

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Mr L. W. Stephan (Chair) Mrs E. A. Cunningham
 Mr T. A. Barton Hon. M. J. Foley
 Mr F. E. Carroll Hon. D. M. Wells

ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**IN ATTENDANCE**

Hon. D. E. Beanland, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
 Mr K. Martin, Director-General
 Dr K. Levy, Deputy Director-General
 Dr R. Kidston, General Manager, Office of the Director of Prosecutions
 Mr R. Newton, Director, Financial and Asset Services
 Mr F. Clair, Chair, Criminal Justice Commission
 Mr G. Brighton, Executive Director, Corporate Service, Criminal Justice Commission
 Mr D. O'Shea, Electoral Commissioner
 Mr N. Lawson, Commissioner for Consumer Affairs
 Mr G. Samuel, Chief Inspector, Trade Measurement Branch, Office of Consumer Affairs
 Mr R. Miller, QC, Director, Public Prosecutions

The Committee commenced at 9 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the meeting of Estimates Committee B open. The Committee will examine the proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation Bill 1997 for the area set out in the Sessional Orders. The organisational units will be examined in the following order: the Department of Justice, the Queensland Police Service and Office of Racing, the Queensland Corrective Services Commission, the Department of Emergency Services and the Office of Sport. The Committee has resolved that film coverage will be allowed of the Chairman's opening comments. After that time, radio and print coverage will be allowed.

I remind members of the Committee and the Minister that the time limit for questions is one minute and, for the answers, it will be no longer than three minutes. A bell will be rung 15 minutes before the end of the time limit and a double chime will sound when time is up. An extension of time may be given with the consent of the questioner. The Sessional Orders require that at least half the time will be allocated to non-Government members. I ask witnesses to identify themselves clearly by name and position before they answer a question so that the information can be recorded in Hansard.

I declare the proposed expenditure for the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice to be open for examination. The time allocated is three hours. The question before the Chair is—

"That the proposed expenditure be agreed to."

Minister, would you like to make a brief opening statement? If so, the Committee asks you to restrict it to five minutes.

Mr BEANLAND: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I will take up that very kind offer. The last 12 months have been a very busy period for my portfolio, as will be the next 12 months. I take this opportunity to congratulate the officers and staff of my portfolio, which includes the Department of Justice, the Electoral Commission and the Public Trust Office, on a very busy year of delivering services to the people of Queensland. This has been a year in which we have achieved a great deal indeed, and a great deal of effort has gone into—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! A camera is operating at the back of the Chamber. Cameras are not allowed to film anything other than the Chairman's opening comments. I did make that comment.

Mr BEANLAND: As I say, a number of issues came up during the course of the year. Those issues required extensive and intensive efforts by myself and the officers of the department. Nevertheless, I believe that we have had a good year in terms of delivering services to the people of Queensland. I pay tribute to the Acting Anti-Discrimination Commissioner and her staff. The Federal Government ceased the previous arrangements and we had to set up and fund our own Anti-Discrimination Commission. That has progressed extremely well, thanks to the great efforts of the acting Commissioner and her staff to get on top of the delays and the backlogs that they faced, much of which has been disposed of. The situation is now running along smoothly.

Likewise, I thank the senior officers and those from the Legal Aid Commission who have been involved with the Federal Government in working through a number of major issues in an effort to reach agreement to deliver legal aid services on an agency basis through one-stop shop arrangements in Queensland. Although the agreement has not yet been finalised, progress is well down the track. Thanks for that progress can be given to those involved.

The Alternative Dispute Resolution Program was extended throughout the State last year, and this year there will be a further extensions into a number of centres that have not previously had alternative dispute resolution opportunities and mediation services.

In the last 12 months we have also endeavoured to have a focus on the physical assets of the department. In the coming 12 months, approximately \$46m will be spent on projects worth approximately \$71m. The Southport and Rockhampton court complexes will be completed at the end of this year. The refurbishment of the Bundaberg Court House will be completed in the very near future. The Gympie Court House, which I am sure is close to the Chairman's heart, has had funds allocated to it in last year's Budget, and the

current Budget will complete the funding and construction of that courthouse now that the plans have been drawn up. We also have funds available to commence work on a new court complex at Gladstone. The much talked of Cleveland Court House will, I hope, finally come to fruition this year, resolving a range of issues that seem to have gone on for quite some time but which are now very close to finalisation. We certainly need to build a new Magistrates Court facility in that area. That project is long overdue—as are others, I might add. Funds are available for some refurbishment of the Brisbane Law Courts complex. The Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages has been relocated to 501 Ann Street in the city. That is a much-improved facility and location compared to the previous building in Herschel Street.

Of course, there is still some work to do in those areas. We are looking at improving not only our physical assets to better deliver services throughout Queensland but also, importantly, creating and generating jobs. That is a very important focus of the Government. A number of other areas, such as community youth conferencing, the upgrading and modernising of court technology and other issues are outlined in the Ministerial Program Statements. I am sure that Committee members are aware of them.

The CHAIRMAN: Questioning will begin with non-Government members.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, mindful as I am of your affection for the Upper House in which we are conducting these proceedings—

Mr BEANLAND: A wonderful facility, I might add.

Mr FOLEY: Some think it was a great achievement of the Labor Government to have it abolished many years ago. I draw your attention to the Ministerial Program Statements at page 2-9 where provision is made for the conduct of a referendum by the Electoral Commission and at page 2-7 where the department's planned performance includes the possible conduct of a referendum. Is this a proposed referendum into the restoration of an Upper House? Is it still estimated to cost about \$6m?

Mr BEANLAND: A referendum on an Upper House is a matter for the Premier. Should that occur over the next 12 months, special funding will be made available by Treasury for it. For a referendum to be held independently of an election process, I would think that it would cost approximately \$6m. Likewise, should additional by-elections or any other types of elections be required throughout the year, a special allocation of funding will be made available by the Treasury.

Mr FOLEY: I am mindful that your Government was elected on a policy platform of taking a referendum to the people to allow them to vote on the restoration of an Upper House. I am mindful that this is the second year that it has appeared in your Ministerial Program Statements. I am mindful also that you not only have budgetary responsibility but also legislative responsibility for the Referendums Act. I ask: is it the intention of your Government to

conduct a referendum in the period 1997-98, as is foreshadowed in the Budget papers?

Mr BEANLAND: As I have already indicated to the member, I think it is fair to say that, should a referendum be held, that would be a matter for the Premier. Although I certainly have the Electoral Commission in my portfolio, as I have indicated, I think very succinctly, the funding for any referendum or elections is a matter for which there is a special allocation from the Treasury.

Mr FOLEY: With respect, Minister, I understand that.

Mr BEANLAND: You have asked the question and I am answering it.

Mr FOLEY: With respect, the question was: firstly, is that the intention; and, secondly, if so, is the referendum referred to in the Budget papers related to the restoration of an Upper House?

Mr BEANLAND: I have indicated that that is a matter for the Premier. If the member for Yeronga wishes to ask the Premier that question, that is fine. It is not appropriate for me to comment in relation to that question. That is a matter for the Premier. I have indicated that, if funding is required for a referendum, by-elections or any other electoral purpose, a special allocation of funding will be forthcoming from the Treasury.

Mr FOLEY: I suggest that you are being evasive with respect to the—

Mr BEANLAND: No, I am not being evasive, I am trying to answer the question.

Mr FOLEY:—very practical question; namely, whether the referendum referred to in your Budget papers relates to the restoration of an Upper House.

Mr BEANLAND: I heard the member for Yeronga's question and I am giving him an answer. It is not my affair if he does not like the answer to the question.

Mr FOLEY: With respect, it is evasive and not responsive.

Mr BEANLAND: I am giving the correct and appropriate answer. If a referendum were held, that would be a matter for the Premier. It is not a matter for me.

Mr FOLEY: You are just the Minister responsible for the budget!

Mr BEANLAND: No. The funding will be made available through a special allocation from Treasury, as I have already indicated. I think that is where the matter lies. That the member fails to ask the Premier that question is not my concern or problem. There is a whole process which the Parliament must go through if you are going to have a referendum. At the end of the day, it is the Parliament that actually decides that.

Mr FOLEY: One of which is a Budget process, and that is what we are here for.

Mr BEANLAND: And I have indicated very clearly in relation to the Budget process. The member for Yeronga seems to be a little hard of hearing this morning. Should a referendum be held, a special allocation—

Mr FOLEY: I think the problem is with the tongue, not the ear.

Mr BEANLAND: I have no problem with whatever you said. A special allocation would be made by the Treasury, as has happened in the past and as would happen in relation to by-elections and so forth. Special allocations would be made by the Treasury. I cannot answer those questions. It is not appropriate for me to answer them. I am not the Minister responsible for this matter. But if a referendum or by-elections are held and funding is required for those, that will be made available through special allocations from the Treasury, as has been the case in the past and as will be the case in the future.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, I draw your attention to page 2-11 of the Ministerial Program Statements relating to the Electoral Commission. I note that \$430,000 is to be spent on local government boundary reviews. Either directly or through the Electoral Commissioner, would you indicate which local government authorities those boundaries reviews will cover?

