

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Mr D. Briskey (Chair)

Mr D. Beanland	Mr P. Purcell
Mrs L. Bird	Mr M. Rowell
Mr R. Cooper	Mr T. Sullivan

QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

Hon. P. Braddy, Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services

Commissioner J. P. (Jim) O'Sullivan

Deputy Commissioner W. (Bill) Aldrich

Mr R. S. (Dick) Warry, Executive Director, Corporate Services

Mr John Just, Director, Finance

Mr R. (Bob) Carson, Director, Administration Division

Dr E. J. (Jim) Hann, Director, Information Management Division

Mr Terry Livingstone, Manager, Information Systems Branch

Mr Jim Hardie, Manager, Human Resource Management Branch

Dr Ann Scott, Principal Policy Officer, Office of the Commissioner

Mr Brian Hodge, Senior Policy Officer, Office of the Commissioner

The CHAIRMAN: I declare this meeting of Estimates Committee B now open. This is the second year in which Estimates Committees have operated in this Parliament. It is recognised that Estimates Committees are a crucial reform which place Ministers, senior public servants and each departmental budget under scrutiny and that they deliver to the people of Queensland a high level of accountability in respect of the Budget. The Committee will examine the proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation Bill 1995 for the areas as set out in sessional orders.

The Committee has determined that units will be examined in the following order: Police and Corrective Services; Queensland Emergency Services and Consumer Affairs; and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Office of the Arts. The following allocation of time will be made under the three portfolios: Police and Corrective Services Commission—the Police Service, two hours, and Corrective Services, two hours; Queensland Emergency Services and Consumer Affairs—Queensland Emergency Services, two hours, and Consumer Affairs, 40 minutes; Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Office of the Arts—Justice and Attorney-General, two hours, and Office of the Arts, 30 minutes. The Committee has also agreed that it will suspend the hearings for meal breaks from approximately 1.30 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. and 6.40 p.m. to 7.40 p.m.

Members of the public and press are reminded that the Committee has resolved that no audio or visual recordings are to be made of the proceedings; however, notes may be taken. I

remind members of the Committee and others that the time limit for questions is one minute, and for answers it is three minutes. A single chime will give a 15-second warning, and a double chime will sound at the conclusion of these time limits. As set out in the sessional orders, the first 20 minutes of questions will be from non-Government members, the next 20 minutes from Government members, and so on in rotation. The sessional orders also require equal time be afforded to Government and non-Government members. Therefore, where a time period occurs which is less than 40 minutes, that time will be shared equally. The end of these time periods will be indicated by three chimes.

The first item for consideration is the Police Department and the Corrective Services Commission, and the time allocated is four hours. As I have indicated, two hours have been allocated for the Police Service and two hours for the Corrective Services Commission. The Committee will now commence examination of the Police Service. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the Police Service to be open for examination. The question before the Chair is: that the proposed expenditure be agreed to. Minister, is it your wish to make a short introductory statement, or do you wish to proceed direct to questioning? If you do wish to make a statement, I ask that you keep that statement to a limit of two minutes.

Mr BRADY: I will make a short introductory statement. The continued commitment of the Government to law and order in Queensland is reflected in the 1995-96 budget for the Queensland Police Service. An amount of \$541.2m has been allocated to the service, which is an increase of \$38m, or 7.5 per cent, on the 1994-95 budget. Since taking office in 1989, the Government has invested significant funding to increase the number of police in Queensland. The number of funded sworn police officers has increased over the period from 5,303—of whom 4,120 were operational officers, that is, 77.7 per cent—in January 1990 to 6,185—of whom 5,657, or 89.3 per cent, were operational—in May 1995. Operational police numbers will grow by 500 over the next three years.

This program will be achieved by a mix of 300 additional sworn police officers and 200 more civilians to release more police officers to return to operational duties. Of these 500 positions, 230 will be funded from the ongoing growth fund, to which the Government is committed to ensure that police resources keep pace with population growth, and 270 from special new initiative funding announced in the 1995-96 Budget.

Contrary to some misconceptions, the Police Service's recruitment program over the next three years will be geared to provide the additional sworn officers and to replace losses through resignations and retirements. The Government is committed to a well-trained, well-equipped Police Service which has access to appropriate technology and communications and is capable of using its resources intelligently, flexibly and creatively to prevent and solve crime.

The annualisation of weekend and evening penalty rates achieved through enterprise

bargaining will give the service the flexibility to roster additional police to meet times of peak demand, especially at weekends. The allocation of a further \$10m in this budget for information technology will enable the Police Service to continue its significant improvements to its computer information systems, of which CRISP is a prime example. A commitment of almost \$8m in this budget will enable the commencement of a major upgrade of the police radio communications network, further enhancing operational efficiency.

The Government's strong commitment to modern police facilities is reflected in the capital works allocation in the budget. A program of new construction of appropriately sited new police stations with the replacement, refurbishment and upgrading of old and inadequate facilities will continue.

The CHAIRMAN: The first period of questions will commence with non-Government members.

Mr COOPER: As this is Rotary's Random Acts of Kindness Week, I have no doubt that the Minister will be perfectly happy to answer all of my questions. I refer to page 97 of Budget Paper No. 2, which reveals that the Estimates for budgets for the Government's overall law, order and public safety program will decline from \$1,096.8m in 1995-96 to \$1,078.1m in 1996-97 and to \$1,059.1m in 1997-98. With that declining budget for those three years, are you satisfied that you can match that strong commitment to law and order?

Mr BRADY: The question, of course, relates to three different portfolios. I assure Mr Cooper that I am very satisfied with the allocation that the Police Service and the Corrective Services Commission is receiving. I have not analysed in detail JAG's funding of juvenile justice or the details of funding for the Premier and the Treasurer. I am not here to answer for them. Ministers in those portfolios will appear before those committees and will answer those questions.

Since we came to Government, the funding growth for the Police Service and Corrective Services has been quite enormous—the figure that comes to mind immediately in Police certainly does—and it is important that we bear in mind that we build bridges to the community through policing over a period. We should not start in the middle of the stream; we should start on both sides and build towards each other. Police funding has gone up 83 per cent. It was at very low levels historically—and actually when we came to Government. I am very happy with the increase in Police funding this year of 7.5 per cent.

I understand that any differences in the figures that you talk about—which, as I say, cover several portfolios—relate to adjustments for capital and accounts for carryovers. That does not mean that there is any lessening of policing in the law and order sector. Certainly in my areas I am happy with a 7.5 per cent increase in policing this year on top of the massive increase in previous years—and a 10 per cent increase in the Corrective Services

Commission—and I think that the Queensland community would be very happy with that.

Mr COOPER: The figures on page 97 also reveal that capital works expenditure will suffer fairly heavy cuts, falling from an estimated \$147.7m in 1995-96 to \$117.2m in 1996-97 and \$69.9m in 1997-98. What specific areas will suffer the most as a result of those reduced estimates?

Mr BRADY: The capital works, again for which I am responsible, are in the areas of police and correctional services, and I will deal with correctional services this afternoon. We believe that the capital works for policing are appropriate. Certainly, there is an indication of the fact that some of the buildings were carried over from previous times. The Bundaberg, Mackay and Doomadgee Police Stations in particular have been carried over, and there are individual reasons for each of them. I can go into detail about that if I am questioned about it. I believe that the capital works situation is adequate for the purpose. As our Government goes on, we continue to review that.

The figures for the second and third years foreshadowed here, of course, are only estimates; they are not locked in. In due course we can see whether we wish to increase that and purely forward estimates. In the first year, of course, the forward estimates are inflated by carryovers and you have to look at it in that context. You have to understand the accounting procedures: the figures for the later years of a trimester such as this are estimates and are not definite figures. The definite figures only come in the budget for that year. You can get a wrong impression if you take a particular capital works budget year where there has been a carryover from the previous year.

Mr COOPER: We are aware that they are estimates and the context that they are taken in, but we do need them for forward projections. I will come to the buildings you mentioned in Warwick, Doomadgee, Bundaberg, and Mackay, etc, later. I refer to Budget Paper No. 2, which states that 500 additional operational police will be put in place over the next three years. What will be the estimated total strength of sworn officers as at 30 June 1996, 1997 and 1998?

Mr BRADY: In terms of the total strength, I made reference to May of this year in my opening statement. That situation, of course, will change. As at 30 June, we believe we will have 6,320 sworn police, which is an increase on the May figure that I gave before. Of course, that is 20 fewer than the funded figure that the Government estimated, although that is more than 12 months ago. We are closer to the figure than was estimated a year ago. We were conservative in estimating that figure.

We anticipate that, in terms of the 500 additional operational police, in the three years they will proceed along these lines, although we are not locked into this absolutely: we will have another 150 operational police in this financial year; 175 extra operational police in the next financial year; and 175 operational police in the third year of the trimester. Of course, that will depend on changes that the Government reserves a right to make from

time to time, particularly in relation to the overall policing strategy to which the Treasurer made reference in his Budget Speech in terms of police planning between now and the year 2001.

In all of this, the most important figure is always the operational figure. We have been very successful in pushing up the operational figures of policing from when we took over from the National Party Government, which only had 77.7 per cent of police operational from 1 January 1990. We now have a figure of 89.5 per cent estimated as at 30 June 1995. Those figures are obtained by comparing apples with apples; we have not changed the rules of the game. They are not my figures, but are supplied to me by the Police Service, comparing the same positions which were operational then and adding, of course, new operational squads such as the Property Crime Squad. In terms of operational policing, the significant figure is this: we believe we will have on 30 June 5,657 operational police out of 6,320, which is an increase of over 1,500 compared to when we came into Government. Those figures will increase over the years ahead.

Mr COOPER: I refer still to the question I asked, that is, the total sworn strengths from 30 June 1996, 1997 and 1998. I am happy for you to place any of those answers on notice so we can have that information, rather than go through the same answer again. Put it on notice, by all means.

Mr BRADY: Again, I can give you those figures. I repeat that it is the operational policing figure that is important.

Mr COOPER: I am looking for the sworn strengths.

Mr BRADY: I will give you those figures. We believe that the number of actual funded police, as distinct from operational police, as at the end of this financial year will be 6,400. For 1996-97, the figure will be 6,515, and for 1997-98 it will be 6,640. We will also increase the number of civilians employed by 200 over that time. That will enable us to increase the operational police figures over that time as well. They are the important figures.

Unfortunately, historically in Queensland we have a rather simplistic way of approaching this, particularly with the tabloid media and, may I say not too unkindly, with the Opposition. What you do with police is what is really important. What matters is how well trained, funded and resourced they are, and how many of them are working as police. Very rarely can we get the media to take an interest in how many extra civilians we have employed in order to release police. People are familiar with different standards of training and ability in armies. I wish they were as familiar with police, because obviously one police service may be much more efficient yet smaller than another police service, just as may happen in the armed forces. It is very simplistic and very wrong to concentrate only on the raw police figures; you must concentrate on the operational figures, and other things as well, such as improvements in technology and resourcing so that the police, even operational police, are spending more of their time working as police officers.

I conclude on this note: it is anticipated that by 1997-98 we will have 6,157 operational police, which is an increase from 5,657 as at 30 June 1995. That is another 500 operational police on top of the figure for the start of this operational year. That is both the police and the operational police figures.

Mr COOPER: To preface the next question, some people quote a figure of 89 per cent for operational capacity; the CJC quotes 73 per cent operational capacity. Therefore, it is a matter of opinion. How many of those additional 500 police will be provided in each of the next three financial years, and how many of those will be recruits and how many will be currently serving officers?

Mr BRADY: One of the reasons that the Opposition attempts to exploit this area, again aided by the persistence of the tabloid media, is that it does not compare apples with apples. The Criminal Justice Commission does not attempt to define "operational police". It has a definition which it calls "direct service delivery", and the Police Service has a definition which it calls "operational police". The CJC, with the best will in the world, is misleading people by its definition when people such as yourself then use the CJC's figures in relation to operational police.

To take an example: the CJC does not count a single Queensland commissioned officer as an operational police officer. Therefore, for you or anyone else to say that its definition is really the same as operational policing and that we are playing with words is clearly nonsense. I do not think anyone would try to suggest that Queensland commissioned police officers are not operational. That is an absolute nonsense. I do not know why the CJC persists with this academic definition of direct service delivery, and why it does not sit down with the Queensland police force and work out a definition of operational policing. The CJC is doing a disservice to the Queensland community and to the Queensland Police Service by its persistence with this definition.

I assure you, however, that when the Queensland police talk about operational policing in 1995 or in the future, they are comparing apples with apples. They are comparing what happened under your Government prior to 1989 with what is occurring now. It is a pity that the CJC does not come down from its academic eyrie and get realistic in relation to this. While it continues to do so, it will enable people such as yourself to exploit the difference between the two definitions. In terms of policing numbers of the future, I have given you the intended operational policing figures—

Mr COOPER: I asked you how many of those 500 additional that you talked about are going to be provided in each of the next three financial years.

Mr BRADY: The police or the—

Mr COOPER: The new 500.

Mr BRADY: It is anticipated that there will be 60 police in this Budget and 90 civilians, that is, 150 operational police—they will be made up that way. In the next year, it will be 115 police and 60

civilians, making a total of 175 extra operational police. In the third year of the trimester, 125 police, 50 civilians, making again a total of 175 extra operational police, which will add up to 500.

Mr COOPER: Talking about the trimesters and things like that, I refer to page 2 of the Portfolio Program Statements which state that the Government is providing growth funding in excess of \$6m per annum over the next three financial years. Last year, you told the Estimates Committee that growth funding would be provided to the extent of \$6.5m in 1993-94, \$13.1m in 1994-95 and \$19.9m in 1995-96. You can refer to page 119 of the Estimates Committee *Hansard* for that. Can you explain why it now appears that this growth funding appears to have been reduced by about two-thirds for 1995-96? Would you have a look at those figures in *Hansard*? It added up to about \$40m. Now you are talking in terms of \$6m a year for three years, which is \$18m.

Mr BRADY: I think this is—

Mr COOPER: Two different funds?

Mr BRADY: It is an appropriate time to hand over to someone who is very familiar with these matters, having been for many years involved in budget planning for education for the police. I would ask Mr Warry, Executive Director, Corporate Services Section of the Police Service, to give you the accountable details in relation to that.

Mr WARRY: Each year, the growth funding in the following year is incorporated in the base. So a \$6.8m growth funding provided in 1995-96 is incorporated in the base in the following year 1996-97, and a further allocation of growth funding is provided as well. So it goes up. For example, over the first cycle of funding, which concludes in this year, this year being the third year, the Police Service's base allocation has gone up by roughly \$6.5m per year. So at the end of the three-year period, the base has increased by approximately \$20m. It is cumulative and that will continue in cycle two of the growth funding, the first year of which is to commence in 1996-97.

Mr COOPER: We were talking about \$40m in last year's Estimates hearings and now it is \$20m. That is six point something million each year. I want that clarified, because that was the case last year. We dealt with these growth funds. It is really \$20m.

Mr WARRY: No. I said before that it is cumulative. So over the three years, you have an outlay of \$40m, of which \$20m goes into the base permanently.

Mr COOPER: You have a total outlay of \$40m. That is over a period of how long?

Mr WARRY: Three years.

Mr COOPER: Minister, getting back to the questions on the police numbers, how many new recruits were there in 1994-95, and how many are planned for in 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98?

Mr BRADY: By "new recruits" now, I assume you are not talking about extra police or extra operational police; you are talking about the numbers who came on to make up for separations?

Mr COOPER: That is right.

Mr BRADY: We will take that on notice. In specific terms, because we have not got the figures here, I can tell you—

The CHAIRMAN: That concludes the first period of questions for non-Government members.

Mr BRADY: I cannot answer that?

The CHAIRMAN: No. I now ask Mrs Bird to begin the questions for Government members.

Mrs BIRD: I would like to expand on some of the questions that Mr Cooper asked on police numbers. Could we go back to Budget Paper No. 1, the Portfolio Program Statements, which highlight all those positive steps taken by the Government to enhance the safety of Queenslanders through the provision of additional police numbers over the next three years. Can you expand on your response to Mr Cooper and tell us what impact the additional police will have and how they will be deployed? More importantly, how can you ensure that the maximum numbers of police are operational?

Mr BRADY: The operational police, as I say, are built up over a period of time. Perhaps in the course of that I can indicate an answer which is really still answering Mr Cooper. We can give him specific figures. The major way of building up operational police over the time has been getting extra police. If you look at the figures between 1989 and 1995, as at 30 June this year we will have somewhere between 1,000 and 1,100 more police than we had when Mr Cooper was Premier and Minister for Police. The 400 extra come through other measures such as civilianisation and better administration. That is a major way of doing it over time. You have to recruit to make up for it. We will give Mr Cooper the figures later.

In terms of allowing for those extras—at the present time it is estimated, with only a month to go, that the turnover rate of police this year is only 3.1 per cent. Back in 1989-90, the last year of the National Party Government, it was 5.4 per cent. Despite some indications to the contrary, as is claimed from time to time, police are not leaving in record numbers. In fact, that is the smallest number of any in the last 10 years. The best percentage prior was in 1992-93, again under our Government, where only 2.9 per cent left. We have an historically low separation period. We build up operational police by replacing numbers. At the present time, the figures of separation are about three officers a week who are leaving the Police Service for retirement, resignation or other reasons. So we replace those. You were asking also about regional allocation, Mrs Bird, were you?

Mrs BIRD: That is right.

Mr BRADY: What we look at there is fairness across the State. We have recently had a review of that, as you know, and we made arrangements to get more police to some of the central and far-northern regions which have historically been missing out to some extent. The police have a very fair formula. The Government plays no part in it whatever. They feed the information in. The major factors are the amount of

crime that occurs in the area, the population of the area and traffic statistics relating to each division. In their additions, they take into account youth population, Aboriginal population, urban crime against the person and other statistics. But the three major ones are: how big is your population, how much traffic do you have, how much crime do you have? Then some extra factors are fed into it.

Mrs BIRD: You talk then about the police-to-population ratios. Can you talk about the difference that has occurred over the last six years between those police-to-population ratios? Are they accurate, particularly those that you provide on 1.2 of the Portfolio Program Statements?

Mr BRADY: Yes, they are certainly accurate. One area that we are very keen to work on is operational policing. If you have an inefficient Police Service, then the police to population ratios are a bit misleading. That less than 78 per cent of police were operational under the National Party indicates that the police to population figure at that time was even worse than it appeared on paper, because the administration was not sufficiently tight; it was not sufficiently efficient. By pushing that figure up to 90 per cent and increasing the numbers as well, we have the police to population figures that are published in Australia. We know that they are better than that, because we have increased the efficiency of the Police Service by civilianisation and other good means of administration.

Unfortunately, it is very hard to compare operational police figures across Australia, because they are not published. So we have to compare ourselves with ourselves from year to year and maintain that goal of keeping it at around the 90 per cent level or, in fact, improving it. There is no doubt, however, that having increased and improved the police to population figure significantly at a rate that is greater than the population growth in this State undersells our success, because the Australian figures do not indicate the 10, 11 or 12 per cent improvement that the Queensland Police Service has carried out in its efficiencies and operational policing methods.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Pages 1-8 and 1-9 of the Portfolio Program Statements refer to perceptions of the community and the actual level of victimisation in the community, especially the fear of crime and the effect that that has on the community. Some sections of the media tell us that crime rates are out of control. From the information contained in those pages, what steps are being taken to manage that situation? Would you also comment on the level of fear of crime that exists in the community and which your programs are designed to address?

Mr BRADY: In the very serious war against crime that is going on in Queensland, Australia and around the world, it is very important to understand the situation. Your question hits a very important point, and if we stop to think about it we will realise that we are all aware of this. There is no doubt that there is a difference between reported crime and actual crime. We need to know how much crime is being committed, how much crime is being reported

and, most importantly, why some crimes go unreported.

During debates with members of the Opposition both here and in other places, members of the Opposition focus only on reported crime. Police are more interested in what crime is actually being committed than what is being reported. The Australian Bureau of Statistics' crime survey compared 1983 figures with 1993 figures. They did that for the whole of Australia—10 years apart—to see how we were going. In their report they said that the victimisation rate for assault remained steady in Queensland in 1993 compared with 1983 and that no statistical significance was observed between the 1983 and 1993 victimisation rates for sexual assault. They say that, over that 10-year period, actual crime remained steady; yet if you look at the reported figures for that period, you will see an increase. They did report, as we have said on many occasions, an increase in property crime in Queensland, and the Government has attacked that in many ways.

We know some reasons for the difference between actual crime and reported crime. We know why crime is being reported now. People in Queensland have more confidence in the Police Service since the Fitzgerald report and its reforms. Women, in particular, are more confident in reporting sexual assaults. They have also become more confident generally in the community. Another factor is the efforts of the Queensland Police Service to recruit many more women and the rising recruitment rate for women—usually between 30 per cent and 35 per cent of recruits in every batch of recruits are female—and the good work that they are doing.

In relation to sexual assault—a lot of the assaults that are being reported now and which come up in the figures for reported crime actually occurred 10 years ago. When those women were younger, they did not report those crimes. They are coming out now, at the age of 24, and reporting crimes that occurred when they were 14. Statistically, that is pushing up the number of reported sexual assaults rather than actual sexual assaults.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I follow on with a question about personal and property crime. Page 1-7 of the Portfolio Program Statements relates to the Personal Safety Program, and page 1-12 relates to the Property Security Program. Over the past year or so, a lot has been said and written about the safety of members of the community, particularly in their own homes. What has been done in those programs to address those particular concerns?

Mr BRADY: A successful partnership has been building in Queensland between the police and the community in relation to the sector to which you refer. There have been many programs, and I will refer to the ones that I think are the most relevant. For example, people should be aware that the Police Beat Shopfronts make an enormous contribution to safety. We have established 31 shopfronts across the State: 17 permanent and 14 portable, and when people are shopping in

shopping centres they go into those shopfronts and obtain information. A lot of information is available to them about what they can do to protect themselves through Neighbourhood Watch or other programs. This is returning the police to the old-fashioned village cop atmosphere in which they get to know the local people and are close to them. No-one goes into suburban police stations unless there is something to report; that is historically true. If you look at the figures, you will see that people do not bother to get out of their cars and call into the local police station. However, if they are out shopping, they will go into the Police Beat Shopfront and obtain information about the measures that they can take to protect themselves and home security.

That leads me into some of the programs on which this Government and the Police Service are working and about which they can learn. The Home Secure Program sets out to improve the security and quality of life for older people and persons with disabilities by providing a range of home safety security support services, information and advice. Elderly people can obtain that information when they are out shopping at the big shopping centres. They do obtain that information, and they are taking advantage of it. By that means and others, people have been made aware of the Neighbourhood Safety Audit Programs, which aim to minimise opportunities for crime, particularly violent crime, in areas of the community through improvements to the design and physical layout of the community environment. In Rockhampton, the whole city was audited, and it was found that the best way to produce a safer environment was for the council to install a darned sight better streetlighting throughout the city so that people could feel confident about walking down the street at night. The confidence level has risen. Safety House is another program.

A very important aspect is the continued development of the Women's Safety Project, which involves the implementation of strategies to enhance the safety of women in Queensland. Information on that project is available, and we are getting it out to the people. The other day, we launched a new aspect of that program: for the first time in Australia, instructors are going to be trained in how to train women in women's safety. When women go to an instructor they can be confident that that person—whether it is a man or a woman—is trained to instruct, rather than someone who just says that he or she is trained. The police will run that program.

Mr PURCELL: I would like to ask you a question about radio communications. Recently, I made a trip with Mr Burns from Cairns to Bamaga, and it became very plain to me how important communications are in that part of Queensland. In the Budget papers, there is an allocation of \$6.4m to cover the acquisition of replacement communications equipment. Will you please explain how this money will be expended? In addition, how will these purchases be incorporated into a study of the joint communications strategy currently being developed with the Queensland Emergency Services? Obviously, that is a very important

exercise, particularly in those remote areas in northern and western Queensland.

Mr BRADY: A significant background to your question is that under Commonwealth legislation the Queensland Police Service is required to switch to new frequencies within the VHF spectrum band within the next two years. Obviously, this change has significant implications for the Police Service, because it required them to examine its VHF equipment to ensure compatibility with the new conditions. In addition, as you foreshadowed in your question, the PSMC review of the Queensland Emergency Services advocated an integrated Queensland Police Service and Queensland Emergency Services communications strategy, requiring a rationalisation of their workshops and so on. So the police are working very much as required by that review and by the Federal legislation to get on with it. It provides an opportunity, which they are seizing, to explore efficiencies through a whole-of-Government radio communications network. Similarly, we will be able to work with Victorian police, New South Wales police and New Zealand police, who are embarking on exactly the same program. So a lot of money is being spent on workshop test equipment, \$1.5m; the headquarters radio control console, \$2.8m; portable repeaters, \$500,000, or close to it, and so on. Over the next five years, up to 90 per cent of the Police Service radio equipment will require replacement owing to age. So all of those things are occurring at the same time.

I can tell you that the workload of the Police Communications Centre in Brisbane has increased by 10 per cent over the last 12 months and is expected to rise by another 15 per cent over the next 12 months. So the public and the police are certainly keeping up communications through that. A planning group is investigating the necessary reconfiguration of the environment necessary to deal with that increasing workload—that 25 per cent increase in communications workload in two years. Much of the infrastructure in rural locations will be replaced. We will also have to have a further investment in police radio communications to be considered in the Budget next year. So you can see that the workload has increased enormously, and the police are responding. It will require a similar response for some years yet.

Mr PURCELL: Can I ask a supplementary question?

The CHAIRMAN: Absolutely, Mr Purcell.

Mr PURCELL: I know from that trip and from talking to members of the Emergency Services, the police and other people out there that what was very important was to try to get the networks on the one radio system. Maybe Mr O'Sullivan might be able to answer that.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: Yes.

Mr PURCELL: It is important to have the Ambulance Service, the Fire Service—and in most cases, the bush fire brigades—and the police communicating with one another. They work very well out there and they need to be able to communicate with one another.

Mr BRADY: I will ask Mr Aldrich, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Operations, to give you a detailed answer on that, Mr Purcell.

Mr PURCELL: Thank you.

Dep. Comr ALDRICH: That is what the PSMC recommendation out of the review of Emergency Services sought to achieve. Recently, we have appointed a project manager, and we are working towards that. It is a very complex arrangement, and it will take time and it will take money. This year, \$60,000 has been allocated for the review. The communication equipment in existence throughout Queensland varies so much that to rationalise it will be a long-term project. What we are looking for in the interim is at least a capacity for the various communication systems to interface with each other. In addition to the technical side of the joint communication centres, it becomes an operational and an industrial issue because you have persons from different organisations, working to different criteria, trying to work together. So there is a lot to do. We have now appointed a project manager. We have a joint project team, and representatives of QES, the Queensland Police Service, an outside consultancy firm and the project manager are working towards achieving that. The first task in that is to identify the extent of the task and then to look at strategies to address it. So that is where we are at this stage.

Mr PURCELL: I know those services out there will be pleased about that.

The CHAIRMAN: Any further questions, Mr Purcell?

Mr PURCELL: I have another question of Mr Braddy.

The CHAIRMAN: No, you have not. The first period of questions from Government members has now expired. We now return to the non-Government members, and I ask Mr Cooper to continue asking questions.

Mr COOPER: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Just going back to those 500 new operational police who are expected to be allocated—you have said mainly to the south-east corner of the State.

Mr BRADY: I did not say that today.

Mr COOPER: It is in the Budget papers. They are expected to be allocated to south-east Queensland, or the vast majority. That is on page 2 of the Portfolio Program Statements. On the basis of existing needs, how will these police be allocated?

Mr BRADY: You have to be careful about the words you use in a State like Queensland. I do not think the words "the vast majority" were used. The facts of life are that the majority of people in Queensland live in the south-east corner. So they also have a fair share of crime and traffic problems. So, naturally, historically the majority of police go there. The people of regional Queensland can be very well assured that we do not neglect them. In fact, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, because this year we had a major conference in Cairns at which the whole of regional policing was reviewed. As a result of that, extra police have been

flowing to the central, northern and far-northern regions during all of this year to bring them up to date, because they had not been receiving quite as many as we believe they should have received. So we will always monitor that. It will be fed into the system and the police will decide where they go and, over time, they will get their fair share. But the "fair share" will have to be determined by the formula that I made reference to—the population, the crime, the traffic and then, of course, the asterisks to those; the Aboriginal population is relevant, the youth population is relevant and a whole host of other factors come into it as subsidiary reasons for doing it. But they are the three major concerns.

When they are allocated within those regions, the assistant commissioners of each of those regions has a capacity to determine where they go within the region itself. So when we talk about a majority, certainly if you are talking about the five southern regions—the north coast region, the southern region, the south-east region, the metropolitan north region and the metropolitan south region—they contain the majority of the population, and a lot of the crime as well. They will receive their share only on that basis. It is not for any other reason that they will receive it. Those determinations will be made, as I say, without any direction or input from me as the Minister or from the Government. The police will determine that strictly on scientific data and on a fair basis.

Mr COOPER: Mr Chairman, I refer to the Minister's claimed operational police percentage of 90 per cent and the percentage of police likely to benefit from the 19 per cent salary increases to be made available under the flexible rostering plan. Why is it that your department estimates that only about 70 per cent of police will receive that increase under that flexible rostering payment, which is meant for operational police? Where are the 20 per cent who miss out?

Mr BRADY: I will answer that question briefly and then ask Mr Aldrich to comment. Operational policing comes in many different forms. We do not want to fall into the trap that some of the more academic people at the CJC have fallen into, that is, thinking that only those officers in blue uniforms who are out there patrolling are operational police. A member of the public would fall about laughing, for example, if a CIB officer investigating a murder was not considered operational or if the commissioned officer who is the head of the Drug Squad, Inspector Ann Lewis, who has had a fantastic year with her squad in terms of recovering enormous quantities of drugs, was not considered by the CJC as being part of direct service delivery. She directs a unit which has recovered about \$600m worth of drugs this year. That is the sort of nonsense that arises when people are too academic about these things. Certain officers do not get involved in weekend work, even though they are operational. Mr Aldrich might explain this further.

Dep. Comr ALDRICH: The 19 per cent annualisation of penalties allowance was to replace shift loadings, weekend and public holiday penalty

rates. Of necessity, according to the figures from Mr Cooper, 20 per cent of our operational police do not qualify or do not work on a rotating seven day per week roster. For example, officers at a four-person station are truly operational police; but because there are four officers, they do not cover shifts over a 24-hour roster seven days per week, so they do not get the 19 per cent. We or anybody else are not about giving money for jam; we are about giving money for service.

Those officers who do not qualify for the 19 per cent allowance will remain on the existing shift loadings. For example, all officers in a 20-person traffic branch are operational, but the officer in charge, under normal circumstances, works predominantly 9 to 5 Monday to Friday. Why would we want to pay him a 19 per cent allowance to compensate for working shifts, weekends and public holidays that he does not work? The difference in the figures that you quote is that the 19 per cent allowance for penalties is paid to the operational police who work on a rotating roster. That leaves a remainder, as I have tried to cover, who are still operational but who do not get an allowance; they get penalty rates as they work.

Mr COOPER: The system should be in place by now. It was supposed to come into effect on 27 May. You should have a pretty fair idea how many police officers are getting the 19 per cent allowance as part of the flexible rostering arrangement. Also, can you tell me what the overtime budget is for the police officers not included in that scheme?

Mr BRADY: As you indicated, Mr Cooper, the new rostering system started on 27 May. We can give you only round figures, because they vary from time to time depending on transfers, promotions and so on. Based on the current strength of the Police Service, we believe that in excess of 4,500 police at any one time are eligible for the 19 per cent payment. I am told that there are still some grey areas to be resolved. Naturally, everybody who thinks that he or she might be eligible for it has his or her hand up asking for it. That has to be resolved. However, about 4,500 police officers will be receiving the payment at this time. Based on the figures that we have, by 30 June this year, 6,320 sworn police will be working in Queensland.

Mr COOPER: In my previous question, I asked about the overtime budget for the Police Service officers not included in the flexible rostering system.

Mr BRADY: I can give you a figure of 4,500 out of the 6,320, but I cannot give you an exact number.

Mr COOPER: I will place that question on notice.

Mr BRADY: I will take that question on notice.

Mr COOPER: Under that arrangement, how many police would be rostered on duty from Friday evening, say, to Sunday evening in the Brisbane area, and how does that compare with the weekend rostering system in the past?

Mr BRADY: That is a matter that is being bedded. I do not think we will be in a position to give you an exact figure for some time. However, when we are, we will do so. It is progressing now. As you know, I am very keen to oversee that program. The Commissioner and his officers are very much aware of that. I do not have that figure yet. When I have that figure, I will pass it on to you. However, I will not be in a position to give it to you in the next 24 hours.

Mr COOPER: The scheme has started. You must have a pretty fair idea how many police officers are employed—

Mr BRADY: We have given you a fair idea.

Mr COOPER: —in the Brisbane area as compared with the old overtime arrangement.

Mr BRADY: I am told that, at this stage, we do not have that figure available. However, when I have it—and I am very keen to get it, too; I believe it is a very important figure—I will pass it on to you.

Mr COOPER: As to the Juvenile Aid Bureau—I notice that there does not appear to be any reference to it this year in the Budget papers. Calls to your office yesterday indicated that, although there is no reference to it, it is scattered amongst personal safety, property security, public order, safety and road safety, and on a regional basis. In my opinion, it should be mentioned specifically. If you could do that, that would be great. How many officers are attached to the Juvenile Aid Bureau in 1995-96, and how does that staffing level compare with previous years? What is the staffing on a district by district basis?

Mr BRADY: We will give you the 1995-96 figures, because we had those prepared for this Budget discussion. Before I do that—you have to bear in mind that this is an area that is very important. Miss Simpson, who is here today, has made this mistake in the past. Juvenile offenders are not just the province of the Juvenile Aid Bureau. Juvenile offenders and the crimes that they commit are the province of the whole Queensland Police Service. To try to say that what you do in relation to juvenile crime is strictly just a matter of looking at the raw numbers in terms of the Juvenile Aid Bureau is entirely wrong. From my experience with police, I know that frequently juvenile offenders are detected, arrested and dealt with by people who have absolutely nothing to do with the Juvenile Aid Bureau.

As to the figures for 1995-96—there will be 216 officers attached to the Juvenile Aid Bureau; 23, Brisbane Central; 26, North Brisbane; 12, Oxley; 14, Wynnum; 19, South Brisbane; 15, Logan; 20, Gold Coast; two, Bundaberg; 10, Cairns; eight, Townsville; three, Mackay; six, Rockhampton; three, Emerald; two, Gympie; 15, Redcliffe; 12, Sunshine Coast; two, Gladstone; 14, Ipswich; five, Toowoomba; and five at Maryborough.

In other areas, JAB functions are also undertaken as part of the position attached to the CIB unit. That should be borne in mind. We do have the total figures for 1994-95. There were 200 positions dedicated to the JAB. The figure for

positions absolutely and totally dedicated in 1995-96 is 216.

Miss SIMPSON: I seek leave of the Chair to ask a question of the Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Miss Simpson seeks leave. The Committee advises that leave is granted.

Miss SIMPSON: Following on from that question about juvenile crime—you would remember that last year no statistics were available for the breakdown of the categories of offences for juvenile crime and that at that time, in last year's Estimates Committee, we had to refer back to a two-year-old statistic which indicated that 40 per cent of crimes against property were committed by juveniles. Also at that time, you indicated that with CRISP operating you would have new figures on the percentage of crimes committed by juveniles. I ask: as this is important to understand in a setting of JAB staffing levels, what is the current statistic for the percentage of crimes against property committed by juveniles?

Mr BRADY: I do not have those figures here, and they are not figures that I intend to search out at this time. Those are statistical figures. You have the opportunity to ask me questions in the Parliament or write me a letter when the police statistics come out, and I will answer any such inquiry at that time. That is not a suitable question for these Estimates hearings.

Miss SIMPSON: With respect, we did touch on it last year and you said——

Mr BRADY: I was kinder last year than I am prepared to be this year!

Miss SIMPSON: The document does refer to the JAB staffing levels. As that is still a critical issue and as juvenile crime is still a critical issue——

Mr BRADY: This is why I gave a bit of a flick with the whip. You continually make that mistake. The police of Queensland deal with juvenile crime. The Juvenile Aid Bureau is there to perform certain functions, in particular to try to prevent juvenile crime. The actual policing of juvenile crime is very much part of the role of the uniformed officers, the CI Branch and other people. To try to equate the reaction and performance of the police relating to juvenile crime—as you continue to do—to the number of Juvenile Aid Bureau staff is wrong.

Miss SIMPSON: So the number of JAB officers has no relevance to the number of offences committed by juveniles?

Mr BRADY: We obviously think that it is important, because we have increased the number of JAB officers from 200 to 216, but you simplistically draw the wrong conclusions.

Miss SIMPSON: But the conclusions have to come from statistics, and we do not know what the statistics are.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr BRADY: The statistics are available in the police statistics, and you can ask me questions about them——

Miss SIMPSON: They were not last year.

Mr BRADY:—when the statistics are published.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the honourable member to allow the Minister to answer the question and then she may ask another question.

Mr BRADY: That question is not relevant to the Estimates of my department. There are many figures that we have to extract and research for the Estimates process. The police crime statistics should be pursued at the time that they are published. You have many opportunities to do so, both in the Parliament and by correspondence, and I invite you to do so.

Mr COOPER: I turn to the cost of training police recruits. I ask: what capacity is currently available at the Oxley Police Academy for training recruits? What would the capacity be if it were utilised as a police training facility only? What is the total cost of training a police recruit?

Mr BRADY: I will ask the Police Commissioner to answer that question.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: The staffing levels at the academy are 65 sworn staff and——

Mr COOPER: Sorry, there was some misunderstanding there. I wanted to know how many recruits——

Mr BRADY: He will come to that. He is giving you a fuller answer than you asked for.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: The maximum number of recruits able to be accommodated at the academy is 140 recruits per intake, with three intakes per year. We have an overlapping facility there, and we include rejoiners and serving police from other States in that. The academy is now running at capacity and it is geared to run at capacity for the conceivable future because of the demand and the growth being experienced. As I said, each year the academy can accommodate three intakes of 140. The fact that it is now a joint academy has not had a bearing on the numbers and our ability to train those people in the future.

Mr COOPER: To follow on with that—you said that there are 140 recruits multiplied by three intakes per year and the fact that ambulance officers, SES officers and all those other people are being trained there has no effect on the capacity of the academy. You could recruit and train 400-plus police recruits in any year.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: We are doing that.

Mr BRADY: We are already doing that. The training of emergency services officers does not impact on the academy's capacity for police recruit training. The training for those other officers is totally additional, and it does not in any way interfere with the training of police recruits. We did not have to restrict the numbers of police recruits being trained to undertake that other training. We have expanded the capacity of the academy. Of course, the method of training for the emergency services officers is completely different. They come in for only relatively short periods and most of them do

not have to live in, whereas the police recruits do live in. When I was at the academy the other day—as you were—for the swearing-in of the latest batch of first-year constables, I asked this very question. I talked to the commandant out there about that issue. You can be assured that the service that we are able to offer in conjunction with Emergency Services has not in any way impacted upon our capacity to recruit and train Queensland police officers.

Mr COOPER: Good. The cost of training a recruit?

Comr O'SULLIVAN: The total budget for the academy is \$11.7m. As to the cost of training one recruit—I could take that on notice and supply that information.

Mr BRADY: That does not include the cost of training emergency services officers. We will give you that answer.

Mr COOPER: May I place another question on notice? Will you please provide the annual cost to the taxpayer on a rank-by-rank basis of police officers?

Mr BRADY: This is not to do with the academy now?

Mr COOPER: No, off the academy now.

Mr BRADY: What are you asking now?

Mr COOPER: From a constable to a—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The second period of questions from non-Government members has concluded. We now move to questions from Government members.

Mr PURCELL: I want to return to the question that I did not get in earlier. I represent an inner-city electorate which is a densely populated area. It is a lovely little electorate, as you know. I have an ageing population in my electorate. Given the amount of media attention being given to law and order at present, I want to ask a question about police beat shopfronts. In view of the fact that a significant amount of money was budgeted to extend the police beat shopfront project in 1994-95, what benefits have been derived by the community to justify the continuation of that expenditure? Is Bulimba on the agenda some time in the near future?

Mr BRADY: I spoke earlier about police beat shopfronts and about how important they are in the modern approach to community policing. They are a novel but effective way of bringing the police and the community together. The old village markets where in centuries gone by the police and the community would come into contact with each other now no longer exist. Today, because of the high number of two-income families and because people are so busy, the only places where people get together in their thousands are the large shopping complexes or the malls of our cities. So that is where we now see police beats being set up. To date, they have been established in the Brisbane city mall, the Townsville city mall and many shopping centres, and another is currently being constructed in the Cairns mall.

Police beat shopfronts are not PR exercises. They are places from which police monitor crime. The establishment of those facilities in the Brisbane city mall and in the Valley have been enormously successful policing initiatives in the direct prevention of crime and in providing a contact point for the public. Currently, there are 30 permanent or relocatable units, which exceeds by one where we thought we would be at this stage. Another 15 will be established between late 1995 and June 1997. Do you have a large shopping complex in your inner-city electorate?

Mr PURCELL: There is one just outside my electorate, but there is a lot of wonderful strip shopping there. The fact is that people feel comfortable when police are visible in the community.

Mr BRADY: They do. When your constituents visit the city mall, the Valley and other shopping centres when they are escaping the aircraft noise, they come into contact with these shopfronts. Your electorate does not really lend itself to the establishment of such a facility. It is not in the heart of the city; nor does it have a large shopping complex, and that is really the locations to which these police beats are most suited. Some of the centres at which shopfronts will be established in the future include the Cherside shopping centre—and I am sure that one of your colleagues on this Committee would be pleased about that—Gladstone and Redcliffe. Westfield Indooroopilly is also well on the agenda.

Mrs BIRD: I would like to take you back to the 1994-95 Budget, if I can. You will recall that, in that Budget, the Government allocated \$1.264m to the Special Operations Team. I notice that in this Police budget there appears to be no provision for the policing of prostitution. What results have been achieved, particularly in that allocation in the last budget, and what action has been taken from this budget to address the problem of prostitution?

Mr BRADY: The Special Operations Team was established to police organised prostitution. One of the great urban myths in this country is that the Queensland Government legislated to outlaw prostitution. Try as we do, as often as we like, people do not like having their myths turned upside down and they do not like being forced to wear dunce hats. Prostitution has not been outlawed by the Queensland Parliament since our Government came to power. In fact, it specifically provides that prostitution per se is not illegal. The legislation makes that very clear. What it does outlaw, however, is organised prostitution and street prostitution—two of the greatest evils that this country and other countries have seen.

We remember the very large and garish brothels that were around only a few years ago under our predecessors in Government—the ones that Mr Hinze was never able to see but everyone else knew were there. They are not there now. We continue to crack down on people such as Mr Armstrong, who boasted a lot about what he was going to do about stopping the police and the Government from interfering with his business. Well, he has not been very successful. He has been

distinctly unsuccessful. He has been prosecuted successfully many times. On the last occasion, he finally pleaded guilty. On that occasion, he put his hand up. He forfeited two cars the other day. The person who promoted himself as the proponent of prostitution in the way that the law did not allow has been successfully prosecuted time and time again to the extent that he is now pleading guilty, although I notice that the media has not been highlighting that to the same extent it was when they were interviewing him in his brothels when he was making the threats.

So the prostitution crackdown has occurred in that context: where single operator prostitution is occurring it is legal, and no moral judgments are made about that in terms of parliamentary legality or illegality in this State. However, we make no apology for cracking down on the nuisance of street prostitution and organised brothel prostitution, and that will continue. Recently, all appeals challenging our legislation have been in our favour. The operations of that squad will continue where necessary, but the intense period has been so successful that perhaps there will be a slowing down in that area for the reason that people are dropping off challenging us.

Mrs BIRD: I also wanted to ask you about the Property Crime Squad. The allocation in the 1994-95 budget has proved that the Property Crime Squad has been highly successful. I notice that in 1995-96 we have included a continuation of the operations to target break and enter offences, particularly for offices and vehicle theft, including the squad's ability to track down the disposal of stolen property. Will squad numbers be increased? Can you elaborate on the performance objectives which have been set to address property crime right across the State?

Mr BRADY: The squad has been very successful. It only got under way in September last year and its success has exceeded all expectations. I have visited the squad at its headquarters. Members of that squad are very enthusiastic, very hard working and they themselves in a sense almost cannot comprehend how successful they have been. They have certainly uncovered a degree of organisation in the breaking and entering and property crime area that I think was not fully understood until we had this special squad.

You will be aware that the squad will work with regional police, but by having a squad there, they can get a better impression of what is really occurring. One example of the work of this squad is: one licensed second-hand dealer who was knowingly involved in receiving stolen property was investigated by the squad and since that investigation he has relinquished his licence and closed his establishment. It is that sort of person and that degree of organisation that in the past, was not fully picked up but is now because of the Property Crime Squad. The squad has now reached its full established strength, and that occurred only recently. As I say, it is less than 12 months since it started. No increase in staff is planned.

That squad has been extremely successful. It has identified \$2.25m worth of stolen property and

actually recovered \$1.65m worth of that in nine months. It conducted four covert operations, and as a result of those operations alone it charged 95 offenders with 1,100 charges and recovered property to the value of \$750,000. So the objectives now are to expand the training of regional police to work with the squad; to understand what the squad is about and work with it; to maintain the Property Crime Squad database so that they are better informed and able to move quickly; to maintain and continue to develop effective liaison between the squad and regional police; and to encourage the free flow of information and intelligence from regional hot spots. So with the numbers in the squad that is the intention over the next 12 months. Members of the squad believe that they can get similar results by current operational activities.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I refer you to Budget Paper No. 2, page 167. In the table in the middle of the page under "Public Order and Safety", there is a 1994-95 budgeted allocation of \$150.5m, but there is an estimated actual of \$153.86m. That seems to be an increase on the allocation of about \$3.36m. Can you explain what this variation was?

Mr BRADY: I think the officer concerned, John Just, can answer this question.

Mr JUST: There have been a number of variances or apparent variances. We have had a budget of \$150m and we increased the estimated actual to \$153m. Salaries and related expenditure is below budget by \$1.5m, and there is a reason for that, which is that Corporate Services changed its method of allocating expenditure over the programs. So what happened was that, at the end of the year, we allocated more to Corporate Services although the same work was being done over the programs. That meant that the program was reduced by \$1.5m, although the program did the same work.

Capital works has been reduced, and that is over all the programs as well. The Minister has answered questions on the capital works problems that we had in 1994-95. The main reason for the apparent over-expenditure is the allocation of Corporate Services across all the programs. It is very complicated. We charge the expenditure to Corporate Services in the first place and then, at the end of the year, we allocate Corporate Services back over those programs so the administration costs can be seen to be supporting those programs. So Corporate Services seem to support the operational program so that it is not seen as an administration area that is eating up the money. It is actually there to support the operations of the organisation, so we charge the cost to Corporate Services and then allocate it over those areas which incur the costs from Corporate Services. What has happened is that \$6.7m is charged to Corporate Services which normally belongs to programs and we have allocated that over the programs at the end of the financial year.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: In the Portfolio Program Statements at page 1-39, there is a table of capital works projects. I count 14 cases in which money is to be allocated to watch-house upgrading or construction. There has been background

criticism throughout the community and justice and welfare groups of the condition of Queensland watch-houses. Certain individuals have appeared regularly on television criticising conditions in watch-houses. With reference to the table shown on page 1-39, what action has the Police Service taken to address this problem?

Mr BRADY: The major problem, of course, that the Government has always admitted in relation to watch-houses is that they are basically designed for a short-term stay. With the rapid increase in prisoner population, particularly with the need to keep protected prisoners in watch-houses until they can go to protected positions in correctional centres, there has been overcrowding. Watch-houses are always going to have to be designed for short-term stays; they are not designed as prisons.

The major approach to remedying the problem over the next few years is the construction of 1,000 extra cells in existing correctional centres and the construction of a new correctional centre at Woodford. That construction has been under way since last year and will continue until the end of next year. Also, it is certainly important for the Government to progressively improve the conditions in the watch-houses that do exist, as well as addressing the problem of getting people out of them and into correctional centres more quickly.

The watch-houses that have been scheduled for replacement are Cleveland, Wynnum, Ipswich, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Mackay, Rockhampton, Moranbah, Doomadgee and Kowanyama. For example, the estimated expenditure for this financial year will be: in Bundaberg, \$5.6m; in Rockhampton, as part of the new court complex, \$500,000; in Doomadgee, \$3.3m; in Emerald, \$300,000, and so on. We did inherit a lot of watch-houses which were in fairly appalling condition. That issue surfaced, and the whole community had to face up to it, during the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody, when the problem was highlighted. As I said, we are proceeding progressively not only to build more prison cells to get people out of watch-houses but also to address the problems of the watch-houses that are substandard. That will take place in each of the major areas to which I have made reference.

I can inform you that a review of watch-house design has been completed by the Police Service. The new design reflects best practice, and the Police Service has been able to incorporate concepts and designs used in other jurisdictions throughout Australia. That partly came about as a result of the royal commission to which I just referred. Subsequent to that, the Queensland Police Service was represented at a workshop in Alice Springs to develop standard guidelines.

I stress two things: the need to build more correctional centres to get prisoners out of watch-houses more quickly and the need to improve conditions in those watch-houses which are substandard.

Mr PURCELL: In terms of construction—as you know, I have a personal interest in minor works

and the Capital Works Program, which are referred to on page 38 of Budget Paper No. 3. I also have an interest in older inner-city suburbs where a lot of the buildings tend to be aged. We do not get too many new buildings out my way. Nearly \$3.4m has been allocated for minor works. Could you tell the Committee how these funds are allocated and on what basis the allocations are made?

Mr BRADY: Minor works funding is generally determined at 10 per cent of the overall Capital Works Program for the department. This year, the figure is \$3.387m; \$2.3m of that is from this Budget, and \$1.086m had not been spent and was carried forward from the previous financial year. The department tries to ensure equitable distribution of that funding throughout the various regions. The department takes into account the age, number, condition, function and geography of buildings, etc. This year, application of the formula is as follows: the central region, \$300,000; the far-northern region, \$200,000; the metropolitan north region, \$100,000; the metropolitan south region, \$100,000; the north coast region, \$200,000; the northern region, \$200,000; the south-eastern region, \$100,000; the southern region, \$300,000; and non-region and emergent works, \$800,000.

The CHAIRMAN: The time for questions from Government members has concluded.

Mr ROWELL: I have a question about page 1-22 of the Portfolio Program Statements regarding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers. It states that 94 officers are employed throughout the State. But when I look at page 1-38, I am disturbed to see that there appears to be no additional money provided, although the Portfolio Program Statements refer to the development and procedural framework that needs to occur with training. Could you clarify that?

Mr BRADY: In relation to Aboriginal police liaison officers—you have to bear in mind that this is a unique situation. In a very short time—less than three years—we have gone from having no officers to having 94. All of those officers are new in the service. In the last Budget, we expanded the number of officers from 47. They were mainly employed in the northern areas—Rockhampton, Cairns, Townsville, Mount Isa—and in Brisbane and some of the regional areas in the north, such as your own, Mr Rowell.

Mr ROWELL: We missed out, unfortunately, which is why I am asking about this.

Mr BRADY: It involves some of the regional areas around your area, such as Innisfail, etc. We believe that needs to be evaluated when it has settled down. We have doubled the number of officers in the last 12 months, and we will look at that again. Coincidentally with this, we are encouraging Aboriginal and Islander people to join the Police Service as sworn police officers. As you are probably aware, the Johnstone TAFE college in Innisfail offers educational opportunities to people in that area.

The specific Aboriginal and Islander initiative does not just lie with the liaison officer program. It very much lies with recruiting Aboriginals and Torres

Strait Islanders as sworn police officers. Amongst the new recruits sworn in the other day in the presence of the Governor-General, Mr Cooper would have seen—as I did—several Aboriginal and Islander people. Every batch of first-year constables now includes Aboriginal and Islander liaison officers. At this stage it is not intended to expand their numbers, because of the rapid expansion that has just occurred. We will see how they go. When the program has settled down we will look to see where we go.

Mr ROWELL: The statement very briefly refers to ongoing training in relation to those positions. That does not line up with the fact that there is nothing allocated in the Budget for that.

Mr BRADDY: Mr Aldrich can deal with that. As I said, you have to bear in mind that this is a new program. In less than three years, we went from having no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander liaison officers to now having 94. Those officers are scattered around the State, and the training that they received initially was nowhere near as good as they are getting now. I think that Mr Aldrich, as Deputy Commissioner of Operations, would be able to give you a bit more detail on the training and where we are going.

Dep. Comr ALDRICH: As the Minister said, this has all happened in less than three years. The first 47 that were taken on board were employed and placed around the State with virtually no training. If we are going make this work more successfully than it already is, what we believe is necessary is that we have to develop the status and self-esteem of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander liaison officers that are employed. Whereas initially they were exposed to very little training, we are now developing a training program that not only will focus on the Aboriginal liaison officers but will focus on the operational police officers that have to interact with those officers to better understand their position. We are also hoping to develop some career structure for those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander liaison officers so that, as they become better at what they do, they can look down the tunnel and see a bigger light in the way of advancement, so they do not merely stay on the base salary rate all the time.

That all requires the development of training programs to better equip them. Already they themselves are identifying areas that they can be of value that we would never, ever envisage. They are receiving invitations from Aboriginal groups to attend gatherings. There was a recent gathering—I am not sure what it was called—in West End where the Aboriginal liaison officers covering that area received an invitation to attend. So, the training aspect that is referred to is to better train and develop the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders that we have got to further expand their role. It has been very successful.

Mr COOPER: I will go back to costing. What is the annual cost on the basis of rank of a police officer?

Mr BRADDY: Can you explain precisely what you want?

Mr COOPER: In the Police Service you have a series of ranks starting from constable working your way through to the commissioner. Can you give us an idea of the actual cost in every rank?

Mr BRADDY: What their pay is?

Mr COOPER: The cost to the taxpayer of a police officer.

Mr BRADDY: Their salary?

Mr COOPER: What it costs the taxpayer—their wages, conditions and so on, on-costs—

Mr BRADDY: Net salary?

Mr COOPER: No, not net salary, the wages, conditions, on-costs—whatever the cost to the taxpayer is.

Mr BRADDY: We will take it on notice. We can give you the salaries now. I want to be satisfied that they can give you the figure. They tell me they can.

Mr COOPER: It suits me fine. We will go to Rocky for a minute. I know that I referred to that stress management strategy that you mentioned on page 4 of the Program Statements, the trial project that is planned for the Rockhampton region over the next three years. What makes Rockhampton such a high stress environment as distinct from other hot spots in police regions throughout the State?

Mr BRADDY: Certainly, stress is one of those interesting things that is about in the public service at the present time. I can remember that a few years ago it used to be RSI. Everyone used to have RSI. I notice that a fairly prominent police officer was recently playing a fairly high standard of football—but he is on stress leave. It is very interesting, stress.

Being a police officer is a stressful occupation; there is no doubt about that. It varies from time to time how people deal with it. One of the great problems we have with stress in Government and paying for it is: how do you differentiate between the stress that a police officer or somebody else gets from his work compared to, say, his family life or other sporting occasions in which he is involved? Say he is packed down in the front row of a rugby scrum. Where is the stress really coming from? It is very difficult and we try to work that out realistically, bearing in mind that the police do have that problem. I am told that medically we retire about 80 members a year from the Queensland Police Service, and 85 per cent of those leave as a result of work related stress conditions.

Rockhampton has been chosen—I do not think it would be anything to do with either the Honourable Vince Lester, the member for Keppel, or Paul Braddy, the member for Rockhampton, to do a project in relation to it. The project manager will be located in Rockhampton and they will try to work out some details from that.

You will recall, Mr Cooper, that I gave you some figures earlier about separations from the police service. I think it is probably very salutary for you to remember that the separation rate from the

Queensland Police Service this year, with a month to go, is the second lowest rate in the last 10 years. Only the 1992-93 year was lower. If some of those police officers who sometimes give you information which is not fully accurate are telling you that they are retiring in great numbers, they are not, at the current time. Yet, of the work related compensation claims we get, a high number are related to stress. We are going to develop a management information system to have a look at that. We will review change and change management processes in the service. We will review developing supervisory and executive development courses. We are going to purchase training resources and stress awareness materials and develop a computerised case management system. We take it seriously, but it should not be exaggerated.

Mr COOPER: Mr Chairman, would it be all right if he could give me figures, not just percentages, for the number of police officers that went out for separations, that is the resignations, medical and cost of same?

Mr BRADY: Over the next three years, the police service has allocated \$290,000 to develop this policy.

Mr COOPER: I am referring to resignations and separations generally. I want numbers, really.

Mr BRADY: Not to put too much stress on the corporate services, I think we will give you the figures for the past 12 months. We are looking at the Estimates for the next year in comparison with last year. We can take out the 1994-95 figures as requested and give them to you.

Mr COOPER: And the breakdown of the costings?

Mr BRADY: Sure.

Mr COOPER: On page 3 of your Portfolio Program Statements you have mentioned the Statewide activity survey. You took a representative sample of police. Could you tell me what that survey revealed and how many officers were actually included in that survey?

Mr BRADY: The personnel were randomly selected throughout the State. The purpose of the activity was to determine the proportion of time spent by personnel across the various program areas. The survey is still ongoing. It was to run over the week, 22 to 28 May, and the results are not available from that yet. What it is intended to do is to provide information about efficiency within the service and to foster better informed decisions. The primary benefit of the survey, the service believes, will lie in its identification of areas of inappropriate deployment of personnel within the Police Service, just as we try to improve operational policing.

It was said to me once when we were pushing hard to get more police working on weekends in a period of high crime activity, "You do not want police officers, for example, falling over each other on Tuesday morning when you do not have enough available on Friday night." So the survey is intended to get that information from police officers, not just from people in the seats making these decisions. We believe it will allow for faster and better informed

decisions. The data is still being gathered in. The survey that concluded on 28 May was the last part of the survey.

Mr COOPER: Do you know how many police officers were involved in that survey?

Mr BRADY: We can give you that fairly quickly. We cannot give you the results of the survey until it is—

Mr COOPER: As we go we will get the results of the survey, because we are all interested in that. You mentioned this rostering and you indicated before the—

Mr BRADY: I am sorry, can I interrupt? I am told the number is 2,000 police officers, in round figures.

Mr COOPER: Involved in the survey?

Mr BRADY: It is a very high number. It is almost one-third of the police officers in the State.

Mr COOPER: Going back to that figure that you mentioned before of 4,500 officers receiving that flexible rostering allowance for actually being available for weekend duty, based on your definition of operational police, 90 per cent of 6,320 sworn police is 5,688 operational police. What efforts will be made to have those 1,188—that is the difference between the two—deemed operational by definition and be allowed to actually participate in after-hours crime fighting?

Mr BRADY: They are participating. A very good explanation was given earlier, which I found very logical and rational, as to the fact that some of them will receive the allowance and others will not. It does not mean that they are not operational; it just means that if and when they are required to work outside their normal rostered hours, they will receive penalty rates or overtime or both if applicable. But that is on the basis that, whilst they are operational, if they are not going to be doing their fair share of weekend rostering work, they should not receive it. You can be very much operational, but not rostered to be operational for a reasonable number of weekends and you would not be entitled to it. They are not hard done by. Police officers who are operational but who are not going to work the weekends—and they are required to work a reasonable number of weekends to receive it—will receive the same benefits. They are still eligible for the penalty rates and overtime allowances that they currently receive. Any other officers, even the ones who are not normally operational, if they work unusual times or overtime, will still get it. They will not miss out on anything to which they are entitled. If they are not going to work the minimum number of weekend rosterings as required by the enterprise bargain, they are not entitled to get the 19 per cent, but they are certainly operational.

Mr COOPER: Returning to the subject of watch-houses, the Portfolio Program Statements mention a \$1.5m upgrade of the Brisbane City Watch-house. Can you tell me when that will be completed and what will be its designed capacity?

Mr BRADY: As you know, a delay has occurred in relation to that watch-house. We have been considering whether we really wanted to

spend that money in that way or whether we should go to alternative quarters. The current understanding in relation to that is that in the next financial year two funding sources will be utilised. Professional fees will be paid for the Brisbane City Watch-house upgrade program. That covers evaluation and design. Additional funding has been allocated to undertake the upgrading. I understand that \$336,000 has been allocated for the watch-house upgrade this financial year, including the airconditioning.

The CHAIRMAN: The time for questions from non-Government members has now expired. The final period for questions will be allocated to Government members and I ask Mr Purcell to continue the questions.

Mr PURCELL: I have a question on information technology. I was fortunate enough to visit the Mount Gravatt Police Station, which is the regional police headquarters for my electorate. I spent some time with the officers and talked about information technology. They ran through the CRISP program with me. In last year's Budget and again this year, the Government has made a large commitment to improving the information technology systems for the Queensland Police Service. The figure was \$10m in 1995-96, and \$45m over the five years from 1991 to 1995. How will this expenditure assist police to reduce crime? How is this money being spent and are we getting value for money?

Mr BRADY: I will make a brief statement and then ask Mr Warry, the Executive Director who oversees this particular area, to continue. This is a very important area. I referred earlier to the tabloid media being simplistic. As well as bringing in civilians and other area people in order to release police to do their police work, through this technology they estimate at least 400 extra police are available—we do not count that when we talk about an extra 1,600 extra operational police. By the use of modern technology, the Queensland Police Service is now at the forefront of technology in Australia. People do not get excited about that, but such things as getting data recorded in 7 minutes when you catch a villain rather than taking 45 minutes to fill out myriad forms really are important. I ask Mr Warry to continue with the details with which he is familiar in relation to that question.

Mr WARRY: I suppose that there are three thrusts to the services on the information technology agenda. One was providing better systems for core police business. You mentioned the CRISP system, and that is the first step in terms of a totally integrated information system. We have one point of entry of data and the information then becomes readily available to all officers. We sought also to increase the police access to information through desktop computers and printing. We have also sought to put in place the infrastructure in terms of hardware and software that will enable us to continue to improve. The very strong focus in all of this is that all police stations are being connected to the Police Service's network and the great use of

intelligence analysis in terms of being able to identify patterns of crime and types of crime.

You asked about the benefits that we would get. We hope that, first of all, the information on offenders and offences is much more readily available to police and in a form that they can analyse to assist using intelligence to improve their operations. We would like to see them able to use that information to apprehend offenders and plan crime prevention strategies and operations. As the Minister mentioned, those new systems will mean less paperwork and administrative work for police. We hope that we will be able to share additional information with related agencies. As to value for money—I suppose we could say that you will have to trust us, but we believe that we have secured that.

Mrs BIRD: You will recall that there was an allocation of \$6.6m for growth funding in 1994-95 and Budget Related Paper No. 3 refers to \$6.8m to ensure that resource allocations can match the population growth. How was the \$6.6m from the last Budget spent and how will this \$6.8m from this Budget be spent?

Mr BRADY: Expenditure in the last Budget was \$6.6m for growth funding. That was year two of the first trimester of growth funding. It was spent in the following way: additional 30 police, \$1.5m—more police were coming on—that was the growth funding aspect; an additional 56 civilians, \$2m; the CRISP technology area—12 positions, \$0.4m; technical areas—17 positions, \$0.6m; training, \$1.2m; communications, \$0.9m. This year we are allocating the growth funding, which will be \$7m, in the following way: communications equipment, \$2m; infrastructure, \$2m; and recurrent and new expenditure for 90 civilians, \$3m; which will take it up to \$7m.

Mrs BIRD: I would like to ask a similar question about Corporate Services expenditure. At page 1-37 of the Portfolio Program Statements, the Corporate Services Program shows an estimated budget for 1994-95 of \$88.378m and an estimated actual outcome of \$101.4m. Why the fluctuations? What has caused that?

Mr BRADY: I will ask the Director of Finance, Mr John Just, to give you details of that, because it is an area of his expertise.

Mr JUST: There is an apparent over-expenditure of \$13m in Corporate Services. It really relates to three items: the salaries and wages, which appear to be over \$7m; the non-labour area, \$3m; and the capital outlays, \$3m. First of all, in relation to salaries, wages and related payments of over \$7m—there is one major area, which is \$4.7m, and that relates to recruit training or our recruiting costs. Historically, the service has charged recruits over our operational programs, because they are the ones who receive the benefit. We allocated our budget that way. When it came to doing our actual expenditure, it was decided to change the methodology and that our recruits should be charged to Corporate Services in the first place because they are part of human resources. That is what we did, and that related to \$4.7m. So you will

see a corresponding reduction in salaries and related payments for all programs. So the \$4.7m, instead of being charged to the other five or six programs, has been charged entirely to Corporate Services.

In addition, because CRISP was such a success during 1994-95, the program was quickened up, and we allocated another \$1.7m to put data entry operators into our CRISP operations. The remaining salaries relate to the advancement of the growth funding recurrent program, which is \$1.3m. So we advanced our growth funding from 1994-95 into 1995-96. The non-labour component of \$3m is related entirely to additional money from Treasury.

Firstly, there was \$1m for our carryover from 1993-94 to 1994-95. That was not in our original budget. Treasury gives it to us after we have framed our budget. There was an additional \$1m that we received from Treasury at its mid-year review which is not included as part of our budget. We expend money on certain programs, where we get receipts back. The receipts do not come back into Corporate Services, but the expenditure is shown in Corporate Services. So that is another \$1m in our non-labour area.

As to the \$3m in our capital outlays, where we appear to be over—that is entirely due to our TRAILS project, which we are doing in coordination with Transport. We expend the money through our Corporate Services, and Transport reimburses those funds to us during the year, and that is \$3m. The reimbursements do not come through our Corporate Services Program; they are a separate area of our accounts, and that is the reason for the \$13m.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I have a question from the Portfolio Program Statements at page 1-20 in relation to enterprise bargaining, mainly about the effect of enterprise bargaining and what impact it will have on the Police Service during peak periods, which I understand are from Thursday nights through the weekends to Monday mornings. I guess what I am asking on behalf of the good people of the Chermside electorate—and probably all around the State—is: in practice, what additional police officers are likely to be available for duty over those peak periods as a result of the enterprise bargaining agreements?

Mr BRADY: As you know, \$6.3m has been allocated to this particular sector. The major aspect of it is that the officers commenced duties on 27 May. As I indicated to Mr Cooper, it is not possible to quantify immediately the increase in operational capability, but we will be able to over time. The commanders are very much aware that they have to increase their operational capability significantly. We will be evaluating the implementation of that agreement at an appropriate time in consultation with the members of the Queensland Police Service. So when we are evaluating it, we expect value for our money. We have to negotiate further productivity and efficiency items through 1995-96, and all of this is designed to give that value for money.

We are confident that we will experience significant increases in efficiencies owing to greater flexibility in the deployment of staff throughout the State. I use the example of there not being much use in having too many staff available on Tuesday mornings and not enough available on Friday nights. So everyone is very much aware of that. The fact that, each fortnight, over 4,000 officers are receiving in their pay an extra 19 per cent means that it is a very serious program. I am confident that you at Chermside and people around the State will see more police officers on weekends, you will see more police cars and you will see a lot more police activity. We will be annotating, adding up and evaluating all of that.

Like anything else in a new program, it might not work 100 per cent at the start, but it will certainly be a big improvement. I expect that the service will be evaluating to get even greater efficiencies from it—always bringing home to the members that the program is not designed to work only when there are extra police officers; that it is designed to work for the police who are there now. Extra police officers will create even greater productivity as they come on stream; but the program is designed to work with the numbers that are there now. The commanders are not entitled to put off the program because they would like some more officers here or some more there; everybody would like that. The program has just started, and we will keep a close eye on it and evaluate it. You and others will see police around more at night and on weekends, particularly on weekend nights.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: In terms of capital works—I refer you to page 2-5 of the PPS. Under "Key Inputs" there appears to be a significant decrease in what was allocated to capital works in 1994-95 compared with what was actually expended; yet 1995-96 seems to show a significant increase. Can you explain that? Was there some carryover? What have been the major projects undertaken in that 1994-95 allocation? What problems have necessitated some delay in that carryover?

Mr BRADY: I think I will ask Mr Warry to give you the details on that.

Mr WARRY: The estimated carry-forward for 1994-95 into 1995-96 was of the order of \$12.3m, which was unusually high. There were some reasons for that, which have already been alluded to; there was deferred expenditure on some major projects as a result of delays experienced in the design and documentation, the native title implications and heritage requirements. The three projects most affected were those that I think have already been mentioned today, namely, Bundaberg, Doomadgee and Mackay. The problems at Bundaberg related to design, documentation and the site in question. At Doomadgee there were uncertainties in relation to native title and also site acquisition and location. At Mackay the problems related to heritage requirements and consultations with the local authorities. We believe that all those difficulties have now finally been resolved, and we have firm programs for their completion. For example, we

would hope that the Bundaberg facility will be completed by June 1996, Doomadgee by May 1996 and Mackay by September 1996. We are very hopeful that there will be no further delays in respect of any of those. I do not know whether that answers the question completely.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: What were the major projects that were actually undertaken and which ones were delayed? What were the major ones that were undertaken in 1994-95 for that roughly \$35m expenditure?

Mr WARRY: I can pull out some of the highlights that related to success stories where delays were not encountered. These included a replacement station, watch-house and house at Moranbah, which we estimate will be completed shortly, and a replacement station and watch-house at Wynnum, which is virtually complete. There is a range of other projects.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: That is fine, thank you.

Mr PURCELL: I refer to capital works and land acquisition. The Budget papers indicate that allocations are made for land acquisition this year. What land was purchased in 1994-95, and what are the acquisition plans for 1995-96? Obviously, that is a pointer to the future expansion of police stations and, possibly, the building of new ones. Of course, the great electorate of Bulimba might get mentioned again.

Mr BRADDY: Mr Purcell, you are certainly a trier. During the 1994-95—

The CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for the consideration of the Estimates of expenditure for the Queensland Police Service has expired. On behalf of the Committee, I thank the officers from the Police Service for their attendance and advise that they are now excused. The Committee hearings are now suspended until 2.30 p.m.

Sitting suspended from 1.30 to 2.30 p.m.

CORRECTIVE SERVICES COMMISSION**In Attendance**

Hon. P. Braddy, Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services

Professor Patrick Weller, Chairperson, QCSC

Mr Keith Hamburger, AM, Director-General

Mr Stan Macionis, Deputy Director-General

Mr Peter Rule, Director Corporate Services

The CHAIRMAN: The hearings of Estimates Committee B are now resumed. The next item for consideration is the Corrective Services Commission. The time allowed is two hours. I advise new witnesses that the time limit for questions is one minute and for answers is three minutes. A single chime will give a 15-second warning and a double chime will sound at the expiration of the time limits. As set out in the Sessional Orders, the first 20 minutes for questions will be from non-Government members, the next 20 minutes from Government members and so on in rotation. The end of the time periods will be indicated by three chimes.

I now declare the proposed expenditure for the Corrective Services Commission to be open for examination. The question before the Chair is that the proposed expenditure be agreed to. Minister, is it your wish to make a short introductory statement, or do you wish to proceed directly to questioning?

Mr BRADY: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I would like to make a brief statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Could you make that statement to the Committee no longer than two minutes.

Mr BRADY: The budget for the Queensland Corrective Services Commission has increased by 10 per cent this year and now exceeds \$200m. The organisation is more efficient and effective now than it has ever been. More prisoners are being held in custody than ever before. The prisoner population better reflects community expectations. More violent serious offenders are in gaol for longer. The legislation introduced by the National Party Government has been strengthened, and further legislative improvements are being developed.

The capital works budget provides appropriate funds for planned and realistic cell expansion, which will provide an additional 360 cells this year and 400 more with the opening of the Woodford Correctional Centre in the 1996-97 financial year. The budget allocates \$28.5m for the construction of the Woodford Correctional Centre and \$16.15m for cell construction at the Townsville, Lotus Glen and Sir David Longland Correctional Centres and security enhancements at the Westbrook Correctional Centre.

I have established a task group, including police, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the QCSC to look at future measures to deal with a hard core of fine defaulters who find their way into secure custody. New initiative funding has been provided to further enhance QCSC activities. The older centres at

Rockhampton, Moreton, Wacol, Numinbah and Palen Creek will be upgraded and refurbished over the next three years to provide an enhanced environment for prisoner rehabilitation and improved working conditions for staff. A drug strategy based on a three-pronged approach of detection, deterrence and treatment will be commenced.

The commission's successful Community Custody Program will be expanded to address the needs of women, young offenders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners from remote communities. Further funds will be utilised for the continuing improvement of suicide prevention strategies. This Government's focused approach has achieved reduced numbers of escapes and serious disturbances, improved programs for rehabilitation, more appropriate imprisonment practices and an up-to-date, humane, accountable and competitive system of corrections in this State.

The CHAIRMAN: The first period for questions will commence with non-Government members. Mr Cooper?

Mr COOPER: I refer to Budget Paper No. 3, pages 34 to 36. Can you give me a facility by facility breakdown of the total number of inmates—that is, the total number of single-bed cells and double-bed cells in each facility?

Mr BRADY: We have to have a cut-off date. The figure that we cite for practically all of our statistics today will be up to 31 March and not for the full year. Arthur Gorrie—single cells, 458; additional prisoners from double-ups, 60. That is a total of 518. I will give the rest in that same order to save time. I am referring firstly to single cells, additional prisoners and then the total. They are as follows: Borallon, 334, 55, 389; Brisbane Women's, 81, 0, 81; Lotus Glen, 269, 63, 332; Moreton, 150, 46, 196; Palen Creek, 77, 0, 77; Numinbah, 84, 0, 84; Rockhampton, 273, 0, 273; Sir David Longland, 228, 82, 310; Townsville, 296, 37, 333; and Wacol, 238, 0, 238. The totals for those institutions is 2,488. The number of additional prisoners from double-ups is 343. The total is 2,831.

Mr COOPER: That is to 31 March?

Mr BRADY: That is to 31 March 1995, which would be substantially the same today.

Mr COOPER: Giving single cells, double cells and totals?

Mr BRADY: The first figure in each case was for single cells. The second one was for the additional prisoners from double-ups. So there is an extra 60. And then the total is given for prisoners for each institution.

Mr COOPER: What was the total of your approved capital works for 1994-95 and what projects for 1994-95 were not completed and why?

Mr BRADY: As to capital works for 1994-95—the budget was \$52.6m. The expenditure was \$29.5m. Therefore, \$23.1m was carried over to this year.

Mr COOPER: Is there any reason for that?

Mr BRADY: The carryovers were as follows: Sir David Longland, expansion, \$9.5m; Lotus Glen, \$3m; Townsville, upgrade, \$2m; WORC expansion upgrade, \$800,000; centre safety program,

\$700,000; Fire Service upgrade, \$260,000; Woodford, new centre, \$6.5m; and suicide prevention, \$350,000. The bulk of these funds will be expended in the first half of this financial year. Carryovers were largely due to the need for more extensive community consultations in relation to the Townsville project and the consultation in developing the tendering process for Woodford. As you would remember, for the first time in Australia we have a competitive process where the public entity, the QCSC, is competing with private enterprise. We had to devise and develop a process of tendering that was fair and seen to be fair and which could be evaluated completely objectively. Also, additional time was taken in developing an innovative design concept for the expansion of the Sir David Longland Correctional Centre. These three projects amount to \$18m of the \$23m carryover. I repeat: that will all be expended in the first half of this financial year. The Lotus Glen Correctional Centre expansion will be completed very early in this financial year. That is one of them.

In relation to the Fire Service upgrades—the contractor experienced unforeseen delays due to security requirements when working in prisoner areas. The WORC program expansion has been delayed due to the unavailability of transportable buildings for camps. Those are the major reasons for the carryovers.

Mr COOPER: You have given me the number of inmates, the extra single cells and the number of prisoners that have been doubled up.

Mr BRADY: Yes, added into them.

Mr COOPER: Yes. How many new cells and beds were provided in 1994-95, on a facility by facility basis? What estimate has been made for new cells and beds in 1995-96?

Mr BRADY: I refer to the cell expansion program which commenced in late 1994. The first three, in fact, have already come on stream. Arthur Gorrie was expanded by 78 cells in November; Borallon, 95; and Yarramulla, which is a WORC camp in far-north Queensland, by 15. Most of them, except Woodford, will be on stream by the end of the 1995-96 financial year. Westbrook is up 130; Lotus Glen, 48; Townsville, 45; Sir David Longland, 96; Wacol, 30; and Townsville Women's, 12. It is anticipated that all of them will come on stream in the 1995-96 financial year, except for the first three that I have mentioned, which are already on stream. The completion date for Woodford will be the end of December 1996 or early January 1997. At this stage, the number is 400, with an infrastructure, or footprint, for 600. So the total for all of those—not counting Woodford as 600 but as 400—is 1,024 individual places or cells commencing from late 1994 through to the end of 1996. Probably the easiest way of putting it is to say 1,024 new cells.

Mr COOPER: Will you give me, on a facility-by-facility basis, the number of inmates who now share cells?

Mr BRADY: What I did before——

Mr COOPER: That was the new ones. Will you give me the totals now?

Mr BRADY: I gave you the figures before for single cells and the number of additional prisoners who are doubled up. For example, when I said that Arthur Gorrie had 458 single cells and 60 additional prisoners, that means that 120 prisoners are doubled up. So it is just a matter of multiplying by two in each of the cases—and I will give you the figures—Arthur Gorrie, 60, so that is 120; Borallon, 55 by 2; none at Brisbane Women's; Lotus Glen, 63 by 2; Moreton, 46 by 2; Longland, 82 by 2; Townsville, 37 by 2; and the total is 343 by 2, which is 686 sharing.

Mr COOPER: I guess we can glean from that what the earlier ones are. It is mentioned in Budget Paper No. 3 at page 35 that \$550,000 has been allocated to enhance the Drug Detection Strategy, yet in the Portfolio Program Statements at page 2-2 the figure is \$1.5m. Will you explain the difference in those figures? Can you tell me also which of the three facilities will be used as trial centres for the Drug Detection Strategy?

Mr BRADY: The drug strategy is based on a continuing program which will run over three years, so the \$0.55m is the funding for the first year and includes any capital that has to be expended. The difference between those two figures is the recurrent expenditure.

Mr COOPER: Just to clarify——

Mr BRADY: The centres involved will be Longland, Borallon and Numinbah, and there will be an evaluation of the strategy developed at each of those places. Just to clarify—the \$0.55m is the capital which will have to be spent over all of those places, and the difference between that figure and the total figure is the recurrent expenditure on the program.

Mr COOPER: I know that it is early days, but have you received many tenders for the new Woodford gaol? What is the range in quotes for both the 400 and the 600-bed facility? When will a decision be made on the successful tenderer?

Mr BRADY: Three tenderers were short-listed in February. The QCSC and the two operators currently running Borallon and Arthur Gorrie were the three asked to tender. The tenders closed as of yesterday, and they will be immediately referred to a tender evaluation committee. I deliberately have not sought that information. I believe it is very important not only that the process be fair but that it be seen to be fair. I know that all three tenderers short-listed produced tenders, and that is as much as I want to know at this stage.

The matter now goes to the tender evaluation committee, which is chaired by Mr A. J. Ayers, the Secretary of the Australian Department of Defence. Other members of the committee include senior officers of Queensland Government departments and Professor Pat Weller as Chairperson of the Queensland Corrective Services Commission, who has been kept isolated from all information relating to the QCSC bid. In addition, a probity auditor was appointed along with a committee secretary to

ensure that the process was conducted with the utmost objectivity and probity.

Originally, five expressions of interest were received, and the tenders from the three short-listed tenderers were received yesterday. Tenderers were requested to submit a tender for a 400-bed facility and a footprint for a 600-bed facility. They have also been asked to give us an indication as to what it would cost to construct a 600-bed facility, but that was not what the original tenders were called for. The tender evaluation committee will conduct its final deliberations in the period 10 to 12 June 1995, and that will include a presentation to the committee by each of the tenderers. It is expected that the decision on the successful tenderer will be recommended by the committee to me shortly thereafter, and I will then have to take a recommendation to Cabinet.

Mr COOPER: We have talked about the total number of inmates facility by facility and so on, and I have taken on board the Estimates outlined in the Program Statements. The staff increases outlined on page 2-11 of the Portfolio Program Statements indicate to me an increase of about 50 staff across nine facilities. Is that about five per facility, and is that an adequate increase to keep pace with the rate of prisoner growth?

Mr BRADY: A couple of important factors should be taken into account when assessing that. I gave figures for the QCSC institutions and the private institutions. That does not take into account the private institutions at all; they have to make their own arrangements on any contract they come to with us, so it relates only to the institutions currently operated by the QCSC. In that regard, you must also bear in mind that those figures do not include the personnel who will have to be engaged to operate the Woodford Correctional Centre. Obviously, a high number of officers will have to be engaged to operate that institution.

The figures relate to the existing QCSC institutions. The staffing figures therefore show an increase of 127 staff in secure custody and 45 staff in open custody from the 1994-95 budget to June 1996, and that does not include Woodford. It can be seen that the figures are quite substantial—as I said, an increase of 127 staff in secure custody and 45 staff in open custody from the beginning of the current financial year until the end of next financial year.

Mr COOPER: We will come to some ratios later. I note that a total of \$1m has been allocated to commence the refurbishment of older gaols such as Rockhampton, Moreton, Wacol, Numinbah and Palen Creek. I assume that those are the gaols concerned. I ask: what specific works are planned at each facility, what increases in prisoner numbers are projected as a result and what increases in staff are to be provided at each of those facilities?

Mr BRADY: At Rockhampton, there will be a suicide prevention program involving buddy cells. One of the best suicide prevention programs involves recruiting volunteer prisoners who are responsible enough to try to assist other prisoners through periods of depression. An amount of

\$90,000 will be spent on that. Radio alarms will be provided at Rockhampton at a cost of \$19,000. A prisoner activities/programs room will be provided at a cost of \$141,000, and there will be an officers' mess upgrade at a cost of \$110,000.