Mr BEANLAND: On page 2-7, a dot point states—

"Completion of five (5) major local government external boundary review cases involving ..."

Those were the ones completed in 1996-97. Five of them are mentioned. However, you are asking about 1997-98?

Mr FOLEY: 1997-98.

Mr BEANLAND: I might ask the Electoral Commissioner. He may have some referrals at the moment. Mr O'Shea might care to come forward and indicate the answer.

Mr O'SHEA: I am currently holding no references from the Local Government Minister. As I understand it, a Bill was introduced in the House in the past couple of weeks that will tidy up some of the procedural problems that we would face by conducting changes to external boundaries of local authorities so closely to the last triennial elections of local authorities.

Mr FOLEY: In the Ministerial Program Statements, it contemplates almost a threefold increase in the expenditure in that area, from \$150,000 up to \$430,000. That suggests increased activity. Can you explain that?

Mr BEANLAND: Perhaps I might just quickly answer one of the points. Recently, a new statutory officer, a Deputy Electoral Commissioner, was appointed—something of which you would be aware—and funding for that position is in there. Is there funding for other staff arrangements in there also?

Mr O'SHEA: Yes. The total allocation over recent years to the Local Government Boundaries Commission has been of the order of \$1.4m. The allocation this year is \$430,000. The \$150,000 you referred to is just the money that was allocated to the Electoral Commission to continue to fund the staff

costs after the Boundaries Commissioner ceased operations in early November last year.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, I am mindful of the independent nature of the role of the Electoral Commissioner and, accordingly, through you I ask the Commissioner whether he has any concerns about the adequacy of the budget provided for the Electoral Commission in 1997-98.

Mr O'SHEA: No, I have no concerns. That amount was the amount I asked for. It is a guess. We have no idea how many references may be referred to the commission in the next financial year. We do not know the depth of research that we may have to do in making decisions.

Mr FOLEY: I am mindful of the submission which the commissioner made to the all-party Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee about the increased costs to the Electoral Commission if so-called truth in political advertising legislation were to be introduced. Can you inform the Committee as to the likely extra cost to the commission if such legislation were to be introduced, having regard to the over half a million dollars that appears to have been spent in legal costs on the Mundingburra and Greenslopes court cases?

Mr O'SHEA: I honestly could not make a guess as to what it would cost to administer truth in political advertising legislation. It is my recollection that the Electoral Commission would not be responsible for the actual administration of truth in political advertising legislation.

Mr FOLEY: Yes. I understood your submission to that committee to indicate that it was cumbersome and likely to involve the commission in onerous duties of seeking to police electoral material and being involved in endless litigation.

Mr BEANLAND: I think it really depends upon the way in which the legislation is drafted as to what costs there could or could not be for the Electoral Commissioner. It depends upon a range of issues that might be contained within that policy. The Electoral Commissioner is free to answer the question, but I wish to make the point that this is a policy matter which has yet to be addressed, were truth in political advertising to be brought before the Parliament in an electoral Bill.

Mr O'SHEA: I cannot add to that any estimate as to cost. As I say, it is my understanding that all of the submissions to that public inquiry agreed that the commissioner was an inappropriate authority to administer truth in political advertising legislation during an election campaign. If the legislation were to focus on the South Australian model, which is simply concerned with misstatements of fact, then it would be administered in the same way as South Australia has done, in which case you would take no action during an election period and you would simply prosecute in the appropriate court afterwards. I do not think that cost would be excessively high.

Mr FOLEY: Very well. Thank you. I turn to the Criminal Justice Commission. I draw your attention, Minister, to page 1-15. I indicate that I will seek to direct questions to the Chair of the Criminal Justice Commission in the same way as I have directed

questions through the Minister to the head of the Electoral Commission. I refer to the reference in the 1997-98 planned performance to implementing enhanced pro-active corruption detection strategies. I ask what the details of that are, and I would ask through the Minister that Mr Clair indicate to the Committee.

Mr BEANLAND: I am happy for Mr Clair to come forward and answer that.

Mr CLAIR: The particular dot point to which the member for Yeronga has referred relates to the need for the commission to go beyond simply acting in a reactive fashion in its fight against corruption in the public sector. Certainly a good deal of the resources of the commission are devoted to investigating complaints, but over the years the commission has decided that, in conjunction with investigating complaints, it should also adopt a pro-active strategy to identify areas of corruption and ultimately to reveal those. That kind of strategy takes time and it necessarily absorbs resources—and at some stages, of course, considerable resources, depending on the level of pro-active activity that is being at any time pursued. It does ultimately have results but, as I say, it takes time and it takes money.

Mr FOLEY: Mr Clair—through you, Minister—mindful of Mr Clair's role as the chairman of an independent commission, just as Mr O'Shea constitutes an independent Electoral Commission, I direct a similar question to Mr Clair that I directed to Mr O'Shea, namely: do you have any concerns about the adequacy of the budgetary provision for the Criminal Justice Commission?

Mr CLAIR: My answer to that has to be looked at in the context that the commission did suffer a substantial cut in its budget last year and ultimately was forced to put into place a redundancy program that saw some 20 positions being abolished. So we are really starting from a new base this year, and we can only look at our budget and our goals against that new base. In general terms, yes, I am concerned. I would like to think that we had the same capacity as we had this time last year and that we would be able to attend to all of the tasks that we had envisaged during the 1996-97 year but were unable to carry out because of the budgetary cutbacks.

Mr FOLEY: In what specific areas will the lower budgetary provision for 1997-98 compared with the 1995-96 budgetary provision result in a weakening of the CJC's capacity to fight corruption?

Mr CLAIR: In terms of the fight against corruption, I think that it is fair to say that the additional budget that has been provided at this stage for the Carter inquiry—which has been provided on the basis that the situation will be reviewed again in the middle of the year to see whether that budget needs to be extended—in terms of that particular activity and the fight against corruption, I think that we can say that we are adequately funded. On the broader front, I have concerns that arise, for instance, in the area of corruption prevention activities where, as a result of the cutbacks last year, the commission was forced to make redundant an officer who was an education

officer in corruption prevention—a very useful task, but unfortunately one that had to go, simply because we had to make budgetary savings. That officer was very much involved in what I call the pro-active side of corruption prevention in going to schools, to tertiary education institutions and to public sector organisations with a view to education against corruption, you might say—a very useful program and one that was certainly regarded as valuable but on the comparative considerations ultimately was one that had to go. So that is one area where it has been cut back. There are others—

Mr FOLEY: What other areas?

Mr CLAIR:—where we have a lesser capacity. For instance, in the complaints investigation area, there are within the commission processes whereby some matters are dealt with in the complaints section but others are dealt with by multidisciplinary teams. We have effectively at the moment had to reduce the number of multidisciplinary teams from originally three down to one. Two of those teams have been, as a result of the redundancies, consolidated and at this stage are absorbed in the investigations associated with the Carter inquiry, so that means that fewer investigations are able to be carried out in the more general public sector misconduct area.

Further areas, if you wish me to be exhaustive—I do think that our capacity to conduct research has been restricted as a result of the cuts last year. We have had redundancies in the research area. That, of course, is an area where there is some elasticity in that while we would like to be doing more, again the choice has had to be made and we have ended up having to cut back. In the intelligence area, we ultimately have redundancies that reduce our intelligence capacity to some extent, that intelligence being intelligence to support operations. Again, for the moment, some of that is absorbed in the activities surrounding the Carter inquiry.

Mr FOLEY: In evidence last year, the Committee was told that as a result of the budget cuts last year the CJC would be obliged to abandon active investigations into Chinese organised crime, namely Operation Shamrock, and Japanese organised crime, Operation Tara. Is that still the case?

Mr CLAIR: No. The funding, you will see from the papers, for the Joint Organised Crime Task Force was reinstated, if I might call it that, towards the end of January and adequate funding was provided for that through until 30 June, and the commission has undertaken to maintain funding for that through until 30 December. There has been some \$350,000 special funding allocated for that. The estimate as to the cost of that is in excess of \$350,000. At one stage it looked to be closer to \$650,000. The commission will find the further funding for that out of its base budget. But there is a special allocation of \$350,000, and the Joint Organised Crime Task Force will continue to operate as it has in the past through until the end of December, although at the moment the commission is certainly reviewing the areas of organised crime in which the commission can and should be properly operating its jurisdiction.

Mr FOLEY: Given the evidence of the Wood royal commission in New South Wales, do you have any concerns in relation to reducing the number of multidisciplinary teams, reducing corruption prevention, reducing the research capacity? Is this a time when we should be cutting back our efforts in these areas?

Mr CLAIR: I think that it is fair to say that the funding for the Carter inquiry has been provided on an adequate basis and, as I say, there is an undertaking that that will be reviewed in the middle of the year and further funding will be provided if needs be. I think what we will see achieved through that inquiry goes a long way to meeting any concerns that might be revived in Queensland as a result of what we have seen out of the Wood commission in New South Wales. The matters that we see that have come out of Wood have been specific to New South Wales. I think in Queensland we had our version of the Wood royal commission back in the 1980s. We have to be alert; we have to be vigilant and ensure that corruption does not take hold again. I think that can be achieved through what we are doing in the Carter Inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you almost finished questioning on that area?

Mr FOLEY: I have one more question on this particular area. I may come back to it.

The CHAIRMAN: We have gone over it.

Mr FOLEY: I will just ask this one question. If legislation were introduced in relation to the Constitution as foreshadowed at the Liberal Party conference last weekend to allow prostitution to be conducted in brothels throughout Queensland, what budgetary implications would this have for the Criminal Justice Commission in terms of its fight against organised crime?

Mr CLAIR: I cannot imagine we would see any budgetary implications at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Question time for that segment is completed. Now we have questions from the Government members. I refer to the Courts Subprogram—and this is in three different segments—how many additional judicial appointments have been made since February 1996? How does this compare with the number of appointments between 1989 and 1996, and what provision has been made in the 1997-98 budget for further additional appointments?

Mr BEANLAND: Can I just say—and I will get some more details in a moment—we have appointed two additional magistrates in that period of time. Two additional District Court judges and one additional Supreme Court judge have been appointed. You asked about the current budget, did you not?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr BEANLAND: In the current budget, there is funding available for two additional judicial officers. When one looks at the figures of the past, in recent years there were no appointments until after February of 1996 as far as the Magistrates Court is concerned. There have been additional appointments made in that area. I think there was

only one Supreme Court judge appointment made over the previous years, but I will just have to check those figures. There were four Court of Appeal judges, an additional Supreme Court judge and six additional District Court judges, but no magistrates appointed during the previous six years of the former Government. Since February 1996 we have appointed two additional magistrates, two additional District Court judges and one additional Supreme Court judge, and there is funding in this year's budget for an additional two judicial officers for those appointments to be made.

I think it is fair to say that the Government is certainly reviewing the figures as far as the dispatch of cases by the courts is concerned. We need to be vigilant of that. That is one of the reasons that we appointed additional magistrates, because at that level there was some backlog developing when we took office, particularly at Townsville from memory. That has been rectified. Again there was additional need in the District Court. As I say, in relation to the Supreme Court, currently there are some amendments before the House in relation to jurisdictions which will affect the amount of workload as far as the Appeal Court, the Supreme Court and the District Court are concerned.

For example, appeals from the Magistrates Court will no longer go directly to the Appeal Court should that Bill be passed; they would go to the District Court. They would go to the Appeal Court only by leave. The sums of money which courts may consider have been increased from \$200,000 to \$250,000 for the District Court and from \$40,000 to \$50,000 for the Magistrates Court. There have been some proposed changes as well as appointments, and there is room in the budget for an additional two judicial officers to be appointed through the year sometime.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Could I take you to question 9 of the questions on notice in relation to the Law Reform Commission and ask you for a couple of clarifications first, if I might? In the answer that was given, you said that the Law Reform Commission has had a budget increase of \$255,000. However—and you can correct me if I have misunderstood your answer—when I worked through the process I found that the Law Reform Commission has absorbed the Litigation Reform Commission. So when you add the allocations for those two groups in 1995-96, the Law Reform Commission has actually suffered a cut, albeit very small—a \$6,000 cut. In relation to that I ask: what references were passed on to the Law Reform Commission in 1996-97 and what references are planned for the forthcoming financial year?

Mr BEANLAND: Can I just say at the outset that I believe that one of the major tasks for the Litigation Reform Commission has always been to get the uniform court rules into place. Whilst some amendments were made and proposed, that never occurred. One of the major operations we have on in the Department of Justice Policy and Legislation Division is to rewrite those court rules to get uniform court rules across the three levels of Supreme, District and Magistrates Courts. I am sure that there

would be some minor changes as far as the Magistrates Court is concerned. That is a major project for whoever does it, and we proceeded with the project because there was a very clear commitment from this Government when in Opposition that we would do something about these court rules. Because the court rules have been around for so long, people just simply talked and talked about it, and the reform was long overdue. To get that driven along as quickly as possible, officers in the department are now proceeding with that and those uniform court rules are well down the track. That is the first thing, a major area of work—a most significant area of work—which requires a number of people to do it.

As far as the Law Reform Commission is concerned, some specific matters have been referred to it. Those issues—and that is what you want, I presume—were, firstly, looking at the function and role of justices of the peace; secondly, looking at the Evidence Act—particularly evidence of children which I think you yourself may have raised, and I think I indicated that in the Parliament in fact—and technology in that area also involving children; and thirdly, the uniform succession laws. They are the three major items.

The Law Reform Commission has had discussions with me in relation to its programs. In the past there has been a tendency to provide a long list of items which go on—there could be up to 15 or 20 items. It asked particularly if we could get down to some specific issues that it may take on board and follow through with some time frames involved, because this would then allow the Law Reform Commission to be more focused and more time orientated as far as producing work for the Parliament and for the Government is concerned. So we have endeavoured to meet those wishes by spelling out the three specific areas at this stage. There are other lists there, but we give first priority to getting some report and recommendations from the Law Reform Commission on those issues. I think my time has expired.

The CHAIRMAN: Can I ask you, again referring to the Courts Subprogram: since the Alternative Dispute Resolution Branch was integrated into the Courts Division in October 1996, what progress has been made in extending the ADR procedure throughout the court system?

Mr BEANLAND: Within the budget itself there is funding for extension into Hervey Bay and Mackay specifically, which is going to take place in the very near future. We are into June. I think it is this month—someone might correct me—that training will occur in Hervey Bay for mediators. That is also going to occur in Mackay. So we have extended it to a number of centres. Someone has the list here. It is at Rockhampton, Townsville and Cairns. I was recently in Cairns, and the people up there in alternative dispute resolution are very focused and doing a tremendous job, as they are at Cairns and Rockhampton. They were particularly pleased, in fact, and they were telling me in Townsville that the changes that have occurred have allowed a much more focused operation to occur as far as mediation

or ADR is concerned. Also, there are services at Toowoomba and Mount Isa. I do not think I mentioned those before. So there has been an extension to Toowoomba and Mount Isa, and now we are extending to Hervey Bay and Mackay with specially trained people in those areas.

Of course, people go from Rockhampton, for example, to a number of other centres to assist and to deliver services where they are needed—Emerald and places like that—from time to time. We are in the process of extending these services, and we will keep driving them right around the State as another way of reducing the cost of justice and also to provide an alternative to people instead of going to court for civil cases. Now they can sit down and discuss it across the table with an independent mediator and resolve these disputes. I think it is fair to say that more and more people are looking at this situation where the possibility of getting a win/win situation is more likely to occur with mediation than perhaps when people go to court. Of course, people still have the opportunity, where they require it, to go to court if they should so desire. But we are extending them, as you can see, and will continue to do so.

Could I also say that there are ongoing courses for court staff in particular. We have indicated in the past that we would try to get more court staff trained up in this area. That is certainly occurring, not only in those centres that I mentioned but elsewhere as well.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I refer you to question No. 5 with regard to victims of crime. It is stated in the answer that the overall budget has been increased in 1996-97 from \$7.2m to \$8.25m for victims of crime. However, I notice that in the DPP section in relation to victim support services, last year, including a carryover, \$1.075m was expended. This year it is budgeted at \$0.872m. Is there an expected decrease in demand in that area?

Mr BEANLAND: Is Mr Kidston here? He is the man who has his finger on this particular item. Mr Kidston looks after these areas in the Director of Public Prosecutions Office. He might be best attuned to answer your question.

Mr KIDSTON: I am Robert Kidston, General Manager, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The base funding for 1997-98 for victim support services is \$872,000. The apparent reduction from the figure provided in 1996-97 reflects the fact that there was a carryover of \$203,000 into 1996-97 from the previous year. That carryover comprised \$167,000 from the COVA implementation, and I think it was \$46,000 from the victims of homicide project. Those moneys were not for recurrent expenditure but for establishment costs associated with those two new projects. So the base funding has increased in 1997-98 from \$622,000 to \$872,000. The increase of \$250,000 is attributed to the COVA funding, which went into base funding in 1997-98.

Mr BEANLAND: Can I also add that, in relation to some of the work being done by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in this regard, they have recently produced a number of booklets about the work of the office as far as victims impact

statements and other issues involving victims of crime. These booklets shortly—if they have not already been produced—will be produced in a number of other languages. In fact, they are going to be produced in five languages at the moment. So there is ongoing work so far as victim support services are concerned. The other languages that they will be available in are Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Serbian and Bosnian, as well as English. These cover violent crimes, legal processes, information for victims, the work of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, victim support services and victims impact statements. That is also work that is taking place in that area.

Mr FOLEY: Could we have a copy of those?

Mr BEANLAND: By all means, yes.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: In recent legislation this year in the House there was additional recognition of the needs of victims of crime in court proceedings, etc. In your opinion, has there been sufficient allocation to cover that potential demand as far as translation work is concerned and a number of other issues?