At Moreton there are a whole host of expenses, the major one being a PABX upgrade of \$50,000. We have not got the total for that one. I will not have time to go through them all. There is a new vocational training area worth \$40,000. At Wacol, the major allocation is \$250,000 on a detention unit/observation cells. At Numinbah, there will be funding for heating in units, a covered walkway, an upgrade of the administration area and airconditioning in the nurses' station and offices. There is a total there of about \$130,000. At Palen Creek, there will be funding for firefighting equipment, converting an old house for prisoner use, water supply upgrade and TV coaxial cable to units. We are spending \$64,000 there.

We have not worked out how we are deploying the extra staff across the centres. There has been no increase in prisoner numbers at Palen Creek, Numinbah or Moreton, but there will be a modest increase only at Rockhampton and Wacol. We have not worked out the numbers yet.

Mr COOPER: Referring to the Secure Custody Program that is in the Portfolio Program Statements, page 2-6—what is the estimated annual cost of keeping an inmate in each of the various classifications, that is, high/medium or low open? I would like that on a facility-by-facility basis.

Mr BRADY: I can give you the net per offender per day figure and also the unit cost with overheads in each of the institutions. The first figure that I will give you will be the net daily unit cost per offender. The second figure that I will give you in each instance will be the unit cost for offenders including overheads.

Mr COOPER: That is for high, medium and low?

Mr BRADY: No, for each institution.

Mr COOPER: If you cover each institution, that might go close to what I want.

Mr BRADY: From your experience, you will know what classification some of them have. I repeat: the first figure that I will give is the net daily unit cost per offender and the second figure will be the unit cost per offender including overheads. I will not repeat that each time. Those figures are: Borallon, \$103 and \$106.64; Arthur Gorrie, \$91.83 and \$102.61; Brisbane Women's, \$110.17 and \$140.62; Lotus Glen, \$102.04 and \$132.24; Rockhampton, \$99.95 and \$130.15; Moreton, \$104.68 and \$142.81; Sir David Longland, \$111.08 and \$149.22; Townsville, \$97.46 and \$127.65; Wacol, \$87.32 and \$125.45; Numinbah, \$39.35 and \$65.87; Palen Creek, \$42.33 and \$68.04; Lotus Glen Farm, \$36.92 and \$52.27; and Townsville Farm, \$30.92 and \$46.27.

The CHAIRMAN: That concludes the first session of questions from non-Government members. I now ask Mrs Bird to begin the questioning from Government members.

Mrs BIRD: It is noticed that, as a result of the PSMC review, the QCSC organisational structure has been changed and that a new plan for the corporate program evaluation is being prepared. That is referred to on pages 2-9, 2-15, 2-21, 2-27 and 2-33 of the Portfolio Program Statements. While program evaluation is important, it is not much good without accountability. What measures have been put in place to ensure accountability, particularly in the operation and financial performance of the QCSC?

Mr BRADY: Since we came to Government, a number of accountability measures have been put into place. We are confident that these measures make Queensland one of the most open and accountable correctional jurisdictions in the world. QCSC operates as a statutory authority, as you know. It has a board, with eight community representatives. The board has a dual role of policy development within the framework of Government policy and monitoring the performance of the organisation. The QCSC therefore reports performance outcomes to the board on a monthly basis and the board meets regularly on a monthly basis and more often if required.

The existence of this level of scrutiny has resulted in the development of quarterly and annual performance assessments by the commission, which has been at the forefront of performance reporting in the Queensland public sector. In addition, official visitors are appointed to each custodial and community correctional centre. The role of these independent scrutineers is to investigate prisoner complaints and receive grievances. The Corrective Services Act provides for the appointment of inspectors with wide-ranging powers, and we use them to investigate major incidents. The board of the commission appoints inspectors following major incidents such as escapes, deaths in custody or riots. In each case now, two inspectors are appointed to investigate any incident, with one of these being an external person to the commission. There is one internal investigator and one external. Inspectors report their findings to the board of the commission.

The Corrective Services Investigation Unit is a unit of the Police Service which has been established particularly to investigate criminal offences within the QCSC. It is independent of the QCSC and it remains part of the Queensland Police Service. Following the PSMC review, the internal audit investigation procedures were strengthened by the establishment of an audit and investigations directorate. When Professor Weller, who is here with us today, became chairperson of the board, he asked each board member to take a sense of responsibility for each of the correctional institutions and community corrections offices as well. Those people are not there to supervise, but they get the experience. They also go in regularly to the particular centre that they have chosen and in which they take a particular interest.

The commission has prepared a rolling, three-year strategic plan. Correctional centres in regions and divisions in central office prepare annual operational plans according to the strategic plan. So

you can see in relation to all of that that there is an enormous degree of different waves of accountability, starting with the internal QCSC engaging external people very much in the system, such as the inspectors, the Corrective Services Investigation Unit and the board members themselves who take on the responsibility. It is very much a strong mix of internal and external supervision of accountability.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Under the heading "Major Program Issues" on page 2-6 of the Portfolio Program Statements, the third dot point states—

"The level of security has been increased by upgrading of the secure perimeters in a number of facilities."

Will you explain what the details of those security upgrades are and what effect, if any, this expenditure has had on the escape rate at various institutions?

Mr BRADY: When the commission commenced, it faced a situation where historically there had been significant escapes and problems in the system. It was decided that we needed to seriously upgrade the security. I can report that we have been extremely successful in doing so. Shortly, I will give the present figures in comparison with the 1990-91 figures—that being the first full year that we were in Government—to show how the security in numbers has improved to an enormous extent.

Since 1991, we have spent \$16.75m on security upgrades to perimeters alone across Arthur Gorrie, Borallon, Lotus Glen, Moreton, Rockhampton, Sir David Longland, Townsville and Wacol. We believe it has now provided Queensland with perimeter security that is at least equal to any jurisdiction in Australia. The work has contributed to a significant reduction in the number of escapes from secure custody. In 1990-91, there were 45 escapes from secure custody from correctional institutions and centres in Queensland. I am not talking about prison farms or absconders; I am talking about so-called secure custody. That figure has come down progressively. In 1991-92 it was 34; in 1992-93 it was 17; in 1993-94 it was 16; and this year, from 1 July 1994 to 24 May 1995, there have been four escapes from secure custody. There have been four escapes in this year to date, with a month to go in this financial year, compared to 45 when we as a Government and the QCSC agreed that we had to spend a lot of money on improving security. The money is significant: \$16.75m has been spent in that time, but it has brought the number of escapes from secure custody down from 45 to four.

The escape rate is a mathematical expression which relates to the number of escapes in a year and the size of the daily prison population. That is a rate used Australia-wide. When the last figures were published, the national escape rate was 1.7; our rate now is 1. We are doing better than the last published Australian average.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: From the same document, page 2-8 refers to keeping the escape rate below the national average, and page 2-15

refers to reducing the number of escapes and absconds from leave of absence. I find that word "absconds" an interesting one, but it is used in your terminology. While I have some difficulty with it from a grammatical point of view, I accept that you use it as a term. At page 2-20, you say that you have reduced the rate of absconds. How will proposed budget expenditure affect or reduce this rate of absconds, which are the worst centres? Is there a reason for that? Are the selection procedures for community custody, which are a part of that procedure, working?

Mr BRADY: The absconders who make up the absconds fall into three groups. The first group is prisoners released on leave of absence from prison for short periods of time. They are not actually in secure custody when they take their unauthorised leave. They will perhaps get 48 hours for compassionate reasons, such as funerals and so on. If they do not return from that, they are regarded as absconders.

The second group is offenders who have been approved to live at a community correction centre or halfway house as part of a graduated release program. These are people who perhaps are shortly to become eligible for parole. They are put in these halfway houses and abscond from there. Again, they are not in secure custody; they do not have guards or fences. If they leave from there in an unauthorised way, they are absconders. The third group is those who have been granted home detention by a community corrections board. If they break their home detention conditions, they are regarded as absconders.

In 1993-94, there were 55 absconders from community custody in those three categories. This year so far there have been 43, and that was for the first three-quarters of that year. I did my mathematics before and that rate works out at about 56, which is one more than last year. Of course, there are 15 more people in those categories this year, so it is just about what it was the last full year.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Are the selection procedures working then?

Mr BRADY: These are the people in community custody. In terms of that, we are not satisfied with the selection procedures. We have got the escape rate down from 45 to 4 which is terrific, but we do not want any escapes. The same thing applies with the absconders. I suppose it is not humanly possible to get to the stage where you will not get any absconders, considering the clientele you are dealing with. We are determined to get the escape from secure custody figure down to nil eventually, but in this category it is difficult.

The QCSC is continuing to examine its procedures. As of March 1995, the criteria used to determine appropriate placement includes the prisoner's psychological state, his or her completion of core programs as prescribed in the sentence management plan, a stable pattern of positive institutional behaviour and their not being dependent on drugs and alcohol. In addition, the QCSC, at my request, is undertaking a review of its leave of absence policy.

Mr PURCELL: Mr Braddy, my question is in relation to industrial disputes— an area in which I have a little bit of expertise. I note that the Program Performance Assessment for corporate support at page 2-32 refers to lost time for various reasons, but it does not refer to lost time due to industrial disputes. If you remember, Minister, we have had recent industrial disputes at Sir David Longland and Townsville Correctional Centres. What have we done to address the issues raised by the staff and have we sorted them out? Will they come up again? In other words, have we looked after the troops?

Mr BRADY: Certainly there has been a history, for a long period of time now, of some industrial disputation between the QCSC and the staff. To some extent that has been exacerbated by disputation between the staff and the union— the SPSFQ, as it now is. The staff do not have their own dedicated union, and that sometimes causes some problems in discussions. In addition, there have been changes in union leadership.

In terms of the future, the QCSC, in order to put in its bid for Woodford—and I do not know what it is, but it was lodged yesterday—had to come to a greenfield site agreement with SPSFQ representing the members. The union, of course, had to bring in officers to advise them. I am informed that those discussions and negotiations and the planning went extremely well between the union, the actual working custodial officers the union chose to bring in, and the QCSC. It is a very important sign for the future that they were able to sit down and work out what they would do and help design the new process of work that will go into the bid to be evaluated and then decided upon by the Government.

In relation to where we are going—on 13 March, members of the SPSFQ, the custodial correctional officers section, met to discuss the doubling-up proposal. Emanating from that meeting was a threat of industrial action if that was continued. A conference was convened between the union and the commission. At that conference, indications were given to the union where appropriate that QCSC would add additional staff resources to correctional centres where additional prisoners were to be doubled-up, and those doubling-up proposals have proceeded. They were delivered for some time to Townsville pending the outcome of the discussions. More recently, local negotiations have recommenced and are ongoing to work through that.

Also, there was the withdrawal of labour by officers at Sir David Longland on 9, 20 and 21 April. This action was taken despite a number of meetings between the centre management, the commission and the SPSFQ, etc. In this dispute, 22 issues were raised, although the issues basically distil down to two. Staff resisted the implementation of operational staffing and the use of casual staff. The QCSC position on operational staffing was supported in the Industrial Relations Commission and the process of consultation is continuing to develop agreement in relation to that. As we meet here today, while all issues have not been entirely

resolved, there is no industrial dispute occurring, and the matter has basically been finalised.

Mr PURCELL: You will continue to talk to the staff so that we do not get any more. Relating to staff training, in Budget Paper No. 3 under the heading Outlook for 1993-94, Queensland Corrective Services Commission committed itself to a target of providing each staff member—I would imagine on an average, to try to get it across to as many staff members as possible—with five days of training and development actively aimed at improving work skills knowledge and their behaviour. How has the Commission performed against this target? Have we got any runs on the board yet? What strategies have been employed to ensure an adequate distribution of training and development of employees throughout the State so they do not all get done in the south-east corner, that those prison officers in the north also get their fair share of those training hours?

Mr BRADY: It has gone extremely well. For the year to date, to 31 March this year, the Commission has provided, on average, 6.8 training days per employee for the period. Given that its target was five days on average, it has exceeded that. A large proportion of the training has been attributed to the training of new custodial officers through the nine-week pre-service program. Priority has been given to training these employees to ensure that the QCSC has sufficient staff numbers to cover the growth in prison numbers within the system. As we have got more prisoners in we have had to employ more staff. But the Commission is strongly committed to training and development, and it is developing a competency based training system. It aims to complete the development of the program by December of this year. The existing Associate Diploma in Business and Justice Administration is being reviewed in line with the requirements of VETEC and the program is being progressively converted to a competency based program. As of 31 March, in excess of 850 employees of the Commission are enrolled in the associate diploma course. We very much lead the way in Australia in that regard.

As at 31 March, 86 staff had completed their first level in that area of certification, 16 have completed the second level, and seven have been awarded the associate diploma. So they are proceeding with it. In relation to the northern areas that you are concerned with, the Commission is very much involved in the open learning distance education format, which will permit officers throughout the State to participate in the associate diploma on an equitable basis. You can obviously do in-service training up there but, even in terms of the associate diploma program, the northern officers are being given access to it by distance education and open learning processes. A system of mentoring staff on the job and correctional centres has been developed and these mentors, together with staff development officers, will provide on-site mentorship and on-the-job training. I think that gives you a pretty good idea that the Commission takes its responsibilities in that area very seriously now.

Mr PURCELL: Do we do that in-house or do we get outside providers in?

Mr BRADY: You mean the associate diploma course?

Mr PURCELL: Yes.

Mr BRADY: We have both. We have lecturers who are employed as staff education program officers and we also get in outside lecturers to give them that as well.

Mrs BIRD: You just mentioned in your Portfolio Program Statements structured days for prisoners. Why are they and why were they implemented?

Mr BRADY: The structured day program really is one of those areas where people running prisons in Australia and throughout the world have to decide how they will structure the day, what the prisoners will do, and how long they will spend in their cells, which is probably the major area. Then when they are out of their cells, what they can do? It varies across Australia as to how long they are out of their—

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister might have to come back to that question. The first period for Government members to ask questions has now expired. I return to non-Government members.

Mr COOPER: I will return to the doubling up. The figures you have given me indicate that we are increasing the number of prisoners that are doubling up. Largely that would be because of the premature closing of Woodford gaol. What we have to do is get back to the ideal, if we can, of as many in single cell capacity as we can. What expansion and what estimates have you done to increase gaol facilities so that we can get back and improve that single cell accommodation?

Mr BRADY: I disagree strongly with you talking about the premature closing of Woodford. That was a decision that was made for several reasons. At the time it was made, the numbers of prisoners had declined, because under our Government the QCSC and the justice system had moved to not taking in so many of the fine defaulters and the other minor offenders. When that was turned the numbers increased again. Woodford, as we inherited it from your Government, was a disaster. You did not have to be an Olympic high jumper or pole vaulter to get out of Woodford, you just jumped over the fence. It had inadequate conditions. The supervision for assaults by prisoners on prisoners was atrocious. It was a poor correctional institution, badly designed, no security and, given that the numbers had fallen drastically at that time, the decision was made that it would be mothballed, and before it could ever be re-opened enormous amounts of money would have to be spent on it. We decided as a Government that we would not spend that money on it, we would pull it down and build a proper prison rather than try to rehabilitate the shocking institution we inherited from your Government. That is what occurred.

In terms of the doubling up, there has been a 36 per cent increase in prisoner numbers in the last 20 months, despite the cry that law and order and

crime is not taken seriously by this Government—it certainly is—and a 40 per cent plus increase in serious, hardened prisoners, people getting five years or more. Obviously, there is a big law and order job being done by the police and other people. When Woodford is built, if it is built to cope with 400 prisoners, which is the tender at the moment, it is estimated that the doubling up of prisoners would be reduced and only 14 per cent of prisoners would be doubled up. If the Government decides to move to build Woodford with 600 cells immediately rather than just the footprint for 600, which is part of the tender, that would reduce the doubling up back to 3 per cent, which is historically probably the lowest in Australia, or we would be very close to it. They are the current projections on prisoner numbers we have and prisoner numbers coming in.

Mr COOPER: But given that the Secure Custody Program was devised and approved prior to the Cabinet decision to amend the penalties and sentencing legislation, what extra funds are going to be allocated to provide additional accommodation and what estimate has been made for the extra prisoner numbers generated by that amendment?

Mr BRADY: I do not accept that there will be any great prison numbers generated by that amendment. The major part of that amendment was that the words about prison being an item of last resort, those words are going to be deleted. As the Court of Appeal has made very clear, they always understood it that way. There are a couple of judges only who commented to the contrary.

The judicial officers of this State made it very clear that the Penalties and Sentences Act only codified the existing law. What will occur from now on is a restoration of public confidence and, where necessary, in a couple of instances, judicial confidence in the system. What the tabloid media, you and Mr Beanland did was undermine as best you could that public confidence by saying that the judges were not able to sentence people whom otherwise they would have sentenced to prison. That was not so. The vast majority of people who would have been sent to prison were sent to prison. There were only a couple of instances where you could point to any judicial officers saying that. It is a question of clarifying what it is as distinct from leading to a significant increase, because the Penalties and Sentences Act has been changed.

The figures that are worked out, however, take into account all contingencies, including any slight increase that may come about from those perceptions resulting from the changes in the legislation. We work on the fact that we are already in a growth market; we have had a 36 per cent increase of prisoners in the last 20 months and the figures are calculated on that basis. I think your comments in relation to the Penalties and Sentences Act are just that—they are comments. The change in the legislation is a clarification to make sure that the public, the judges and everybody else has absolutely no doubts. In my estimation that change, in itself, will not lead to a significant increase in prisoners.

Mr COOPER: The major activities table, which appears on page 11 of the second part of the Portfolio Program Statements, reveals that no major work is to be carried out at the old Boggo Road or Brisbane goal. What is the Government's intention with regard to that property? Is the Brisbane Women's prison going to remain at the present site and, if so, what is going to happen to the rest of the site? Will that be sold?

Mr BRADY: As to the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre—yes, at this time it is the Government's policy for it to remain at that site. A couple of years ago, serious consideration was given to that matter. Given its situation and its relativeness newness, at this time that is considered to be the best option. The Women's Correctional Centre inmates receive a lot of support from various organisations. It is in a very convenient position for them and for families. On balance, it was decided that the centre should stay there. When that decision was made, the Government called for expressions of interest in relation to private development for whatever purposes for the remainder of the site. We did not receive sufficiently interesting expressions of interest to do anything with it at that time. So, for the time being, the site will continue to house the women's correctional centre and the Dutton Park Community Correctional Centre.

Planning for the site is continuing through a whole-of-Government process. Possibilities exist that I will not discuss at this stage. It is certainly not just a matter for me as the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services. There are several possibilities involving various departments of Government, but no decision has been taken at this time in relation to it—other than to continue with the Women's Correctional Centre and the Dutton Park Community Correctional Centre.

Mr COOPER: Still speaking about the women's section, I notice on page 19 of the Portfolio Program Statements that the WORC scheme is to be extended to women. Where will that facility be based and at what cost?

Mr BRADY: The situation in relation to opportunities for women prisoners to be released from the women's prisons, both in Brisbane and Townsville, have been limited primarily and historically because of the low numbers of women prisoners. At the two institutions we have only 100 women prisoners at any one time for the whole of the State, compared with 2,500, 2,600 or 2,800 men. If men behaved in the same manner as women, we would need only one prison in this State, but there does not seem to be any indication that that is going to happen. The relatively low level of criminality among women has, in one way, worked against them. Even women who have progressed from high security to low security have not had opportunities. We have now been able to do something about that. We have been concerned about it for some time. The new board, under Professor Weller, and the commissioners have worked to come up with a solution. The first part of that solution was the establishment of the Helana Jones Community Correctional Centre in 1989. That

has been working, and we are now going to extend the WORC program—which has been such a success for men prisoners, as you know, Mr Cooper, in the west of the State and in the south, central and north-west of the State—to women.

We are extending a work camp rural annexe for 10 women at Warwick. Arrangements have been made for them to live on the showgrounds and they will be working at the Warwick showgrounds. That has been done in full consultation with the local authority and all the relevant authorities in Warwick. They have welcomed the move. To be able to take 10 women out of 100 women prisoners in the whole of the State is a very real contribution to their rehabilitation, rather than keeping them locked up for the length of their sentence with the high security and medium security prisoners at the Brisbane Women's and Townsville Women's.

Mr COOPER: The resources summary provided on pages 4 and 5 of the second part of the Portfolio Program Statements reveals no increase in the number of community supervision staff for 1995-96 beyond the 278 employed in 1994-95. What estimates do you have at this stage that those orders are being carried out as required? You might give us the success over failure rate to justify the cost of the program. How many of those 278 employees in community supervision are actually involved in supervision operationally? What would their average case load be at any one time? What is the cost estimate per case load?

Mr BRADY: In terms of the precision of the figures that you have called for—we do not have those available today. We do not have the case loads available. We can and will supply those to you. In terms of the different areas where there has to be supervision—home detention, people on parole, intensive correction orders, community service orders, fine option orders, probation orders, and orders that are made for people who have gone to prison and who are granted probation as part of their order—all of those involve community corrections at some stage of the process. We can give you the case loads of those. What other information did you want?

Mr COOPER: Of the 278 supervisors, how many of those are operational? Are they all operational? Do they all have case loads themselves, or are some of those in office positions? I think that there are approximately 14,000 or 14,500 offenders out there at any one time—you might like to confirm that—and 278 supervisors. I am trying to drive at the success rate of that. Are there enough supervisors to look after that number of offenders and to make sure that they are completing the programs?

Mr BRADY: From inquiries that I have made and from looking at the workloads, I know that the workloads that are required of the Queensland staff are comparable with standards and practice that are relevant in this field of work. In terms of success—I will give you the successful completion rates for the categories. For those placed on home detention, the successful completion rate between 1 July 1994 and 31 March 1995—for three-quarters of this year—was 85 per

cent. Those are orders that must be granted by the Community Corrections Board. As to the offenders who did not successfully complete—15 per cent or almost all of them were returned to custody and were breached for failure to comply with the conditions of the order. So 85 per cent were successful; 15 per cent were not, and most of those were breached.

The number on parole for 1 July 1994 was 1,568. It went up to 1,627 at the end of March. The successful completion rate is 77 per cent. Approximately 11 per cent of the parolees returned to custody had reoffended in some way. A further 12 per cent breached a condition of their parole order. Intensive correctional orders—75 per cent were successful. There were only 45 involved in those. Community service orders—2,420; at the end of the year, 2,392—a 76 per cent successful completion rate. Of the terminated orders, approximately 1.5 per cent were finalised because of reconviction, and the other 22.5 per cent were terminated for failure to comply with the conditions of the order.

Fine option orders—69 per cent out of 8,700-odd were successful. Approximately 31 per cent of recipients failed to perform the work required and their orders were revoked. Probation—6,706 people; 69 per cent successful. Most of the terminations were caused by offenders breaching conditions of their orders—22 per cent, and in about 9 per cent of the cases the courts terminated and resentenced offenders as a consequence of reoffending. Of those who were in prison and then were given a probation order as part of their imprisonment—there were 485 of those at the end of the year; 57 per cent of those were successful. Of course, these were orders made by judicial officers. A high proportion of offenders on this type of order failed to comply with the conditions of supervision—26 per cent failed and a further 17 per cent of offenders on prison probation were returned to court for reoffending.

Mr COOPER: As we know, quite often the offenders placed on community service orders are not supervised adequately. In a number of circumstances, they simply do not turn up. What I am asking you to consider in your Estimates and future projections is an increase in the number of supervisors from 278 in order to take a better account of the number of offenders. Actually, I think your case load is fairly high, and I do not think they have a chance of maintaining that proper supervision to see that the CSOs are complied with properly. Would you consider that in the future?

Mr BRADY: Mr Cooper, in relation to that, you might be encouraged to know that the work ratio, which was up to about 140 to 1, is now down to about 120 to 1. So it is already improving. The successful completion rate of community service orders, again given the nature of the clientele, is reasonable—76 per cent of people given community service orders complete them successfully.

Mr COOPER: You feel the staffing is adequate?

Mr BRADY: It is getting better. Improvements have been made. It is down from 140 to 1 to 120 to 1.

Mr COOPER: Your staff numbers, your supervisory numbers—that is what I mean.

Mr BRADY: It used to be 140 offenders to each staff. It is now back to 120 for each staff. Given that they are community service orders—they are not other orders which require significant counselling; they are supervising in relation to these things. When you deal with probation and parole people, for example, they are around 70 to 1. Mr Cooper, you were asking about that before.

Mr COOPER: Yes.

Mr BRADY: They are of that order and they are also coming down to 60 to 1. So in each of the areas that you have questioned, they are getting better. The staff/client ratios are improving. It should also be remembered that the people doing community service orders receive assistance from community organisations as well as the employed staff of the Corrective Services Commission.

Mr COOPER: Information that I have been getting from time to time indicates that there needs to be a consideration in the future of increasing the number of supervisors.

Mr BRADY: As I say, it is getting better already, and we hope to continue on that trend.

Mr COOPER: Time is just about up on this one, but I wanted to refer to the major activities table again at page 11, and that is the estimated 1994-95 actual budget.

The CHAIRMAN: You will have to come back to that, Mr Cooper. The second period of questions from non-Government members is now concluded, which brings us back to the Government members. I ask Mrs Bird to begin.

Mrs BIRD: Can we go back to the structured days? Can you also tell me why it was necessary to introduce that?

Mr BRADY: We are talking now about inmates in correctional centres. They are required to be supervised and secured for 24 hours a day. There is a requirement that they be secure and there is a requirement that, as well, wherever possible, there be rehabilitation and reasonable treatment for them. Different States and different institutions around Australia have adopted different programs. Historically, Queensland has and still does maintain a high out-of-cell time for prisoners compared with other jurisdictions. For example, in New South Wales, remand prisoners at Long Bay are locked up for 12 hours but maximum security inmates are locked away for 15 hours a day. At Grafton prison in New South Wales, prisoners are out of cells for only nine and a half hours of the day. At Pentridge in Victoria, they are out of their cells for only eight hours and 45 minutes a day. At Barwon near Geelong, the prisoners are locked away and they are out of cells for only nine hours on weekends and about 12 hours on week days. Casuarina, the new correctional centre in Western Australia, has a 12-hour out-of-cell policy, while in

Darwin inmates are allowed out of their cells for only eight and a half hours a day.

In relation to Queensland—the commission is adopting a policy progressively throughout the State. In January at Lotus Glen, 12 hours a day out of cells was introduced for half the prisoners; in Townsville, 12 hours per day out of cells; at Rockhampton, 12 hours out of cells—introduced just before Christmas. Things are moving along. About two years ago, Moreton Correctional Centre successfully introduced 12 hours out of cell. Wacol is working on a strategy to introduce 12 hours out of cell, and in July last year, the Sir David Longland Correctional Centre successfully introduced 14 hours out of cell.

So you can see that, compared with similar institutions in this country, the prisoners have reasonable in-cell, out-of-cell time—better out-of-cell time than similar institutions in New South Wales and Victoria and on a par at least with Casuarina, a very modern correctional centre just constructed in Western Australia in the last few years. So that enables sufficient time for them to carry out programs under supervision. When they are in their cells for 12 hours, of course, those who wish can have study programs, and they are happy to have that time as well. So our aim is to have 12 hours out of cell, 12 hours in cell, which is appropriate.

Mrs BIRD: I would now like to turn to the Key Strategic Issues on page 2.1. In that section you talk about the growth in offender numbers and the changing nature or hardening of the offender population. Has the type of prisoner changed over the past few years in a way that may impact on high occupancy levels?

Mr BRADY: Yes. You are right. In recent times, the nature of the prisoners has changed. Certainly, a hardening prison population is occurring. I will give you some indication. I refer you to June 1988—a time that Mr Cooper would be particularly interested in—when 25.2 per cent of prisoners—one in four prisoners in Queensland institutions—were serving five years or more—five years to life. That group now accounts for 36.7 per cent of prisoners in our gaols. We now have the highest number of prisoners that we have ever had, which contradicts the nonsense by political commentators in the tabloid media that we are soft on crime. Compared with the number in 1988, 11 per cent more people are serving five years or more in our prisons. More people are being imprisoned.

Conversely, in 1988, when Mr Cooper was in Government, 26.4 per cent of people in prison were serving one year or less. That group now represents 19.9 per cent of all prisoners. Increasingly, we are making sure that we sentence the people who are committing the more serious crimes and we are finding more appropriate penalties for the lesser offenders. As to prisoners serving one to five years—back in 1988, 40 out of every 100 prisoners were serving a term of imprisonment of one to five years. The figure is now 32.6 per cent. The big increase, as you can see, is at the hardened end of the prison chain. The figure for people serving five years or more has gone up by 11 per cent. We are trying to deal with that increase.

Of course, this means that recidivism is difficult; if you have a higher client population who have committed more serious offences, these people usually have a fairly lengthy criminal history and are more likely to reoffend. We are running programs for anger management, problem-solving skills, alternatives to violence and a treatment program to try to prevent sex offenders from relapsing. Those are things that we have to do, and are doing, in a prison system which has considerably more prisoners and hardened criminals.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I refer to escape rates and notification of escapes, which is mentioned in section 2.6 of the PPS under the Secure Custody Program. What are the consequences for a prisoner who escapes? I imagine that you would have to take into account a variety of reasons and circumstances. Secondly, with respect to the population that lives around correctional service facilities, is any notification system in place which protects or alerts local residents when an escape occurs?

Mr BRADY: Firstly, I will deal with the last part of your question, if I may. Notification systems are required to be put in place. Every correctional centre has developed a contingency plan for responding to major events, such as escapes. These plans prescribe certain duties. The notification of local residents in the metropolitan area would be impractical. However, the Queensland Police Service provides an immediate response to escape situations, and media outlets are notified through the normal police processes. The circumstances are different for correctional centres in country and regional areas because they tend to be in relatively isolated areas which are surrounded by farm properties. For this reason, a resident notification system is put into operation when an escape occurs. We recently had discussions about that system and made sure that it was upgraded, because in one instance it did not work to my satisfaction and that of the board and the QCSC. That problem has been chased up.

Borallon, which is in the south east, has a notification system. As I said, some difficulties were noticed with it. Townsville has a notification system, but no problems have been identified with it. No problems have been identified with the Rockhampton notification system. The Lotus Glen notification system, both for the main centre and for the farm, was recently upgraded. Palen Creek has a notification system, as does Numinbah.

As to the incidence of escape, as I said before, a few years ago, in 1990-91, there were 45 escapes. We have reduced that number to four. We have not had an escape from secure custody since—and I am touching wood as I am saying this—January of this year. The escape rate from secure custody in Queensland is now below the last published rate for Australian correctional institutions.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: And what would be the consequences for prisoners who escape?

Mr BRADY: Upon return, they would immediately lose any lower security classification

that they might have received and would return to a high-security classification. They would be charged with the offence of escaping from lawful custody and would be sentenced for the escape. Under the current system, they would lose any remission rights they had for good behaviour. They would return to the beginning of the chain as high-security prisoners and would have to work their way through the system. They would have to satisfy a classification committee that they are entitled to be classified at lower levels. Additionally, if it was intended to release them to community correctional areas, that escape would be taken into account as part of their program—it certainly should be taken into account—in determining whether they are eligible for any of those privileges.

Mr PURCELL: I return to the issue of Corrective Services employees and occupational health and safety issues. Budget Paper No. 3, under the 1993-94 outlook, states that Corrective Services has committed itself to reduced levels of absenteeism of its officers. How has the commission performed in relation to this target and what particular strategies has the commission adopted in relation to the reduction of stress and injuries for officers within the work force? They have a fairly stressful job; they have to look after hardened criminals.

Mr BRADY: I am pleased to say that, unlike the Police Service, the Corrective Services Commission does not have anyone playing football in the front row for Australia while on stress leave. However, in respect of the work involved, the levels of absenteeism have traditionally been a concern in this area, and positive programs have been put in place. The good news is that the total rate of absenteeism—that is, days lost through sick leave and injury—decreased from last year's figures by 12 per cent. The average number of days lost per staff member fell from a monthly average of 1.06 days per employee to a monthly average of 0.93 days per employee for the year.

The past year has seen significant improvement in terms of absenteeism through sick leave and injury. There has been a 41 per cent decrease in the rate of days lost through injury, which considerably improves on the target. The commission was hoping to get a 10 per cent reduction but achieved a 41 per cent reduction. There are some very good signs. The QCSC relies heavily on the process of rehabilitation of its employees after illness or injury. The strategy which is supported by a Statewide network of trained rehabilitation coordinators aims to return the employee to the workplace at the earliest possible time. Often this will mean a return to light or alternative duties until the person can resume normal work. This process is working well and is one of the reasons why I believe the figures have dropped.

In relation to managing stress, the commission has employed the services of a consultant to provide the commission with information concerning the stress which exists in the workplace, with a view to recommending further appropriate strategies for the management of stress. This report is due at the

end of June 1995. We take the issue very seriously. Whilst we tend to semi-lightheartedly joke about stress, we work in stressful occupations ourselves and we know what stress is about. Police and Corrective Services officers work in stressful environments. However, there are strategies and programs that can assist, as well as management programs. Things are moving along well in that regard.

A further consultancy is being conducted by the Lyncroft Consulting Group in relation to the recruitment and selection of correctional officers. We have realised that perhaps we can do better in picking people who will be able to use their stress positively or withstand it. The commission believes that a significant contributor to occupational stress in this area can be the recruitment and selection of inappropriate people, so more effort is being put into making sure that we recruit people who can cope with the stress and who know what they are going to be doing in order that they come into the job with their eyes open and are psychologically robust enough to cope with what they are doing. That will not solve the problem altogether, but it will make a big contribution to the solution.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Under the Secure Custody Program on page 2-6, reference is made to the assessment of prisoners. I want to focus for a moment on the long-term prisoners—the lifers. I imagine that there must be ongoing assessment of them, because they are in for such a long period. Will you inform us how the budget allocation that you have made to this area impacts on the number of life sentence prisoners in custody and the way in which their sentences are calculated?

Mr BRADY: As at 31 March this year, there were 207 life-sentence prisoners in Queensland correctional institutions. The Corrective Services Act provides that the basic rule is that, to be eligible for parole, they have to serve 13 years of their sentence. As a result, the current situation is that the parole eligibility of all life-sentence prisoners is calculated at 13 years; it also takes into account time spent in pre-sentence custody. If they spent 12 months on remand in prison waiting for the trial, that is part of the 13 years. The courts have power to recommend earlier release on parole for life-sentence prisoners. One judge has recommended that twice, but neither of those prisoners has been released at this time.

When considering life-sentence prisoners, you have to look at the ones who are eligible for parole but are still in prison and the ones who have been released. We have collected some interesting figures calculated since 1990 to 2 May 1995. The average length of stay in prison for life-sentence prisoners—for those who have been released since then or were eligible for release and have not been released—is 18 years. So for most of the 207 life-sentence prisoners, that is about what they can expect. Although they are eligible for parole after 13 years—and, in special circumstances, earlier than that—there has been a big turnaround. Prior to our coming to Government, one-third of life-sentence prisoners under the previous National Party Government were being released in under 10 years.

Life-sentence prisoners today can expect to serve on average 18 years. We have had people in prison for 26, 31 and 32 years. The common mythology is that life means 12 years. Even that is not accurate. Thirteen years is the standard minimum now, but in fact it is usually considerably more than that. People who are not considered safe are not released, and they will be kept in. The Remission and Security Reclassification Committee, which includes two board members, looks at reclassifying prisoners from the high to medium category.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Page 2-19 of the PPS refers to community custody. This relates to parolees and day-release prisoners. I have heard it claimed that a high proportion of armed robberies are being committed by prisoners detained under open security or community custody arrangements. Will you outline how the programs that you are funding are working in this regard? What is the situation with the parolees and day-release prisoners who are committing those crimes?

Mr BRADY: We have prisoners who are released by a Community Corrections Board on release-to-work orders. They can be released in one of two ways: by the Community Corrections Board or by the commission. Prisoners suitable for release to work are transferred into the Community Custody Program—either the WORC Program or community corrections centres. Community corrections centres include Dutton Park, Kennigo Street, St Vincent de Paul, Maconachie Lodge, Rose Blank House in Cairns and a couple of Aboriginal out-stations in Cape York, that is, Wathaniin and Baa's Yard. Women prisoners can go to the Helana Jones Centre and, shortly, to Warwick to the WORC that I talked about before. From July 1994 to 31 March, there was a daily—

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member might like to ask that question again in the next session. That finishes the time for questions from Government members in this session. We will now go back to questions from non-Government members.

Mr COOPER: In answer to a previous question, you mentioned that there have been no estimates of expansion connected with amendments to the Penalties and Sentences Act. Does that answer apply to the new Criminal Code; that there will be no extra prisoners as a result of the changes to the code and, therefore, no estimates of expansion?

Mr BRADY: No, not at all. In terms of making estimations as to where we go—we try to be realistic rather than refer to the propaganda, whether it be yours or ours. I repeat that the Penalties and Sentences Act, in relation to the issue of prison as a last resort, was propaganda. The changes will have little, if any, effect on the number of prisoners serving time. Only two judges that I know of have ever said that they took it into account when sentencing. One was a District Court judge, and the other was a Supreme Court judge. On the other hand, Mr Justice Fitzgerald of the Court of Appeal said that it merely codified the existing law. I think that all the other judges took notice of that. I do not know why those two did not,

but no doubt they have reasons of their own. In reality, although the last-resort issue was a matter of political and newspaper rhetoric rather than changing the sentencing practices of judges, it was important to change the Act to restore public confidence, because to some extent it had been undermined by your efforts and those of some newspapers.

However, in terms of the Criminal Code—certainly, the increased penalties provided for will have some effect. The QCSC is sensitive to law reform, and it takes that into account in terms of what it is doing.

Mr COOPER: I see nothing in the budget for future cell or staff expansions to take account of that.

Mr BRADY: The net figures that we provide take everything into account, as best we can tell. It is not an exact science—as you know from your days there; it is far from an exact science. We try to take everything into account. One of those factors is the turning of the tide. For a while in 1991-92, the number of prisoners was decreasing. In about 1993, the number started to rise again, and it has continued to rise every month for 22 consecutive months. I agree with you that in some areas the reforms to the Criminal Code will mean longer sentences for some people. To that extent you have to take that into account when working out what you are likely to get. I do not think it is a major factor, but it is a factor.

Mr COOPER: I asked a question earlier about \$1m going into Etna Creek. There is no evidence of expansion in those particular gaols. If the Criminal Code is going to work, I am wondering how you are going to take into account those extra spaces. In answer to a question earlier this year on the Boggo Road gaol, you mentioned that it could well be used as a justice centre that includes watch-houses, police stations, courthouses and so on. Is that still a concept that you are taking into account in presenting your Estimates?

Mr BRADY: No, we are not taking that into account. The figures that I outlined before in terms of prisoner numbers and planning for the future take into account reasonable probabilities on a worst-case scenario rather than a best-case scenario—more people coming in rather than fewer people coming in. What happens at Boggo Road is a whole-of-Government decision. There are possibilities of certain developments in terms of watch-houses or whatever, but it is very problematic at this time.

Mr COOPER: So there are no estimates—

Mr BRADY: No, because if that were to occur the Government would fund it. People first heard of the funding for the Woodford centre not at normal Budget time but when I went to the Cabinet and the Cabinet Budget Review Committee a few months after I became the Minister to obtain approval for a special allocation for Woodford which was confirmed in subsequent Budgets. So that would occur if anything further was to be done, as has occurred from time to time. As you know, we have had to purchase Westbrook. We are going to

renovate that for our purposes as prisoner numbers in Queensland increase. We will keep an eye on that, and if anything else happens in terms of watch-houses or remand centres or whatever, that would not be done unless the money was there. A special new allocation would be made; it would not have to be found out of the existing budget.

Mr COOPER: I refer to the "Major Activities" table on page 2-11 and the reference to contract correctional centres. The figure there of \$29.147m is a joint figure for Borallon and Arthur Gorrie. There is a cost overrun of more than \$2m on that program, from what I can see in the 1994-95 figures. Could you give me those individual cost figures for running both Borallon and Arthur Gorrie? You might also give us the figures again. You gave us the prisoner numbers, but could you also give the staff numbers for each centre?

Mr BRADY: In view of the fact that the question primarily relates to figures and numbers that have been negotiated with the department, I will ask Mr Stan Macionis, the Deputy Director-General, to reply to that, Mr Cooper.

Mr MACIONIS: The cost variation between the 1994-95 budget and the 1994-95 estimated actual is due to growth in prisoner numbers and contract variations that have been undertaken at those two centres during the course of the year, in other words, the doubling up and also the change in the total accommodation by an extra 95 cells that came into place from 1 April 1995 at Borallon. So they reflect increases in costs at those centres in a similar way that we have had some increase in costs at our own centres due to us putting extra staffing on. I do not have the break-up of that figure here, but we can provide that subsequent to this between—

Mr COOPER: That is the cost of each gaol?

Mr MACIONIS: The cost of Arthur Gorrie and Borallon.

Mr COOPER: And staff numbers at each gaol?

Mr MACIONIS: We do not, of course, keep the staffing numbers for the contracted centres because our contracts with Arthur Gorrie and Borallon are based on a set of outputs. We do not specify the staffing levels that they will be required to have but we measure and audit those outputs to see that they are meeting the performance targets in those contracts.

Mr COOPER: But you will give me the staff figures for each centre?