Mr BEANLAND: As far as translation work is concerned, there is already—and has been in the past—a good deal of work, as I think I indicated at the time, done in this area. A number of courts provide translation services there at the counter. As far as actually going before the judge is concerned—I think that might be what you are referring to or what was referred to in the Parliament. Of course, the Legal Aid Office would already provide services in that regard as, I am sure, would the Director of Public Prosecutions. Someone can correct me here. My understanding is that, where it is appropriate, interpreters are provided currently, they have been provided and will continue to be provided. Otherwise, obviously, the witnesses and those others—whoever it might be—who are involved in the court case would be at a grave disadvantage. I am sure that the judge would quickly take action in that regard. So these services are being currently provided and will continue to be provided where appropriate and where needed.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: With respect, it was foreshadowed also that victims of crime—not necessarily giving evidence but listening to the proceedings, and where there was sufficient indication that they were not getting a clear understanding of the proceedings because of language—may also now be able to have an interpreter.

Mr BEANLAND: Of course, help can be provided through the victim support service in that regard. I think that is probably the appropriate area.

Mr KIDSTON: The victim support service is about to publish a report on assistance to victims of crime from non-English-speaking backgrounds. There are a number of recommendations in that report. That report would be made available to the member when it is published in a month or so.

The CHAIRMAN: Minister, again I refer to the Courts Subprogram. As an eight-week delay is considered appropriate for having matters heard in

the Magistrates Court, what level of success has been achieved in meeting this standard and what measures are and have been taken to ensure that this does occur?

Mr BEANLAND: Thanks, Mr Chairman, for that question. I might get the Director-General to answer that question. We have had an ongoing program. Where one gets the delays down to two or three weeks for cases, there are normally complaints from some of the local solicitors because they do not have time to prepare cases when the delay is too short. They do need a few weeks in which to prepare cases in order to go to the Magistrates Court. I will let the Director-General answer that question, because we do have a list here, I think, for that.

Mr MARTIN: The standard which the Queensland Government, the department and the Magistrates Courts have adopted in relation to delays in the Magistrates Court is a standard of eight weeks. That accords with the standards which are in the process of being developed and further refined through the Council of Australian Governments processes.

In the benchmarking exercise that was undertaken this year across Australia, the Queensland courts system came out generally the best of all Australian court systems as regards delays. The mere fact, however, that we have bettered the Australian standard does not necessarily mean that we can necessarily relax about the level of delays. The Chief Stipendiary Magistrate in conjunction with the Courts Program regularly monitors on a monthly basis the delays in the courts. Where delays go above the eight weeks level, appropriate arrangements are made by the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate to move additional magisterial resources into that.

At the moment, at the end of April 1997, the report from the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate indicates that the maximum delay being experienced in Magistrates Courts in civil matters is 12.9 weeks at Hervey Bay, whereas the minimum—from a quick glance here—is only five weeks at Gladstone. I think the member might be aware of that. That is good. In the criminal area, the maximum delay is 12.9 weeks at Hervey Bay and Maroochydore. The minimum delay in the criminal area is 4.7 weeks at Townsville. Townsville has been able to bring its delays down through the addition of an extra stipendiary magistrate during the course of the last financial year.

As the Attorney indicated, the new magisterial appointments during the year have been put into areas where there were delays being experienced, such as Townsville. That has enabled us to bring the items of delays down. It is something that we constantly monitor: where appropriate acting stipendiary magistrates are used if gaps occur suddenly through illness or for other unforeseen reasons. However, by and large, the department is happy with the level of delays, as is the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate. The profession certainly is not complaining to the department about significant delays in major areas.

Mr BEANLAND: Can I just add that, when I took office, there was a 22-week delay in Townsville.

That led to the appointment of the additional magistrate in that area. Since that time we have taken very close note and endeavoured to ensure that, where possible, delays are kept to a minimum, because 22 weeks is certainly right out of the ballpark.

The CHAIRMAN: We return to non-Government members.

Mr FOLEY: I draw to your attention your own press release of 10 July 1995 in which you said, prior to the last State election, that the coalition's policy includes an annual additional State Government grant of \$1m to victims of crime support services. I am happy to make it available to you to refresh your memory, if you wish. I contrast that with your breaking of that promise and your failure to provide such an additional grant of \$1m to victims of crime support services as indicated in your answer to question No. 5. I ask: why have you broken your promise to the Queensland people? When will you take action to provide the annual additional State Government grant of \$1m to victims of crime support services which you promised prior to the election?

Mr BEANLAND: This is page 1-3 that you refer to? Which page in the Ministerial Program Statements are we referring to?

Mr FOLEY: It is at page 1-3 of the Ministerial Program Statements. It is in answer to question No. 5 on notice.

Mr BEANLAND: Of course there has been no breaking of any election promise. The member for Yeronga would be quite aware of that. In fact, a great deal of funding has been put into the victims area—compensation support. In fact, in the time since I have been the Attorney-General, we have taken up a great delay process that was occurring as far as compensation payments were concerned.

Mr FOLEY: Excuse me, by way of clarification—I am not asking with respect to compensation; I am asking with respect to victims of crime support services, which is a different thing.

Mr BEANLAND: Yes, I am answering the question. You have asked it; I am answering it.

Mr FOLEY: I am asking you to be responsive to the question.

Mr BEANLAND: I am very responsible.

Mr FOLEY: Responsive to the question.

Mr BEANLAND: I am fixing up the mess that you left behind, member for Yeronga.

Mr FOLEY: I am asking you about victims of crime support services.

Mr BEANLAND: The point is that I am answering the question; he has asked it.

The CHAIRMAN: The member has asked the question. The Minister may answer as he sees fit.

Mr BEANLAND: Thank you, Mr Chairman. The issue is, of course, that from 1995-96 we increased funding to 1996-97. In 1995-96 there was some \$3.6m budgeted and the actual amount spent in 1995-96 was \$8.2m.

Mr FOLEY: Point of order, Mr Chairman. This answer is not responsive to my question.

Mr BEANLAND: That increase from \$4m—

Mr FOLEY: With respect, I am taking a point of order. The Minister is answering a different question related to the payment of criminal compensation. I have asked the Minister a question in relation to victims of crime support services with reference to question No. 5 on notice.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest you listen to the answer.

Mr BEANLAND: I think the member for Yeronga is saying that compensation payments are not support services for victims of crime. That is what he is saying.

Mr FOLEY: I am using exactly the same terminology that you used in your answer to your question on notice.

Mr BEANLAND: Victims of crime see that as part of the support service program.

Mr FOLEY: So criminal compensation and support services are the same thing?

Mr BEANLAND: That is not supporting victims, I think the member is saying.

Mr FOLEY: This is nonsense, Mr Chairman.

Mr BEANLAND: Could I ask, Mr Chairman, for a little decorum from the member for Yeronga?

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister can answer the question as he sees fit.

Mr BEANLAND: He has had at least seven gos. He is not in a court now, badgering some witness. That might be all right for court—badgering witnesses.

Mr FOLEY: The main contrast is that witnesses in courts tend to answer the question.

Mr BEANLAND: He is badgering witnesses, Mr Chairman. He needs to show a little decorum.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister will proceed.

Mr BEANLAND: Thank you. We go back to the answer. Firstly, there has been an increase in compensation payments. The former Government kept down the compensation payments by not processing the applications and holding them back. On taking office we started to tackle that issue. One of the reasons that there is a considerable increase—in fact, there was \$4.6m in 1994-95 paid out, \$8.2m in 1995-96 and \$8.4m—an estimated 400 applications or thereabouts—in 1996-97. In addition, a range of other support services is taken into account. We have, of course, support services through the Director of Public Prosecutions, which we have talked of previously. There is some \$872,000 there. Some of the other departments also provide additional support services in this area.

It is fair to say, though, that I believe that the current system does not work as well as it needs to. There are problems in relation to counselling services that are being provided. I would like to ensure that better efforts are made in that regard as far as victims are concerned. Over the coming months, we will be having discussions with a range

of victims groups to endeavour to improve ways of delivering a whole range of those services that are delivered to victims. I do not believe that the current system works nearly as well as it should do and is able to do.

The provision of a range of services across the whole of Government needs to be looked at as far as victims are concerned. Various aspects of support—whether it is compensation payments or funds for victims of homicide or whatever it might be—we need to look at that whole area, particularly the counselling area, where I believe a good deal more needs to be done. Over the coming months, there will be discussions taking place in an effort to improve that area, because I believe that there are a number of aspects that are worth while and need improving to deliver what I believe is an overall service to victims of crime.

Mr FOLEY: I table the press release of Mr Beanland dated 10 July 1995 in which Mr Beanland promises an additional annual State Government grant of \$1m to victims of crime support services.

Mr BEANLAND: I thank the member for his next question. Mr Chairman, I have a question I need to answer.

Mr FOLEY: I draw the attention of the Committee to Minister Beanland's answer to question on notice No. 5, where he indicates that funding for victims of crime support services—his terms—has been reduced from \$1.075m in the 1996-97 budget to \$0.872m in the current budget. I now turn—

Mr BEANLAND: Is that a question, Mr Chairman? I need to answer his question.

Mr FOLEY: I am getting to my question. I now turn to the prosecution of crime. I ask through you whether the Director of Public Prosecutions has concerns about the adequacy of his budget, having regard to the independent nature of his office.

Mr BEANLAND: Mr Chairman, could I just say in relation to the budget of the Director of Public Prosecutions—which page are you referring to?

Mr FOLEY: Page 1-17 of the Ministerial Program Statements sets out the subprograms with respect to prosecution of offences and also their staffing resources.

Mr BEANLAND: Can I just say in relation to the Director of Prosecutions Office that there has been an increase in funding from \$18.4m to \$19.5m. There has also been an increase in the number of staffing levels allocated to the Director of Public Prosecutions Office in relation to lawyers, law clerks and administration—up from 99 to 102, 77 to 80, and 40 to 41 respectively as shown on the staffing resource table. The Director of Public Prosecutions Office is now in the process of putting in place a new computer system. That information technology will allow them to deliver services better in this whole area. Perhaps we might ask Mr Miller to talk about this information.

Mr MILLER: The question is whether I have concerns about the level of funding for the office of the DPP?

Mr FOLEY: That is correct, yes.

Mr MILLER: Direct question. Direct answer: no.

Mr FOLEY: Can I draw your attention to the provisions on page 1-15 of the Ministerial Program Statements which indicate that cases registered for higher court proceedings will increase by 900—from 8,570 to 9,500—and matters received in the Magistrates Courts will increase by some 400.

Mr MILLER: I just cannot pick that up, Mr Foley.

Mr FOLEY: Page 1-15.

Mr MILLER: Yes.

Mr FOLEY: Under the heading "Key Outputs—Criminal Justice".

Mr MILLER: Yes.

Mr FOLEY: Those figures appear to indicate a very substantial increase in the workload of your office.

Mr MILLER: Yes.

Mr FOLEY: Let me take you also to page 1-17 where the staffing resources of your office are set out. What is indicated there is that there is an increase, for example, in the number of lawyers of only three to cope with an increase of 400 extra matters in the Magistrates Court and 900 extra matters in the higher court.

Mr MILLER: Yes. There are some changes foreshadowed with respect to appeals. I expect that, with the introduction of information technology within the office, we would be able to smarten up our procedures and reduce the workload on some of the staff. I would hope that some structural changes also would bring about improved performance. I am not prepared to concede that we have got too many people for the work that we have got on hand. I think that we have got to produce more efficiently than we have in the past, and that is my response.

Mr FOLEY: What structural changes are proposed?

Mr MILLER: I think that we have to have more staff of more experience and maturity in order to get rid of cases earlier than is presently happening. I think that too many cases are being progressed through the system—and I do not like the use of that word "progressed" but I am stuck with it. I think that there are too many cases staying in the system for longer than they should. They should be culled out very early.

Mr FOLEY: How many more staff do you think we need?

Mr MILLER: I think we certainly need six or seven, certainly in the area of PO6s—experienced legal people. I am not sure that we have got them in the office at the present time. I think that we will need to have those positions established at a sufficient salary level to attract people from outside. Efficiency is the name of the game. If we have efficiency, I believe that we are going to have a better justice system. People who are charged will have their cases dealt with earlier. Those who should never have been charged in the first place will be

discharged earlier rather than having it hanging over his or her head for months.

Mr FOLEY: I am sure that is so, but what budgetary provision is there to assist you to achieve those efficiencies? It is not apparent on the face of the budget.

Mr MILLER: It may not be apparent on the face of the document but it is my belief that we can achieve them.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you. Minister, I note at page 1-19 of the Ministerial Program Statements that the legal policy subprogram proposes to continue to develop legislation that implements Government policy in all the areas of the Attorney-General's portfolio. One of the Acts you administer is the Criminal Code, which has a chapter on prostitution laws. Is it your intention to introduce prostitution law reform over the forthcoming year?

Mr BEANLAND: Of course, that is a matter of policy. This is an Estimates Committee. Can I say to the member for Yeronga—who is perfectly aware of this—that that is a matter that he should direct to Mr Cooper, not to me.

Mr FOLEY: With respect, Minister—

Mr BEANLAND: You can have as much respect as you like.

Mr FOLEY: The Act that you administer is the Criminal Code and the prostitution law is contained within that. One of your areas in your own Ministerial Program Statements is the development of legislation. That is one of the things that the Department of Justice and Attorney-General does. I am asking whether the resources that you are seeking in this budget will be applied to carry out what you have told the press that you would do, namely, note very carefully the recommendations of the Liberal Party conference with respect to proposed changes to the prostitution laws.

Mr BEANLAND: I thank the member for Yeronga. I do not need the policy unit of the Department of Justice to note that very carefully. He might need these things. He might have made a mess-up of the current prostitution laws and created some problems, but I do not need the policy unit of the Department of Justice to note very carefully the decision of the Liberal Party State convention. I can do that quite capably by myself, thank you very much indeed.

I have indicated already that this matter is a matter for the Minister for Police, who has a piece of legislation there which was brought in, in fact, by the former Labor Government in relation to prostitution. If Mr Foley wishes to address these matters, or if he wants to talk to Mr Cooper about policy matters, that is fine. He will have an opportunity later to do so.

Mr FOLEY: But Minister, you are aware that you administer the Criminal Code.

Mr BEANLAND: I certainly am.

Mr FOLEY: You are aware that the Criminal Code includes a chapter with respect to prostitution laws?

Mr BEANLAND: Yes, we just updated the Criminal Code and had a very lengthy, detailed debate in the Parliament about it.

Mr FOLEY: You carefully avoided touching that chapter, did you not?

Mr BEANLAND: Have you asked your question?

Mr FOLEY: Yes, I have asked a question.

Mr BEANLAND: Right. We did not amend that section in relation to the Criminal Code, as all members of the House would be aware. The Code was debated at great length and in great detail. The Minister for Police is in charge of the ministerial committee in this regard. At this stage I am not proposing to go any further with the matter. It is a policy issue and it needs to be addressed with the Minister for Police.

Mr FOLEY: But it is a budget issue because you have made it a budget issue in your own Ministerial Program Statements.

Mr BEANLAND: I do not see prostitution there. I cannot see it at all.

Mr FOLEY: You have said that it is part of your legal policy subprogram to continue to develop legislation. The question I am asking you is whether or not you are asking the Parliament to give you money in the Budget to do what you have told the people of Queensland, through the Courier-Mail, you propose to do, namely, to take action in relation to legislation concerning prostitution. Minister, it is a very fair question and I would ask you not to evade the question. I would ask you to answer the question.

Mr BEANLAND: I have answered the question, but I want to answer it even more fully because the member for Yeronga seems to have trouble reading. First of all, can I say that under this section to do with the legal policy subprogram, no reference whatsoever is made to prostitution.

Mr FOLEY: No, it says, "to develop legislation that implements Government policy".

Mr BEANLAND: Again I remind the member for Yeronga that he is not in the court now badgering some witness. Can I just say that I have a long list of legislation which requires reassessment and re-examination from time to time. Currently, we going through that process in relation to the power of attorney legislation. That is out for public consultation currently. It is a very forward looking piece of legislation and one that involves a great deal of work and consultation. These points under this legal policy subprogram talk about, "Continue to develop legislation that implements Government policy in all areas of the Attorney-General's portfolio." I have a host of areas in my portfolio.

Mr FOLEY: That is right, and one of them is prostitution laws.

Mr BEANLAND: It makes no reference at all to prostitution.

Mr FOLEY: I am asking whether or not you propose to use the budget to expend money on that area?

Mr BEANLAND: The planned performance states—

"Continue work on operational/administrative initiatives such as the review of its current organisational structure and the development of procedural manuals and guidelines; and

Continue to provide quality and timely policy support to the Attorney-General and Director-General, as required."

Mr FOLEY: Minister, why—

Mr BEANLAND: I have already indicated that the issue of prostitution is an issue for the Minister for Police.

Mr FOLEY: Why are you evading the prostitution issue? Why will you not answer?

The CHAIRMAN: The time for examining the Minister on this segment has expired. I call the member for Mansfield.

Mr CARROLL: I have two brief questions to clear up answers to earlier questions and then I will continue with another topic. Firstly, I ask the Director of Public Prosecutions for clarification of his answer about the necessity for six or seven higher level staff, especially when I note on page 1-17 of the Program Statements that provision is made for only three additional lawyers. Is it the case that there will be additional higher level lawyers, but fewer lower level lawyers?

Mr MILLER: That is my hope. I believe that it would be better to have five people on \$70,000 a year than seven people on \$50,000 a year. The output will be improved immeasurably. I would prefer to have more PO6s than people right down at the bottom of the scale.

Mr CARROLL: Have you indicated that this should be possible because of the improved information technology of which the Minister has spoken?

Mr MILLER: I think that will have an effect, but I do want quality and you have to pay for it.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, as you mentioned, you recently completed an extensive review of the Criminal Code. Finishing the issue raised by Mr Foley about the possible change to some particular laws in relation to prostitution in the State, is it not the case that those kinds of recommendations from one of the coalition parties need to find their way through party policy formulation and then on to coalition policy formulation before reaching your desk?

Mr BEANLAND: They certainly would. It is a long process. The prostitution issue is a matter for the ministerial committee, eventually, before it goes to the Cabinet. It was set up some time ago and it includes—and publicity has been given to this—the Minister for Police, the Minister for Health, and others including myself. It is being handled through the Police Department. Legislation relating to prostitution was introduced under the former Government and it comes within the portfolio of the Minister for Police. That is the area in which any matters would be addressed were they to be addressed. Of course, there is a whole procedure of

policy committees and so on to go through. This matter is currently a long way from going through any of those processes.