Mr MACIONIS: We do not ask for the staff figures at Borallon and Arthur Gorrie. That is not specified in the contract. We specify outputs; staffing is an input. We do not tell them how many staff they are supposed to have there, nor do we monitor it. However, we do monitor that they are achieving all the items that we specified in the contract, such as programs delivery, such as all the basic security and prisoner needs that are specified in the contract. We do, of course, have our own centre staffing numbers, and subsequent to this hearing I could provide a list of those by each centre.

Mr COOPER: I thought it would have been useful for the purposes of keeping an audit of the system as it is vis-a-vis the private system, that is all, staff/prisoner ratio numbers.

Mr MACIONIS: I think that the concept of having the contracts and specifying outputs was that we are not going to tell these people how to do it, we are going to see that they are achieving the outputs of those contracts. If they can achieve the same output with less resources, that is fine. We are looking at the outputs, and our interest is that they can achieve the outputs that we specified in the contract.

Mr COOPER: I move now to Woodford prison, to which we made reference last year. Tenders have virtually been accepted for that prison. Last year, we talked about policing at Woodford. I asked the question in the same context of Police and the Corrective Services Commission. Considering the advent of a major prison at Woodford, again, what estimates, projections and plans have you got to increase police facilities in Woodford to be able to take into account that high security prison?

Mr BRADY: That is a matter for the Police Service. It is very much aware of it. I do not have that material and I do not propose to get it. I do not think it is strictly to do with the Estimates of the Corrective Services Commission. You are entitled to have a legitimate concern about it. May I assure you that the matter is being addressed and that there are ongoing discussions between the Corrective Services Commission and the Police Service in relation to that matter. I understand that that matter will be adequately addressed, but it is not a matter for these Estimates.

Mr COOPER: In my opinion it is, be it either the Police Service or the Corrective Services Commission. That is what we are talking about now.

Mr BRADY: It comes under the Estimates of the Police Service.

Mr COOPER: I can ask it now or during the Estimates of the Police Service; it is relevant.

Mr BRADY: The Police Service Estimates are over. It is not a Corrective Services matter, it is a Police Service matter. I do not have the officers here with me and I do not believe it is necessary for me to do that. If you wish to pursue that, you can write to me or ask me a question in Parliament about it.

Mr COOPER: I asked a question in the same Estimates hearings last year. If the Government is building a prison there, it is only responsible government to make sure that it allows for estimates for expansion of the inadequate police facilities that are there at this time. To me, that is commonsense.

Mr BRADY: It is, Mr Cooper, and commonsense measures are being undertaken. The Police Service and the Corrective Services Commission are meeting and discussing the matter and appropriate arrangements are being made. I do not have the figures. It would have been more appropriate to have asked this question during the

Estimates of the Police Service. I do not have the figure with me and the Police Estimates have concluded. If you wish to pursue it, please write to me or question me about it in Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: The questions regarding the Police Estimates have concluded. Could you carry on with your questioning relating to Corrective Services?

Mr COOPER: I will carry on with my questioning but I will make the point that I raised the issue in exactly the same Estimates last year and it was acceptable. What is the estimated ratio of custodial correctional officers to inmates on 30 June 1995 and your estimates for 30 June 1996?

Mr BRADY: Where at?

Mr COOPER: As far as all your correctional facilities are concerned. I would like the ratio of prison staff to prisoners. Also, what are these ratios on a facility-by-facility basis on those two dates? You might have to take that on notice; I do not mind, as long as I get the information.

Mr BRADY: I will take that on notice.

Mr COOPER: What has been the percentage growth in the number of inmates since 1 July 1993 and in the number of custodial officers?

Mr BRADY: In each of the institutions?

Mr COOPER: In each institution.

Mr BRADY: We will take that on notice also.

Mr COOPER: I would also like the estimated overtime budget in 1995-96 on a facility-by-facility basis and a comparison of how that compares with the previous years.

Mr BRADY: I will give it for 1994-95 and 1995-96.

Mr COOPER: That will be right. On page 2-10 of the Portfolio Program Statements, what plant and equipment on a facility-by-facility basis was not replaced as approved in 1994-95 because of a forced diversion of that budget to cover costs associated with doubling up of inmates? Was any of the plant and equipment deemed dangerous and unsafe yet used beyond its operational life?

Mr BRADY: None of that, certainly not. In terms of the precision of the detail that you require, we will have to take that on notice. Certainly, the commission operated on a proper basis.

Mr COOPER: I have no doubt that it operated on a proper basis, but was it forced to divert its budget to cover costs as far as the doubling up of inmates was concerned so that you had to shift funds aside from one program to another?

Mr BRADY: In general terms, when you have changes such as that to meet circumstances arising, you make necessary changes. They have been reprioritised for this year and certainly there was no danger in relation to anybody in terms of reprioritising, but we can give you the detail of that.

Mr COOPER: I refer to the Secure Custody Program at pages 2-6 to 2-12 of the Portfolio Program Statements. What expenditure, on a

facility-by-facility basis, has been allocated in 1995-96 to upgrade secure perimeters at each facility?

Mr BRADY: I gave you the information about secure perimeters before.

Mr COOPER: Yes, you mentioned that the number of escapes had decreased.

Mr BRADY: I gave you the total figure. From memory, it was \$16.5m.

Mr COOPER: Do you have the projections for 1995-96?

Mr BRADY: It is just about to be completed.

Mr COOPER: Is there no more to be done?

Mr BRADY: Do you want all the breakdowns of what has been spent already?

Mr COOPER: For each facility that has been allocated for 1995-96.

Mr BRADY: You do not want past expenditure?

Mr COOPER: I am quite happy to take 1994-95 and 1995-96 figures.

Mr BRADY: We have the expenditure for the last few years. As you can see by the figures, we have been very successful in this area, looking at Arthur Gorrie, Lotus Glen, etc. I think \$1.65m has been budgeted to be spent at Westbrook in relation to security. The rest of the programs are now complete. The Director-General has just confirmed that we have about \$400,000 to spend at the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre for securing the perimeter as well.

Mr COOPER: You can get me those other figures. Referring to the Portfolio Program Statements, page 2-14, what is the nature of the wilderness camp for youth offenders and what will its capacity be? Where will it be located? What are the costs?

Mr BRADY: I will ask the Director-General, Mr Hamburger, to answer, as he is aware of the precise details of that project.

Mr HAMBURGER: Mr Cooper, the wilderness camp will be aimed at young offenders in the 17 to 25-year age group. To some extent it will be based on the WORC program, except that it will be a more closely supervised facility and it will be placed in a more remote location. We tend to place work camp facilities, as you know, fairly adjacent to a local community. However, we are planning to put this one at least 30 kilometres or so from the nearest township, so it will be fairly remote.

This project is based on a similar program in operation at Wild Man River in the Northern Territory. The capacity of the camp will be in the order of 15 young offenders. There will be a mixture of programs. Approximately half of the time will be spent on some form of work activity, which could involve forestry work or some form of manual activity. The other half of the day will involve educational programs, anger management and other behavioural matters which tend to impact on those sorts of young people.

The CHAIRMAN: The time period for questions from non-Government members has now finished. The final period for questions will be from Government members.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: To return to the question I was asking earlier, you gave details about where prisoners are residing in the community correctional centres. Specifically, how many of those prisoners have committed offences while they were in those community-based centres and how many have been responsible for armed robberies while they were in those centres, which we have read so much about?

Mr BRADY: To give you an indication of people being returned for various offences and reasons why they were returned—in all, 723 prisoners so far this financial year have completed their time in community custody and have been further reintegrated into the community. Of the remaining prisoners, 200 were returned to prison for failing to comply with the condition of residence. Many of those prisoners were returned for poor behaviour or were found to have been drinking alcohol. Forty-three were returned for being absent from their designated place. The group of 200 prisoners returned to prison comprised 21 per cent of the number of prisoners placed in the community custody program. Twenty-one per cent were sent back, mainly for non-criminal offences such as not being where they should have been, or for drinking alcohol.

The remaining 29 prisoners—only 3 per cent of all prisoners admitted into community custody programs—were returned to prison as a result of being charged with another offence. That is, 3 per cent of the 723 prisoners placed were returned to prison for committing another criminal offence. Many of those were returned to prison for relatively minor matters such as driving offences or possession of cannabis. In relation to armed robbery—again the subject of mythology presented by the tabloid media and one particular outlet which weekly carries on about this—two prisoners from community custody programs have been convicted of an armed robbery which occurred whilst the prisoners were in community custody. I think that gives you the basic figures, Mr Sullivan. Once again, considering the clientele, I think the figures speak for themselves.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I ask a complementary question. Referring to a similar theme, page 2-25 refers to parolees in a similar situation. How many people are currently on parole and therefore are under the supervision of the commission? How closely are they supervised by the commission? How many of these parolees commit offences while they are on parole?

Mr BRADY: As at 31 March 1995, there were 1,627 prisoners under parole supervision in Queensland. That is an increase of 59 prisoners supervised compared to the end of the last financial year. Therefore, nine months ago there were 59 fewer than there were at the end of March. Of course, all of those people are released by community corrections boards around the

State—the regional boards or the Queensland board.

In terms of failure to comply—of the 680 parole orders completed in the first three-quarters of this year—again finishing on 31 March 1995—77 per cent were completed without a problem. That is, 77 per cent completed their parole conditions without a problem. Of those which were terminated, 81 were returned to prison for failure to comply with the conditions of the orders, such as not reporting or failure to go to counselling as required by the order. Of the remaining 75 prisoners who defaulted, 11 per cent were returned to prison as a consequence of being convicted whilst on parole. Eleven per cent of people on parole in this period of 12 months went back to prison for committing another offence, 12 per cent went back for failure to comply with a condition, and 77 per cent successfully completed their parole conditions and at that time were reintegrated into the community. A significant proportion of those who returned to prison for an offence—75 prisoners in all—were returned because they committed an offence such as possession of cannabis or a driving offence, that is, not a major offence.

I say in conclusion: the fact that only 11 per cent committed offences, given the nature of the clientele, suggests that it is a very successful program. In all, 89 per cent of those prisoners had not reoffended. Some might have breached a condition of the order, but they did not commit another offence within that time. Overall, the Community Corrections Board has to make informed estimates when releasing people, bearing in mind, as they have to do, that only life-sentence prisoners can be kept in prison, if necessary, for life. They have to make some informed decisions, and they seem to be doing pretty well. Certainly, it is an encouraging sign that the people we select from the community who are making the decisions about parole, as distinct from politicians or bureaucrats, are making pretty good decisions.

Mr PURCELL: I have a couple of questions relating to victims of crime. A strategic overview of the Queensland Corrective Services Commission identifies the improvement in the community's understanding of corrections issues as integral to the effective system of convictions. I think services to victims of crime fit into this area. Would the Minister please advise what action has been taken to accommodate victims' needs for information so that they get feedback on what is happening with prisoners and the person who perpetrated the crime on them, and to acknowledge the role of the victims in offender rehabilitation so that the offenders own up to the fact that they have injured somebody? What do we do about bringing that home to them?

Mr BRADY: In the sense that you asked the question, I suppose that there are two groups of victims: those who want to know about their offenders and those who never want to hear about them again; they do not want to ever be reminded of that. As to that second group—it would be offensive if we sent them information, because they would see that as bringing back some pretty rotten memories when all they want to do is forget as far

as possible that they ever had anything to do with that particular offender who has been sent to prison. I believe that some of the people who make recommendations in that sector do not know what they are talking about. There is a large number of victims in that category; they just do not want to know about it, and any system that is ever devised in relation to victims being informed must take that into account. That group does not want to have their noses rubbed in it again. They never want to hear about the offender.

The system basically works this way: we notify the ones who want to know. We notify those people who, by requesting information, have made it clear that they wish to know when a person is going to be released—or, in the case of a murder, it would be an immediate family member. We do notify them, but we only notify them if they request it. The system is as sensible and as simple as that. The Commission tries to do other things as well. The Commission acknowledges the need for a formal way of recognising victims as stakeholders and the need to provide education and information to victims on the philosophy, policies, procedures and operations of the commission and to provide appropriate referral for those victims to services in the community. I am confident that the commission will get even better at that.

One of the people we appointed to the board of the commission this year is Mr Ian Davies, who is President of the Victims of Crime Association of Queensland. He was not appointed by our Government because he represents that association; he was appointed because he had the personal capacity and knowledge that came from being in that association at a high level—being the president, and a very strong member of it. He is doing a fantastic job. Together with others, Mr Davies will make sure that the QCSC keeps on the right track in terms of dealing with victims and developing programs. A lot of the things we can do for victims we are also doing for prisoners, such as the Anger Management Program, the Substance Abuse Core Program and so on, so that those prisoners will not re-offend when they get out.

Mr PURCELL: I have one further question on prison classification. In a number of places, the Portfolio Program Statements refer to sentences and case management. In particular, I note that the Queensland Corrective Services Commission plans to commence implementation of a new policy and procedure on integrated sentences and case management in open custody centres. That reference is on page 2-15. As I understand it, the most important aspect of sentence management is the appropriate classification. What mechanisms are in place to ensure appropriate prison classification? I understand how important that is. I did a trip out west with Ian Stewart, who is here today, to WORC camps and so forth. I notice that the return rate of those people is very low. So if we can get the classification right and use those camps much more, we get fewer returns to prison.

Mr BRADY: There are several situations that apply depending on how long a person's sentence is, and so on. In terms of the more

hardened prisoners who are sentenced for more serious crimes—a prisoner serving a sentence in excess of 10 years, or a life sentence—the responsibility for reclassification from high to low or open security rests with the Queensland Corrective Service Commission Remission Classification Committee. We have two members of the board on that committee: Mr Davies, to whom I referred before and who is also a member of the Victims Of Crime Association; and Mr Bunny Powne, who is in his third term on the commission. He is very experienced in the western areas and the WORC camps and would be well known to Mr Cooper and Mr Littleproud. The committee works with people from the Directorate of Offender Development to the senior adviser on sentence management and the general manager. They very seriously consider cases and make recommendations.

In relation to the lesser sentence prisoners—there is a Sentence Management Committee at each correctional centre, and they comprise representatives of the Sentence Management Unit, centre management, program staff and custodial correctional officers and, in cases involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. They make recommendations in relation to the reclassification of prisoners. In relation to prisoners serving sentences of 10 years or life—for whom there is a special committee—the committee makes the initial recommendation, and it then goes to the board for final approval as to whether the prisoner can be reclassified from high to medium to low and so on. The process is taken very seriously by the commission; it is not just one clerk or even a senior officer sitting down and making those decisions. There is one group of people for both groups—for the less serious offenders—and a significant group for the more serious offenders. They have to make decisions about people who have committed crimes, so they are not infallible. They take their task very seriously. They take into account reports and all the program information that is available to them.

Each prisoner's security classification is reviewed at a maximum interval of once every six months. However, a prisoner cannot be reclassified before he or she has served one-quarter of the non-parole period. Prisoners must serve at least a quarter of their non-parole period before they can apply for a reclassification downwards. A lower security rating cannot be granted until both eligibility

and suitability criteria are met and assessments conducted. The commission is continually reassessing how it handles those classifications, because problems can arise when people are released to work or whatever and they are not really appropriate.

Mr PURCELL: I was very impressed with those camps. Have we got any plans to speed up the process of creating more camps?

Mr BRADY: The camps have been very successful, and western centres are asking for them. They are very much sought after. The major problem is the type of prisoners you can send there. There is only a minority of prisoners that we are prepared to send to WORC camps. In the case of violent offenders and serious sexual offenders, it is a no-no. Even if you perhaps think that a bloke really has reformed, you can blow apart the whole system and affect someone's life or ease of mind if that person then re-offends. We would rather err on the side of caution by sending too few rather than too many offenders to WORC camps. We can only send certain categories of them.

We hope that the big expansion in the future relates to community-based alternatives for Aboriginal prisoners in the north. Quite a few of them are sent down from communities on Cape York for relatively minor offences—or perhaps even more serious offences. We have two out-stations at Baa's Yard and Wathaniin, and we are going to expand them as well. There is one near Kowanyama and another near Yarrabah—quite away from the towns where people live. They provide the capacity to send appropriate prisoners there, rather than holding them in secure prisons such as Lotus Glen or Townsville. Our capacity to expand the number of WORC camps is confined only by our capacity to select suitable prisoners. As we get more hardened prisoners, ironically that capacity decreases, because murderers, rapists and people of that nature cannot be sent to WORC camps.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for consideration of the Estimates of expenditure for the Corrective Services Commission has now expired. On behalf of the Committee, I thank the Minister and officers of the commission for their attendance.

Sitting suspended from 4.31 to 4.40 p.m.

QUEENSLAND EMERGENCY SERVICES**In Attendance**

Hon. T. Burns, Deputy Premier, Minister for
Emergency Services and Consumer
Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier
on Rural Affairs

Dr Leo Keliher, Director-General

Commissioner Gerry Fitzgerald, Queensland
Ambulance Service

Commissioner Geoff Skerritt, Queensland Fire
Service

Ms Sue Bradshaw, Executive Director,
Corporate Services Division

Mr Allan Windsor, Executive Director, Counter
Disaster Services Division

Mr Michael Kinnane, Executive Director,
Statewide Services Division

Mr Gary Taylor, Director, Finance

Mr Bernie Elder, Acting Management
Accountant

Mr Mat Tiley, Director Facilities and Asset
Management

The CHAIRMAN: The hearings of Estimates Committee B are now resumed. The next item for consideration is Queensland Emergency Services and the time allotted is two hours. For the information of new witnesses, the time limit for questions is one minute and the time limit for answers is three minutes. A single chime will give a 15-second warning and a double chime will sound at the expiration of those time limits. As set out in the sessional orders, the first 20 minutes of questions will be from non-Government members. The next 20 minutes will be from Government members and so on in rotation. The sessional orders also require equal time to be afforded to Government and non-Government members. Therefore, where a time period has been allotted which is less than 40 minutes, that time will be shared equally. The end of these time periods will be indicated by three chimes. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the Queensland Emergency Services to be open for examination. The question before the Chair is that the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, is it your wish to make a short introductory statement in relation to this office or do you wish to proceed direct to questioning?

Mr BURNS: I would like to make a statement.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind you that your statement should be kept to a limit of two minutes.

Mr BURNS: With an overall budget of \$354.809m, which represents a 10.7 per cent increase on the previous year, Queensland Emergency Services can look forward to a period of consolidation and the following anticipated achievements—

continued modernisation of QAS and QFS stations, plant and equipment;

QAS expects to construct an additional eight new or replacement ambulance stations and purchase almost 50 new vehicles;

almost \$17m will be spent on purchasing 54 new urban fire appliances;

\$4.234m will be spent on QFS capital works with the construction of seven new urban fire stations, two joint facilities, upgrading urban stations, QFS buildings and the purchase of land; and

upgrade of communications equipment and services.

Provision of \$2.7m has been made for the purchase of a computer aided dispatch system for the metropolitan area. As well, there will be a continuing upgrade of radio communication services throughout the State. The QAS will also join with the QFS to develop joint communication centres throughout the State. The sum of \$2.502m will be spent on subsidies to provide 50 new rural fire trucks, including eight heavy duty tankers, and \$0.198m will go towards the construction of 34 new rural fire stations throughout the State.

Other anticipated achievements include—

recruitment and training of 152 new firefighters;

an additional 20 firefighters will be hired for the new full-time station at Gaven on the Gold Coast;

recruitment of new ambulance officers achieved by a reduction in the number of support positions; and

continued support for the provision of new Ambulance and State Emergency Services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of \$1m.

That initiative will enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to be self-sufficient in providing an initial response to emergencies and disasters which have the potential to affect their communities.

Other anticipated achievements include—

introduction of the paramedic training program with an initial emphasis on rural and provincial areas of the State;

recruitment of additional pilots and aircrew at QES Air Units in Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns to provide for 24-hour emergency aeromedical and aerial rescue response;

support for potential community helicopter providers at Rockhampton and Mackay, subject to development of proper business plans and service agreements with QES; and

the implementation of a Total Asset Management System to record QES management and financial information associated with assets.

The CHAIRMAN: The first period of questions will commence with non-Government members. Mr Littleproud, do you seek leave to appear before the Committee?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I do, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Leave is granted. Mr Littleproud, we will start with questions from you.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Thank you Mr Chairman. I will base most of my questions on the Portfolio Program Statements. In the main, I commend you on the outlays. I am going to start with questions about the Ambulance Service and these questions will last probably 20 minutes. I refer to page 19. I will make one comment with regard to that document this year. In relation to staffing levels, the way that those figures are presented this year is not nearly as detailed as last year. In fact, it is in a different format, which makes it a little difficult for me to make comparisons. Nevertheless, I have some questions in regard to those figures, which show both administrative/ambulance officers combined for Community/Business Services and Support Services. Would you have a breakdown of the 130 and 55 that are shown?

Dr FITZGERALD: I am Gerry Fitzgerald, Commissioner, Queensland Ambulance Service. I do not have immediately available a breakdown of ambulance officers versus support staff. You will see from the documents presented in front of you that the Support Services Subprogram has been broken up, as has the Ambulance Services Program. The third area, which is the community/business focus, is basically first-aid delivery and also management and the administration of the subscription scheme. It is worth saying that the vast majority of those staff numbers in Community/Business Services would be staff involved with the administration of the subscription scheme.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Not uniformed staff?

Dr FITZGERALD: They are not uniformed staff. There would be a few ambulance staff involved in the delivery of first-aid services, probably in the order of less than 10. I do not have the exact figures.

Mr BURNS: Do you need the exact figures?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Not today.

Mr BURNS: Do you want us to supply them later?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: It would not hurt, because that leads directly onto the next question. There has been a practice of using uniformed staff in administrative positions, and it has been claimed that sometimes they count as operational staff when in fact they are administrative staff. Obviously you do not have those numbers with you either, but when you provide those numbers, I will get an indication. Do you count all uniformed people as operational staff or do you admit that some are administrative staff?

Dr FITZGERALD: All uniformed people are either operational staff or operational supervisory staff. I suppose that the difficulty is: what is counted as administrative? Obviously there are assistant commissioners who are the line managers for the region. They are counted as ambulance staff because they are ambulance uniformed staff and their superintendents, etc., would be included as

ambulance staff rather than administrative staff. The administrative staff are generally public servants seconded to the Ambulance Service.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I am now dealing with capital works. I notice that in the list of items that you have included in your capital works programs on page 20, quite a number of those have been listed for a number of years—Noosa, Caboolture, Cairns since 1991, Charters Towers, Dunwich, Emerald, Kilcoy since 1991, Monto, Spring Hill since 1991, Toowoomba which you are moving on at present, and Wynnum. If you remove those from the figures, would it be possible for you to provide me with the actual new money allocated for capital works, not carryover?

Mr BURNS: You can get those figures from page 20. If you take all of the ones on page 20 with asterisks, you will see that those are the ones that we are carrying over. They are the ones from "Wynnum" up. We are building Caboolture at present. Cairns is about three-parts built. Charters Towers is about half completed. We have had a discussion with the Health Department about Dunwich to try to come to a joint arrangement, because we want to put a medical aid post-cum-ambulance centre there. Of course, there are negotiations over who owns the land and who pay the bills. The Chairman is laughing because it is in his electorate and he knows of the discussions. We have been negotiating on Emerald, but we have not started construction because we are trying to obtain land in the hospital area. We are having some difficulty with the hospital department there. At Kilcoy, we are on the way. The new station at Kuranda has started. It has been held up a bit by rain but, apart from that, Lesley Clark tells me that it is well under way. By the time we turned the first sod at Monto the builder had half laid the slab, so that is well and truly on the way. Noosa is finished. A delay has occurred in the refurbishment program at Spring Hill because I had a look at whether I needed to have one central new building in the heart of the town for ambulance and fire, but we have now decided to go ahead with that. Toowoomba is an ongoing saga, but yesterday we opened Stages 1 and 2. Even though it is referred to in the document as Stage 2, we have amalgamated the new communication area and we brought in the QFS. That was the reason for the delay. Wynnum is in my electorate. We are still negotiating with the Health Department about land in the hospital area—if we can get it.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: So, those ones that are listed—

Mr BURNS: They are all ongoing projects. I think that you have to say in a lot of these other projects that, as we go down the track, whether you get them finished in the 12-month period, you have to put them in the program and start them off. It is a slow process, especially if you are trying to negotiate with other departments about their land.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I understand that some time ago the old committee at Withcott actually had a block of land that you have mentioned. You have also said that you have purchased another block of land. I think there is an allocation of \$100,000.

What was the price of the original site and what was it sold for?

Mr BURNS: I have no idea. Until I went to Toowoomba yesterday, I really did not know that we had a block of land at Withcott. Yesterday, we talked to the old QATB board and they said to me, "It is nice to see you spending money buying land at Withcott, because the land at Withcott was sold." I think we have to proceed with Withcott, and there is a bit of money so we may be able to go a bit further than just buying the land this year.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Is it the same site?

Mr BURNS: No.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: A new site?

Mr BURNS: I do not think that we have picked a site yet, but we are out there to buy it.

Mr TILEY: We are looking at various site options in Withcott. Some other departments have some land at Withcott that might quite possibly be suitable for the site.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Would you be looking at a joint Fire Service/Ambulance Service?

Mr TILEY: That is an issue that has been discussed. I know that, regionally, they are considering those things between fire and ambulance. There is a possibility that land is available on current fire reserve land. The land-planning issues are actually being addressed during the month of May, so we can crank off our site development briefs during the months of June/July.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Thank you. I see you have an allocation in the Motor Accident and Insurance Fund for \$1.05m.

Mr BURNS: What page is this?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: It is in one of the programs. I think it would come under your—

Mr BURNS: We might be able to find it. Get your question ready and we will see if we can find it.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I just want to make the point that I understand that money is raised from motorists—the idea being that it is to cover the costs of motorists who need the Ambulance Service but who may not be subscribers. It probably could be argued that those people who are subscribers are paying twice because they also contribute to this Motor Accident Insurance Fund. Is there some other way that we can catch those people?

Mr BURNS: I am just trying to find it. Let me say this, I would like to be able to charge a levy on just about everybody for the Ambulance Service. The way to do that would be the same as the fire levy—to try to find a levy that strikes everybody. Unfortunately, it is virtually impossible because whilst with the fire levy you can strike a levy on every house or every block of land, when you start to talk about ambulance levies, there can be 10 people in one house and there can be two in the next and there is no way that you can get a record of that. The only way that you could do that is if you went to the Federal Government for the taxation and social security records. Of course, they are not prepared to

do it because just about every department everywhere would want to use their system to strike their levies or raise their moneys. So, finally, you end up coming down to a subscription scheme, and we have a substantial subscription scheme with over 900,000 people subscribing plus Government contributions. I have not got a breakdown—it is page 9 in the PPS.

Dr KELIHER: Could I just add that that \$1.05m reflects an amount that was agreed between the Queensland Ambulance Service and the Insurance Commissioner. It reflects the percentage of work undertaken by the Queensland Ambulance Service with respect to road trauma. So it is directly related to the number of motor vehicle accidents that the Queensland Ambulance Service attends.

Dr FITZGERALD: If I may, it is to cover the third-party claims. Basically, it was a practical approach to get around the problem of having to raise charges against third-party insurance.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: We have the problem with those people who are driving unregistered vehicles, which is another component.

Mr BURNS: One of the things that we have tried to do is cut out a lot of the paperwork. For example, in hospital transfers, we could have raised a whole lot of documentation on hospital transfers. We just have a set fee between us and the Health Department, which it negotiates on a yearly basis. We get out of all that sending of bills backwards and forwards and arguing about the costs and charges involved.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Is that being administered all right now, because at one stage there was a mix-up? The Health Department was not charging it out properly. There was a \$200,000 allocation, or something.

Mr BURNS: As far as I can ascertain from my finance people, we have not had any problem with receiving our money.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: It is coming through all right now?

Mr BURNS: Yes, it is coming through. At first, there were some negotiations. Of course, it was a big, substantial gain for us to get over \$10m a year in hospital transfer money rather than go through all of that paperwork and the arguments over it. It also made it a lot easier for the customers, because if you are transferred between hospitals, there is no charge.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: The next question relates to the April edition of *Emergency*. In that edition the director-general was quoted as saying—

"I will do everything possible in the 1995-96 budget to fund essential improvements."

He was talking about housing and conditions in some of your remote areas. Dr Keliher, where in the Budget papers is funding to guarantee those improvements? From the minor works, is it—\$1.29m?

Dr KELIHER: Yes, that is correct. The Ambulance Service received an additional \$600,000, which is included in that minor capital works from the departmental allocation. It is oriented specifically towards repairs and improvements to houses of ambulance staff in remote and rural centres. Recently, the commissioner and I undertook a trip around the south-western region out to places such as St George, Cunnamulla, Goondiwindi, Charleville and so on. Some of the conditions that our ambulance officers are living under are really substandard. For example, the house in Dirranbandi required a completely new kitchen. The bathroom was in a very poor state, with cracked bathtubs and so on. For a small price, we could enhance the quality of life for our staff in remote and rural centres. I think that it is a key initiative for the Queensland Ambulance Service in the forthcoming year. We have also allocated \$150,000 towards the Queensland Fire Service. They have far fewer houses.

Mr BURNS: The Minor Capital Works Program goes by region but places in the northern region like Mount Isa, Kirwan, Hughenden, Collinsville, Bowen, Townsville and Normanton have programs; Theodore, Mount Morgan, Gladstone, Winton, Baralaba and Mackay in the central region; Dalby, St George, Meandarra, Clifton, Miles and Mitchell in the southern region; Childers, Proston, Eidsvold, Caloundra, Gin Gin—some of them are just concrete driveways; some of them are external painting. There is a whole list. There are pages.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I am sure your staff out there appreciate that sort of effort. I want to make the comment that you were probably green with envy when you saw last week in the *Sunday Mail* that the Health Department is going to give rural doctors free cars and mobile phones. You would probably like to do the same thing for your officers out there in the bush.

Mr BURNS: They get an ambulance vehicle, of course, and they are in radio contact with everybody. Of course, that is one of the problems—it raises the ante. It is very difficult to get staff in rural and remote areas. In fact, sometimes it is really difficult to get staff in closer areas. For example, we have been a couple short in Charters Towers for about 12 months. Charters Towers is not a remote area; it is a nice drive to Townsville. It is a really good town. You can argue about Boulia, Betoota, Bedourie, Aramac or places like that, but we have towns like Charters Towers where we are finding it difficult to get staff. We have allowed the commissioner to advertise interstate for people for the rural and remote areas. We try to pick our staff out of our own areas if we can. Of course, the other thing is that we are going to upskill honoraries.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: While you are on that, I have made public comment previously, because when you took in your last intake, there were quite a few honoraries who were part of the way through their associate diploma course, and they did not seem to feature very highly when the selection process came into being. I wonder if you should put into the selection criteria that, if they come from the

bush, they are more likely to be employed there or stay there?

Mr BURNS: You have no disagreement with me on that point. I have been arguing for this for a while.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: You are the boss.

Mr BURNS: There are a couple of other ways of doing it. Honoraries do not have to do the course now. Honoraries can do the AD at their leisure. If they do their AD, we can start to do something about making them ambulance officers. Quite a few of the honorary ambulance officers are undertaking the training and skilling.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Some of these officers were part of the way through. That is why they were disappointed.

Mr BURNS: I do not have the numbers in front of me, but I think a larger percentage of honoraries got positions this time. In a lot of cases nowadays, the problem is that honoraries love to be honoraries but do not want to be permanent. They like the honorary position and they like helping people. In some places, honoraries have a better job and do not want to be full time.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I refer to the stretcher capacity of vehicles. There will be 84 new vehicles, some of which are of the new Holden configuration. There are also two-stretcher vehicles, that is, the Ford 350s. Evidently, yesterday you commissioned some four-wheel-drive vehicles. Are you careful about where you place those Commodores? They are good vehicles for the job. I am told that in some of the places at which officers attend motor vehicle accidents there is often a need for more than one stretcher, perhaps even for two cars.

Mr BURNS: You are quite right; Ford does not make the chassis anymore. Every ambulance commissioner in Australia has had the same sort of problem. We have looked at a number of options. First, we looked at four-wheel-drive vehicles for country areas. However, they are heavy and costly to run. We do not put those vehicles in areas where they are not needed. That is part of the commissioner's job. We give him the money and he allocates them. We have developed quite a good system of using Falcons and long-wheel-base Holdens. The officers find those vehicles very good, but they are single-stretcher vehicles, as you say. They are good for hospital transfers. They are fast and good on bitumen roads. The officer in the back has a seat-belt on so he is in a very good position. And they are half the cost of the big ambulances. That means that we can put more vehicles on the road. We are trialing a General Motors vehicle at the moment.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I am more worried about the mix.

Mr BURNS: The mix is part of it. Sixty per cent of our vehicles are class 1. Class 1 vehicles can carry one or two stretchers and are designed primarily for immediate response. Class 2 vehicles carry one or two stretchers. Thirty-eight per cent of our vehicles are class 2. Class 3 vehicles do not carry stretchers. Seventeen per cent of our vehicles

are class 3. We have 607 ambulances. We have rationalised the number of ambulances. We had a lot of old ambulances that people were hanging onto that were better suited to the Workers Heritage Centre at Barcaldine than they were for picking up patients. The use of those vehicles is up to the officers concerned. The allocation is flowing through quite well and we are getting very good vibes about that.

Dr FITZGERALD: Over 95 per cent of ambulance cases involve a single patient. In most cases, we can send a single stretcher. We are trying to change the mix, not abolish two-stretcher vehicles. We feel that the appropriate mix is probably about a third of the vehicles being two-stretcher vehicles and the rest being single-stretcher vehicles. In small country towns where ambulance officers are the only response, they will always need a two-stretcher vehicle for responding to motor vehicle accidents involving two or three patients. Certainly, in the urban areas, particularly if we can look after the non-urgent side better, a single-stretcher vehicle is quite appropriate. There is always backup available if there is more than one patient.

Mr BURNS: The average vehicle age has now come down and will be about 3.6 years by the end of July, which means that we are really starting to get a modern fleet.

The CHAIRMAN: That concludes the first period of questions for non-Government members. I now ask Mrs Bird to begin the questioning from Government members.

Mrs BIRD: I wish to ask about the age of the ambulance fleet. In doing so, I am conscious of the fact that you are replacing many vehicles in the fleet, as Mr Littleproud said. You have already replaced some in my electorate. Could you talk a little more precisely about the age across the State of the ambulance fleet and how quickly you are replacing those ambulances?

Mr BURNS: The biggest problem we had when the new service came into being—and the new service came in after an all-party committee recommended it—was that we did not have an asset register. There was no plan for the replacement of vehicles, which made it difficult. Some 20 per cent of the vehicles at the time were for administrative, not operational, purposes. We had vehicles that were 20 years of age. We had 75 over 10 years of age. Now, we have only two that are over 10 years of age. We have gradually brought the age down. As I said to Mr Littleproud, it is the mix that is important. The old ones were a problem to us, because once they get past about eight years of age we cannot buy the parts for them.

Some of them have not done many miles. Some ambulance stations have only 17 call-outs per month and others do 600 per month. For instance, others around Brisbane would have 600 per week. There are large variations. The LACs bought and owned their old vehicles. When we asked, "Could we shift this vehicle that has only 10,000 or 15,000 kilometres on the clock

somewhere else", there was an argument because we were trying to take their vehicle away. But now there is an acceptance that that is a rational use of those vehicles. We have moved those vehicles to places where they can run up some miles and we have put brand-new vehicles into the stations. They are starting to accept that. But there were some problems at the time. We have brought the vehicle age down. There is a substantial improvement in them. I was at Dayboro with Margaret Woodgate on the weekend. The ambulance officers had their vehicles on display in the street to show people the new vehicles and equipment. That is a good way for the local ambulance committee to get support from the locals, for getting people to pay subscriptions and donate to the ambulance. It is working very well.

Mr PURCELL: I have a question on first-aid certificates. Page 16 of the Portfolio Program Statements states that the QAS aims to increase the number of Queenslanders trained in CPR as part of its first-aid certificate program. Can you give further details about the program, which I understand is very popular with people out in the country? In remote areas, there might be only one person there to assist someone who is injured. It is a necessity that people know some sort of CPR. How many certificates did we issue last year and how many do we intend to issue in the new financial year? Does that meet the need for CPR courses in the community?

Mr BURNS: Firstly, we have a very terrible situation in Queensland in that only 8 per cent of the public has done a first-aid course. That is one of the worst figures in Australia. It is a very poor figure internationally, too. I make this speech every time I go to ambulance centres in the community. The best story is the young fellow who was on the front page of the *Courier-Mail*. Lightning struck a person sitting beside him. The young bloke had been trained in CPR by the life-savers. Not so long ago, we gave this person a medal at Parliament House. He said to the older person with him, "You go and ring 000. I'll keep him alive." He worked on the person and kept him alive. The ambulance officers came and he was saved. A defibrillator was used.

One young man is alive because, firstly, of the action of that young man who knew CPR and, secondly, because our officers were trained and had defibrillators and so on. It is a combination of things. We need to do something about that. The number of first-aid certificates issued in 1994-95 was 16,000. We estimated that we would get it up to 19,000. We did not get there. We are now asking for 18,000 this year, but we are going to run an advertising campaign. We are going to start to run an advertising campaign to convince people that they ought to learn first aid. We want to work with all of the other groups that teach first aid. It is not just something for ourselves. We like to train people through the Ambulance Service. In all of the stations there are generally training rooms and officers who are keen to carry out that work. We have to move into the schools if we can, and move to get a lot of younger people trained. It really is important that more and more people are trained. I

am not going to test Committee members by saying, "Put your hand up if you can do CPR."

Mr PURCELL: I can.

Mr BURNS: You would skite whether you could or not!

Mr PURCELL: You ran the course here. I did it here at Parliament House.

Mr BURNS: I cannot put my hand up, but I should; every one of us should, and we will try to do as much as we can to convince people that they should.

Mr KELIHER: One of the real benefits of the first-aid training program is that it can be undertaken by all of the other divisions within Queensland Emergency Services—and that includes our counter-disaster services/SES people, our Queensland Fire Service people and our people in divisions such as Aviation Services and the Chemical Hazards and the Emergency Management Unit. It is a non-revenue earning aspect of the Queensland Ambulance Service, but we are all part of the one organisation. The rest of the divisions are truly grateful for the excellent work that the Queensland Ambulance Service does in that regard.

Mr PURCELL: I am aware of the amount of training that ambulance centres undertake in schools and so forth. In my electorate, the LAC has just purchased a new TV/video in one so that the ambulance officers can undertake training in schools. The theory is to teach people while they are young.

Mr BURNS: Good idea; that is the only way to go.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I have a question on the LACs. The second statement on page 15 of your PPS states that the Quality of Service Reports that you got from your local ambulance committees indicate satisfaction that a high standard of service is being delivered. How many LACs are currently in operation throughout the State? Do the survey reports that you received reflect the overall community support, or are they just from a select group within the community?

Mr BURNS: The LACs are very widely based, and their numbers have now increased to 135. The number of unconstituted LACs—areas where we do not have one or where one has dropped away—has decreased from seven to six. The major problem for LACs is that the Federal Taxation Office has ruled that donations to the Ambulance Service are not tax deductible, and we are going to take them to the Administrative Review Tribunal over that particular matter. It is claimed that now that we are providing substantial funding to the Ambulance Service, it is really a State service and no longer a charitable organisation. In light of the substantial amount of money that we collect from over 900,000 people by way of levies, we have argued against that ruling.

LACs are a very valuable asset. We expect to receive about \$1.49m from them in 1994-95, and we have indicated in their budgets that they want to spend about \$2m. Over recent years, the LAC at

Toowoomba has bought four defibrillators at \$10,000 each and has spent, if I remember correctly, about \$50,000 or \$60,000 on gear and equipment. Throughout the State, LACs receive very strong support from local communities. They are very protective of their funds. The conflict over the alleged stealing of committee moneys has now been resolved, because most of the LACs can see the moneys coming back. This was a big issue at Monto in particular, but it has now been resolved because that building is being constructed. In all cases, we are starting to develop a better role for the LACs. As we said last year, that action was necessary. Since then, a reference group has been established comprising a couple of very senior LAC people and our officers, and we have now given them a better role to play.

LACs are really valuable. They can do things a lot cheaper out in the community than we can through the Government. People will do a job for an LAC on an ambulance station for about half the price they would charge the Government. The theory is that the Government has a ton of money, so people can always charge the Government more. So that you are all aware, I place on record that the substantial support that we receive from LACs is very much appreciated. Without them we would be in a lot of trouble in maintaining community support for the ambulance.

Mrs BIRD: Page 25 of the PPS states that a ticketable offence notice system will be introduced across a broad spectrum of the legislation administered by the Office of Consumer Affairs.

Mr BURNS: The Estimates of the OCA will be discussed after 7.40 tonight.

Mrs BIRD: Do you want to leave that until then?

Mr BURNS: Yes; there is a separate time set aside for it.

Mrs BIRD: Are we talking about fire services now?

Mr BURNS: Yes—whatever you like.

Mrs BIRD: Can we talk about fire alarms?

Mr BURNS: Smoke alarms, you mean— smoke detectors?