Mr CARROLL: I am mindful of the fact that approximately one fourteenth of your budget relates to the Criminal Justice Commission, that that institution is only one of six statutory authorities under your portfolio and that last year the Committee spent about two-thirds of its time on the CJC. However, interest from many in the community prompts me to ask you a number of questions about that part of your program and also the part of your program referred to on page 1-17 relating to the prosecution of offences. Comparing the increased provision this year of \$19.5m for the prosecution of offences with the allocation of \$21.5m for the Criminal Justice Commission, I ask: is it not the case that the CJC is only one of those Government bodies investigating or prosecuting crime in the State?

Mr BEANLAND: It certainly is. The CJC does investigate cases, but the actual prosecutions are carried out by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. You are correct that the DPP operates throughout the State and we are currently in the process of extending those services with committals and so on. The money that the CJC has goes into a range of areas, not just investigations. For example, from memory, \$1.3m goes to research which covers a range of issues; the misconduct investigations and organised crime area has \$12.3m allocated to it; misconduct prevention has some \$618,000; the intelligence division has another \$1.6m; money for witness protection is \$1.8m; and corporate funds of some \$5m are also available. Funding is broken up into a range of areas within the CJC operations.

Mr CARROLL: In the last 12 months, how many prosecutions were taken to the courts by the CJC in comparison with prosecutions initiated by the Queensland police force?

Mr BEANLAND: Mr Clair, do you have the answer to the question about prosecutions by the CJC?

Mr CLAIR: I am afraid that I would have to take that on notice in terms of the number of prosecutions that have gone forward.

Mr BARTON: At least it was not a dorothy!

Mr BEANLAND: It was not a dorothy dixer, unlike the Labor Party which serves up lots of them.

Mr CARROLL: I understand that that will be taken on notice?

Mr BEANLAND: Yes. We will take it on notice.

Mr CLAIR: I do not know that I can talk about the number of prosecutions taken to the courts by the Police Service.

Mr BEANLAND: We will get you the answer, because it involves several aspects. That is no problem.

Mr CARROLL: Thank you, Minister. It appeared to me that in an answer to an earlier question this day, Mr Clair complained of a tightened budget allocation. Is it not the case that much of the clean-up work and the ground-breaking work done

by the CJC was done in the first five years or so of its operation and that the workload in those areas is reducing?

Mr BEANLAND: Perhaps I should ask the CJC Chairperson to answer that question. It is perhaps more appropriate for him than it is for me.

Mr CLAIR: If one turns to the complaints work, which is very much the largest area of expenditure within the CJC, that work is ever increasing. In the course of this year we have had a substantial increase in the number of complaints compared to previous years, and that of course puts greater demand on our resources. At the same time, the work in other areas is either at the same level or is increasing. As I said before, to some extent research is an elastic area, but the fact is that the need for ongoing research continues. The need to take proactive measures in respect of discovering areas of corruption continues. In fact, if anything, certainly at the moment it absorbs more resources than it did in the early years.

The other area which I touched on earlier is that of corruption prevention. It is fair to say that over the past 12 months or more, the commission has adopted the view that we need to change our focus to some extent to put more emphasis on prevention, because ultimately that is a much more effective means of fighting corruption than investigating complaints. We would like to put more resources into that. Obviously, resources are finite, so that may involve some sort of balancing procedure where we shift our focus to some extent from the reactive area to prevention areas.

Mr BEANLAND: We have been going over some material. Could I take a moment to give Mr Carroll a very quick run-down on the previous question he asked about the number of prosecutions? The material supplied to us by the CJC indicates that these changes were over 10 months and that the figures are compared to 1995-96 figures. So the figures for 10 months of the current financial year are compared to 1995-96 figures. Referrals to the Director of Public Prosecutions were down from 76 to 44. Recommendations of criminal charges to the Queensland Police Service were down from 56 to 9. Recommendations of disciplinary action to the Queensland Police Service were down from 185 to 115, and recommendations of disciplinary action to principal officers were up from 56 to 77. There is also one other figure for referrals to the Queensland Police Service for investigation of minor misconduct, which was down from 857 to 498. I think that is the sort of answer that you were after.

Mr CARROLL: Thank you, Minister. Last year, before this Committee, the Chairman of the CJC broke some news about the need to have a special investigation into allegations of Police Service involvement in organised drug crime, and I ask: is there any impending further investigation or new investigation of that style which might justify the increase in the overall budget this year for the CJC?

Mr BEANLAND: Perhaps I should again refer that matter to Mr Clair.

Mr CLAIR: As I mentioned earlier, special funding has been provided in the new financial year for continuing the Carter inquiry. That has been provided on the basis of it being funded for the three months through until the end of September, but with a specific undertaking that the position will be reviewed in the middle of this calendar year to see whether additional funding is required. Those investigations, or investigations associated with that inquiry, are continuing, and there are certainly a number of areas yet requiring attention. A number of areas of investigation are continuing, some of which will see some attention in public hearings. That is probably the more accurate way to put it, Mr Carroll.

Mr CARROLL: From your answer, I gather that nothing is forthcoming of which you are presently aware which is of the size of the current Carter inquiry?

Mr CLAIR: I am sorry? There is nothing of the size of the Carter inquiry?

Mr CARROLL: Forthcoming?

Mr CLAIR: Is that what you are asking, Mr Carroll?

Mr CARROLL: Yes.

Mr CLAIR: I gave my answer on the basis that investigations of the type that you have described are being undertaken under the umbrella of the Carter inquiry. That is the basis on which I gave the answer. What I am saying is that there are ongoing investigations in that area. I should say that it is not proposed that there be some further and other inquiry established, Mr Carroll.

Mr CARROLL: I am sure that the public of Queensland will be pleased to hear that. Minister, I wish to ask you whether or not you have managed to secure better communication with the CJC in matters such as reporting or budgeting. Last year we were left with the impression that there was not enough communication in that regard. I refer to a number of debates in the Queensland Parliament last year—on 8 and 10 October—and also to some comments made early this month in regard to PCJC report No. 38, and I ask: over the past eight months or so, have you managed to effect an improvement in communication?

Mr BEANLAND: There have been a number of discussions and meetings with the Chairman and others, the CJC, me and officers of the department on a range of matters and issues—not only on budgetary items but also on a whole host of other issues which the Chairman wishes to discuss from time to time. That is fair enough. I am also aware of the range of recommendations in report No. 34 and which appeared again in report No. 38. Until the current inquiry ceases and makes recommendations, following through on those matters needs to be held in abeyance. I am and will be following up those reports once the inquiry is completed and I will be having further discussions with Mr Clair and others who are appropriate in relation to a number of recommendations in those reports from the PCJC. But there are ongoing, regular discussions with the Chairman.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, also in those debates in the Parliament in October last year there was some mention of the desirability of the CJC communicating better with the PCJC. I ask: has the PCJC been involved in the Budget process this year?

Mr BEANLAND: No, not the PCJC; it has not been involved in the Budget process. I understand that it has submitted a report to the Parliament and sent a copy of it to the Connolly/Ryan inquiry into the CJC, again containing a host of recommendations which would give it somewhat of a different role and perhaps a more powerful role than it currently plays in relation to a range of issues.

Mr CARROLL: An allegation also raised in those debates was that the CJC may have allocated unnecessary resources to the preparation of reports not directly related to its core responsibilities. I ask: has there been any change over the past eight months or so to the process whereby the commission embarks upon research or inquiries and prepares such reports?

Mr BEANLAND: It has not received any direction or anything of that nature from either me or the Government. Perhaps I would need to refer that matter to Mr Clair. He may have changed some of the processes, but that is a matter for the Criminal Justice Commission. Would you care to answer that, Mr Clair?

Mr CLAIR: I must say that I am not aware of the debates or the point to which Mr Carroll refers about the CJC preparing reports which it may not have been obliged to under its legislation. I am afraid that comes as a surprise to me. I find it difficult to answer the question. I am not aware of any particular change in the approach that has been taken by the CJC as a result of some debate that took place in the House. If Mr Carroll is able to give some more detail, perhaps I can address the question.

Mr CARROLL: I find it surprising that the Chairman of the CJC is not aware of mention of his commission from time to time in the House. The debate is reported and circulated in Hansard. I ask: has there not been a change to the practice whereby the PCJC is more closely overseeing the work of the CJC, specifically in relation to the preparation of those types of reports?

Mr BEANLAND: I cannot answer for the PCJC. All I can do is refer to report No. 38. Upon reading report No. 38, and report No. 34 prior to that, it seemed to me that the PCJC was, putting it bluntly, fairly unhappy with the current state of affairs—and I think that is a fair comment when one reads that report—on its oversighting of certain reports and other issues in relation to the CJC. That is not a question which I can answer, and it should be directed appropriately to the PCJC.

Mr CARROLL: Perhaps Mr Clair might answer this question.

Mr BEANLAND: If Mr Clair can add something to it, I am very happy for him to do so.

Mr CARROLL: Mr Clair, I understand that there has been a closer working relationship with the PCJC, and I am asking you to either confirm or deny that—hopefully, to confirm it.