Mrs BIRD: Yes. In doing so, may I say: bouquets to the Fire Service for recognising at long last that women can do the job, and for equal pay.

Mr BURNS: Righto.

Mrs BIRD: I refer you to page 45 of the PPS, which states—

"Offers have closed for the supply of upgraded Fire Alarm Monitoring equipment required because of the introduction of fibre optic cabling for Telecom lines. Delivery will commence in May-June, 1995."

What is the impact of that?

Mr BURNS: Telecom has escalated its program for the introduction of fibre optic cables throughout the State, and it has advised that after 1995 it will not be able to guarantee continued support for the present technology used by us in

monitoring fire alarms. That is a big problem for us. To meet the new timetable, we have allocated a further \$800,000 to carry out the necessary conversions in country areas throughout the State. It is anticipated that the conversions will take two years, with completion occurring in 1997. The equipment for the first stage has been ordered, and the changeover will commence in August this year. South coast and Brisbane systems are expected to be commissioned by February 1996. Meetings with Telecom have established that support for the present technology will continue well into 1996, so we can meet their timetable. However, should a main exchange cable become faulty, instead of replacing it a fibre optic cable will be used. Telecom has undertaken to work closely with the Fire Service to ensure that there is no disruption of service to fire monitoring lines.

Our installation schedule anticipates that both the south coast and Brisbane will be converted by mid 1996. Telecom is aware of this time frame and sees no problems. Telecom fire lines were traditionally copper cable from the subscriber premises to the monitoring stations. Telecom now uses new technology and replaces the copper cable with fibre optics and other techniques. Most fire alarm monitoring systems throughout Australia will be affected as the voltage to operate the system, originating at the monitoring fire station, was passed up through copper line. The new fibre optic cables do not conduct battery voltage but do pass audio signals. The alarm receiving equipment will therefore need to be replaced with new technology equipment compatible with fibre optic technology at both the fire station and alarm panels.

There are about 4,000 alarm circuits to be upgraded at a cost of about \$1.6m. Full cost recovery of this initiative is achieved over a three-year period by way of introducing an equipment rental charge at the end-of-the-line units. The new equipment also allows for more alarm information to be monitored. One of the problems we have is that between 40 per cent and 50 per cent of fire calls are false alarms, and a lot of those are because of the monitoring system. The member for Bulimba represents the suburb of Murarrie. The office that he sits in is the one that I used to sit in. Every day, the fire-engine would go past at about 10 o'clock in the morning to the chicken processing plant down the road. As the heat built up in the base, the automatic fire alarm went off, and down the road came the fire-engine. That plant never, ever had a fire in the 15 years that I represented that electorate, but the fire brigade went down there just about every day. The new system, which should allow us to obtain more information, is compatible with our computer-aided dispatch system, so it might save some calls for the Fire Service. In 1994-95, we are able to expend only \$600,000 due to the delay in delivery, so \$1m will be carried forward to the trust fund.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I have a question about the Queensland Fire Service Trust Fund and the debt overdraft situation. I believe that the overdraft came into being some time ago.

Mr BURNS: What page of the PPS are you referring to?

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Page 10, just above that table. What has happened since 1990 in terms of reducing that debt, and what has having the debt meant to the Fire Service in terms of what you have been able to do? If I read this correctly, it means that for the first time the balance is likely to be in funds. Now that the overdraft is cleared, what will any additional funds be used for?

Mr BURNS: We did have a major overdraft at the time. I have said this before, the previous Government showed a lot of courage in introducing a fire levy. It was the way to go. Unfortunately, there was a lot of opposition to it, and a freeze was put on it for about four years. Because the fire commanders in various areas wanted gear and station upgrades, they were allowed to borrow and to run up overdrafts. The overdrafts were escalating. It got to the stage that we took over with about \$57m worth of debt, but one could expect that by now it would have been \$79m worth of debt. That was not the answer.

The trouble was that, when we took over, we decided to pay them off, and the overdraft level, for example, was \$27.7m. We reduced that in 1991 to \$14.9m, which was a really hard job for the Fire Service. It was tough for the Fire Service. We reduced it to \$10m in 1992, to \$6.9m in 1993 and to \$800,000 in 1994. The budget overdraft for 1994-95 was supposed to be a \$5.88m overdraft, however due to savings, the revised overdraft was a \$2.84m overdraft. Estimated actuals now indicate that the closing balance will be \$8.5m to \$8.6m in funds. That is because we are carrying over \$7m towards appliances. We have ordered some very big appliances which we have to get from overseas, and things like that. So we are carrying that money. That trust fund is there.

I think the estimated actual at the end of this financial year—do we have a figure on what it will be?

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: It says \$467,000

Mr BURNS: The overdraft will be down to virtually nothing.

Comr SKERRITT: It will be \$467,000 in funds.

Mr BURNS: The other debt was a long-term capital debt which was used for buildings, appliances and major equipment. Since 1990, no further loans have been drawn. In 1990, it was \$29.6m, and at that time we agreed to pay it over eight years. In 1993, we woke up to the fact that we were trying to do it too fast and that it was too hard on the Fire Service itself, so we extended the term by a further five years, reducing the repayments by \$2.6m. We used to pay \$6.1m a year and now we are paying \$3.5m a year. Due to this reduction, we were able to put some money into capital outlays and some money into the overdraft reduction. The loan is expected to be completed in the year 2003.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: What will this mean in terms of what can be done with the funds?

Mr BURNS: It is substantial. For example, that little bit of money we saved after renegotiating the loan means that that money can go into capital works. This year, we want to train 152 firemen. It costs about \$6.8m to train and pay 152 firemen their wages for 12 months. You have to have that sort of money; you have to be able to free that money up in your system. It is the old story: you pay off your house and you have more money to spend. In this particular case, we have reduced the debt substantially; we have more money to spend. The Commissioner of the Queensland Fire Service, Mr Skerritt, might like to say a few words about what it means to him.

Comr SKERRITT: Certainly, the improvement in the overdraft situation means that all of our budget, with the exception of the reduced repayments on the long-term loan, can now be applied to improving a whole range of facilities. Last year, our capital works program was almost nil; this year, we are up around the \$4m mark, and that is spread right across the State. Further to that, we have our recruitment program, which is a significant improvement over the last year and a record for the year. We are also continuing to improve our training facilities. We are able to apply significantly more funds for our permanent firefighters and auxiliary firefighters in sorely needed training, which will make the job safer for both our firefighters and the public.

In addition to that, we are spending a lot of money in refurbishment of fire stations to improve the living conditions and working conditions of our firefighters so that they look forward to coming to work into a much brighter environment. We are providing training rooms which are sound-proofed and which are much more comfortable for them. So, we are trying to give an all round, more effective environment for our firefighters to operate in over the coming years. So, it is an important aspect. It was a difficult process to reduce the overdraft—there was a price to pay for that—but the benefit now is before us.

The CHAIRMAN: That concludes the first period of questions from Government members. We return now to questions from non-Government members.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: All of my questions this time will be on the Fire Service. I wrote earlier to the research director, Mr Laurie, putting a question on notice to Mr Burns. Mr Chairman, Mr Burns and I have discussed this before, but you indicated that there may be some difficulty with having it accepted. Mr Burns is quite willing to accept it. I now formally move a notice of question with regard to response times for fire brigades.

Mr BURNS: I have to explain, Mr Chairman. Mr Littleproud and I got into trouble here, I think. He put a question on notice to us. We said, "Right, we will see what we can do." Part of the answer is to do with statistics from 1985 and 1988, and we do not have the figures for those years. However, at the same time we told our officers that that was the way to go. That is why Mr Borbidge was going crook this morning. I think we have caused the trouble there. When someone else rang through to the Parliamentary Library seeking more information, our

staff said to the library staff, "They will have to do what Mr Littleproud did and put it on notice." We have now been told by Michele Cornwell, the Deputy Clerk, that there is no process for questions on notice at the Estimates and that questions are just asked at the time of the Estimates. However, I still think the idea of letting us know of the need for detailed information beforehand is not a bad idea because you do end up with the information.

The CHAIRMAN: In that respect, for the benefit of *Hansard*, I ask that Mr Littleproud ask the question.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I want to know the average time that elapses between the time a fire alarm is given and the time a fire appliance arrives at the scene of the fire for the last four years. I want the same average response time for Townsville, Rockhampton, Brisbane and the Gold Coast and the number of firemen employed for every 100,000 people in Brisbane each year from 1985 to 1995.

Mr BURNS: Statistics are not available prior to 1993-94. The collection of meaningful data is still being refined—we are just getting the system under way—but the average response time for 1993-94 was 6.5 minutes. Let me say that my faith in response times and manning levels were really put to the test in the tragic Southport fire where our response with the two pumpers was very quick—exceptionally quick—and we had one and three men on both of them. I have to say that we lost two good, experienced men and that the building was virtually destroyed. The coroner pointed out that operational procedures and equipment were the problem, as he saw it. So, I see it as a combination. While we talk of one and three and while we talk of response times—and everything was right in relation to them at Southport—we still lost two good, experienced blokes, and we cannot afford to do that.

We need a combination of all those things: operational equipment, operational procedures and everything else. When we talk of response times, how fast we get there is not always the answer. Again, on many occasions the time it takes people to ring up affects the result. If someone tries to run around with a hose first and then, when it gets out of hand, rings the fire brigade, by the time the firefighters get there it is too late.

As I said, statistics for the average response time for the last four years for Townsville, Rockhampton, Brisbane and the Gold Coast—statistics are not available prior to 1993-94. The average response times for 1993-94 are as follows: Brisbane, 5.8 minutes; Gold Coast, 6.59 minutes; Rockhampton city 7.02 minutes; and Townsville city 9.58 minutes. My department says that in Townsville distance is a contributing factor and that relocating fire stations is being considered, as is risk mapping the centres of fire cover.

I will now give the figures for the number of fire fighters employed per every 100,000 people in Brisbane each year from 1985 to 1995. In 1985, the Fire Service was run by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Board, covering the city of Brisbane. In 1990, a new region was established which covered

the existing city of Brisbane plus Pine Rivers, Caboolture, Bribie Island, Deception Bay, Capalaba and Cleveland. Staffing was rearranged within the region. This provided some difficulty in ascertaining accurate statistics to compare like with like. In addition to that, the board establishment figures cannot be validated.

An exercise has been undertaken on an estimated basis on data available for 1993-94. The population estimated in Brisbane city was 786,442. The establishment estimated for Brisbane city was 722. The number of firefighters per 100,000 in 1994 was 92. The population protected per permanent firefighter in 1994 was 1,089. One should be careful in comparing the number of firefighters to population because a check will show that Queensland is well served under those sorts of figures. New South Wales, with a population of over 6 million, has one permanent firefighter for every 2,512 people. South Australia, with a population of 1.5 million people, has a permanent firefighter for every 1,625 people. The time has run out, so I cannot give you the rest of your answer.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Could you provide it?

Mr BURNS: I will.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: We are talking about staffing. I refer you to page 49 of the Portfolio Program Statements. It shows an overall increase of staff for the Fire Service of just 28. My memory is good enough to go back to just a week ago when, in front of the House, you spoke to the assembled firemen and said that there would be another 150 firemen coming on. I am having trouble reconciling where that 150 fits into 28.

Mr BURNS: I am sure you would, but you would remember that these documents were produced before we had to negotiate. I waited until after the Southport coroner reported before I met with the UFU and those people about the issues of that particular case and the issues of manning which they have been raising. We promised them on that day—and I will hand over to Commissioner Skerritt—that we would do three courses of 44 this year plus an extra 20. That is where the 152 comes in. The commissioner might like to explain that.

Comr SKERRITT: The figure of 2,027 includes full-time equivalents. It is already showing that we use, in some places, temporary and casual people to supplement and they are converted to full-time equivalents for the purposes of reporting to Parliament. In fact, during 1994-95 the only increases to the Queensland Fire Service staff have been seven rural training officers and four rural inspectors, which are included. Therefore, that figure includes rural staff. That resulted from the recommendations of the Bushfire Audit Report. During the 1995-96 financial year there will be an additional 30 permanent firefighters above establishment required for the new fire station at Gaven. That will be a recurrent expenditure in the order of \$1m per annum.

The situation in relation to the 152 staff mentioned in the media and spoken about by the Minister relates to our normal recruitment process. The Fire Service, across-the-board, including head

office, is currently 94 staff under strength. That is due to workplace reform and review of recruitment procedures. The workplace reform resulted in holding some numbers, because one of the facets of the workplace reform proposal was a spill of senior office positions which would have resulted, with agreement, in a reduction in the number of senior or middle level officers. It was not felt to be appropriate to recruit at that time.

At the same time, it was my considered opinion that the recruitment process of the Queensland Fire Service needed to be reviewed in a number of areas as well, in terms of equity and merit for all sectors of the community. That process took a considerable amount of time. The 152 recruits include the 94 mentioned, plus 40 expected to be lost by attrition in May 1995 to May 1996, and an additional 18 lost by attrition from May to August 1996.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Associated with the statement to the assembled firemen, you said you would be using overtime to come up to the safe standards they were seeking. Already people at the Burleigh Heads station are making statements. They want to know when they are going to get up to the State standard. When do you intend to make this money available?

Mr BURNS: This is why I warn people about arguing about permanent firefighters and numbers. Burleigh Heads has permanent firefighters, Tweed Heads has none. That is why the New South Wales service is able to do certain things in Sydney that we cannot do in Brisbane. For example, Ballarat in Victoria, with 60,000 people—

Mr LITTLEPROUD: But—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister will respond to the question.

Mr BURNS: I will hand this over. That is the argument we have: when those people from Burleigh Heads raise the issue, they do not realise that a lot of other places do it on the cheap. We try to do it with permanents.

Comr SKERRITT: The arrangement that took place after the coronial inquest and before the march was that we held a meeting with the United Firefighters Union, Brisbane branch and the State Committee of Management representatives. The objective of that was to look at the issues related to the coronial inquest and the staffing levels and crewing sizes in Brisbane. At that meeting it was agreed that a working committee would be formed consisting of a broad cross-section of fire officers from across the State and including all regions. It was agreed that in the first instance we would be addressing crew sizes in Brisbane. That was the agreement with the State Committee of Management and the Brisbane branch. At the same meeting it was agreed that we would acknowledge that similar arrangements would be explored in the other regions. I am very much aware that a similar set of negotiations has already taken place with firefighters in what is known as the south-eastern region, which includes the Gold Coast. Some offers have been put to those firefighters by their Assistant Commissioner and I

am advised they accepted those offers late this afternoon. I was advised of that by the secretary of the local branch or the president. I might not have that quite correct, but one of the senior officials has indicated that there is agreement.

Notwithstanding the fact that the figures show that there are no real issues leaping out at the Commissioner of Fire Service saying that there is a major problem in terms of the emergency situation, we are still addressing that through negotiation with the union. I add: the fire call statistics show: for 1989-90, 31,797; for 1991-92, 36,129; for 1992-93, 37,371; and for 1993-94, 34,517. That is a reduction. In terms of fire deaths, the graph is flat. Nothing is significantly leaping out and saying: there is a major problem there.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: While we are still talking about the big picture, I refer you to pages 48 and 49. We see capital outlays and fixed capital expenditure and those sorts of things, and also major activities. Under plant and equipment capital outlays there was an underspending of well over half of the money that you had planned to spend. On the other hand, when it comes to fixed capital expenditure, you were up by \$700,000, which was about three times your budget. Similarly, when it comes to operations, you spent about \$17m less than planned. On training you are up by about \$4m on what you had planned, and on technical support you are up by about \$4m. You spoke before about the purchase of equipment overseas. What other factors were there which caused these variations?

Mr BURNS: The biggest problem is the \$7m allocated to the purchase of appliances. They have not been delivered. Contracts for two aerial ladder platforms were signed on 5 May for this financial year. The delivery agreement is 220 days from the date of signing. Some of those pieces of equipment date back to 1966. They are very old pieces of equipment. The telescopic aerial pumpers were ordered in June and shall be supplied within 240 working days, so they are two-thirds of the year through. The other pumpers ordered in June shall be supplied within 150 days.

Comr SKERRITT: In terms of the increase in capital works for this current financial year—

Mr BURNS: He is talking about the variations, not the increase.

Comr SKERRITT: The variations in the fixed capital expenditure on capital works relate to the addition to our program, through an agreement with the Queensland Ambulance Service, of a project to jointly build a facility at Caboolture. Our contribution to that is \$600,000. We felt that was an opportunity for the Queensland Fire Service to participate in what the department is about, which is to look at opportunities for joint facilities.

In terms of the variations in the Appliance Replacement Program, which is largely the capital outlays, in 1994-95, for the first time in many years, the Fire Service was in a position to order high-reach aerial appliances, telescopic aerial pumpers, and standard pumpers in significant numbers. An increase in the levy had realised an increase in revenue in the order of \$5m for the Queensland

Fire Service and that was to be applied to the capital programs.

The issue at the time was that, rather than each financial year develop an offer arrangement and go to tender for the different kinds of units that we purchased for the Fire Service, we needed to develop five year standing offer arrangements. We developed a five year capital replacement program for the fleet. The fleet was significantly run down. In 1991-92, we had 96 vehicles, and 25 per cent of our fleet was over 20 years of age. In 1992-93, we had 112 vehicles; we were going out backwards. We needed to replace the vehicles at the rate of 26 vehicles per year in perpetuity to mark time. That \$5m enabled us to do that, but we need to develop five year standing offer arrangements. Those standing offer arrangements have caused delays in the ordering process.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: On page 43, under Major Program Issues, dot point five is, "Continue the improvement of incident command radios . . ." I suppose that has a lot of relevance now after the coroner's inquiry, because he made a comment with regard to the equipment that those men had. I have got in mind those completely enclosed suits that firemen have to wear under some circumstances, plus the equipment they should have when they are in a normal fire situation. What have you got planned there?

Mr BURNS: The radio purchase program—we are going to have massive increases in money this year—

Mr LITTLEPROUD: It is the fifth dot point down.

Mr BURNS: It is PPS page 45. It is in our annual report, page 19, and in document No. 6. Last year, for example, in radio purchase, in the northern region we had \$2,400; this year, it is \$54,500 in central. We are going up from \$373,750 to \$598,886. The number of units of portable radio equipment that we are going to buy over the 1994-95/1995-96 period is about 150.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Are they changing the style?

Mr BURNS: Yes. My direction to them, as a result of the inquiry at Southport, was that they had to look at operational procedures and equipment. Equipment is the most important one. The unfortunate two people were down and laying on their radios, I believe.

Comr SKERRITT: There will be significant improvements in communications right across the spectrum, if I can use that term, not just in relation to portable radios, although that will be important. Critically, we need input from the firefighters into the particular kinds of radios that we need.

Mr BURNS: Especially hand-held portables.

Comr SKERRITT: For the hand-held portable radios, there is certainly a changing market. There are intrinsically safe radios that we need to purchase. We also have to have regard to the heavy duty industrial type units and the ability to withstand extreme temperatures, water resistance, microphone capability, and the ability to operate

with gloved hands. We have recently had one of our research officers down in Melbourne to look at hands-free type radios that are available on the market. We already have such radios in Brisbane to be used with fully encapsulated suits, as you said before. The technology is there but, importantly, with the Coronial Inquest Working Committee which has been developed, it will be through that mechanism that there will be full input by the firefighters into the types of radios that are available.

Mr BURNS: Did we not ask the Griffith University to do some research on your communication while wearing breathing apparatus, because that seems to be very much an important point?

Comr SKERRITT: There is no doubt that there is a major problem in relation to the wearing of breathing apparatus and using communications. For example, the in-mask type communications sound good on the face of it, but the continual breathing inside the mask actually activates the radio all the time and the noise levels on the channels are significant. Sometimes there is a downside to the new technology. It has to be carefully researched, and Griffith University is helping us with that.

Mr BURNS: The working party with the union reps is the main way to go.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: You mentioned here that you are going to implement standards of fire cover across the State. Minister, you and I spoke briefly about this once in the House when a piece of legislation was coming up. Could you give me some details of what you have got planned?

Mr BURNS: I am the stumbling block to the standard of fire cover; I have got to say that. The Fire Service wants to do it and I think the union wants to do it, although I think the union might be starting to change its mind a bit now that it has had a look at it. I went to England and Scotland to look at standards of fire cover. The fire chief in charge of the largest fire district in the whole of Europe told us quite truthfully to hasten slowly, that a lot of the standards of fire cover were based on riskmapping from the war—the British standard when they were protecting rail heads and oil refineries and things like that—and he said that sometimes you end up with a major group. For example, at Wynnum, you could understand as a fire cover at the Ampol Refinery that you would have a very substantial number of firemen there. But Ampol has got its own fire service—fully trained people and all the equipment.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Why do we need ours there as well as their own?

The CHAIRMAN: The time for non-Government members to ask questions has expired. You might like to continue that question later. It is now time for Government members to continue with their questions. I call on Mr Sullivan.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I refer you to page 44 of the PPS. I want to ask a question about the Queensland Fire Service Appliance Replacement

Program. It is five dot points up from the bottom of the page. It says that 18 pumper tankers will be delivered within this financial year, along with 10 pumper tankers from the previous year. Has the allocation for this program been increased in this budget? If the urban appliances are replaced, will this have a flow-on effect for country areas with the urban appliances moving out?

Mr BURNS: Most certainly. I will answer the last bit while the fire chief is looking for his figures. It most certainly will. The embarrassing thing is that sometimes when you go out to a rural fire brigade to hand over a vehicle, you find that it is one that is 20 years of age that has been used by the local people in Townsville or somewhere. The case I am using was in Bundaberg where it was going out to Burnett Heads. They are as pleased as punch because they are getting an urban fire vehicle. We hand them out that way. So there is a flow-on effect. As new vehicles go into places like they have been to Acacia Ridge and others just recently—Thursday Island has just got a new pumper—the old equipment can be taken out of there. In the case of the one at Thursday Island, I think it would probably be burnt—or it should be—but the others might be going back into the service somewhere else, as the case may be.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Is that the one that had to be pushed out to the fire?

Mr BURNS: That is the one that had to be towed down to the fire. The fire chief is always embarrassed by this, but it is a story I tell to show how bad the equipment was from the old service. The firemen beat it down on their pushbikes and they had to get the Navy to tow it down the road. The pub burnt down. If a pub burns down on Thursday Island, that is a major disaster.

Comr SKERRITT: This year we will be able to allocate 54 new units to the fleet. That sounds like a bland statement, but it is actually one-eighth of our fleet in one hit. It is the first time that we have ever achieved such an enormous improvement in the Queensland Fire Service fleet. It is sorely needed, so that we do not have the situation that we had in Thursday Island. I am pleased to say that the member for Cook, I think it was, handed over a new appliance for Thursday Island a week or so ago.

Mr BURNS: What do we get this year?

Comr SKERRITT: What we get this year are the two aerial high-reach ladders. One of those will go to the Gold Coast and one will stay here in Brisbane to replace our ageing fleet. There will be eight telescopic aerial pumpers, and they will be spread across Queensland—and I can go into that in more detail later. They will come at a cost of \$600,000 each—\$4.8m. Those types of appliances are very suitable for provincial towns and they will go into places such as Toowoomba, Maryborough, Bundaberg and Rockhampton to replace the very much ageing Cranvel aerial platforms that are in place there. The 20 standard pumpers will be an enormous boost to our normal everyday fleet to enable us to replace those ageing appliances, to get pumpers out into the auxiliary areas. So we do

not just throw them away. They go down to the rural areas; they go out to the other auxiliary brigades—

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: A very quick question. The first two appliances you mentioned; are they the very expensive ones for the high-rise?

Comr SKERRITT: They are.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: What do they cost, approximately?

Comr SKERRITT: They cost in the order of \$1.2m per unit. It is a very expensive business, but we are getting two of those at a total cost of \$2.4m.

Mrs BIRD: If I could just talk to you about regionalisation and specifically the counter disaster area. It is on page 41 of the PPS. The service implemented regionalisation in 1994-95. Can you outline the benefits? Obviously it was successful, because we are continuing with that in this budget. Can you also outline how regionalisation has affected the provision of training?

Mr BURNS: The biggest problem we have with counter disaster services—and I think in emergency services generally where we have larger numbers of volunteers in both the State Emergency Service and the Rural Fire Service—is training. We get a lot of very energetic volunteers, and the big thing is to make certain that they are safe and secure when they do their job. Prior to 1994-95, our CDS service was a centralised structure with areas spread throughout Queensland. It did not provide a focal point within the various regions of the State and that led to some difficulty in developing effective working relationships.

Mr WINDSOR: Prior to regionalisation, we were centrally stationed in Brisbane and we had a training team of six people to cover the whole State. With regionalisation, we have devolved our staff to the regions and each of the members in the region—and the staff ranges from six to seven depending on the region—has a training responsibility with a regional coordinator overseeing it and also he or she being involved in training. This is giving us a much greater chance to meet our clients and particularly the volunteers who are always asking for more and more training. We have been able to achieve that and will be able to achieve that more in the ensuing year.

Dr KELIHER: The staff in the Brisbane office has actually declined from 29 down to 22. At the same time, we have created two new positions in Brisbane—a Director of Policy and Coordination, and a coordinator for our new Cadet Scheme, which has been a great success. Our staff in the regions has increased from 31 to 43, and this includes the position of Coordinator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Emergency Services. The gentleman who undertakes that, Mr Graham Johnson, has done an outstanding job in far-north Queensland. He is a very dedicated officer and has spent a great deal of time on a lot of the remote islands, teaching the Torres Strait Islanders the arts of the SES and also now undertaking first-aid training and rural firefighting skills. Our increased regional capabilities in terms of budget for last year was \$696,000. For this year, it is \$611,000. So the

funding is certainly there and the support is certainly there.

Mr PURCELL: I would not mind asking a question about that SES Cadet Scheme in relation to the training of those cadets—that is on page 37 of the Portfolio Program Statements. Could you tell us the objectives of the scheme—how many we want to train and where? What steps have been taken to establish the scheme? At what centres were cadets established in 1994-95? What plans do you have for expansion or for more cadets in 1995-96?

Mr BURNS: The Cadet Scheme has been really embraced by country Queensland, and especially central Queensland. Ten cadet units were established in 1994-95 at Moranbah, Middlemount, Ingham, Charters Towers, Allora, Southport, Tully, Hughenden, Mount Morgan and Kingaroy. The total number of cadets enrolled exceeds 200. The first thing we had to do was set up in the towns people who are skilled in training and who could handle young people. We plan a further six this financial year and we allocated the same sort of the money last year. That should get us through the stages of what we call the first program.

Local cadet advisory committees, comprising key public identities, have been formed in each centre to support and monitor the activities of the local cadet unit, particularly the selection of the adult leaders. For example, key personnel involved in the formation of the committee would be the SES representative, the local controller or the group leader, the principal of the local high school, elected representatives of local government, representatives of the service clubs, the police officer and the SES district coordinator. The cadets have to serve a probationary period before final acceptance into the unit and then we issue them with a uniform. The uniforms cost us about \$150 each. The cadet units are fostered by the parent SES unit, but they have their own cadre staff of instructors and equipment. It is going quite well.

Dr KELIHER: I add that the scheme was designed for young Queenslanders, particularly between the ages of 13 and 16 years. The objectives of the scheme are to foster new and additional skills and knowledge among these young people, to provide alternative interests and areas of activity for the youngsters, and to support the future development of the SES. That is going to be very fertile ground for future membership of the SES, especially in some of those smaller centres where it is difficult at times to get enough people actively involved. It will also contribute to disaster awareness within the communities. It will promote community involvement and give the young people a sense of community. I think that that is an important thing. It will also, we believe, assist in reduction of vandalism and street crime and so on, which can result from young people having little else to do with their time. We believe that it has been a very positive step, Mr Purcell. I think that the number of centres that are now contacting our organiser and coordinator, Mr Henry Christie, and putting their hand up and asking whether they can start a cadet unit in their own local area is increasing all the time. I would like to place

on the record my gratitude to Mr Henry Christie for the excellent work that he has done in going around the State and organising those things, right down to designing the uniforms and such issues as that.

Mr PURCELL: I have a little supplementary question. Do you have any cadet units in the city yet and why do we not have one at Bulimba? That would be a good place to start.

Mr BURNS: I think we have one on the Gold Coast, which would be the closest one to the city. As I said, the country people have accepted it very well and in those areas a lot of the SESs meet a lot more regularly than those in the city. Maybe this year we will get some in the city. If you want to volunteer, we are looking for some leaders.

Mr PURCELL: You have one.

Mrs BIRD: On page 36 of the 1993-94 QES annual report, reference is made to the establishment of a sexual harassment officer network. Can the Minister explain what steps QES is taking to prevent harassment in the work force? What role does the sexual harassment officer network play in the department's prevention strategy?

Mr BURNS: The Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act prohibits sexual harassment. The Emergency Services experienced six formal reported and resolved sexual harassment grievances and numerous informal harassment complaints and grievances have been managed pro-actively. The department is in a high risk category of organisations vulnerable to harassment complaints. In accordance with the liability provisions in section 153 of the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, Queensland Emergency Services is required to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment in the work force. The department has developed an harassment prevention program which has included the implementation of the following strategies: policies and administrative procedures for preventing harassment and management of grievances have been drafted; all staff, and especially supervisors and managers, have received training and information on how to prevent and manage harassment in the workplace; and to make the resolution of harassment complaints and grievances at the lowest possible level, a network of harassment referral officers and grievance investigation officers has been established.

The role of an harassment referral officer is to provide advice to the complainants of harassment on options for resolution. The training of the networks was conducted on a regional basis during January to March 1995. As a result there are 52 trained harassment referral officers and 22 trained grievance investigation officers. Statistics on the number of cases and the time staff are devoting to the networks will be gathered and maintained during the following year.

The harassment referral officer is to provide support and advice on options available to complainants of harassment and assist the managers in implementation of anti-discrimination

and harassment strategies, assist respondents who may need advice about their options when answering a complaint, promote departmental policies on workplace harassment, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunities and conduct information sessions on workplace harassment, particularly sexual harassment.

The role of the referral officer network is to support the department implementations of policies on workplace harassment, sexual harassment and equal opportunity and assist the department in meeting its requirements under section 113 of the Anti-Discrimination Act, and provide a formal structure which is endorsed by management to address issues of harassment and anti-discrimination.

Dr KELIHER: I add that the department does have an equal employment opportunity management consultative committee, which is chaired by myself and comprises the divisional heads and union representatives from all of the major unions—the Miscellaneous Workers Union, the United Firefighters Union, the State Public Sector Federation and so on. We have a very active committee that meets on a quarterly basis. We have seven regional equal employment opportunity consultative committees and the full-time manager of our Equal Employment Opportunity Program spends a great deal of time working with the sexual harassment referral officers. I think that it has been a great success in our area.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: On page 54 of the PPS, the fifth dot point from the top talks about the development of specifications for improved house numbering for inclusion in model local law. I digress to say that, recently, I wrote to you to see whether we could actually consider a Statewide emergency marker scheme that would affect all of the emergency services. Specifically in this Budget, what steps have been taken by the department to promote the improved system of house and property numbering across the State, which would be the first stage of helping the emergency services to have a better response to their emergencies?

Mr BURNS: The Murgon Shire Council was one of the first to move on this. There is a CORIO system from Victoria, which would help, and which we are trying to talk through with local government. Numbering is one of the biggest problems we have. Just drive up Queen Street tomorrow and see if you can see the numbers on the buildings. If someone rings and says that there is an accident, or someone has got hurt in such and such a building, see if you can find the number. You will find it very difficult. If you go out to the country areas, of course, if they are 20 or 30 miles out of town, they do not have a house number. These days with block numbers as against Australian Post numbers, it is very confusing.

So the project involves the promotion of an improved system of urban and rural property numbering. It is handled by Michael Kinnane and our Statewide services people. Late in 1994, the QES set up a working party coordinated by OPU with representatives from the QES division and the Queensland Police Service to examine difficulties connected with poor urban and rural numbering.

The working party developed a proposal for the development of model local law on an urban and rural numbering system. The Department of Housing and Local Government has agreed to prepare a model law under section 462 of the Local Government Act incorporating standards developed by the QES working party. QES intends to submit a request in July 1995 to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning to draft a model law. We are liaising with the Police Service, the Department of Lands, the Administrative Services Department, the Brisbane City Council and the Local Government Association in our efforts to promote better house and property identification.

At the request of QES, the Local Government Association of Queensland is sending questionnaires to all local governments to identify clearly the level of interest and support for improvements to property numbering systems. ASD is also contacting all Neighbourhood Watch groups on this issue. The Murgon Shire Council has introduced the rural property numbering system preferred by the QES and the Department of Lands. The draft national model for rural addressing is circulated by the Australian and New Zealand Land Information Council Working Group on Rural Addressing. The property numbers are calculated on the distance of each property along the road from a defined reference point. Consideration is being given to a colour-coding system, which will distinguish adjoining local government areas. The QES has provided technical support and advice to the Murgon Shire Council, including a visit to the Murgon Shire in company with the Department of Lands to brief the council on the draft national model. Murgon Shire Council's successful trial has already been received favourably by neighbouring local governments.

The thing about it is that we also need to go a bit further. Old properties in the bush used to have the property name on the roof. One of the my experiences with Allan Windsor was, because of the flood around Rockhampton, we were sending a load of food out and it was dropped at the wrong property. When they got out there and saw all the properties flooded, they found a place that fitted the description we gave them, and dropped the food. It turned out that the bloke down the road had paid for it. He was less than impressed with our efficiency.

Mr PURCELL: Public education in fire safety is a very important part of, in some cases, preventing fires and controlling other fires to do less damage. On page 45 of the Portfolio Program Statements, reference is made to two major public education campaigns to be conducted with Fire Services in 1995-96. Could you outline how the fire education program in schools and the home fire prevention program have been getting on? What do you expect to get out of those programs? Could you give the Committee further information about what strategies Queensland Fire Services is employing to provide public education in fire safety to the community?

The CHAIRMAN: That ends the second time period for questions from Government

members. Perhaps the member might like to ask that question in the next time period. We now turn to questions from non-Government members, and I call on Mr Littleproud to continue his questions.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I turn now to corporate services. At page 33 of the Portfolio Program Statements, there is a table there and the second point in the table refers to the enterprise bargaining framework and agreements. In the column headed "1994-95 Measure/Units" it states—

"Achieved within Agreement timeframes."

I thought that, within Fire Services at least, the enterprise agreement fell over. I would just like you to explain that.

Mr BURNS: I think that is referring to the public service section, which has agreed to it. Sue Bradshaw might like to talk on this particular matter.

Ms BRADSHAW: The Minister has indicated that the achieved one was the core public service. I might hand over to Gerry to talk about the ambulance, because there has been substantial progress.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: It was the fire one that I was interested in.

Mr BURNS: In the meantime, the ambulance one has got to a stage at which there is agreement between the union and the Ambulance Service about enterprise bargaining. It now has to go to a special purpose Cabinet committee, and then I think it goes to the workers for their vote.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I was going to ask about the core public sector enterprise agreement.

Ms BRADSHAW: The core has actually been to the ballot already, and has been accepted by the members. It was certified on 5 May.

Mr BURNS: In the case of the Fire Commissioner, he will give his version of what is happening.

Comr SKERRITT: As you described it to Mr Littleproud, the enterprise agreement fell over in terms of the Fire Service—

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Workplace reform.

Comr SKERRITT: We are not into enterprise bargaining at this stage with the firefighters. Under the industrial relations process, we were required to complete our negotiations under the structural efficiency principles, which were handed down by the Federal Industrial Relations Commission, I think, back as far as 1988. I would have to seek advice on that. There were delays in the Fire Service completing that. The proposal was put to the members. Whilst there was an interim agreement with the UFU State committee of management at the time and the Senior Officers Association, the membership in both areas rejected it—the "No" vote outweighed the "Yes" vote. Therefore, it has been essential to go back to the members to identify what were their concerns. We will be in the Industrial Relations Commission on 17 July, and 11 days are set aside for the hearing. The firefighters have received the \$8 safety net enterprise bargaining payment and we are

negotiating enterprise agreements with some of our support areas within the framework.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: So you would be satisfied that that statement is an accurate statement?

Mr BURNS: What is that?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: In view of the answer given, you would agree with the statement in the table on page 33 that the enterprise bargaining framework agreement was achieved within agreed time frames.

Mr BURNS: Yes. I am advised by my director-general, very much so.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: All right. Page 35 gives the table of the staffing resources within corporate services. Under "Executive Coordination" there is listed 30 administrative staff plus one professional. The director-general made some comment a while ago, but would you regard that 31 in terms of executive coordination as probably something that you could cut back on?

Mr BURNS: I will play a bit of politics with you for a minute. The other day, Mr Borbidge said outside here that he would cut \$9.6m out of corporate services. I have to tell you, if he does, someone has to pay the wages, someone has to answer the phones, someone has to pay the leases and organise the leases, and someone has to run this group behind us. If he does not do it with people who are on AO2, AO3 and AO4 salaries, he will be doing it with firefighters, who are on a substantially increased salary compared with them. So that statement out there, while it got a cheer, will bring a frown to your face if you have to implement it.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I probably will.

Mr BURNS: You should hope. For example, there are 120 staff in the Fire Services' corporate services. If you had to sack them, the redundancy costs for that staff would cost \$5m. If you abolish the staff and use the firefighters instead, it would cost you an extra \$6.115m a year just to pay them alone. You would have to get another \$4.93m for lease payments, CITEC charges, bank and Auditor-General fees, because he has done away with that \$9m.

Not only would that leave you in a difficult position; you would not be able to pay the staff. You would probably save \$97m per year because no-one would be employed to pay out the wages. Mr Borbidge's statement was very stupid. We need public servants. As you know, I got angry with it for its criticism of others. I do not think that workers ever achieve much by asking for someone else to be sacked. In all of my time in the union movement, I have never felt that workers, in demanding something for themselves, gain anything by saying, "The best way to do it is to get rid of those other fellows over there." People keep saying, "Change the 10/14 shift. Do this, do that." We cannot work on the basis that we fix things by sacking or attacking others rosters, etc.. Let us ask Sue Bradshaw, for example, whether the 31 administrative and professional staff are related to

executive coordination. Can you tell us what their jobs are?

Ms BRADSHAW: Executive coordination is basically the office of the director-general, but it also includes internal audit, which is accountable to the director-general. It includes our legal staff, our Cabinet liaison staff and our ministerial correspondence. In view of the increasing potential for litigation, this is a fairly key area. It also includes administrative secretarial support as well. As I said, it contains internal audit. Its focus is on accountability and checking that the department is meeting the requirements of the Financial Practices Manual and the standards imposed by the State and Commonwealth Governments.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I refer to page 31, the fourth dot point down, in relation to performance in 1994-95. In respect of human resource management policies, the last line mentions dispute resolution. The problems that the auxiliary fire brigade at Roma had would still be fresh in the Minister's mind. At that time, I thought that the dispute resolution processes in place under the PSMC for full-time employees could create hassles in respect of auxiliaries. In hindsight, have you given any thought to what has happened in that regard?

Mr BURNS: I have thought about it a bit. This organisation, for which I am the responsible Minister and for which you would like to be the Minister after the next election, is mostly based on volunteers. We have to have procedures in place to take account of the differently paid areas. The problem at Roma—and I will let the fire chief tell you his concerns about that—was that the man in charge could not control his officers. He had one person who would not agree with him. There was a split in the ranks. There was a very bad management problem.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I am more interested in the administrative side of it.

Comr SKERRITT: It was a difficult management process, but it was important that the process be followed. At the time, the process required the commissioner and his officers to follow the guidelines as laid down by the PSMC. In respect of managing people, in discussions with the Mayor of Roma the ability of the commissioner to simply sack people because other people did not like them and how that would sit with the local council was raised. Notwithstanding the fact that these people are part-time employees, when they are working for the commissioner under the Act they are employees of the commissioner and therefore subject to the legislation and all of the other protections provided for employees. The fact that there was one person out there who seemed not to be popular with the others did not diminish my responsibility to make sure that that person was protected and at least the proper resources used. We did use local resources. We used the Community Justice Program—

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Mediation.

Comr SKERRITT: —to try to bring the parties together to talk and work it through at the local level. We kept the mayor fully informed

throughout the whole process, because it is very much a local issue and we recognise the importance of local authorities. We have negotiated with the auxiliary association recently. We have put to it a proposed dispute and grievance procedure for auxiliaries. That is still in draft form at this stage. It is still with the auxiliary association. We are also waiting for it to respond to that before we put it in place. We are also looking at leadership training for our auxiliary captains.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Thank you for that answer. This issue is important.

Mr BURNS: A bit of leadership training would help. These people come through the system without going through the permanent firefighters development scheme. It is important that the leaders be trained to be able to handle their men and women.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: My next question concerns the Statewide service, in particular the appointment of people to permanent positions within the SES. You would be aware of an ongoing saga in north Queensland. The message coming to me seems to be that the volunteers want to be led by permanents who understand the ethos of the SES movement. I understand that there are still problems. That position has not yet been filled. Can you comment about when that position is likely to be filled and what your selection criteria are?