Mr CLAIR: Since I arrived at the CJC as its Chairperson, I have been striving to achieve a closer working relationship with the parliamentary committee. I hope that I have succeeded to some extent. It is difficult for me to speak about the contents of the discussions that take place regularly with the PCJC when we have our meetings every two months or thereabouts. But we have been working together to ensure that the PCJC is satisfied with the way in which the CJC prepares its two-monthly report, and that may be the matter to which you were referring previously.

Mr CARROLL: Yes, I see.

Mr CLAIR: Certainly at the moment we have processes under way to enable the CJC to be informed about just what it is that the PCJC would like to see in those reports—for example, what format it would like. If there is some way in which we can make it happier than it is, we will work towards that.

Mr CARROLL: That is certainly to be encouraged. Can I ask what are the staff numbers of the CJC at present and whether that will change under this budget when implemented?

Mr BEANLAND: Mr Clair, you might care to answer that.

Mr CLAIR: The total approved establishment in 1996-97 was 263. I have mentioned earlier a redundancy program. The approved establishment estimated for 1997-98 will be 247. That 247 reflects the 20 redundancies, which would have taken the 263 down to 243, but then with the creation of some different positions—I won't say "creation of different positions"—there were previously three positions which were above establishment in the Intelligence Division but, as it were, held against vacancies at any given time, which of course far exceeded three at any given time. They have been formalised, so that accounts for three of the additional four positions, and there has been one position envisaged as being created in 1997-98, so that brings it up to the 247.

The CHAIRMAN: The time for questions from Government members has now expired. I call the member for Yeronga.

Mr FOLEY: Mr Clair, how much has the CJC spent and how much will it be spending on the Connolly inquiry?

Mr BEANLAND: Mr Clair might care to answer that.

Mr CLAIR: In 1996-97 the total provision that has been made—and it is expected that this will be a fair representation—is \$938,400. In 1997-98 we have made provision in the budget for \$472,500.

Mr FOLEY: Are they—

Mr CLAIR: That is in terms of provisions made for the cost of legal representation associated with that inquiry. I find it difficult to estimate the actual cost of staff time devoted to the inquiry, although the figures that we have kept have consistently indicated that we devote, on average, the equivalent of 12 full-time staff to fulfilling the requirements of the inquiry, either by way of turning out material in answer to summonses or by preparing statements or

by attending to give evidence or in other associated matters.

Mr FOLEY: To what extent has that financial and administrative burden prejudiced the capacity of the CJC to combat corruption?

Mr CLAIR: It has certainly had a major impact on what we have been able to spend in other areas, and that has been a constant problem, of course, but we just have to cut our cloth to match the reality of the situation.

Mr BEANLAND: May I just add a couple of points to that? I think it is appropriate. The CJC elected to take outside legal advice—by that I mean to go to a firm of solicitors of their own volition. That is fair enough. They could have in most cases used the ILRO, the Inquiry Legal Representation Office, which is made available and services could have been provided through that particular office which are being provided for a whole range of other people who seek legal representation before the Connolly/Ryan inquiry. But that is a matter for the CJC, and they have made that decision and that is fair enough.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, I refer you to your answer to question on notice No. 10 regarding the cost of the Connolly inquiry. I direct you to the latter part of the question, which appears not to have been answered in the written answer, namely, what measures, if any, have you as Minister put in place to contain the costs of that inquiry?

Mr BEANLAND: I suppose the first thing the Government put in place was the ILRO, the Inquiry Legal Representation Office, which is working very effectively to keep down the costs of these inquiries for people who seek representation before them. A great deal of work and effort has gone into that. That has substantially reduced the cost of people appearing before an inquiry. Of course, an inquiry such as this is independent, as the member for Yeronga would be aware. All inquiries are independent and they take a life of their own in relation to time. Although the best will in the world always believes that the inquiry will be over in a short period, issues inevitably come up because one cannot estimate what are the issues that might be confronted by the inquiry from time to time. So various matters come before the inquiry which they end up needing to pursue for related reasons. They do that and that extends both the time and cost of the inquiry. Whilst one might set down guidelines and encourage inquiries to be completed in the shortest possible time, that is not always possible because of the way in which inquiries operate.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, you said originally three months. What do you say now?

Mr BEANLAND: What I say now very clearly is that a number of issues have been raised. I believe that a secret inquiry was raised which I had not heard of before, plus various material has been produced—

Mr FOLEY: You must have read the correspondence between the former Government and the CJC or read the annual reports.

Mr BEANLAND: I do not read your secret inquiries; you hold them in secret.

Mr FOLEY: It must have been the best-publicised inquiry this side of the black stump.

Mr BEANLAND: I do not mind the toing-and-froing; I have all day to do this. I am quite happy about that if the member for Yeronga wants to do it. The fact is that it was a secret inquiry that you were running and you had trumped up and you were investigating—

Mr FOLEY: Minister, what I have asked you is whether or not you have another prediction apart from the three months which you told the people of Queensland. When is the Connolly inquiry going to end?

Mr BEANLAND: The member for Yeronga is continuing to think he is in court. He is not in court in this particular case.

Mr FOLEY: No, I am continuing to hope that the Government will be accountable to the Parliament.

Mr BEANLAND: What I am indicating to you is the correct and proper answer, but you do not like the answer, and—

Mr FOLEY: I am asking you a question and your answer is not responsive.

Mr BEANLAND: I have indicated already to the member for Yeronga, but he will not listen because he continues to interject—

Mr FOLEY: When will the Connolly inquiry end?

Mr BEANLAND: It will end when it finishes the functions and roles that it was set up to carry out.

Mr FOLEY: You said when you set it up that it would take three months. What do you say now?

Mr BEANLAND: I would not have anticipated your secret inquiry.

Mr FOLEY: When do you say it will finish?

Mr BEANLAND: Did you come out and tell us you had a secret inquiry? It might come up with some more Labor Party secret inquiries.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, if you would like to go into Opposition again—

Mr BEANLAND: Is the member for Yeronga telling me—

Mr FOLEY:—then I would be happy to give an answer to your question.

Mr BEANLAND:—that there are no more secret inquiries? He never told me about the first one! So we have had these secret inquiries. There are other issues that—

Mr FOLEY: Point of order. Mr Chairman, I ask you to direct the Minister to answer the question.

Mr BEANLAND: Now of course there is the case before the Supreme Court of Queensland involving—

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister will answer the question as he sees fit.

Mr BEANLAND: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I was coming to the point that I understand—and someone can correct me—that Mr Carruthers' aspects of the matter are now before the Supreme Court of Queensland, which I am sure will delay and slow down further the processes of the Connolly/Ryan inquiry. If the inquiry ends up having to go to the Supreme Court or is taken to the Supreme Court by various parties, all of that delays the whole process.

Mr FOLEY: But you have budgeted \$3.129m, and I am asking you—

Mr BEANLAND: I haven't finished the answer yet, Mr Chairman.

Mr FOLEY:—on what basis has that budgetary provision been made for 1997-98?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I call the Minister.

Mr BEANLAND: Thank you, Mr Chairman. As I was saying before, some of the issues involving the Connolly/Ryan inquiry are currently before the Supreme Court. Funding has been made available in the budget for an additional three months, from memory, for that inquiry. The Government, as I have indicated in the past, is keen to have the inquiry conclude as soon as it gets through the proper roles and functions it must perform. Who knows what else it might unearth through these processes? It has already unearthed a great deal of material, of course. So we will just have to wait and see. But there is funding there for three additional months, and I hope that the inquiry would then be in a position to wind up and to report as soon as possible so that its recommendations may then be considered by the Government, together with the matters contained in various Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee reports in relation to the CJC.

Mr FOLEY: I draw your attention to the fees for commissioners, barristers and solicitors set out in answer to question No. 10 on notice of some \$3.5m in 1996-97 and just over \$2m for 1997-98. Is it correct that junior counsel are being paid at two-thirds the rate of senior counsel, that is, at a sum of \$2,400 per day with senior counsel at \$3,600 per day? If that is so, have you taken any steps in relation to the reintroduction of this two-thirds rule which was abandoned by the Bar some time ago?

Mr BEANLAND: No, there is no reintroduction of the two-thirds rule or any other rule that the barristers used to utilise at that particular time—certainly not. In fact, it is something which I certainly do not support. As far as the fees for barristers in relation to the Connolly/Ryan inquiry are concerned—perhaps the Director-General might be able to provide some material in relation to that.

Mr MARTIN: The fees paid to commissioners and counsel assisting the inquiry are as follows: Commissioner P. D. Connolly, QC, \$3,000 per day; Commissioner K. W. Ryan, QC, \$3,000 per day; senior counsel Mr R. I. Hanger, QC, \$3,600 a day; senior counsel Mr Simon Couper, QC, \$3,000 per day; counsel T. F. Carmody, \$2,400 per day; counsel K. D. Dorney, \$3,000 per day; counsel G. A. Thompson, \$2,400 per day; and counsel K. N. Wilson, \$2,400 per day. Those fees, which were set

at the commencement of the inquiry, represent the standard commercial fees paid by counsel of the appropriate standing of the silks and seniors and juniors who are appearing.

Mr FOLEY: Is it a mere coincidence, then, that the \$2,400 paid represents two-thirds of the fees of senior counsel?