Dr KELIHER: That position was originally filled in January this year, as you know. There was quite an uproar from some sections within the far-north SES groups. The officer who was successful in getting that position decided against taking up the position. For his own personal reasons, and in spite of the fact that he was the most meritorious candidate, he withdrew his acceptance of the position so the job fell vacant once more. The position was then readvertised fairly swiftly thereafter. It was first advertised some time late in February. I had some concerns. I had been away on recreation leave when the previous incident blew up. I was not entirely satisfied that the key selection criteria addressed sufficiently the problems raised by the people in far-north Queensland. Their particular concern was that the senior training officer for the SES was required to have all of the SES qualifications. That is not necessarily the case, but I can understand their point of view.

In search of clarification, I reviewed the issue and later referred it to the Public Sector Management Commission. There are some positions in the Government for which you are entitled to say, "Only qualified engineers can apply." This ad did not say that you had to be a qualified SES training officer. That was where the delay was encountered. The time that has now elapsed between that position being advertised and the present day will require me to readvertise the job. I intend to readvertise the job and it will be filled within the next two to three months.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Will it have different terms of reference?

Mr KELIHER: No, it will have the same terms of reference. That has been clarified.

Mr BURNS: They have cooled off a lot. A lot of the people were resigning and so on. But we were getting to the stage at which only one person could have won the job the next time around. If a position is advertised, everyone has to have a fair go.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I do not have much time left. I cannot let this question go by. I refer to an article in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* in relation to funding for the Point Danger Air Sea Rescue, which stated that the State Government admitted to being misled by a bureaucratic blunder in respect of who was going to get the money. Initially, you said that, because it was based in New South Wales, it could not receive funding. You have now changed your mind. I am pleased to see that you have found a solution.

Mr BURNS: It is a bad solution, really, but it is a solution that satisfies our people down there. Merri Rose did a lot of work on it. The problem is that we rescue a lot of people in New South Wales through that helicopter service, but New South Wales does not put up any money. We give the air/sea rescue at Point Danger just under \$20,000, but New South Wales gives it only \$750. It is really a bad-news story as far as New South Wales is concerned.

This year, we are funding air/sea rescue units to the tune of \$750,000. There is funding on a dollar-for-dollar basis and there is funding on endowable receipts, etc. A marine rescue organisation made up of air/sea rescue units, coastguards, lifesavers and others meets in our department, and it distributes the money. At one stage, that group was in the process of issuing accreditation to air/sea rescue units. The air/sea rescue people at Point Danger raised the issue that they were based in New South Wales but we were demanding that they be accredited. At that time, the matter came to a head. The recommendation from the marine rescue group through the office was that the Point Danger group be removed from the system.

I asked everybody whether they were happy with that recommendation, and everybody said that they were happy, so I signed the docket. Then I found out that everybody was not happy, including Merri Rose, who ran a massive campaign kicking the daylight out of me—and she wears pointed shoes, so I gave in; simple as that.

Mr KELIHER: There are quite a few parties involved, and I think the problem started in the translation between what the rank and file said at Point Danger, what the management of Point Danger said, what they said to the air/sea rescue zone committee, what that group said to the State committee, what they then said to the Queensland Volunteer Marine Rescue Committee, what was then passed on to our blue-water area, through our counter-disaster services, through Allan Windsor to me to the Minister, and in each translation a bit was lost.

Mr BURNS: Sometimes a lot was lost.

Mr KELIHER: The sadness of the people at Point Danger eventually became joy, and the Minister then required me to speak to those people and find out the facts of the situation. We have not only resolved the issue of their funding but they have also received an additional \$8,000 to replace the motors in their boats, and they will receive additional funding this financial year.

Mr BURNS: I will write to New South Wales demanding that they do their share. They ought to do the right thing by that service.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I will make a suggestion. We dragged a lot of grain from around Moree through Goondiwindi. You might get some out of Ken Hayward!

The CHAIRMAN: The time for that period of questions from non-Government members has expired. We move now to the final period of questions from Government members.

Mr PURCELL: I return to the question on safety that I asked when the bell rang in the last session. I must learn to wear pointy-toed shoes if that is how one gets a bit out of you!

Mr BURNS: We are running a specific Fire Education in Schools Program. Let me say first up that there are some marvellous fire officers who are keen to do something in this area. A group of them has produced a little reduced-size fire-engine named Phil the Fire-engine with all the minor hoses and little uniforms for kids, and it is an instant success wherever they take it. That has been done by them and not by the Fire Service; it is completely their initiative.

Specifically, this year we want to take the Fire Education in Schools Program to 50,000 Grade 1 school children. That is a huge initiative for the department. We want to increase the promotion of domestic smoke alarms in accordance with the Fire Service policy of advocating the installation of smoke alarms in all homes. Smoke alarms do not put the fire out, but they most certainly give people a chance to be warned, to get our fire people there a bit earlier and get people out of the house before anything goes wrong. We want to improve the awareness of operational staff to their fire safety and public education duties.

We have undertaken the production and distribution of literature, including posters, the *Fire Safety in the Home* booklet and smoke alarm brochures. We will do that in conjunction with the Ethnic Communities Council to provide literature to specific target groups. Smoke alarm brochures will be printed in 11 non-English languages. As to the aged—150,000 smoke alarm brochures will be distributed through the Queensland Police Service's Crime Prevention/Home Secure Program so that we can get them into the homes. The service will acquire a display caravan to physically demonstrate the benefit of domestic sprinkler systems and smoke alarms. If you have ever been into one of the smoke-filled rooms that they practice in, you will realise that once the lights go out and the room is full of smoke it is pretty dangerous.

The service delivers daily responses to telephone requests for advice on various fire safety

topics. It also conducts lectures and demonstrations on fire extinguishers, and school visits are undertaken by operational crews. Some of our firemen are getting into Adopt-a-Fireman, similar to the Police Service's Adopt-a-Cop initiative. The service will liaise with the public and private sector in the provision of specific information relating to the building industry, including building owners. It will participate in formal activities with other fire industry-allied bodies—including the Australian Fire Protection Association—for Fire Awareness Week, which will run from 9 to 13 October this year. Fire officers speak at seminars, conferences and community group meetings such as Neighbourhood Watch and Rotary meetings. There is also the distribution to the community and/or regulatory authorities of information on hazardous practices and dangerous products identified by the activities of the Fire Investigation Unit.

It should be remembered that many houses burn down during rural fires because people have stored 44-gallon drums of fuel under the house, they have left all of their gutters full of leaves, they have done a silly thing and grown flammable trees right up to the house or, in many cases, have left no access so that a fire-engine can reach their house. In places not so far from Brisbane, we could not get a fire-engine to certain houses. People do not take their cars down to their houses and they do not want us to get down there, either.

Mr PURCELL: Just a brief supplementary question—when will you legislate to make it compulsory for new homes to be fitted with smoke detectors?

Mr BURNS: That is not a matter for us; it is covered by the Building Code of Australia, and you would have to ask that question of Terry Mackenroth and his department. But we strongly support the idea of the compulsory installation of smoke alarms in new homes. Smoke alarms are not expensive. People can buy them for nine bucks or pay only 20 bucks and 30 bucks for the expensive ones. The fire officers in many areas will be only too pleased to come down and show you where to put them. People can buy battery-operated detectors so that there are no major problems with installation. We would rather that people purchase the more expensive pieces of equipment, because the batteries run out and if people have not replaced the batteries on a regular basis that could be a problem. I believe that running a campaign encouraging people to give grandma a smoke alarm and give her the new batteries every birthday is the way to go.

Mr KINNANE: The Committee would be aware that on the first page of the PPS under the Strategic Overview we refer to the focus of QES, particularly in developing public education and preventive programs. That document refers to a range of community education initiatives which are being coordinated by the Public Education Unit very closely with all the operational divisions, particularly Fire and Ambulance. I want to reiterate the points made by the Minister and point out further that the projects being conducted by the Public Education Unit this year include two-page advertisements in

every edition of the Queensland *White Pages* outlining what to do in an emergency. We have received sponsorship to the tune of \$40,000 for that project. For the Fire Ed Project—which the Minister referred to—aimed at Grade 1 students throughout the State, we have received sponsorship to the tune of \$40,000 from Suncorp, and we are looking forward very shortly to what should be the very successful launch of that program.

Mr BURNS: In July.

Mr KINNANE: In July, and the subsequent training of firefighters to attend schools. There will be a fire alarm display, which is a display caravan that can be promoted throughout Queensland highlighting the benefits of installing a smoke alarm. The positive feature of that is that the caravan will travel throughout the regions. We are hoping that in 1995-96 we might be able to purchase a second display. General safety and warning messages are being developed which target the general community and supplement other programs. So the Public Education Unit of Queensland Emergency Services has very much a focus on raising public awareness on what to do in an emergency and how to be better prepared.

Mr KELIHER: May I add that Rowan Clem and John Davies were the people who did most of the work developing Phil the Fire-engine, and Bob Hammill and Graham Metcalf from our Public Education Unit have done an enormous amount of work with the Queensland Fire Service.

Mrs BIRD: I refer the Minister to page 59 of the PPS, which refers to a figure of \$0.13m for the Women in War Exhibition and \$0.021m for the Troop Train. I ask: what major activities are planned for those projects? Are there any plans for the exhibition to be shown to people in my electorate in particular and those in regional and rural Queensland? What is the total cost of the projects?

Mr BURNS: I will get the figures out; Michael can answer you in a moment. The Troop Train and Women in War initiatives are part of the State Government's contribution of \$425,000 totally to Australia Remembers, but in addition to that \$425,000 there are contributions from the departments. For example, Queensland Rail is supplying two steam engines and the carriages for the train; it is also providing us with \$70,000 in subsidy towards it. Vince O'Rourke and Queensland Rail have been very valuable supporters. A lot of other people are supporting us, such as the ABC and others. It will be a major event, travelling up the coast. There will be stops in Proserpine and Bowen. In fact, the train will stop overnight in Bowen and overnight in Mackay—in both ends of your electorate.

Two hundred veterans have already booked themselves on the train and we have received expressions of interest from local authorities, CWAs, the Salvation Army and everybody all along the coast for massive displays in each of those towns. I think it will be a great and nostalgic event for Queensland.

The Women in War initiative is a little different. We thought that the whole of the concentration

seemed to be on the Army, Navy, Air Force—the men. However, now that the celebrations are beginning, we decided that we should do something about the women's side of it. We got together to help celebrate 50 years since the end of the war. We wanted to acknowledge the contribution made by women, the Land Army, women who worked in all of the trades and women who went to war themselves. So, this major tour of this material produced by the museum and our department will go to Townsville, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton, Cairns, Ipswich and Toowoomba. There will then be a second tour—the remote tour—to Miles, Roma, Wandoan, Stanthorpe, Charleville, Cloncurry and Barcaldine. Michael might want to say something about this.

Mr KINNANE: As the Minister has said, your question refers to the two projects of Women in War and the Troop Train, which have been coordinated by the operational planning and policy unit in QES and the public education unit in QES respectively. Funding of \$150,000 has been earmarked for both projects. As the Minister has said, the Women in War exhibition is being developed to celebrate 50 years since the end of the war in the Pacific and the wonderful contribution made by women to Australia's war effort during World War II.

The Minister has referred to two planned tours of the exhibition. The larger of the two will be held at the Queensland Museum and major provincial cities while a comprehensive display, including reproduction of the original material, will travel through seven centres in western and far-north Queensland. The Minister has referred to a number of those centres which include, of course, Mackay City. The major regional tour will be there between 25 September and 7 October in the Mackay Library.

The CHAIRMAN: The time for that answer has expired.

Mrs BIRD: Can I get that information?

Mr KINNANE: Certainly.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: On page 31 of the Program Performance Statements, the latter half of the fifth dot point states—

"Other major systems in the process being developed include the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) for Fire and Ambulance, the Ambulance Integrated Management System and Lifedata system for the Office of Consumer Affairs."

My question is specifically on the CAD system. How does it work and what cost savings do you expect to accrue from this new system in the Brisbane area?

Mr BURNS: I am computer illiterate so I will hand this question over to the Ambulance Commissioner.

Dr FITZGERALD: Basically, Computer Aided Dispatch involves the use of computers to identify the appropriate resource to respond to a call for assistance. In essence, most of them are based on a map of some form on which the resources are displayed and the computer aides the dispatcher in identifying the nearest vehicle, be it ambulance vehicle or fire vehicle, or whatever, to respond to a

particular call for assistance. The QES has budgeted \$5m in 1995-96 for this project. Computer Aided Dispatch actually has two major thrusts, and one is an effectiveness issue. As I said before, it actually improves the effectiveness of the use of resources and in fact has an impact on reducing response times both for fire and ambulance vehicles.

It is also an issue of increased efficiency. Computer Aided Dispatch rooms are much more efficient in terms of the utilisation of dispatches and call-takers than are manual rooms. We would anticipate that the expenditure on the Computer Aided Dispatch would be recouped by savings in efficiency both within the room and in the appropriate use of our fire and ambulance resources within a relatively short time—within a matter of five to 10 years.

The proposed system will be a common system for both fire and ambulance. It is likely, however, that the system will serve two separate communication rooms in the Brisbane area initially. We are in the process of evaluating tenders at this stage and are down to the last two tenderers. We would anticipate making a decision within the next few months and proceeding to implement Computer Aided Dispatch in Brisbane during 1996. We would then develop proposals, if you like, for the roll out of that system into the remainder of the State.

Mr BURNS: I will ask them to go slowly on it and make certain that they are thoroughly investigated, because when we were in London we went and saw something similar at the London Ambulance Service, which has had two goes at implementing Computer Aided Dispatch. It put \$4m into one and I think another \$4m into the second and lost all of it. The system collapsed both times. Of course, the officers who put it in were not there, we met the new officers. We have told everyone to be very thorough and to try to buy a system that is operating somewhere that we know is good. The reason the time factor is not as quick as we would like it is because of that.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I would like something clarified. Dr Keliher and Dr Fitzgerald might be able to do that. Dr Keliher, could you enlarge on that last statement? Dr Fitzgerald, did I hear you correctly when you said that there will initially be two separate rooms but the system is integrated and then you will move both of them to an integrated single location?

Dr KELIHER: The thing that is important about the CAD project is that it will facilitate instantaneous recording of incident information using the Telecom OOO enhanced service and it will allow the optimal allocation of resources. It is a

real-time safety critical control system that integrates our radio, telephone and some of our external interfaces, including the fire alarm system that Commissioner Skerritt referred to earlier on, patient medical alarm, station turn-out, hazardous chemical databases, pagers and mobile data terminals in vehicles. Can I just mention also that the CAD project and the mobile data terminal systems are also linked in to what is known as Rec 57, that is, recommendation 57 of the PSMC report into Emergency Services, where police and Queensland Emergency Services are working closely to effect these outcomes, including mobile data and CAD. We will also facilitate statistical reporting and other computing systems such as hospital systems.

Dr FITZGERALD: With respect to the second part of your question—and Commissioner Skerritt might like to add something from the fire point of view—it is quite possible to run a number of communication rooms off the same computer system. The final decision has not been made, but it is possible that we continue to have separate fire and ambulance communication rooms in the short term, depending on the building or the prospect of an inner-city emergency centre, where a new joint location would then be built. It is also possible to bring, for example, the south coast region onto that same computer system and just operate from another node in the south coast off the same actual box.

Comr SKERRITT: The reason they will be running parallel initially is because we need to settle down the Telecom problem with the fibre-optic cable and put in the new alarm systems. It will then be much easier to cut across to the single room after that is actually completed, but there are no disadvantages in running it in parallel. The systems will be the same. Should the Ambulance Service system fail for some reason—and there is certainly significant redundancy built in to prevent that—they could come across to the communication centre at the Fire Service and operate there on an emergency basis. That is what Rec 57 is about as well. That is why we are talking to the Police Service about systems that will talk to each other. It is a real commonsense approach to mobilising.

The CHAIRMAN: There are only about 30 seconds to go. As the time is almost up, I think we will stop there. The time allotted for the consideration of the Estimates of expenditure for Queensland Emergency Services has now expired. On behalf of the Committee, I thank officers from QES for their attendance and advise that they are now excused. The Committee's hearing will now be suspended until 7.40 p.m.

Sitting suspended from 6.40 to 7.40 p.m.

OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**In Attendance**

Hon. T. Burns, Deputy Premier, Minister for Emergency Services and Consumer Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier on Rural Affairs

Dr Leo Keliher, Director-General

Mr John Sosso, Director, Policy and Legal Division

Mr Neil Lawson, Commissioner for Consumer Affairs

Ms Sue Bradshaw, Executive Director, Corporate Services Division

The CHAIRMAN: The next item for consideration is the Office of Consumer Affairs. The time allotted is 40 minutes. For the information of new witnesses, the time limit for questions is one minute and for answers it is three minutes. A single chime will give a 15-second warning and a double chime will sound at the expiration of these time limits. As set out in the Sessional Orders, the first 20 minutes of questions will be from non-Government members, the next 20 minutes from Government members and so on in rotation. The Sessional Orders also require that equal time be afforded to Government and non-Government members. Therefore, where a time period has been allotted which is less than 40 minutes, that time period will be shared equally. The end of these time periods will be indicated by three chimes. For the benefit of *Hansard*, I ask the departmental officers to identify themselves before they answer a question.

I now declare the proposed expenditure for the Office of Consumer Affairs to be open for examination. The question before the Chair is—

"That the proposed expenditure be agreed to."

Mr Burns, do you wish to make a short introductory statement in relation to the office?

Mr BURNS: I do.

The CHAIRMAN: You understand that you are limited to two minutes?

Mr BURNS: Yes. Over the past year, there have been significant changes in legislation provisions to enhance the position of consumers. A key achievement during the year was the finalisation of the Systematic Review of Business Regulations which involved the completion of some 20 reviews of legislation administered by the Office of Consumer Affairs and its certification by the Business Regulation Review Unit.

In terms of consumer education, the Office of Consumer Affairs produced a booklet titled *Your First Used Car*, which was made available to all senior secondary school students to assist in particular young Queenslanders with what is likely to be their first major financial commitment. Information material was produced and distributed widely dealing with such matters as consumer issues facing senior citizens through the Age Wise Kit and new brochures on the Security Providers Act and the Auctioneers and Agents Act.

In the middle of April this year, the Queensland Motor Vehicles Securities Register, or QMVSR, was converted to the New South Wales REVS service. The link-up with REVS provided protection by including the encumbrance registers of New South Wales, Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. As a result, consumers can now obtain, with one telephone call and one fee, a guarantee of information on encumbrances in five States or Territories. After experiencing various technical problems, the REVS system is now operating in a stable environment and approximately 1,200 telephone clients are being connected to the service on a daily basis with an average waiting time of only two minutes for their call to be answered. A facsimile service handling approximately 900 faxes per day is in operation and there is little delay for persons trying to use this service. Significantly, since the conversion to REVS, over 900 new accounts have been created for motor dealers who never purchased certificates prior to the cut-over date of 17 April.

Most importantly, there will be an improved delivery of services offered under the Fair Trading Program through its regional network of offices. The progressive computer linking of regional offices will enable more Queenslanders in regional and remote areas to enjoy similar levels of services to people in the south-east corner of the State. As part of a stronger compliance program, ticketable offences or on-the-spot fines will be introduced across a broad spectrum of legislation, which will allow prompt attention to breaches of the law. A major new initiative will be the monitoring of payments by financial institutions to the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund through a new computerised database and close scrutiny of trust accounts held by banks and other institutions.

The Births, Deaths and Marriages Regulations will be amended to allow for the recording of additional information, for example Aboriginality and mother's occupation, and additional new products such as special birth certificates which are being sought by clients of the Office of Consumer Affairs.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Minister. The first period of questions will commence with non-Government members.

Mr ROWELL: At the outset, I would like to express my disappointment at not being able to access the normal channels of using the Parliamentary Library to obtain information regarding consumer affairs. I understand that I should have gone through the Cabinet Liaison Office to get this type of information. I think, in hindsight, the Government should look at this process because the facilities of the library are very important. I think it is another mechanism that members can use to gather information.

Mr BURNS: Mr Chairman, could I expand on that? We should apologise to Mr Rowell. The problem is that Mr Littleproud, as the spokesperson on Emergency Services, wrote through the Chairman to me seeking three questions on notice. We accepted that was the program as it came through the Chairman. When a request was made from the library for information from Mr Rowell, we

said he had to go through the Chairman because that is what Mr Littleproud had done. We have now been told by the Deputy Clerk that there is no such thing as questions on notice for the Estimates Committees.

We are sorry that you were dealt with in that way; we expected that that was the process. It is our fault in that regard and not the library's or the CLLO's.

Mr ROWELL: I accept that. The first question that I have is on the PPS, page 27, in relation to the program outlays and funding sources. That deals with the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund. There is a list of current and opening balances and certainly expenditure, which I believe will come to some \$19.535m all together. What proportion of the fund is contributed by the real estate industry and what proportion is contributed by the motor vehicle industry itself?

Mr BURNS: I do not know if I have the exact figures. The motor vehicle industry is a small proportion in comparison with the real estate industry. Do we have that breakdown in figures?

Mr SOSSO: No, Minister, but the situation is that the vast majority of funds which go to the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund are from interest on trust accounts. In very rare cases, motor dealers have trust accounts. I cannot give you a breakdown, but obviously almost all of the money flowing to the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund comes either from the trust accounts of auctioneers or the trust accounts of real estate agents. Obviously real estate agents, motor dealers, debt collectors and auctioneers pay licence fees but, except in the case dealt with in the Act where a special contribution is called, almost all those licence fees are paid to the Consolidated Fund rather than to the credit of the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund.

Mr ROWELL: Would it be possible to get those figures, Mr Sossso?

Mr SOSSO: With respect to how much money is credited to the fund?

Mr ROWELL: Yes, from each particular organisation that produces the funding.

Mr SOSSO: Yes, that could be obtained.

Mr BURNS: We will take that on notice.

Mr ROWELL: All right. What proportion of the funds claimed as disbursements is accounted for by the real estate industry and what proportion by the motor vehicle industry?

Mr BURNS: We should be able to give you that. That is broken down in a set of figures that we have available and which have been supplied to me. We will have to take that on notice again, I am sorry.

Mr ROWELL: All right. According to Mr Sossso last year in the Estimate Committee, *Hansard* page 162, the main purpose of the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund is to "assist consumers who have been disadvantaged as a result of the actions of

licensees." What consideration has been given to adjust the overall levels of contributions to actually reflect the real needs of meeting the purposes of the fund by the contributing industries?

Mr SOSSO: As I said, the purpose of the fund was to benefit consumers disadvantaged by the actions of licensees. I think I mentioned last year that in 1991 the Act was amended to provide a greater use of moneys in the corpus of the fund. I am not relying on any material in front of me, but I think that by 1990-91 the fund had risen to approximately \$100m. There had been a number of reports from the Auditor-General saying that it had risen beyond the level that it should. In 1991, Parliament passed legislation allowing a greater use of moneys from the fund. To my knowledge, as from 1992 one of the purposes of the fund has been to enable vocational education for industries regulated under the Act, that is, motor dealers, real estate agents and debt collectors.

Over the past two years, moneys have been paid from the fund to the assistance of those industries. For example, in October 1993, applications were called for the provision of vocational education funding grants under the Auctioneers and Agents Act. Fifty-three requests for copies of funding guidelines were received. Fourteen of these requests resulted in applications being lodged to the Office of Consumer Affairs. One of the successful applicants was the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, which was granted \$147,417. In addition to that, a number of other persons who are providing services to persons licensed under the legislation also received funding. I think the answer to your question, Mr Rowell, is as distinct from the situation prior to the 1991 amendments. For the first time in the last two years moneys are actually being paid from the fund to the assistance of persons licensed under the legislation.

Mr BURNS: I also found the answer to that question that Marc asked a moment ago. Remember this: the real estate agents put hardly any money into this fund at all. We take interest off their trust accounts. It is consumers' money that is paid in there as deposits, and it is the interest off their accounts. Do not make the mistake that we are taking money off the auctioneer or agent in this regard. It is your legislation that we are implementing in this regard. Total claims paid to motor vehicle dealers between 1 January 1990 and 1 March 1995 were \$1,952,781.35. Total claims paid to everybody, real estate agents and all, was a total of \$2,682,312.74. It is about \$730,000 for real estate agents and \$1.952m for motor dealers. In relation to motor dealers for 1991-92, there were 202 claims of \$821,000; in 1992-93, \$323,300 for 81 claims; in 1993-94, \$199,444 for 126 claims; and to March 1994, \$164,580 for 72 claims. Amounts paid out due to encumbrances on motor vehicles for the financial year 1993-94 total 14 claims for a value of \$51,184.39. Between 1 July and 31 March, there were three claims for the value of \$12,959. We have only started recovery recently from some of those car dealers. We must remember that they generally hit the toe. In 1992-93, we recovered \$11,500. In 1993-94, we

recovered \$52,115, and from June 1994 to March 1995, \$64,991. We are out pursuing them now and making those fellows that sold the hot car pay the money. The serious recovery started in September 1993 and litigation has commenced. Plaintiffs and summonses have been issued against 18 motor dealers to recover a total of \$283,368.73. In 1990, we did three; 1991, one; 1992, three; and 1994, 11. The recovery program has two effects. Firstly, it provides income to the fund. Secondly, as the industry is now aware of the recovery program it sends a pretty powerful message to the licensee that should they default on their statutory or common law obligations, such as the claims to pay, the full force of the Government will pursue them for the money. This can only increase consumer protection.

Mr ROWELL: Mr Sosso mentioned grants, subsidies and, of course, there is housing that is included as far as a beneficiary of this fund is concerned. For the three years between 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995, could you provide a list of the beneficiaries and the sums advanced?

Mr BURNS: If it is for housing, you will have to ask the Housing Minister. We gave him \$9.5m this year. He makes the decisions through a scheme called the Community Housing Partnership Program, and we do not get the breakdown.

Mr ROWELL: You do not get the breakdown whatsoever?

Mr BURNS: No. We make an allocation to the Housing Department for the Community Housing Partnership Program and the allocation is made by him.

Mr ROWELL: In the Estimates Committee Hansard page 162 last year, 1994-95, I refer to the shortfall in the bank remittance of the trust fund to the Auctioneer and Agents Fidelity Trust Fund, a problem already apparent at that time and during the hearing last year. Who was responsible for the shortfalls? How much money is involved? When is it anticipated that full retrieval will occur?

Mr BURNS: We set up—and I will ask John to support us in a moment on this particular matter—in May 1994 audited bank data compared to the Office of Consumer Affairs data on trust accounts revealed approximately 1,180 trust accounts either not being reported on by banks or requiring clarification as to whether the accounts were subject to the Auctioneer and Agents Act. Due to the ongoing reconciliation process, this figure has now been reduced to some 66 accounts as at 30 April 1995. Monthly interest payments to the fund have increased dramatically since April 1994, when approximately \$491,000 was received from banks, to \$821,000 in January 1995. The significant proportion of this increase is due to the reconciliation process being conducted. One contributing factor leading to the underpayments to the fund has been the lack of an efficient method to reconcile bank remittances against licensees' trust accounts. An ability to electronically compare trust account data with bank payments will ensure that payment deficiencies are minimised. A working party has been set up to oversee the management

of the fund and the valuation of the fund grants and reconciliation interest payments on trust accounts.

The following progress has been made by the working party. Negotiations have commenced with the major banks so that fresh agreements may be made regarding the payment of interest on trust accounts of licensees. In addition, negotiations are taking place with building societies and credit unions. A Cabinet submission is in the process of being prepared on the long-term viability of the fund. Funding has been approved by the Cabinet Budget Review Committee to develop a database to improve the collection of interest payments from banks and to enhance the Office of Consumer Affairs' capacity to regulate auctioneer and agents by integrating licensing, investigations and committee information holdings. Funding has been approved by the Cabinet Budget Review Committee to fund a temporary legal position to seek to recover past interest shortfalls by banks. In 1995-96, a total of \$581,000 has been funded for the total database and legal position. A proposal has been developed also to look at capping the amount which one person may claim from the Auctioneer and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund. We have a claim from an interstate person and one from a Japanese person for \$3m. When they get to those sized sorts of deals maybe the consumer should be aware. Maybe it is not something for our funds to subsidise that type of thing. But we are just looking at that at this stage.

Mr ROWELL: I refer to the PPS statement at page 28, note 2(c). I refer to the sum of \$581,000 allocated to the Auctioneer and Agents Fidelity Fund compliance initiative. Will this expenditure be recovered from any banks and other bodies found to have withheld contributions to the fund?

Mr BURNS: I just spoke about that. We got that from the Budget Review Committee to chase up those people, to put a legal person on and then to provide a base for us to pursue the banks. It is quite obvious that some banks were not paying interest on trust accounts in here. They were paying them either to the agent or paying them somewhere else, but they most certainly were not paying them to us in accordance with the legislation. We are going to pursue them, and the legal person is to go back after that money. That is what the \$581,000 is for.

Mr SOSSO: Your question is: what were the chances of success? As the Minister said, approximately \$177,000 of that money has been put aside for the employment of a funds manager AO6.2, a legal officer PO4.1, and an administrative support AO3.1 as well temporary staff to assist in this. It is impossible to say in advance what the success will be and it is impossible at this stage to say the extent of the number of banks that will be involved because matters are still continuing. As the Minister has said, the problems with banks differ from bank to bank and from one area of the State to another. As the Minister said, in some cases the banks have inadvertently paid the money back to the agents rather than to the credit of the trust fund. In some cases they have not paid the money to the agent or a licensee at all. They may have put it

somewhere else. In some cases, they may have paid it directly to the client. In some cases, the problems have been brought about because branches have not followed head office directions. In some other cases, it is because the head office itself has misunderstood things. In some cases, whole regions of the State have not been complying with it.

In terms of our success in litigation, the quantum of damages etc., will involve a lot of work. It would not be prudent at this stage to telegraph our blows or to indicate which banks are involved, except to say that the involvement of a legal officer will result in a lot of work going ahead and perhaps by this time next year we might have some runs on the board.

Mr BURNS: In relation to the expenses under the \$581,000—we told the CBRC that we thought we would generate at least additional receipts of \$1m. That statement is on page five of the Portfolio Program Statements.

Mr ROWELL: The REVS register is mentioned on page 27. Can you give an indication of the value of the REVS System? How many cases has it turned up of people attempting to sell encumbered or stolen vehicles? Can a breakdown be given of the different groups accessing the registration—dealers, financiers and general public—and also the number of interstate inquiries?

Mr BURNS: In our first 30,000 inquiries, we told 6,215 people that the vehicle that they were trying to buy was encumbered. That is one of the reasons why, although we were encountering problems with it at that stage, we were not prepared to back away from the continuing implementation of the scheme. That would have been removing the chance of those people knowing. The only way to implement the system was to continue with the system that is there.

The problem that we had prior to the implementation of REVS was that most motor vehicle dealers were not even ringing up. That has become very clear since REVS has been implemented. A great percentage of them never took a certificate. It is true to say that some of them sell dealer to dealer, and we have to address that problem. But in addition, they were taking a punt, because they knew the other dealer, and they were passing on the vehicle. In most cases, they were getting away with that. We are demanding a certificate. Remember this about car dealers: we guarantee that if you buy from them and the vehicle is encumbered, you can claim on our fund. If you buy from the backyard dealer along the side of the road or elsewhere, we do not guarantee that we will pay you out. Sometimes the Auctioneers and Agents Committee might decide to help, but in most cases—and when I produce the next piece of legislation—you will not get a repayment if you buy off a backyard dealer or if you buy a vehicle from the side of the road. We are going to remove the right of the Auctioneers and Agents Committee to even have the discretion on it. You will not be protected if you go down that way.

The CHAIRMAN: That concludes the period of questions from non-Government members. I now turn to Government members.

Mrs BIRD: You will recall that I asked you a question during the previous Estimates hearing relating to a matter on page 25 of the Portfolio Program Statements, wherein it states that a ticketable offence notice system will be introduced across a broad spectrum of legislation administered by the Office of Consumer Affairs. I ask the Minister to explain, firstly, the objectives and then the benefits and the likely costs involved in introducing the system.

Mr BURNS: The reason for on-the-spot fines is fairly obvious. Generally, it costs so much of an officer's time to issue a summons to a person and then seek that person in order to bring him or her to court. In a lot of cases people will pay up on the day—or they want to pay—or they do not turn up and the officer's time has been wasted. The objective is to achieve and maintain an improved level of compliance by traders with legislation administered by our office. That is providing some increased community confidence in the marketplace. If you are not prosecuting people when they break the law, people think, "What is the use of having the law?" Officers say that so much time and effort is taken up that they have to decide whether to pursue a fellow or let it go.

The infringement notice system is implemented to improve the level of compliance with consumer protection legislation without increasing court congestion through increased law enforcement activities and to enhance the level of compliance with consumer protection legislation in a cost-effective manner for both Government and traders. Of course, it is a lot easier for them too, if they do not want to appear. The system also encourages traders to compete in an equitable manner consistent with fair trading principles, to develop consumer and trader confidence in the compliance process and promote timely remedial action. Implementation will commence on 12 June 1995 and will initially be restricted to the Trade Measurement Branch for prescribed offences under the Trade Measurement Act 1990. Procedures and policies for the administration of the system have been developed and documented, and a training course for the inspectorate was conducted on 24 May 1995. We expect that the cost of setting it up will be about \$9,000. We expect about \$200,000 in revenue, which will go to consolidated revenue as a result of ticketable offences during the year.

Mrs BIRD: Has that process started?

Mr BURNS: No, it will start on 12 June. We have been out talking to traders and others about it. Most people accept that that is the new way of issuing small fines and offences, but it is up to the trader. If the trader does not want to take an on-the-spot fine, it is like your being picked by the police—you can go to court if you want.

Mr PURCELL: I would like some further information on security providers. On page 24, the Portfolio Program Statements note the commencement of operations of the Security

Providers Act. What has happened since that Act has come into being? Has the Act done what we wanted it to do in regard to licensing those providers? Have we made any money out of it, and are they looking after the consumers that used to get bashed up when they went out for a drink?

Mr BURNS: This is going to take a bit of time, because it is going through the process of training the new people. It replaces most of the Invasion of Privacy Act of 1971 and makes provision for all crowd controllers or bouncers to be licensed. In addition, it requires firms which employ private investigators, crowd controllers and security officers to be licensed. The industry asked for the firms to be licensed.

As at 30 April, the following licences had been issued: security officer, 248; crowd controller, 14; security officer/crowd controller, 501; private investigator, 123; and security firm, 218. Crowd controllers working when the legislation commenced have six months to become licensed; the legislation included a sort of grandfather clause. A major initiative under the new Act is the requirement for new applicants to complete a course of training approved by the chief executive of the department before being granted a licence. Existing licence holders, however, are not required to undertake the training. So if you are working in the industry, you have six months to get a licence, but you do not have to do the training if you are an existing licence holder.

In order to clean up the industry, applicants for licences who have been convicted of certain offences—for example, drugs and assault—within 10 years of applying for a licence are automatically barred from obtaining a licence. All crowd controllers are required to display identification while on duty. Penalties of up to \$6,000 can be imposed on any person employing an unlicensed crowd controller, security officer or private investigator or any person working in those occupations without a licence. The sum of \$100,000 has been added to the base of the department to cover the cost of two staff for licensing and enforcement activities as well as administration costs, that is, postage and database management. In 1993-94, revenue under the Invasion of Privacy Act was \$615,000. For 1994-95, revenue is expected to be \$765,000 of which \$275,000 will be attributable to the Security Providers Act. When all crowd controllers become licensed, revenue for 1995-96 is expected to be around the \$970,000 mark—that is an estimate.

Mr PURCELL: So it is paying its own way?

Mr BURNS: Yes, it pays its own way. Those in the security industry working in nightclubs and the entertainment industry wanted something done, because a very small number of people who really were thugs gave the industry a very bad reputation. The industry would like us to register the people who run Myer or David Jones security, but we have never heard of a Myer security officer bashing up a customer, so we do not think that that is an area where there is a need. We worked on the basis that we only regulate those who need to be regulated. The industry has pushed very hard. They say, "You should register these people who work for David

Jones and Myer." As I said, the little old ladies who go into Myer do not complain very often that the security guard gave them a thumping while they were shopping.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I refer you to page 24 of the Portfolio Program Statements. I understand that the REVS system, the Register of Encumbered Vehicles, a carryover from the Queensland Motor Vehicle Security Register to the national register of encumbered vehicles, took place in April this year and funding is allocated for that system. What are the details of the cost of implementing this national link-up? Could you also supply information on any expected revenue that might come from this?

Mr BURNS: We had to make up our minds as to whether we bought a stand-alone system and did it ourselves or we went into the New South Wales system. It is true to say that we had a bit of trouble when we went in because, within a couple of days going in, the New South Wales system collapsed because we had not been told that they did not have the capacity for the loading of the information we had. But we put our faith in their system, and they have moved very quickly to fix it up. Instead of having 96 per cent capacity, we are now down to 56 per cent capacity, and we are not having the problems that we were having. But there were problems at that stage and we did set out to make certain that none of our inspectors went out to start enforcing the regulations until we got through it. So that was a problem for us.

The No. 2 problem is that, as I said before, we did not know that a whole line of motor vehicle dealers were not making any contact with us previously. We knew that they were not buying certificates and we knew that they were not handing out certificates, because 96 per cent of the people who are selling cars privately and who ring up buy a certificate. It was the dealers. As I said, dealers are protected under the system or dealers' clients are protected under the system. We keep saying to people, "Buy off the dealer because you are protected", but we were not too sure that they were being protected. The initiative now with New South Wales, Victoria, ACT, Northern Territory and Queensland is one phone call, one fee. Remember this, the fee has been reduced for dealers who go on to the computer network. If they have an account with us, it is \$4; if it is sent by fax, it is \$6, and it is \$7 for individuals. If you ring up as an individual, when you get through to the operator, they will ask you for certain dealings. They will give you the three things you need—the engine number, the chassis number and the registration number. At that stage, they ask you if you have got a bankcard. If you have got bankcard, they take the bankcard details and you get the certificates in the mail and the money has gone into the system. So there are no freeloaders on the system. We are just starting a big advertising campaign to convince people buying cars privately that they should use the system.

In 1994-95, we got \$717,000 from the Government for the establishment of the REVS scheme. Since the conversion, the register's telephone service has needed to be staffed by extra people, and we have asked for additional

money for the Client Services Branch to fund REVS' increased activity level from within the existing budget this year. We have sought some extra money. Expenditure for 1995-96 is expected to project about \$800,000, and we think that revenue will be projected at about \$3m for 1994-95.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allocation for that question and answer has concluded. Any further questions?

Mr PURCELL: I will ask one about motor cars, seeing that we are fully revved up.

Mr BURNS: What motor cars?

Mr PURCELL: In regard to the sale of motor cars. Consumer Affairs has had a campaign with regard to first-car buyers—in regard to the younger kids. You have put out a booklet and I just want to know if that has been successful.

Mr BURNS: Yes, it was, to the degree that we ran out of books. We have had to start to reprint it. As most members would know, and you have been members for a while, we send you a lot of material and you generally put them on a rack in your office. The next time we send out a different booklet, you throw those old ones away. In a lot of cases, they are never used. With this one, we had requests for more booklets. We took them to schools and, in fact, launched them at the Wynnum North school in my own electorate. It was called *Your first used car. Buy with your head and not with your heart.* I think that most members of Parliament would have experienced the Monday mornings when mum turns up with young John or young Sally. They bought a car on Saturday. They had gone down to buy a \$1,000 Holden and they have ended up with an \$8,000 one that is red, and they have got a big debt over them.

Mr PURCELL: Mag wheels.

Mr BURNS: I have to say to you that we are also looking at a cooling-off period—a 24-hour, one full business day cooling-off period to address some of those problems, too. If you are talking about a cooling-off period, you would not be allowed to take the car off the premises. You cannot take the car out of the yard. In addition, the dealers are worried about other things. We need to address the dealer's side of it, because you could go around every caryard and book up a car in each place and sit back on Monday morning and make up your mind which one you wanted. So we have to address that.

That booklet has been a success. The RACQ has put out a different one. Basically, ours is for young people, particularly for Year 12 students. We are concerned that too many school leavers are scammed by unscrupulous dealers. I am not talking about the caryard dealer, I am talking about the bloke on the side of the road. The nice-looking car is generally parked on the highway where 22,000 cars a day drive past.

The unfortunate part about it is that a lot of the backyard dealers buy their supplies off the registered dealers. The registered dealers get rid of the cars. In fact, they say to you, "Where are we going to get rid of the cars they can't sell?" So they

sell them to the backyarder, who then on sells them from there. So we have to warn the kids, and we have to warn ourselves. It is the first big investment for most kids. As soon as they turn 17, they get a licence and then they want a car. It is that point in time where you can really ruin your future by your investment. If you buy a bomb or buy a lemon at that particular time and you are paying off that lemon and you have not been able to use it, then really that is a drain on your finances and it is a really bad start to dealing with people in the industry.

Mrs BIRD: I am interested in the Business Names Compliance Project, which was established within the Fair Trading Program to improve compliance with the Business Names Act. How successful has the program been in increasing compliance with the Business Names Act? Also, what have been the costs accrued to date on the project, if you have those figures, and how do these costs compare with the revenue received as a result of increased compliance?

Mr BURNS: I will ask the commissioner.

Mr LAWSON: You must remember that if people carry on a business under a business name other than their own, then that name has to be registered. We have found that in the past there have been quite a large number of people who have been operating businesses without having a properly registered name. A computerised comparison between the *Yellow Pages* data and the Business Names Register conducted in 1993 identified some 40,000 unregistered business names. As a result of that, we commenced an enforcement program. We spent something like \$113,600 on administration costs. Correction, \$113,600 was spent and returned to Treasury. Four thousand eight hundred names were registered as a result of that campaign. In fact, when we compared the databases we found that there were some businesses that were operating legitimately. The program was further funded in 1994-95 for \$153,000, and in that program another 18,000 unregistered business names were identified. To date, a total of 14,000 firms have been approached by us and we are pursuing them in terms of registration. To 30 April 1995, in excess of 2,660 applications have been received under that campaign, generating a total revenue of \$221,100.

A further \$33,600 has been generated this financial year through the receipt of renewal statements following on from the registration of those businesses originally. Also in April of this year, we commenced prosecutions against some firms who refused to register their business names after being approached by our office. During the next financial year, it is proposed to change the focus from an office-based activity to much more direct compliance activity, where our inspectors will be reviewing business operations, monitoring newspaper advertisements, visiting premises and, if necessary, instituting prosecutions to enforce compliance.

Dr KELIHER: As the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mr Lawson, mentioned, 40,000 business names were targeted by letters, and

approximately 4,800 names were registered. But the good news is that the revenue collected from this exercise was over \$320,000. The compliance program has proven to be very worthwhile and valuable to the organisation.

Mr BURNS: This is one of those areas where you really need to enforce compliance, because people want to check the name of a firm when they make a complaint about it; they ring up, and there is nothing on the register. In addition, if they do not register the name now, someone else takes it, and later on there is a fight.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for the consideration of the Estimates of expenditure for the Office of Consumer Affairs has now expired. On behalf of the Committee, I thank the Minister and officers of the Office of Consumer Affairs for their attendance. The Committee hearings are now suspended until 8.30 p.m.

Sitting suspended from 8.20 to 8.33 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY-GENERAL**In Attendance**

Hon. D. Wells, Minister for Justice and Attorney-General

Mr Brian Stewart, Director-General

Dr Ken Levy, Deputy Director-General

Mr Kent Maddock, Deputy Director-General

Mr Keith Watts, Executive Director, Corporate Services

Ms Marg Herriot, Acting Executive Manager

Mr Lew Wyvill, Acting Chairperson, Criminal Justice Commission

Mr Rod Newton, Executive Manager, Financial Services

Mr David Hook, Executive Director, Courts Division

The CHAIRMAN: The next item for consideration is the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Office of the Arts, commencing with Justice and Attorney-General. I remind witnesses that the time limit for questions is one minute, and for answers it is three minutes. A single chime will give a 15-second warning, and a double chime will sound at the expiration of these time limits. As set out in the sessional orders, the first 20 minutes of questions will be from non-Government members, the next 20 minutes from Government members and so on in rotation. The end of these time periods will be indicated by three chimes.

I now declare the proposed expenditure for the Department of Justice and Attorney-General to be open for examination. The question before the Committee is: that the proposed expenditures be agreed to. Minister, is it your wish to make a short introductory statement?

Mr WELLS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Then I would ask that you keep that statement to two minutes.

Mr WELLS: The budget for the Department of Justice and Attorney-General has increased dramatically since the Goss Labor Government came to office in 1989. The Department of Justice and Attorney-General allocation in that year was \$139.791m. It is now \$292.538m, representing an increase of 109 per cent in Consolidated Fund funding. The major increases have been in the areas where the major concern lies. In 1989, the Director of Public Prosecutions was allocated \$5.39m. That amount has now increased to \$15.494m. In 1991-92, the funding for the Legal Aid Office was \$4.791m. That has now increased to \$9.982m.

As to new initiatives over that time—the establishment of an Alternative Dispute Resolution Division in the department and the Community Justice Program involved an expenditure of \$2.059m in 1995-96; the Administrative Law Division, \$1.232m; the Anti-discrimination

Commission, \$1.045m; the Court of Appeal, \$1.718m; the Litigation Reform Commission, \$261,000; and the Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee, \$394,000. All of these innovations in the law of Queensland have come to pass as a result of Government initiatives and, therefore, involve Government expenditure. We have created whole new areas of law and, therefore, whole new areas of administration.

The CHAIRMAN: The first period of questions will commence with non-Government members.

Mr BEANLAND: I refer to the Portfolio Program Statements, page 1-25, and the Budget Estimate of \$15,493,000 for the 1995-96 financial year relating to the Director of Public Prosecutions. I refer to the continuing implementation of the Matters Management System. Last year, in answer to a question from me, you stated that this system would be fully implemented either by the end of the last calendar year or the beginning of 1995. I note that the Portfolio Program Statements elsewhere say that it is still being implemented. What has been the reason for the delay in this matter?

Mr WELLS: The Matters Management System is a system whereby the various offices of the Director of Public Prosecutions can be linked up so that prosecutors will be able to see at a glance the progress of trials. The Matters Management System will replace the existing case management system, which has outgrown its usefulness. It will provide an effective mechanism for managing the conduct of prosecutions and will be an ongoing process.

The indication I gave to the Committee last year was an indication based on the information I had at the time, which was that the system would be fully operational by that stage. However, the ambition of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has grown in that time. It has been determined by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions that the system will be more effective than we originally expected it would be. Therefore, we are shooting for a better result.

Mr BEANLAND: How much of the funds of \$415,000 allocated last year were expended, and what funds have been allocated this year for the program?

Mr WELLS: Which line of the Estimates are you referring to?

Mr BEANLAND: I am referring to the same line. For last year, the figure was \$13,407,000. This year, it is \$15,493,000.

Mr WELLS: Yes, but that figure does not just involve the Matters Management System; it involves a great many other things as well.

Mr BEANLAND: Yes, I appreciate that. I am asking what funds were spent last year and what funds will be spent this year.

Mr WELLS: You have to bear in mind that the overall figure for the prosecution of offences includes enhancement of the office in a number of different respects. I take it that your interest is specifically in this area. In that case, I ask the

Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions, Brendan Butler, to come to the table and give you the details that you are seeking about the Matters Management System.

Mr BUTLER: Expenditure in relation to the Matters Management System in 1994-95 was \$365,000. There will be a carryover of \$250,000 into the 1995-96 financial year.

Mr BEANLAND: Is the \$250,000 that you have referred to the total funding for this year, or is there other funding this year?

Mr BUTLER: No. The funding was provided as part of a special Treasury allocation to the department which included a number of items. The final budget allocation within the department for the coming year has not been completed, but I would anticipate that a further amount in the order of the \$415,000 from last year would be allocated in the coming year. However, that is subject to the final departmental Budget allocation.

Mr BEANLAND: So the way the budget has been drawn up, it has not been finally allocated; is that what you are saying to me?

Mr BUTLER: The external budget, yes.

Mr BEANLAND: In relation to the Matters Management System—could the Minister please advise what working hours were saved in the 1994-95 financial year and will be saved in the 1995-96 financial year with the implementation of this system in the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office?

Mr WELLS: The performance indicators that we have that have been set are targeted at the delivery of a completed system that meets the needs of the office. In addition to these indicators, the office is preparing an impact document which will identify the financial and system impacts expected from the Matters Management System. That document is not yet complete, but it is pretty clear already that the very tangible benefits are going to include: reduced telephone inquiries, faster responses to external inquiries, reduced time spent in dealing with correspondence and maximised saving of time in retrieval and tracking of files. The consequence of these improvements will be more effective preparation of prosecutions, minimisation of delays in criminal prosecutions, refined client protocols and improved management of resources in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. All these advantages are going to flow from the fact that prosecutors will be able, at a flick of a switch, to call up information which previously it was necessary to elicit by a process of detailed personal inquiries. The consequences of that will be higher productivity among the prosecutors and the preparation of prosecutorial briefs with greater facility, and that of course will lead to an overall much more efficient office.

Mr BEANLAND: I accept what the Minister said about the improvements, but my question is: what working hours have been saved for the 1994-95 financial year and what hours are anticipated to be saved in the 1995-96 financial year in the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office through this system? I appreciate that savings will be made, but

I am inquiring as to how many working hours will be saved in both financial years under the system.

Mr WELLS: I did answer the question, but I am happy to answer it again if it helps you to hear it twice. The department is currently preparing an impact document which will identify the financial savings which are to be expected from the introduction of the Matters Management System, and if this remains an abiding interest of yours, I am very happy to correspond with you in due course when that document is prepared and give you the information which you seek. But I would emphasise that the office that we are talking about was funded at the level of \$5.39m when the party which you support was in Government, and it is now funded at the level of \$15.494m. I think that that is a very considerable advance, and it needs to be recognised that the commitment of this Government to the effective functioning of the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office is undoubted and unshakeable. We are going to continue not only with the Matters Management System but by every resource which is available to us to ensure that the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office is capable of fulfilling its function as effectively as can possibly be.

Mr BEANLAND: I refer to the Portfolio Program Statements at page 1-25 and the budget estimate for 1995-96 of \$15,493,000, and I ask: what amount of additional funds and what other action has been taken in the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office to overcome the problems highlighted in the CJC report on management and funding dated April this year, and when can the community expect these problems to be rectified?

Mr WELLS: One of the most important initiatives that has been undertaken is the Ipswich committals project, which is going to be expanded as a new initiative in this budget into a Brisbane committals project. For the benefit of honourable members, I would like to explain how that works. Basically, it means that prosecutors take over cases from a very early stage. Rather than wait for the end of the committals period to become involved, the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office gets involved straightaway. The consequence of that is that the prosecutors are able to work out the strength of the prosecution case at an early stage and, indeed, support is made available to the Legal Aid Commission to ensure that it is representing clients in the area and to ensure that it will be able to get in touch with the prosecutors.

When that occurs, each side knows if the other side has a particularly strong case or a particularly weak case. This means that you have very early pleas of guilty or very early nolle prosequis, that is, very early abandoning of the case by the prosecution—dropping of the prosecution—and this means that many cases which would otherwise end up in the court and take a great deal of the courts' time and consume a great deal of judicial and forensic resources do not get to court; the matter is dispatched much more effectively. The savings of the project have been considerable already. I think that that is probably the most innovative of the

initiatives that have been undertaken by the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office.

Mr BEANLAND: I refer the Minister to the PPS at page 1-25 and the budget estimate for 1995-96 for the Director of Public Prosecutions totalling \$15,493,000, and I ask: what funds have been allocated to enable staff of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to become familiar with the proposed new Criminal Code?

Mr WELLS: There is an overall budgetary allocation in respect of the new Criminal Code. That overall budgetary allocation applies to prosecutors as well as it applies to everybody else. I would think, however, that the interest which the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has taken in the new Criminal Code would speak for itself. The intensity of interest which has been shown by that office is an indication that very little else is going to be required for the Director of Public Prosecutions and his officers for them to understand the implications of the new Criminal Code. It is a document which the office has been consulted extensively with respect to in the drafting stages. It is a document to which they have contributed, and they know it extremely well.

There are in fact funds for training staff of the Director of Public Prosecutions available in the department. These funds will be a departmental special, and they are going to be targeted as we move down the track. But in saying that, I do not want to suggest that in order to understand the new Criminal Code it will be necessary for the prosecutors to go back to law school. It is not like that at all. The prosecutors are extremely familiar with the new draft Criminal Code already, and it would be an insult to their intelligence to suggest that they were all going to have to go back to law school in order to study and understand the new Criminal Code.

Mr BEANLAND: While we are on the new Criminal Code—I refer to the Portfolio Program Statements, this time at page 1-6, and to the estimated actual expenditure of the department of \$300,611,000, and I ask: what funds have been spent in the 1994-95 financial year in drafting the new Criminal Code?

Mr WELLS: It is \$0.1m. Yes, that is correct. The figure I gave you from memory was correct. It is \$0.1m, but this is to cover a wide range of different activities. The activities include the increased staff which were necessary to cover the very onerous workload in the process of the drafting of the Criminal Code, additional payroll tax, purchase of additional computer equipment for use in the Criminal Law Group and those kinds of things. No statutory reform is of course entirely budget neutral. The resources which have to be consumed in the preparation of major reforms to the law indeed are conspicuous and the amount of work which was involved in the drafting of Queensland's biggest and most important statute was indeed considerable.

I think it needs to be said that the Criminal Code is no ordinary statute and should not be treated as if it were any ordinary statute. The Criminal Code is a document which is unlike any of

the other specialist statutes which are on the law books of this State. It is not something that people have to have regard to at particular times of their life, for example, when they are buying or selling a house. Rather, it is something which governs all of us every minute of our lives, whether we are at home, at work or walking down the street. Consequently, it is something which has an impact on every person.

The amount of consultation, the amount of correspondence, the number of seminars and the degree of community involvement in the drafting of the new Criminal Code of course exceeded that applied in the case of any other statutory reform. Inevitably, it was going to be something which cost a little bit of money to do, but it is money very well spent because at the end of the day we will have a Criminal Code which is a Criminal Code for the twenty-first century. We could not continue with a Criminal Code which was drafted by our forebears in the nineteenth century, which reflected nineteenth century concerns, which was written in nineteenth century language and which used nineteenth century concepts. We need a Criminal Code that is aware of the modern world; a Criminal Code that is aware of the existence of computers.

Mr BEANLAND: I refer the Minister again to Portfolio Program Statements, page 1-6. There is \$331.248m allocated for the 1995-96 financial year. What funds have been allocated for an education program to advise people of their rights under the new Criminal Code? I ask that particularly in view of the Minister's comments a few moments ago.

Mr WELLS: That is part of the \$0.1m that I mentioned to you. The information is contained in the excellent brochures and other material which has been circulated to all honourable members. I note that you yourself were not satisfied with the 100 copies that we sent to you and actually asked for more. I was extremely gratified by your interest in the matter and your dedication to informing your constituents.

Mr BEANLAND: I will just correct the Minister, I did not receive 100 copies of the Criminal Code from the Minister. I might have received 100 summaries, but not copies of the Criminal Code.

Mr WELLS: Yes, it was 100 summaries. You were not satisfied with the 100 summaries, so we sent you more. If you were not aware of the fact that that was happening in your office, I would like to assure you that your office and the department have extremely cordial relations and we are very happy to send you more of anything that you want.

Mr BEANLAND: I look forward to getting 100 copies of the Criminal Code when it is passed. I thank the Minister for that. I want to move on to travel matters of the Minister. I refer to page 1-6 of the Portfolio Program Statements. There is an allocation of \$300.611m. In the 1994-95 financial year budget Estimates you indicated that you would advise me of what domestic travel you and your ministerial staff intended to undertake. However, I have heard nothing further from you in relation to your domestic travel arrangements. Would you advise what travel had been undertaken, and the

cost of it, at last year's Budget time? You indicated that no funds had been allocated at that time for travel.

Mr WELLS: I understand that all such matters are to be raised in the Treasury Estimates, so I would refer you to that forum.

Mr BEANLAND: I would have hoped that you would have been accountable under your departmental Votes, because Ministers are not accountable to the House now like other members are. The Minister knows that full well.

Mr WELLS: That was not a question, Mr Beanland. Let me assure you, however—and this is an answer—that the accountability exists through an Estimates process which has been set up to be transparently clear and to provide perfectly lucid information to honourable members who care to present themselves at the right forum. I would suggest to you that, if you want the answer to that question, it would be a good idea to present yourself at the right forum. If you do not do it this year, I suggest that you do it next year.

Mr BEANLAND: I thank the Minister. Clearly, he does not wish to be accountable here.

Mr WELLS: That is not a question either, that is a gratuitous remark.

Mr BEANLAND: I refer to page 1-17 of the Portfolio Program Statements and the outlays of \$84.036m. In relation to Appeal Court judges, what funds have been allocated in this 1995-96 budget for overseas travel?

Mr WELLS: That is indeed a question for these Estimates. I will refer the question relating to judicial travel to the accountable officer of the department, my Director-General, Brian Stewart.

Mr STEWART: There is a global allocation made to the Court of Appeal and the Estimate for the 1995-96 year is \$1.718m. Of that amount of funding—

The CHAIRMAN: The time for the first period of non-Government members' questions has now concluded. The honourable member might like to ask that question again. It is now time to turn to Government members' questions, the first of which will come from me. I refer to pages 1-11 and 1-19 of the Portfolio Program Statements and see mention of the construction of the new Cleveland Court House. With regard to that necessary public community asset, could you advise the Committee of what actions have been taken with regard to the construction and, further, how did your department determine what were the needs of the Cleveland community?

Mr WELLS: I might say that I first heard of this from the honourable member who asks the question, who happens to have a particular familiarity with the area. I think, Mr Chairman, you said to me that the building provided a poor public image because the public toilets were in a demountable building outside the front door. You also said that there were limited public spaces, or interview facilities, and no facilities to enable parties in domestic violence disputes to be kept apart, except perhaps the particular architectural structure

of the demountable outside the front door. I checked on this myself and I saw that it was the case. More than that, we got a report by the consultants Price Waterhouse as to the needs of the area. The end result of that was that \$4m has been allocated to the project of purchasing land for the courthouse and building a courthouse.

The Redland Shire, as we know, is rapidly growing and the need for the courthouse was identified by the Price Waterhouse report. Since the department made the decision to purchase the land, the Queensland Police Service has indicated that it intends to purchase adjoining land for a new police station and that will, by bringing in economies of scale, maximise the efficiency of the construction. There will be two magistrates courts in the new building. It will be a modern building that meets the needs of a modern and growing community.

Mrs BIRD: I refer to page 1-10 of the PPS. I ask for details of the Victim-Offender Mediation Program, concentrating on the results, if any, of that program.

Mr WELLS: The Victim-Offender Mediation Program grew out of the Community Justice Program, which was initially established in 1990 as a neighbourhood dispute resolution service. But we discovered that the skills that mediators acquired and the circumstances which obtained in that process were such as would equip the mediators to deal with almost any dispute which could be soluble by any alternative dispute resolution means. Therefore, the Crime Reparation Program, and others, grew out of the Community Justice Program.

After an offender typically pleads guilty, but before sentencing, the magistrate is able to say to the offender and victim that victim-offender mediation is available. That occurs only with the consent of the victim of the crime and only in minor matters. You do not put a dangerous offender in the same room as the victim for this sort of purpose. This scheme is designed to nip in the bud a promising career in crime. The two parties sit down, by their own consent, before the two mediators and talk it through. The consequence of that is that, for the first time, the offender realises the enormity of what he has done. Instead of seeing society as the villain and himself as a victim of a system, the victim begins to see that he himself has victims. This is a Copernican shift in the offender's thinking. The end result is that offenders tend to realise that a life of crime is not for them.

This is not a soft option for the offender. The magistrate typically retains the capacity to sentence but is able to have regard to the fact that a mediation has occurred. As I say, this is not a soft option for offenders, because getting a tongue lashing from their victims makes them realise—often with a rush of blood to their heads—that what they have done is something quite different from what they thought they were doing, and that there were real people who suffered as a result of their escapades. When the victims get to speak their mind before their offenders in this way, the offenders frequently come to a different view of the world. Indeed, in terms of the cases that have been

through the Victim-Offender Mediation Program, we know of only one offender who has re-offended.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: At page 1-12 of the PPS, the fourth dot point refers to a video conference link between the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre and the Supreme and Magistrates Courts, and mentions possible budgetary implications. Would you explain the function of this facility and what those budgetary implications are?

Mr WELLS: The sum of \$200,000 has been allocated from the Justice Department budget and \$200,000 from the Police and Corrective Services budget for the establishment of that video conferencing facility. The link will be between the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre and the courts. It will enable the courts to hear and determine bail and remand applications without the alleged offender having to go to court. This is going to save very considerable amounts of the resources of the Corrective Services Commission, and at the same time it is going to considerably enhance security. This is a scheme which we think has tremendous potential to save money. More importantly, events of the kind where somebody once broke out from the Supreme Court cells and attempted to hijack a Brisbane City Council bus are not going to be repeated, because it will be unnecessary to remove to the court the person charged with the offence; the matter can be dealt with simply over the video link.

This is a matter of bringing modern technology into the courts system. The law must move with the times, and the Criminal Code is not the only step we are taking to ensure that the law moves with the times. The video conferencing facility is an important part of that overall program. I think the potential of this is going to be very great. We will review it as it applies to the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre and the courts. I think that video conferencing potentially has the capacity to make an enormous difference to the conduct of litigation of all kinds in our courts.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I refer to page 1-57 of the PPS. The first item under "Executive Co-ordination" reads: "Developed an integrated planning system for the Department". Does this integrated planning system include proposals for the regionalisation of administrative services, or not?

Mr WELLS: Yes. The department is looking at regionalisation, particularly in the area of the courts. The courts are the area of the department which is most susceptible to regionalisation. When you look at a regionalisation program you need to look at the delivery of services to the area where the regionalisation is occurring. There would be no point in going down a track which merely involved the regionalisation of administration, because in an age of technology the regionalisation of administration can be negatively cost effective. We need to be sure that what we are doing is something which is going to enhance the actual delivery of justice. With that caveat only, I would say that we are looking very closely at the possibility of regionalisation, particularly with respect to the courts.

Mr PURCELL: I would like to ask a few questions on something that is close to my heart in relation to construction. Firstly, I refer to access to courthouses, which is found on page 1-19 of the PPS statements. There is an amount there for the improvement of disabled persons' access. I would like to know where that program is up to. Is it the only program, or do all other courthouses have wheelchair access?

Mr WELLS: The major part of the program, as far as disabled access is concerned, is the building of ramps. We have undertaken the building of ramps in a large number of areas. We want to act in the spirit of the Anti-discrimination Act and ensure that people with disabilities have the same access to court facilities as do other people.

Work on the building of ramps has been undertaken in the Beaudesert, Biloela, Claremont, Cooktown, Inglewood, Mackay, Nambour, Noosa, St George and Tully courthouses. The cost, I am advised, is \$215,000. The Beaudesert Court House ramp is to be constructed in conjunction with the anticipated refurbishment of that whole complex. The Biloela Court House ramp is being constructed and is halfway completed. The disabled access in Cooktown, Inglewood, Mackay, Noosa and Tully courthouses has been completed. The Nambour Court House has been a little delayed because architects are having some difficulty in determining a suitable location for the ramp; the stairs and the topography of the site make it rather difficult, but not impossible, to build. As you would know from your background in construction, it is important to get these things right before you actually start building. My department is well aware of that, and the problem is close to rectification.

Mr PURCELL: There would be a lot fewer builders' labourers employed if builders got it right the first time. We do not mind pulling it down and building again. There are a number of other new courthouses referred to on that same page, including the Caboolture, Hervey Bay and Rockhampton courthouses. How did you decide that they should receive new courthouses and not, say, Holland Park or somewhere else?

Mr WELLS: That was the same Price Waterhouse study that I referred to in answering the Chairman's question. They indicated that there were priorities in respect of which courthouses needed to be built. The situation with the courthouses at Hervey Bay and Caboolture was such that you would not actually need a consultant to tell you that you needed to build them, but it was good to have the consultant to tell us in which order we should be doing things. We need work done at the Magistrates Court in Brisbane, a building that was initially built as an office block, and therefore is not all that suitable to use as a courthouse and requires a little bit of refitting in order to effectively perform that function, particularly in respect of the airconditioning. The Hervey Bay Court House is far too small for a growing community of the kind that we have at Hervey Bay and is well past its use-by date. We are going to be building the Hervey Bay Court House as a modular courthouse. We will build the first stage of it, because we anticipate a very

considerable increase in population in the Hervey Bay area which will necessitate, in the fullness of time, the development of an additional wing to it, which will be a District Court.

The Caboolture Court House was probably in the worst state of any courthouse. It has now actually been pulled down and we are in the process of building a new courthouse on that site. The cost of the Caboolture Court House will be \$5.5m, and it is currently in the process of construction. The Hervey Bay Court House cost a total of \$3.5m for the stage to which I have just referred. That courthouse will be completed in August/September this year.

Mr PURCELL: For the Minister's information, you are right about the one at North Quay. It was built as an office block. I worked on that as a dogman. It was not a courthouse in those days.

Mrs BIRD: When you responded to my question on the Victims Offenders Mediation Program, you mentioned firstly the neighbourhood dispute resolution and then the alternative dispute resolution. In asking my question, I refer to pages 1-13 of the PPS, and I ask: could you advise me whether the alternative dispute resolution department intends to target any particular group for mediation? Is there any special group that stood out that required mediation?

Mr WELLS: Yes. As I mentioned, the techniques of mediation, which were developed by the Community Justice Program, were techniques which proved to be susceptible of application to almost any dispute at all. One of the areas where we found that mediation could be extremely useful was in the area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediation. When you think about it, it is only logical really that the mediation concepts which are innovative and new in Queensland law, which is derived from British law, are in fact the concepts which have traditionally been employed by Aboriginal communities for thousands and thousands of years. The department has identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island mediation as an important way to enhance access to justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I might mention that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have proved to be particularly adept at the techniques of mediation, for the historical reasons which I have mentioned, and we have no less than 24 Aboriginal mediators who have undertaken quite complex mediations— typically mediations in Aboriginal communities, not mediations of the kind that we are more familiar with in neighbourhood dispute resolution, but they are typically multi-party dispute resolution processes. Our Aboriginal mediators have proved themselves to be particularly adept at this kind of work.

Mrs BIRD: Again, you have mentioned the Community Justice Program. It seems to have been fairly successful in its entirety. Just how successful has it been?

Mr WELLS: I have some figures here. One thousand six hundred and seventy one files had been opened as at the end of April 1995 and 641 mediations and facilitations had taken place to the

end of April 1995. The mediation program has had good success indicators. Ninety-one per cent of those people who actually sit down to a mediation walk away with some kind of an agreement. Follow-up studies have indicated that three months after the agreement has been entered into, in 80 per cent of these cases the agreements are sticking. What this has demonstrated is that the Community Justice Program provides an extremely effective means of resolving a whole range of disputes. This is useful not only from the point of view of keeping harmony in neighbourhoods and in communities, but also from the point of view of actually keeping people out of court. If you have a problem with overhanging tree branches, your neighbour's dog barking in the middle of the night, howling cats, smoking barbeques, loud stereos in the middle of the night or fences built in the wrong place, you have got several options. You can go and——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That concludes the first period for questions from Government members. I now turn to the second period of questions for non-Government members.

Mr BEANLAND: I return to the PPS page 1-17, outlays of \$84.036m in relation to the Appeal Court. I ask in relation to Appeal Court judges: could you detail what funds have been allocated in this 1995-96 Budget for overseas travel by each of the judges of the Appeal Court?

Mr WELLS: I will refer that again to the Director-General.

Mr STEWART: There has been a global allocation of \$1.718m to the Court of Appeal. That global allocation will then be distributed across to a number of cost centres, one of which will include travel. Those final disbursements for the year have not been made within the Court of Appeal at this time. I anticipate they will be made within the next three to four weeks and then cash flows will be in place for very early July.

Mr BEANLAND: Does that apply also to domestic travel? I presume it does?

Mr STEWART: It certainly does. As part of that overall global allocation all travel associated with the court, apart from the jurisprudential travel, will be included in that \$1.718m.

Mr BEANLAND: Was travel budgeted for in the 1994-95 financial year and undertaken as indicated at Budget Estimates time last year for the Appeal Court judges?

Mr STEWART: I am not precisely aware of the indication that was given last year, but I can indicate that there was a Budget allocation, I think, of \$196,000. To date, there has been some \$45,000 spent from that travel.

Mr BEANLAND: In relation to a matter to do with the Townsville Supreme Court library, I refer to PPS page 1-17, a courts budget of \$84.036m and I ask: in relation to the Townsville Supreme Court library, what funds are there within this budget to update publications in the library and put in place modern on-line computer technology, as I understand this library is sadly lacking in these respects?

Mr STEWART: There are funds available and made available from the departmental budget each year to the Supreme Court Library. That commenced last year. The Supreme Court Library Committee, of course, is funded not solely from departmental sources but only very marginally from departmental sources—the vast amount coming from interest earned on solicitor's trust accounts and admission costs. The Supreme Court Library is run by a committee of practitioners chaired by a Supreme Court judge, Mr Justice Derrington, and one of the departmental officers is represented on that committee. The allocation within that budget is not a ministerial responsibility, but does occur by the library itself.

I know that they have been looking very closely at regional libraries. Last year the department assisted by making a special one-off grant to the Ipswich Court to provide a library there for the Ipswich District Court. It is one of those ongoing issues of ensuring that we have available those resources in the courts right throughout the State for the circuit and District Court as they travel.

Mr BEANLAND: Page 1-17 of the Portfolio Program Statements shows that \$84,036,000 is budgeted for courts in 1995-96. I ask: will you guarantee that there is sufficient funding in the budget to reduce to zero the backlog of cases before the Supreme and District Courts?

Mr WELLS: This is known as the fallacy of the complex question. In other words, it is like the question, "Have you stopped beating your wife yet?" If I answer your question in the terms in which it is asked, then I accept your initial proposition that there is a backlog in the Supreme and District Courts. Whether there is or not is a matter of interpretation and I know what interpretation you make. In the Supreme and District Courts, the dispatch of cases in the civil jurisdiction has been so effective that it has been necessary and possible for the administrators of those courts, that is the Chief Judge of the District Court and the Chief Judge Administrator, to take judges who would otherwise have been doing civil cases and put them on criminal work. I might mention, however, that in the financial year which is covered by this Estimates discussion, that is, the immediate financial year that we are now in, we appointed two additional judges—one to the Supreme Court and one to the District Court. As a result, the dispatch of many cases in the District Court is completed within 4 months, which has to be pretty close to the optimum period. I should mention also that there is currently an Acting District Court Judge in place to assist with the dispatch of the work of the court. The Supreme Court civil list is down from last year. The District Court criminal list is up a little, but the District Court civil list is down. Those things vary from day to day.

Two other measures that are extremely important are in place to effectively ensure that the flow of cases is as close to optimum as can be. One of those is the Case Flow Management Project, which is well under way in the Supreme Court. The department recently allocated \$400,000 for computer facilities to enable that process to occur.

What those computer facilities mean is that a judge who is managing cases is going to be able to press a button and recall immediately to mind the dates that were set for the completion of certain procedures in the case and the orders that have previously been made in the case and so forth. That will greatly aid in the dispatch of those cases. Another measure put in place is the committals—

The CHAIRMAN: The time for that answer has expired. If the honourable member wishes to ask you to expand on that he may, otherwise you will have to finish.

Mr BEANLAND: I move on to the productivity dividend. Page 1-6 of the Portfolio Program Statements shows a total figure of \$331,248,000 budgeted for 1995-96. I ask: what was the productivity dividend for the 1995-96 financial year?

Mr WELLS: I will ask the Director-General to answer the question.

Mr STEWART: The productivity dividend has not been applied across all parts of the department by Treasury—the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is exempt from that as is the legal aid grant, but generally it is 1 per cent of non-labour costs, excluding those key areas.

Mr BEANLAND: Do you have the actual figure?

Mr STEWART: \$1.305m.

Mr BEANLAND: In relation to the 1994-95 financial year, how does that compare?

Mr STEWART: I do not have that figure on me, but I presume it would be up a little. Countermanding that, there has been a non-labour escalation of 3 per cent based on CPI, which has been a sum of \$3.761m, which gives the portfolio a net increase, based on that escalation for non-labour costs and also the productivity dividend of \$2.456m.

Mr BEANLAND: Again in relation to the productivity dividend, how and where were productivity improvements made to allow for those savings that we have just had outlined to us to be made?

Mr WELLS: Enormous productivity savings have been made in a vast range of areas of the department. One area where there was spectacular improvement was in the area of court reporting where all the productivity indicators represented considerable enhancement. In the area of the courts, the throughput of cases is going to be massively enhanced as a result of the committals project to which I have already referred. It would be almost impossible to underestimate the importance of the committals project. In the Ipswich statistics, which are now available to us, I think from memory there was a change of 32 per cent in terms of the number of cases that were actually going to court, which has led to a very considerable decline in the workload of the courts and has enabled the same resources to apply over a much wider field.

The Legal Aid Commission has spent some time trying to get the right mix between briefing out

and in-house work and it believes that it has now fixed on the optimum. As a result of that, it has been able to achieve more with only slightly more resources. In the area of the Crown Solicitor's Office, the Crown Solicitor has moved to a time-costing arrangement whereby records are kept of the amount of time which is spent on each matter that is attended to by each officer. That will enable the Crown Solicitor's Office to more clearly identify the resources which need to be applied in particular circumstances to particular cases, and lead to an enhancement of the productivity of that office.

I could go on mentioning one area after another of the department where there has been an improvement in productivity. In respect of our courts, the efficiency of the courts system compares extremely well with that of other States, when you bear in mind that we are the most regionalised State in Australia and the amount of cases that the judges are able to get through by virtue of the amount of travelling that they have to do.

Mr BEANLAND: I refer to the Criminal Justice Commission for a moment. On page 1-42 of the PPS, there is a figure of \$21,065,000 for 1994-95, which is the estimated actual expenditure. Last year, the then Chairman indicated to the Estimates Committee that a report into the administration of criminal justice in this State would be concluded in a couple of months, as it was well advanced. The report was not completed until April of this year. In view of the report being so well advanced at that particular time, what was the reason for the delay?

Mr WELLS: In order to emphasise the independence of the CJC, I would ask the Chairman of the Criminal Justice Commission, Lew Wyvill, QC, if he would come to the table.

Mr WYVILL: That report required a very detailed study of a complex number of issues. I am not able to give you a detailed run-down of the day-to-day work that was done, but under the Director, Dr Brereton, a committee was formed and representatives of the Legal Aid Commission, the Director of Public Prosecutions and others attended. I think we may have had about four or more meetings. I know I took an interest in it. I am unable to give you an account of whether the period of time that was taken was an inordinate period of time. My recollection was that it was, as I have indicated, a complex study and it proceeded with quite proper haste. If you want to know in more detail, of course, I would have to consult Dr Brereton.

Mr BEANLAND: I would appreciate it if I could be advised in due course, particularly in view of the then Chairman's remarks.

Mr WYVILL: As I said, we can give you an account of the meetings of our committee.

The CHAIRMAN: You can take that on notice.

Mr BEANLAND: Just supplementary to this issue I ask: what was the cost of preparing this report?

Mr WYVILL: \$66,232.

Mr BEANLAND: Thank you very much. I refer to Portfolio Program Statements page 1-42 and the figure \$21,510,000 in relation to the Criminal Justice Commission, and I ask: what funds have been allocated for this financial year for monitoring and reporting on the suitability, sufficiency and use of law enforcement resources and sufficiency of funding for the law enforcement component of the various other departments and officers in the courts as is required under the Criminal Justice Act and highlighted in the PCJC's recent report which related to this particular matter?

Mr WYVILL: We received that instruction a few weeks ago and we have to respond to the PCJC by 26 June. What compliance with that instruction requires us to do is, first of all, make an assessment of a very extensive opinion that was given by Mr Morris, QC, and then look at our own resources to be able to meet what he understands to be our obligations. Until we have done that, I can assure you that we have not given a thought yet to the amount of money we will have to allocate to that because, prior to receiving that instruction, we had made an assessment about budgetary requirements at the figure that I think we have given, one point something million dollars. That did embrace some compliance with that obligation, which was obviously what we were informed about when Mr Justice de Jersey advised us in Boe's case that, in effect, we did not have an authority to prioritise our obligations, which meant that we really had to look at the lot together, which is a rather difficult job.

Mr BEANLAND: Just as a supplementary question following on from those remarks, I take it from those comments that there was no thought given to in fact carrying out an investigation into these other aspects of law enforcement?

Mr WYVILL: No, that is not so at all.

Mr BEANLAND: How did you select just the two?

Mr WYVILL: Aspects of it were looked at and we prioritised that. As Mr Morris pointed out, it is a broad issue, and he advised the PCJC to recommend that our Act be amended to give us an authority to prioritise. I understand the PCJC did not so recommend, which puts us in the difficult position of having acknowledged obligations without the funds to do it.

Mr BEANLAND: Can I just follow that up? Why was it then that you did not give this particular work priority over other work?

Mr WYVILL: Why was it not?

Mr BEANLAND: Yes. Why was priority not given to this particular work over other work?

Mr WYVILL: Because there are other more pressing and, we felt, more important obligations. We just cannot eat into the budget that we have allocated to investigate, for example, organised and major crime to do an inquiry into whether those people who police the fisheries department are adequately funded, properly resourced, or properly trained, and that is part of what Mr Morris said we had to do.

Mr BEANLAND: Thank you. I will move back to the courts. I thank the Chairman of the CJC. I refer to PPS page 1-17, which gives the Budget estimate for the court for 1995-96 of \$84,036,000, and I ask: in relation to the information technology allocation of \$3.9m for the courts, what will be the number of working hours saved by the introduction of this new system?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am afraid that the second period of time for questions from non-Government members is now concluded. I return once again to the Government members and I ask Mr Sullivan to ask a question.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Minister, I refer to page 1-13 of the PPS towards the bottom of the page, the last two dot points in the Alternative Dispute Resolution section. It mentions an increase in the number of training courses that are requested by and provided to a variety of groups. In what way will these increased courses improve dispute resolution and what types of Government and non-Government agencies will use these courses?

Mr WELLS: The division has undertaken training to assist a number of public sector agencies and authorities, including the Office of Consumer Affairs; the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs; the Department of Education; the Logan City Council; the Local Government Association; the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Courts Division; Queensland Rail; and Queensland Emergency Services. The division has been able to raise approximately \$20,000 from the provision of external training. Mediation is an extremely useful tool and has a whole-of-Government benefit.

I might mention one particular application that it has in the courts is that in a whole range of areas, including the Magistrates Court, a great deal of pre-trial conferencing takes place, which enables the cases that do go forward to go forward with both sides better informed as to the lines of argument so that the cases can be conducted in a more streamlined way. It also increases the number of cases that settle and, therefore, do not go to court.

So the development of mediation in the legal system in Queensland, as well as the other agencies of Government in Queensland, has been a very, very marked development. The development dates back to the establishment of the Community Justice Program in July 1990, which gave an enormous fillip to those within the legal system who were prepared to use the efficiencies that could be achieved by utilising mediation techniques to ensure greater access to justice and quicker satisfaction of clients.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Earlier, you said that Aboriginal people in particular benefit from these sorts of courses. Will the increased number of training courses include extra training for Aboriginal people and are you able to say whether the alternative dispute resolution courses have been successful in keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders out of the court system and therefore possibly out of the corrective services system?

Mr WELLS: Yes, they have been. As I indicated, there are 24 trained and accredited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediators. That is 14 per cent of the 163 mediators that we have at the moment in Queensland, which is not bad for a community which represents 1 per cent of the population. We have taken steps to enhance the understanding and awareness of the Aboriginal community of the existence of mediation. Mediation videos have been targeted at that community in particular. A program has involved the distribution of publications to members of that community. As a result, there has been a considerable uptake of mediation by that community, which has not only enhanced their access to justice but also assisted them to keep out of the courts.

Mr PURCELL: I have a question in respect of the National Crime Authority. I refer to page 123 and to the 1994-95 budget of \$7.018m for prosecutions in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The Estimate for 1995-96 is \$8.2m. Was any of that money used to prosecute National Crime Authority cases, or was the money used to fund cases only within Queensland's borders?

Mr WELLS: Yes. The prosecuting agency for the National Crime Authority in Queensland is the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The Minister for Police referred a number of matters to the National Crime Authority and requested that it assemble evidence. The National Crime Authority has indicated that its investigations have been into organised crime in Australia and in Queensland. A number of prosecutions are being brought. The focus of the investigations was based initially on syndicates responsible for cannabis cultivation in Queensland. The trials that will ensue as a result of that investigation into organised crime by the National Crime Authority will occupy the next 18 months.

Mr PURCELL: I will ask a question that the honourable member for Indooroopilly raised last year so that he is saved from having to ask it again this year. On page 9 of the *Hansard* for Estimates Committee B, held on 10 June 1994, the shadow Attorney-General asked you, "What floor space does the CJC occupy?" Therefore, I ask: what floor space does the CJC occupy and, further, does the CJC occupy the same floor space as it did last year?

Mr WELLS: Yes, it does. I did not happen to have the information to hand at the time when the honourable member for Indooroopilly asked the question last year so I initiated an inquiry into the CJC. This is the only inquiry that I have ever initiated into the CJC. I found that the floor space was 5,713 square metres at 557 Coronation Drive, Toowong. The floor space for the CJC at the MLC court building is 754 square metres. Those floors have not changed in size from the time when the honourable member last raised this important question. The issue is relevant this year by virtue of the fact that the MLC facility which is currently occupied by the CJC is the province of the Misconduct Tribunal, and it will be transferred to the District Courts. Consequently, the 754 square metres at the MLC court building will no longer be

necessary. Consequently, the CJC is expected to withdraw from that space, thus creating an economy for the CJC.

Mr PURCELL: Thank you, Minister. That was very enlightening.

Mrs BIRD: I am interested in briefing work outsourced by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. I know that there has been an increasing workload within the department. Obviously, there would have to be some briefing out. What is the extent of that briefing out to private firms and solicitors?

Mr WELLS: One of the recommendations of the CJC report into the legal system in Queensland was that there should be greater use of the private Bar by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. This recommendation has been taken on board by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. There is now greater use of the private Bar. This has proved to be extremely cost-effective by virtue of the fact that there was in recent times something of a downturn in the work available for members of the private Bar. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has received very good value for money by briefing out to the private Bar.

Mrs BIRD: I refer to page 125 of the PPS. Please provide details of the variation in the budget for the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Mr WELLS: Are you referring to the increases in the DPP's budget?

Mrs BIRD: Yes.

Mr WELLS: Some of the increases included the expenditure on the Ipswich committals project. That is a big cost-saver; but you have to spend money in order to save money. So you spend money in the area of the Director of Public Prosecutions and, a consequence thereof, you save money in the courts area. Other variations were due to the development of a computer system in the Confiscation of the Profits of Crime Unit and also the payment of various Commonwealth taxes. Increased award payments and the necessity to have an additional resource sufficient to meet the additional judges who were appointed accounts for the rest. I should explain that, when an additional judge is appointed, by a formula additional resources are also required in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and in the Legal Aid Commission. The additional judge does additional cases and, consequently, you need additional prosecutors and Legal Aid Commission staff to service those. It is the flow-on effect of the two judges who were appointed during the last financial year that I am referring to.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I refer to page 1-21 of the PPS, the last dot point, which states—

"(b) the revamping of the Confiscation of Profits Section to increase recovery of the proceeds of crime;"

What increase do you envisage and what has been the past history of this practice?

Mr WELLS: I have some figures that might be of interest to you. In the last year, 19 restraining orders were obtained by the confiscation section. I should explain that there are two types of orders which can be issued under the confiscation of profits of crime legislation. The first type is a restraining order. That can be made at an early stage in the proceedings. The second is a confiscation order. The restraining order has the effect of preventing dealing with property so that the property remains available should a confiscation order subsequently be made. The confiscation order occurs after the conviction. Those figures for last year—19—are running more or less average. There were 20 in the previous year. In 1994, there were also 64 pecuniary penalty orders obtained. A pecuniary penalty order is an order by the court to the effect that a significant sum of money should be paid over by the person who is convicted. It is not a fine but is a recovery of funds which arose from dealing with tainted property. The pecuniary penalty order provides that a convicted person is required to pay a sum equal to the value of the benefit derived from his or her offence. The total value of pecuniary penalty orders which were obtained in the last financial year was \$1,545,000.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I refer to the last line on page 1-21 of the PPS which states that there will be the continuing development of the Matters Management System for operational and management control of the prosecutions process. What does this mean in practice for meeting the needs of the DPP?

Mr WELLS: The practicalities of it are that the present system is based in Brisbane and it is not particularly performance oriented. The new system is going to be a Statewide system, as I implied when I was answering the member for Indooroopilly. The new system will allow for instantaneous communication between the various offices of the Director of Public Prosecutions. It will provide electronic mail, spreadsheeting, word processing and record management facilities. I previously announced the need for the new system. It has taken some time to implement, because it has been necessary to prepare our own software. None of the available software was considered to properly do the job. The software, therefore, has to be designer software designed by the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office itself.

The aspirations of the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office to have the most effective Matters Management System possible has led the office to set its sights a little higher in this respect and to have a software package which will actually meet the needs of Queensland and, consequently, that slight delay has occurred. I anticipate that the new Matters Management System will provide better management information and generate performance and workload statistics of a kind that have not previously been available and enable the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office to discharge its public duty even more effectively than it has done in the past.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: On page 1-20 under the heading "Major Program Issues", the third

bottom dot point refers to services to victims of crimes being enhanced, particularly female victims of violent sexual offences. What action has your department actually taken to assist women who have been the victims of violent crimes?

Mr WELLS: There is already in place a \$900,000 over three years project to establish a Victims Unit within the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The purpose of the Victims Unit is to help victims through the criminal justice process. It is important to remember that victims of crime are often traumatised by the experience which they have been through. In these circumstances, they should receive the maximum assistance that the criminal justice system can offer. Nothing can take away the trauma which victims have experienced, but the extent of that trauma can be ameliorated at least to some extent if rational steps are taken, such as letting them know the next step in the process so that they do not feel as if they are adrift in a sea of legalese and ensuring that the circumstances in which they have to make statements, either to the police or to the prosecutor, are commodious circumstances— perhaps at home in familiar surroundings or with their friends around them. Consequently, we set up a unit. I believe that there are now five people in that unit, but I will check that and come back to it. They provide the services which I have described. They refer people to the special witness provisions of the Evidence Act, for example, so that their evidence can be given with the least trauma possible. This maximises the opportunity of the witness to give effective evidence.

This program has worked so well that there is a significant new enhancement in the current budget. We are increasing the amount of money available by \$250,000, and that increase will enable the program to be expanded significantly to secondary victims of murder and manslaughter. It is important to address crimes of violence, and sexual offences against women and girls particularly, but we want also to address the very pressing and traumatic needs of the families of murder and manslaughter victims, and that is what this enhancement will do.

Mr PURCELL: I refer to page 1-21 of the PPS and to the Ipswich office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Will you supply details of the establishment of that office?

Mr WELLS: Yes. That became necessary as the result of the appointment of the new District Court judge to Ipswich. As I indicated a little while ago, when you appoint an additional judge you also need to appoint an additional prosecutor. The additional staff that were appointed in Ipswich were three in number. There was a prosecutor, a legal officer and a clerk. I might say that those staff performed an important role in the Ipswich project.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That ends the period of questions from Government members. I now turn to questions from non-Government members, and I ask Mr Beanland to ask the next question.

Mr BEANLAND: I refer to the matter that I raised previously—PPS page 1-17 and the

\$84,036,000 courts budget estimate for 1995-96. I ask: in relation to the information technology allocation of \$3.9m for the courts, what will be the number of working hours saved by the introduction of this new system?

Mr WELLS: I will ask the Director-General to answer that question.

Mr STEWART: I cannot provide a detailed answer by way of number of hours. There are two features to the Infrastructure Replacement Program. The first is that we have an infrastructure that needs to be replaced. Throughout the State, there are a number of separate systems which run separately, and the purpose of this exercise is to replace those existing systems which are now becoming aged. At the same time, we are putting in place a more strategic approach to trying to integrate all of the systems which we do operate, and there are some fairly significant savings which we will achieve. We will not be implementing the systems until we can identify those in detail, and part of that exercise has already been undertaken by a special research project within the Courts Division which recently resulted in a number of what the management people today call business process re-engineering, but redesigning the way we do our work manually, which will then impact on the efficiency of the computerised system.

There are a number of longer-term benefits as well. We believe that there will be very significant productivity dividends, particularly in some of the regional Magistrates Courts, where about 40 per cent of our fines are currently processed on a manual card system, so that will add to a lot more efficiency there. I believe that one of the larger gains will be the interface with other agencies within the criminal justice system. I do not believe the day is too far away when we will see single identifier numbers and identities provided to people when they enter a court system and go right through to the correctional system. That is one of the activities which is presently being worked on by a steering committee from the Information Policy Board, which is looking at the design and development of a criminal justice information system which integrates all of those aspects. It should also integrate aspects from Transport, which would include driver's licences and so on. So we will have things like the electronic issuing of warrants, and we will have automatic processing right throughout the agencies of the State. As I said, that will be a five-year program in all. The first part of the project is getting the infrastructure up to date, and the second part will be the gradual implementation of that whole-of-system design which we will put in place.

Mr BEANLAND: I refer to PPS page 1-17 and the courts budget estimate for 1995-96 of \$84,036,000, and I ask: in relation to the merging of the Land Court, the Planning and Environment Court and part of the Building Tribunal to form the new Land, Planning and Environment Division of the District Court, what are the estimated cost savings to be gained from such a merger?

Mr WELLS: The estimated cost savings are significant. There will be an initial set-up expense. The estimated full year recurrent costs of the

proposed Planning and Environment Court are \$1.96m and one-off establishment costs are estimated at \$0.225m. You will note that there is a specific new initiative in these Budget papers that addresses this. The extent to which the funds are going to be expended depends on when the court is established, and it is not going to be established by the beginning of the financial year. So the date of establishment depends on the passage of the necessary legislation.

In addition to the funds provided by Treasury, the amount of \$1.57m will be transferred to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General from the Department of Housing and Local Government. The efficiencies which will occur will come from rationalising the three jurisdictions into one. Cost savings will be derived by having assessors hear matters previously heard by judges or by members, and consequent savings in court costs will flow and there will be much greater flexibility and much more informality. It will not be necessary for the rules of evidence to be followed in the preliminary stages and therefore the determination of technical matters will be less accessible and access to justice will be improved.

The funds that I referred to which are being transferred from the Department of Housing and Local Government and the Department of Lands are going to be funds which will be extremely well invested because the efficiencies which cannot be exactly quantified at this stage will nevertheless be very great. The efficiencies will not only be efficiencies that will be reaped by the Government and therefore by the taxpayers; they will also be efficiencies which will be reaped by litigants before the court. Access to justice will be enhanced as a result of this reform. When one is considering the cost-effectiveness of any initiative, I think that one of the major things that one has to throw into the consideration is the extent to which it enhances access to justice. It is important that people should not only have legal rights for which we legislate but that they should also have the access to justice which necessarily flows from that.

Mr BEANLAND: Let us refer back to the Criminal Justice Commission for a moment. I refer to page 1-43 of the Portfolio Program Statements, and the totalling line item figure of \$22.415m Budget estimate for 1995-96. Within that figure I refer to the Corporate Services allocation of \$8.164m, which is up some \$604,000 on the estimated actual figure for 1994-95. As approximately half of the CJC budgeted increase in expenditure in 1995-96 occurs in Corporate Services, what does this include?

Mr WELLS: I will ask the chairman of the CJC to answer the question.

Mr WYVILL: Information technology all comes under Corporate Services, I understand.

Mr BRIGHTON: There has been a significant increase in the information technology allocation this year and also the staff development training program. The main reason for that is that last financial year both of those allocations were significantly curtailed in an endeavour to meet other

expenditures within our budget allocation. The information technology allocation has to be reinstated this year. Our network and the hardware is ageing and it needs to be upgraded to ensure that the system continues. All of the central expenses of the organisation fall within the Corporate Services allocation. That is why the increase seems to largely be attributable to that division.

Mr BEANLAND: Still on the CJC—on page 1-43 of the Portfolio Program Statements there is a line item tabling \$22.415m. I notice that the CJC is very good on public relations, marketing, media relations and so on. What funding has been budgeted for that in the 1995-96 Budget estimates?

Mr WYVILL: We have no specific allocation for public relations in that year.

Mr BEANLAND: You are very good at it. Somebody is doing it.

Mr WYVILL: We should.

Mr BEANLAND: I ask that question to be put on notice, because I am interested. There are people down there who do this work, obviously, because it happens regularly. A lot of work is produced by the CJC. Someone is doing this sort of work.

Mr BRIGHTON: There is a media liaison officer and an assistant media liaison officer; their salaries are non-cost. That is where it really begins and ends. However, if you want those details, we can provide those on notice.

Mr BEANLAND: I refer to the Legal Aid Office. Page 1-36 of the Portfolio Program Statements shows a Budget estimate of \$9.982m. What is the office doing this year to achieve a 5 per cent improvement on the 1994-95 financial year's results that it could not have done last financial year?

Mr WELLS: Sorry, could you explain what you are driving at there?

Mr BEANLAND: I want to know what it is going to do this coming financial year that it could not have done in the 1994-95 financial year to achieve this 5 per cent improvement in its results. It talks about a 5 per cent improvement in results for the 1995-96 financial year on the 1994-95 financial year. I am curious to know what it is doing in 1995-96 that it could not have been doing previously to get this 5 per cent improvement.

Mr WELLS: Do you mean why has the Legal Aid Commission got more money?

Mr BEANLAND: It does not say that on page 1-34. The fifth dot point states—

"A customer service evaluation will be conducted. The Office aims to achieve a 5% improvement on the previous year's results."

Mr WELLS: If I understand your question correctly, you are asking why will the Legal Aid Commission be able to deliver more effectively than it has done in the past. One of the major reasons that that is the case is because the Legal Aid budget has a \$2m surplus greater than what was

previously anticipated and what could reasonably have been hoped for in the past. The reason for that is that there has been a considerable improvement in the amount of money flowing to the Legal Aid Commission as a result of interest on solicitors' trust funds. The reason the solicitors' trust funds have increased is by virtue of the fact that the recession has ended and there has been an increased number of people who have been undertaking transactions involving their solicitors. Why has that yielded greater interest? The reason it has yielded greater interest is because a year or two ago—I think it was closer to two years ago—I entered into some rather vigorous negotiations with the banks whereby they agreed to pay a higher level of interest on the money in solicitors' trust funds that flowed to Legal Aid.

We are now reaping the benefits of the negotiations which I undertook a couple of years ago, and consequently the Legal Aid Commission has an additional \$2m available to it. In fact, over the next three years, that additional \$2m is going to yield \$8m, which will enable the Legal Aid Commission to expend more money, particularly in the area of Family Court cases to assist families which find themselves in court over a marriage break-up. This will be enormously beneficial to the community and it is a very good result for the Legal Aid Commission.

However, not all of the money which is going to be available to the Legal Aid Commission is going to be immediately expended. It is necessary that the Legal Aid Commission be immured against the effects of the kind of recession from which we have recently emerged. Consequently, a certain amount of that money will be placed in a sinking fund which will enhance the reserves of the Legal Aid Commission. That money will be put away for the kind of rainy day that we have recently had to endure for the duration of the recession. The Legal Aid Commission will also produce an enhanced result through quality assurance from enterprise bargaining. That will bring about greater efficiencies in the Legal Aid Commission itself.

Mr BEANLAND: Minister, in relation to victims of crime, at page 1-24 of the Portfolio Program Statements there is a Budget estimate of \$30,193,000 for 1995-96. You have indicated a number of aspects in relation to additional funding for victims of crime. Will any community organisation actually receive a grant from these additional funds? How much of the \$250,000 will be spent this financial year?

Mr WELLS: Those figures refer to service delivery direct to victims of crime.

Mr BEANLAND: How much of that will be spent this financial year?

Mr WELLS: On criminal injury compensation?

Mr BEANLAND: For victims of crime \$250,000 is allotted, but that is apparently over three years.

Mr WELLS: For criminal injury compensation the figure is \$4.1m. With respect to the overall

program for assistance to victims of crime, \$250,000 will be added to the \$900,000 already existing in the program. Instead of being a program only for victims of violent and sexual offences, it will also include the secondary victims of homicide offences. That funding will be allocated according to the needs of the case.

Mr BEANLAND: I presume it is not all going to be spent this year, because it says it will be over three years.

Mr WELLS: That is right.

Mr BEANLAND: I presume there will be \$80,000 a year or something of that nature?

Mr WELLS: There is already \$900,000 over three years. To that, you add another \$250,000, which comes to \$1.15m over three years. As you say, it is not all going to be spent this year; it is going to be spent over the three years of the total program. We have an existing program which we are enhancing.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The period is finished for non-Government members to ask questions. I now turn to Government members for the final period of questioning.

Mrs BIRD: Returning to the question of the Legal Aid Commission, can you provide me with some details of improved access for people in rural and remote communities to the Legal Aid Commission?

Mr WELLS: Yes. There are a number of programs for people from rural and remote communities. One of these is the telephone advice service which has a 008 number. That enables people from anywhere in Queensland to speak to somebody in the Legal Aid Commission who will be able to point them in the right direction. Another significant initiative is the establishment of a mobile Legal Aid office which travels in a bus around rural and remote Queensland.

The other important factor in the legal aid system is the regionalisation of the Legal Aid offices themselves. Many major provincial centres do have Legal Aid offices. Also, a program is now being established in Logan City, part of the purpose of which will be to research the access of people in rural areas to justice. The rest of that program will involve service delivery, particularly to women who are victims of domestic violence.

Mrs BIRD: Do you have a breakdown of funding for that? Is there a specific amount allocated for rural and remote communities?

Mr WELLS: I will ask the Director of the Legal Aid Commission, John Hodgins, to answer that question.

Mr HODGINS: We do not break services up under that sort of categorisation. There is a budget for regional offices and a budget for our telephone information service which goes through rural and remote communities in the whole of Queensland, and there is the Legal Aid outreach van which has a limited allocation. We have specific projects, but we do not particularly categorise it as your question asks.

Mrs BIRD: To expand further on legal aid and centre funding, do you have details of funding for community legal centres?

Mr WELLS: Yes. Community legal centre funding has been at the level of \$250,000 for the last couple of years. However, this year we are going to index the grant for the community legal centres. Prior to this Government coming into office, no money at all was given to community legal centres by the State Government. In 1991-1992, \$100,000 was provided; in 1992-93, \$150,000 was provided; in 1993-94, \$250,000 was provided; and the same was provided in 1994-95. Since then the community legal centres have asked us if we would index that sum of money. We have taken a position to index that sum of money and to backdate the index. We will not simply index it from this year; we will index it from when we started to pay \$250,000. The amount of money that will be paid will be, therefore, the indexation of the \$250,000. The amount that they receive will be paid over two years, so over the next two years they will receive two indexed amounts which will represent the backdating.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: In relation to PPS, page 1-32, I have two questions on legal aid. Firstly, I refer to the very bottom line of page 32 and the top of page 1-33, and you have made brief allusion to this before. On the legal service for women in the Logan area, targeting family law and domestic violence, you mention a research project. Is this solely a research project, or are there particular services funded from this, and what is the purposes of this? I know that the Logan area has one of the highest rates of domestic violence cases that come before the courts, but what specifically is this funding going to do?

Mr WELLS: The \$140,000 that you refer to will establish a women's legal aid service at Woodridge. This is an innovation which is complementary to the justice statement which was brought down by the Prime Minister just a little while ago. The service is going to employ two additional lawyers and a social worker, and it will have a Statewide focus, though the service delivery will of course be most impacting in the immediate area. The fact is that women are granted legal aid in only 26 per cent of cases. They are only 26 per cent of the litigants before the courts that are legally aided. The Legal Aid Commissioner has identified as a priority improving services for women. The Women's Legal Aid Program is going to focus on women's justice with particular reference to rural and remote communities. The program will be based at Woodridge and provide direct services in Logan City, so it will be actually a service delivery centre as well as a research centre.

The Magistrates Court in Beenleigh does experience a significant workload in the area of domestic violence, and the service is going to examine Statewide issues to ensure that new and alternative services are developed to focus on women's issues so that legal aid priority matches community needs. The development of this legal service in Woodridge will be a significant step forward in ensuring that women do achieve equality before the law.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: My next question is from the very last part of the second paragraph on page 1-32 where it mentions a range of things, including a Civil Law Legal Aid Scheme. My understanding was that access to civil matters in legal aid has been very limited. Is this funding extending access to legal aid? If so, in what way?

Mr WELLS: Yes, absolutely. Funding to civil matters in the legal aid system is not limited at all because there is a \$4m fund provided by the Public Trustee. That \$4m fund is capable of delivering a very, very large amount of civil legal aid. During the recession, during the decline in solicitor's trust funds, it became necessary for the Legal Aid Commission to limit the extent to which it was, out of the funds that were available to it, able to provide legal assistance to people wishing to bring civil actions. To ensure that those litigants were not deprived of their opportunity to have their day in court, I established this \$4m fund. That has proved to be extremely effective. The projected commitment of funds for this year is going to be \$1,189,701. From memory, 70 per cent of the people who made application to get legal aid under this scheme have been able to do so.

I was very gratified to note that in the justice statement that was brought down by the Prime Minister recently the Commonwealth has decided to set up a program which is obviously modelled on the Civil Law Legal Aid Scheme which is now operative in Queensland. The scheme looks like it is going to go on to permanency. What this means is a significant enhancement of the resource base for legal aid in this State, and therefore a significant improvement in the access to Justice of the would-be litigants of Queensland.

Mr PURCELL: I have a couple of questions for you. The first one is in regards to computer hardware and doing things smarter. This morning, we heard Mr Braddy say that there were two ways of his department fighting crime; more numbers on the ground and doing it smarter. Page 1-10 of the PPS shows that you have money set aside for technology. What will we use that technology for? Do we employ people to put programs into the computer? Just do things smarter? How are we going to use the technology and the computers that we are going to buy?

Mr WELLS: We are talking about an \$11m program. We are expecting that there is going to be very significant productivity improvements as a result of the upgrading of the computer technology within the department. The Director-General mentioned just a little while ago that 40 per cent of total Magistrates Court fines are processed by a manual card system. Obviously, when we have the Magistrates Court staff doing this by means of a computer that is going to significantly increase the speed at which these things can be done. To commence the new upgraded system, the 1995-96 Budget allocated \$3.9m to the replacement and upgrade of the computer hardware. A further \$2.45m is going to be spent in 1996-97, and in 1997-98 a further \$2.41m will be spent on replacement and upgrade. This again will be a connected system, as I understand it. The

information will be capable of flowing very freely between one part of the Justice Department and another part of the Justice Department. The consequence of that will be that a whole lot of things that were previously done by means of personal interaction involving telephone calls, calls back, messages on answering machines and interruption of meetings and so on are going to be capable of being done by means of pressing a button on a computer console. The consequence of that is going to be much greater efficiency and much greater throughput. So these savings are going to be very considerable indeed.

Mr PURCELL: Do we employ programmers or do we buy in people to do it for us?

Mr WELLS: We will go out to tender on those. There are State purchasing guidelines which apply in these circumstances, and tenders will be called.

Mr PURCELL: If I could move from there to the Criminal Justice Commission at 1-37, I am really interested in how many people we employ in the Criminal Justice Commission. We spend a lot of money on them.

Mr WYVILL: Two hundred and sixty three. Ninety-two of those are police officers, if you want to know.

Mr PURCELL: That costs us \$14m-odd?

Mr WYVILL: Yes, a total of \$14,640,000.

Mr PURCELL: That is all I wanted to know.

Mrs BIRD: I refer the Attorney-General to pages 1-13 of the PPS and the operations of the Justice of the Peace (Magistrates Court) and the justice system. Please provide details of the implementation of the Justice of the Peace Magistrates in the justice system.

Mr WELLS: The Justices of the Peace in the Magistrates Court? As you know, there are three levels of community legal officers. There are the Commissioners for Declarations, whose job it is to sign the forms and witness the affidavits, and then there are the Justices of the Peace (Qualified) who, in addition to the powers of the Commissioners for

Declarations, also have the power to issue or choose not to issue search warrants and the power to sit on the bench for certain purposes. The top level is the Justices of the Peace of the Magistrates Court, and they are the people who routinely will sit on the Magistrates Court bench and hear and determine minor matters.

In the Justice Department, we have a training program for Justices of the Peace (Magistrates Court). We are focusing that training program particularly on those areas where Justices of the Peace routinely sit on the Magistrates Court bench. That means focusing the training program in rural and remote areas of the State. We have completed training in places such as Kowanyama, Cherbourg, Murray Islands, Yorke Island, Boigou Island, Palm Island, Bamaga, St Pauls Island, Saibai Island, Woorabinda, Coconut Island, Horn Island, Longreach, Thursday Island, Yam Island and Warraber Island. Yarrabah and Lockhart River are currently the sites of training for Justices of the Peace (Magistrates Court). The training has commenced with officers of Southport, Beenleigh, Caboolture and Sandgate—officers trained to Justice of the Peace (Magistrates Court) level. Justices of the Peace (Magistrates Court) training of area registrars is going to commence in Maroochydore in the week commencing 15 June and in Rockhampton in the week commencing 19 June.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for the consideration of the Estimates of expenditure for the Department of Justice and Attorney-General has now expired. On behalf of the Committee, I thank officers from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for their attendance and advise that they are now excused. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Acting Chairman of the CJC and the executive director of that body for their attendance and advise that they are now also excused.

Mr WELLS: I would also like to thank my officers for being here tonight, but also mention that it is not unusual for me to keep them up this late at night.

QUEENSLAND OFFICE OF ARTS AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

In Attendance

Hon. D. Wells, Minister for Justice and Attorney-General

Mr Brian Stewart, Director-General

Mr Greg Andrews, Executive Director, Office of the Arts & Cultural Development

Mr Doug Hall, Director, Queensland Art Gallery

The CHAIRMAN: The next item for consideration is the Office of the Arts, and the time allotted is one half of an hour. For the information of the new witnesses, the time limit for questions is one minute, and for answers it is three minutes. A single chime will give a 15-second warning, and a double chime will sound at the expiration of these time limits. As set out in the sessional orders, the first 15 minutes of questions will be from non-Government members and the next 15 minutes will be from Government members. The end of those time periods will be indicated by three chimes. I now declare the proposed Estimates for the Office of the Arts to be opened for examination. The question before the Chair is: that the proposed expenditure be agreed to. Minister, do you wish to make a short introductory statement in relation to this office?

Mr WELLS: The only thing that I want to say in relation to the arts is that the arts is something which permeates all of life. The arts is not something which is set aside from the rest of life. The arts is an increasingly important part of the economy and an increasingly important part of this Government's Budget. There has been a \$40m increase in the Arts budget over the past six years. I think that that reflects the importance which the Government attaches to the arts in its hierarchy of evaluations. The arts represent something very important about a society: a society which has a vigorous arts culture is a society which is vigorous in a large number of other ways. I simply want to say that the arts is not something which is to the sidelines; it is something which is very central to human life.

The CHAIRMAN: The first period of questions will commence with non-Government members. Mrs Sheldon, do you seek the Committee's leave to ask questions?

Mrs SHELDON: Yes, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Leave is granted.

Mrs SHELDON: I refer to the Commonwealth's statement on the arts, *Creative Nation*. On page 20 it states that with the assistance of the Queensland Government the Commonwealth will establish a national centre of training excellence for Australian indigenous performing art. It will provide \$14.45m over four years to establish in Brisbane the Australian National Institute for Indigenous Performing Arts. According to Mr Keating, this centre would be the Aboriginal equivalent of the National Institute of Dramatic Art or the Australian Ballet School. It would

involve the relocation to Brisbane from Redfern of the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association, which includes a Sydney-based Aboriginal and Islander Dance Theatre. To support that proposal, how much have you spent in 1994-95 on negotiations with NAISDA, AIDT and the other Aboriginal theatre dance and arts groups across Australia?

Mr WELLS: It is very appropriate that the Aboriginal equivalent of NIDA should be located in the State which produces the greatest number of Aboriginal performing artists. To this end, we are in positive negotiations with the Commonwealth with a view to finding a location. I think that the establishment of that centre will be a great boost to Aboriginal artists in Queensland. It is important to remember that one of the most promising careers that people from the Aboriginal community frequently can follow is in the arts. Aboriginal art is much sought after not only by those people who already live in Australia but also by those people who come to Australia as tourists, and so is Aboriginal performing art. The cultivation of the arts of the Aboriginal people in this State, which happens to be at the one time a major tourist centre and a major centre of Aboriginal population, is a very fortuitous coincidence.

Mrs SHELDON: My question was: how much have you spent in 1994-95?

Mr WELLS: As I said, we are in very productive discussions with the—

Mrs SHELDON: Nothing!

Mr WELLS: If you want to answer the questions—

Mrs SHELDON: Obviously I asked you the question. You did not give me the answer.

Mr WELLS: If you want to dictate the form of the answers, I would suggest that you go into a different job, because that is not how it is done in this place.

Mrs SHELDON: How much will be spent in 1995-96?

Mr WELLS: There is no amount in the program here to which that refers. There is no money budgeted for this year because we are in the process of fruitful discussions with the Commonwealth about location of the program. I said that to you at the beginning. If you want to persist with this line of questioning, you can succeed in wasting a good deal of your questioning time. You are most welcome to do that.

Mrs SHELDON: So do you deny that your lack of support in this budget has left Queensland with nothing of substance to show for all the Prime Minister's fine words and creativity?

Mr WELLS: I find it difficult to believe that such an obtuse question is being asked. This initiative, which is very significant, is going to bring to Queensland a very valuable performing arts facility and a very valuable scheme of training in the performing arts. One goes by one step at a time in all of these sorts of things. The first thing that you do before you start making Budget Estimates is find

out where the place is going to be located. When you have found out what that place is——

Mrs SHELDON: Could you tell me where that place is?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister will answer the question after you have asked it. Do not interfere with his answering the question.

Mr WELLS: When you have found the location, then you have some idea of the kind of budget which is going to be necessary. The arrangements that have been made between the Commonwealth and the State, as I said, are extremely fruitful to this stage. Those arrangements do not involve a commitment by the State of Queensland to provide funds for the establishment of that centre in Queensland. We will, however, explore the possibilities cooperatively with the Commonwealth and then talk about the question of whether there will be a Queensland contribution or whether the contribution to that program will come entirely from the Commonwealth. Those questions are completely open, and you do not go putting line items in Budgets relating to things about which decisions have not been taken.

Mrs SHELDON: I refer to page 77 of Budget Paper No. 3 concerning the allocation for Stage 5 of the Queensland Performing Arts Centre. Can you confirm that this is the seventh budget in a row where this item has appeared and yet the documentation for the work is not yet completed—let alone a start made on actual construction?

Mr WELLS: What you are driving at is the question of why was not Stage 5 of the Cultural Centre built yesterday, or last year, or 10 years ago or 15 years ago? The point that I would like to make in response to you here is simply this: we have in the South Bank cultural facility a world-class cultural facility. When we have Stage 5, the South Bank playhouse, we will have something which rivals the West End of London, or the banks of the Seine in terms of its international standing. In order to do something like that, you want to get it right, and we want to get Stage 5 right. There was some discussion at one stage over the question of the appropriate size for the South Bank playhouse. The earlier plans were for a somewhat larger drama theatre. What we did, given that there were significant misgivings about that, was to establish a reference group, and what the reference group told us was that the optimum number was 850. In order to get the necessary degree of intimacy, which is required for a dramatic production as distinct from an opera or a concert, you cannot have too many, but in order to ensure that the best productions do come here and are prepared to use the place, you have to have a thing of a size that is going to get the number of people sitting down in the theatre that is going to enable them to make a profit.

If you want to have the Royal Shakespeare Company coming here, of course, you have to have that profit margin built in. Now, 780 people, which was mooted at one stage, is not enough to build that profit margin. One thousand, which was mooted at another stage, is too much, in fact, to

enable the necessary intimacy to occur, which will enable the very best dramatic production to be delivered on a stage. So consequently, the reference group fixed on 850, and that is what we are going with. We make no apologies whatsoever for the fact that we did our homework very carefully. We make no apologies for the fact that we are going to have the playhouse with the best acoustics, the best appointments and the best facilities in the western world. We make no apologies for that, and if that requires a degree of preparation, that is just fine.

The CHAIRMAN: Order. The time for answering questions has expired. Mrs Sheldon?

Mrs SHELDON: I refer to page 1-52 for the Portfolio Program Statements for the Minister for the Arts and to the major activities table. When are our major culture organisations going to be granted guaranteed triennial funding so that they can plan their affairs more than one year in advance?

Mr WELLS: It has already occurred.

Mrs SHELDON: So they all have triennial funding?

Mr WELLS: We are moving to three-year funding in respect of a number of the different major organisations. That is established in respect of some already and, in respect of others, it will occur in subsequent years.

Mrs SHELDON: Could you tell me the ones that do have it and the ones that do not?

Mr WELLS: The Queensland Performing Arts Trust, the Queensland Museum, the Queensland Art Gallery, the Queensland Theatre Library, the State Library of Queensland and the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust.

Mrs SHELDON: Thank you. I refer to page 77 of the Capital Works Estimates where the only capital works listed is the perennial phantom appropriation for Stage 5 of the culture centre. Are you committed to building a new wing for the art gallery?

Mr WELLS: Are you referring to the "Phantom of the Opera" there?

Mrs SHELDON: Are you committed to building a new wing for the art gallery?

Mr WELLS: Yes.

Mrs SHELDON: When would that be?

Mr WELLS: I think that it will be in the fullness of time necessary to find additional space for the art gallery. I do not think that that is going to be necessary in this year's budget but, in the fullness of time, that will be necessary. I think that this is something which will have to be subject to routine reviews and at some stage in the next decade I think that there is going to have to be an expansion in that area.

Mrs SHELDON: I refer to page 75 and 76 of the Budget Overview containing new spending initiatives for the conservation, recreation and culture program areas, in which I note that there are no new initiatives in the arts area. Do you not agree that this is a serious insult to the arts community?

Can you really not find worthwhile projects in the arts to support?

Mr WELLS: One of the important things that needs to be spelled out here is that the Arts budget has increased by \$40m over the period of the last six years. That is to say, when the party that you supported was in Government, you were giving them \$40m less than we are now giving to the arts. That was the insult to the arts community. There was no insult contained in a budget this year, which is \$40m more than you were prepared to give and which, in itself, contains items of escalation that will benefit the arts community generally.

I might add that one of the important things that we are addressing is something which you failed to address when your lot was in Government, and that is the infrastructure of the South Bank centre itself. We are going to be spending \$2.5m as a new initiative to fund the refurbishing of certain aspects of the South Bank culture centre. Part of this will be cosmetic stuff, such as new carpets in places where they have been worn, but importantly is the addressing of the corrosion of the airconditioning ducts. At the moment, the airconditioning ducts, which your lot put in, have become corroded by virtue of the fact that second-class materials were used as some sort of cost-cutting device, which your Government implemented at that time in order to make itself look good with the minimum amount of capital expenditure. Those pipes are going to have to be replaced. That is going to cost the largest part of that \$2.5m. It is a significant investment in our future because the South Bank centre is, of course, an emblem of the arts in Queensland. As you would well know, I see you there often enough adding to the atmosphere of the place and the very atmosphere which you breathe when you go there needs to be improved by this program, which is only necessary by virtue of the fact that your lot did not do the job properly in the first place. Now, \$2.5m is not an insult; \$2.5m is, in fact, an exercise in maintaining the good health of the people who commit themselves to the arts in this State.

The CHAIRMAN: That concludes the time allocated for non-Government members to ask questions. I now turn to Mr Sullivan, who will begin the questions for Government members.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Page 1-45 of the PPS, the fourth dot point, refers to the Pandora Foundation. What will the funding of this foundation mean with respect to enhancing the cultural wealth of this State and what is the purpose of this foundation?

Mr WELLS: It would be hard to underestimate the importance of the Pandora to the history and the culture of Queensland. The Pandora, of course, was the ship that went out to catch the Bounty mutineers, and having caught many of them, went on its way back to England but got wrecked off the coast on the Barrier Reef, and it went down. A number of them managed to get off the sinking ship and make their way back home, but the wreck remains on the bottom of the ocean. The artefacts that have been recovered already from the Pandora are artefacts that greatly enhance our

knowledge of those times, which gave birth to our nation. They indicated to us for the first time that they used self-propelling pencils in the late eighteenth century. Of course, a number of cannon have been found there, but the surgeon's gold watch was particularly nice. The last dive exhumed the world's oldest extant coconut, which was being taken back from the Pacific Islands in order to enhance the diet of the people in the northern latitudes.

The wreck will furnish enormously interesting information about the early days of the European settlement of Australia. To this end, we have established the Pandora Foundation. The Government will be providing \$1m up until the year 2000 to match funds of \$2m from the community and from industry generally. The exhibition will be located in Townsville. The people of Townsville have embraced the exhibition with great enthusiasm.

Mr PURCELL: Minister, having answered all of my ballet questions during question time in the House, I do not have any ballet questions for you tonight. I refer to page 107 of the *Hansard* for Estimates Committee B held in June 1994. The shadow Treasurer, Mrs Sheldon, in reference to an increase of \$2m for library book stocks, said—

"Doing one's sums on that, it would appear that the per capita increase . . . is going to be something like 4c per capita."

Doing your sums, Minister, has the \$2m increase amounted to 4c per capita in Queensland or not?

Mr BEANLAND: If it was a 4c per capita increase, the \$2m that the honourable member referred to would be enough to go over the population not only of Queensland but the whole of Australia, plus New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Canada. It does not take a lot of mental arithmetic to work out that, if there are three million people in the State and \$2m is available, there is a lot more than 4c per person.

The sum of money for that library enhancement was \$2.5m. I wanted to have the opportunity to report on the effect of that library enhancement. It has provided additional book stock in libraries virtually throughout Queensland. The effects of this are already being felt in local municipalities. I have had discussions with library and local government staff in a number of areas. They have reported a very satisfactory result and an increase in the book stock has already occurred in many local libraries.

The new arrangement put in place at the same time as the escalation of funds by \$2.5m involved local municipalities with libraries providing the funds for the staff, whereas the Government concentrates solely on book stock. Where a phase-in period is desirable, it is occurring. According to all accounts that I have received, this is proceeding very satisfactorily as far as those municipalities are concerned. But the important thing is that your constituents, mine and those of every member of the House are now able to access to a greater extent than previously a variety of books on different subjects. The scope of libraries has been considerably increased as a result of this very considerable enhancement.

Mrs BIRD: I refer to page 1-46 of the PPS. The tour program of the Queensland Art Gallery is important not just so that people can view art and learn about it; it is extremely important, particularly in rural and regional Queensland, for the Queensland Art Gallery to be exposed to youth. That is important also for the youth of my electorate. Can you give me some details of the programs?

Mr WELLS: Yes. The Queensland Art Gallery is celebrating its centenary. Part of the celebrations of the centenary involve the enhancement of the touring program of the library. The Matisse Exhibition closed on 16 May. A Moet and Chandon Touring Exhibition will open on 31 May and close on 2 July. An Exhibition of Australian Colonial Art 1800 to 1900 will open on 5 July and close on 20 August. The Pathways Exhibition: Aboriginal Trade Routes will open on 8 September and close on 29 October. The Lloyd Rees Drawing Exhibition will open on 4 November. The Time Remembered Exhibition will open on 18 November and close on 28 January. Aspects of Australian Photography will open on 17 February. And the list goes on.

Indeed, the art gallery is providing a rolling program of touring exhibitions to ensure that art is brought to the people. The major blockbusters that the art gallery has put on in recent times also are very important. All of these things represent the democratisation of the arts, because, if you reflect on it, it means that people who cannot afford to go overseas or even travel interstate to see many of the very important touring exhibitions which are now available in Queensland are still able to see these things simply by going to the art gallery. This means that the arts will not forever be the preserve of those who are wealthy enough to be jetsetters.

Mrs BIRD: So we still might see Escher in the country.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: At page 1-44 of the PPS, the second dot point under major program issues refers to research continuing into the arts and cultural development needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and communities throughout Queensland. What will be the result of the funding allocated with respect to encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to develop their cultural activity?

Mr WELLS: We have recently appointed an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts industry development officer in far-north Queensland, which is where there is a very heavy concentration of Aboriginal people who make the arts their life. She was appointed to the position in December 1994 and assumed duties in February. She will be placed in Cairns after 12 weeks' familiarisation in the office of Arts Queensland in Brisbane. The work of that particular officer will be extremely valuable in that she will bring people from Aboriginal communities in touch with those who will enable them to exhibit their art or perform their art in more widely seen circumstances. The facilitating role which this officer will play will be very significant in the life of the Aboriginal communities of far-north Queensland.

Mr PURCELL: I refer to page 1-45 of the Portfolio Program Statements which refers to the art

gallery for Aboriginal paintings. Could you please advise the responsibilities of the newly established position of curator for indigenous art at the Aboriginal art gallery?

Mr WELLS: Yes. The curator of indigenous Australian art will be responsible for the gallery collection program, the development of collections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art in accordance with current acquisitions policy, research, documentation and dissemination of information, preparation of exhibitions and associated interpretive material, presentation of lectures, talks and other appropriate means to assist on the interpretation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, promotion of the use of and facilitation of access to the gallery's collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and the provision of advice to gallery staff. The establishment of the position will enable the gallery to implement a number of its objectives which are very central. The position has been broadly advertised. Applicants were short-listed for interview on 30 April, and we expect the appointment to be made in the very near future.

I do not think I can emphasise sufficiently the bright future which exists for Aboriginal visual artists. The demand for it amongst tourists coming to this country is extremely high, and a living is to be made by many Aboriginal visual artists in the future. It is very appropriate, I think, that Queensland—which is the source of so much of the material which is now finding its way into museums and private collections overseas—should be the place where the best of that art is not only curated but also displayed.

Mr PURCELL: Just a brief supplementary question, if I may—will there be a special place in the art gallery for Aboriginal art, or how will it be displayed? Will it be disseminated through the gallery?

Mr WELLS: That is a question of artistic discretion, and I would disqualify myself and ask the director of the art gallery to respond to that.

Mr HALL: The answer to the question is "Both". At the present time, we integrate the indigenous holdings into the permanent displays, but within the permanent display areas there are also areas which are designated for indigenous Australian art exclusively. So it is a combination of both, but it also varies according to the programming and indeed to the views that particular curators might have about the way in which indigenous Australian art might be represented depending on whether it is urban, whether it is regional or whether it is remote, and a range of other considerations that come into play.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for the consideration of the Estimates of expenditure for the Arts has now expired. I thank the Minister and his officers for their attendance. I also wish to thank Hansard, our research officers and other parliamentary staff for their assistance. That concludes the Committee's consideration of the matters referred to it by the Parliament on 31 March 1995. I now declare this meeting of Estimates Committee B closed.

The Committee adjourned at 11.02 p.m.