Mr BEANLAND: I do not think you should put any weight on those fees in relation to some other fees. There is no relationship between one set of fees and another set of fees as far as the Government is concerned.

Mr FOLEY: The simple fact of the matter is that, on the figures that Mr Martin has read out, the two-thirds rule is alive and well in the payment to junior counsel. My concern is this—and I ask you to apply your minds to it—that the commercial rates that may be relevant to an inquiry due to run for a few weeks or up to three months is a very different thing from an inquiry which may run for a year or more. My concern is that your Government appears to have failed to apply any fiscal discipline when the timing has blown out relative to the commercial nature of the rates that are being paid. I am asking you why you have not done so and why you have not taken prudent budgetary measures consistent with the independence of that inquiry to protect the public purse?

Mr BEANLAND: We are protecting the public purse. I am not sure what point the member for Yeronga is trying to make in relation to this, but the Director-General has indicated the fees. There is no relationship from one set of fees to another set of fees, whether it is two-thirds, three-quarters or some other matter. Perhaps the Director-General would care to give some further information.

Mr MARTIN: The principles adopted as regards fees paid to counsel and commissioners in relation to the Connolly/Ryan inquiry are exactly the same principles as were adopted in relation to the payment of fees to commissioners of the Fitzgerald inquiry and to counsel who appeared before the Fitzgerald inquiry. Exactly similar relationships have been applied.

Mr FOLEY: Do you not concede that the commercial rates payable for an inquiry which goes for a few weeks is a very different matter from the commercial rates payable for something which is going to run for a year or more?

Mr MARTIN: If I could continue on—having been involved in the Department of Justice at the time of the foundation of the Fitzgerald inquiry, I can say that the view of the department and the then Government was that the Fitzgerald inquiry would last only a matter of weeks or a couple of months and, accordingly, fees were negotiated and set at that time.

Mr FOLEY: I understand the precedent, but what I am asking you to do—through you, Minister—is to apply your mind to the commercial nature of inquiries. I am suggesting to you that there is a vast difference between a short-term brief and a long-term brief.

Mr MARTIN: Indeed there is. If one could anticipate the length of time of all forms of inquiries—be they Fitzgerald, Connolly/Ryan, Carter or any other inquiry—that this jurisdiction and other jurisdictions have established over recent years, and if one could then negotiate with members of the private Bar in a more commercial way, then no doubt lower fees could be obtained. That would, however, require a willingness by the fee-paying authority—normally the Government—to enter into a contractual relationship with a barrister to pay a set fee for a long period of time and to guarantee a certain degree of income for that period of time. The nature of practice at the Bar, as you would well know, does not permit those types of contracts to be entered into with independent counsel. That is a matter which is from time to time the subject of discussions between the Government and the Bar Association, particularly with a view to ensuring the more commercial rates when, for example, the Director of Public Prosecutions briefs the Legal Aid Commission barristers, etc.

Mr FOLEY: Did they do that with the Carter inquiry?

Mr MARTIN: The Carter inquiry was established by the Criminal Justice Commission—

Mr FOLEY: Perhaps Mr Clair can assist us—with your indulgence, Minister—because if a different approach, a more fiscally restrained approach, has been adopted, I am sure the people of Queensland would like to know.

Mr BEANLAND: I am happy for Mr Clair to answer the question.

Mr CLAIR: Mr Carter in fact requested that his fee be limited to the pro rata amount of the current salary of a Supreme Court judge. That works out at about \$600 per day. He has made it clear that he would refuse to accept any more than that. When it came to engaging senior counsel before Mr Carter, the CJC was in a position where it was—to put it in the vernacular—financially strapped. Facing what might have been a longish inquiry, we did not compromise in the quality of counsel, but I did have a long conversation with him explaining to him the realities of the CJC's financial situation. Mr Jerrard, who is eminent counsel, took the brief and said that he would do it for \$1,500 a day. The other counsel who has been involved in the inquiry as counsel assisting is Mr Devlin, and my understanding is that Mr Devlin's fee is \$1,200 a day.

Mr FOLEY: In light of that experience, do you propose to revisit this issue or simply to allow it to sail along on the current fee levels that have been in place since your original three-month prediction?

Mr BEANLAND: I think it is fair to say that I will not be interfering with the independence of the Connolly/Ryan inquiry and I would hope that you are not suggesting for a moment that I do so—

Mr FOLEY: Of course not; you know that.

Mr BEANLAND: —although the way you phrased some of your earlier questions, I thought you were reflecting upon that matter.

Mr FOLEY: I am asking about your budget responsibilities.

Mr BEANLAND: As far as budget responsibilities are concerned—we will endeavour to ensure that the Connolly/Ryan inquiry continues within the budget and that matters are in accord with that. It would be inappropriate for me to interfere with its independence, and of course once the fees are set in relation to these matters I would anticipate that there would be great difficulty in having fees reduced. Nevertheless, that is a matter which no doubt we will look at down the track.

Mr FOLEY: Could I take you to a different matter on page 1-11 of the Ministerial Program Statements where it is indicated that some \$20m in fixed capital expenditure went unspent and over \$22.5m went unspent on total capital outlays. You must be disappointed at the failure to spend over \$20m in capital works in your own department?

Mr BEANLAND: I am not disappointed about creating all those jobs at all. If some of the capital works funding has not been spent from the last financial year, it is carried over the coming six months. I have already indicated that Southport and Rockhampton are the two major centres in that regard. Of course, people working on those centres will have jobs for another six months or so in those particular locations. Unfortunately, last year's budget was for a nine-month period of the financial year. That made life difficult to spend all the funds. In some cases the majority of funding was allocated where there were still problems, such as at the Cleveland Court House, which has had ongoing problems. It would have been very easy to up stakes and move elsewhere, but the council was of the view that it wanted the Government to look at building a court complex in a certain location. Therefore, at the end of the day, we have endeavoured to cooperate with the council. Of course, all those funds will be spent at the Southport and Rockhampton Court Houses, which are major complexes. They will be completed this financial year, as I have already indicated. A number of other projects will be commencing.

Mr FOLEY: But Minister, you have failed to spend almost half of your department's capital works budget. The job market has been deprived of over \$20m worth of work in the 1996-97 financial year. Are you just accepting that blithely and expressing no disappointment whatsoever in relation to it?

Mr BEANLAND: I am very pleased for those people who have jobs for the next six months on those particular court houses. They probably had a real possibility of not having a job if these matters had not been extended. They now have jobs for this particular period. The tenders have all been let. The work is proceeding apace. I know that it is going to be completed over the coming months, and we will have the new centres in those particular locations.

I have already indicated that, in the coming year, we have new projects that do not measure up to as much capital works funding as the current financial year, but once the Rockhampton and the Southport Court House complexes are completed, we have to get the Cleveland one in place. It still has

a few problems. We have to get the Gladstone one started. Planning is well under way for that. Hopefully, we will call tenders for that in the not-too-distant future. Mr Chairman, as you would be aware, planning has proceeded for the Gympie court complex. That is now in place. We look forward to calling tenders to construct the new Magistrates Court complex there. Of course, there is funding for the Brisbane arrest courts. I will just turn that up. Of course, there was some funding in relation to that this year. We will be having major expenditure in relation to a new watch-house and arrest courts on the other side of the Roma Street Police Station. All in all, the department got on with the job of having tenders let through the Public Works and Housing Department.

Mr FOLEY: But Minister, far from getting on with the job, you failed to spend half of your capital works budget.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr BEANLAND: I still have time left to answer the question, do I not?

The CHAIRMAN: The time allocated for this segment has now expired. I have had a request for a break.

Mr BEANLAND: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Sitting suspended from 10.53 a.m. to 11.03 a.m.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: At the risk of giving people the impression that the Attorney-General's Department consists predominantly of the CJC, I seek a couple of clarifications of issues that were raised in the Estimates last year. Could I address them to Mr Clair through the Minister? Last year, there was some concern—and I certainly expressed concern—that your previous budget of \$21.6m was reduced by \$1.5m to \$20.1m. In your response to the proposed cuts that that could bring about, you said that whistleblowers support would be reduced to Brisbane, misconduct risk reviews would be reduced by 60% and misconduct workshops would be reduced by 80%. You talked about travel in the Intelligence Division being reduced by 66%. You said that the review of legislation and the Police Service reform agenda would be affected, one in three official misconduct teams would be disbanded and the Joint Organised Crime Task Force would go to half strength from four to two. I expressed some concern that, in relation to a \$1.5m reduction in a \$20m budget, those probable areas of impact were disproportionate. Have those impacts materialised?

Mr CLAIR: As far as the JOCTF is concerned, what was at that stage envisaged, that is, at the time that I gave evidence, was that its activities would have to be substantially reduced and the areas of organised crime that it was looking at would have to be reduced from four to two. Subsequently, because the budget position worsened, the commission had to take a decision that the JOCTF be disbanded entirely. That again was a staged thing. At one point we thought that we could disband it, but with a controlled handover, as it were, of its activities back to the Police Service; but in the end, shortly before Christmas, when we were required to formulate a balanced budget, we simply had to take the hard

decision to totally disband the activities of the JOCTF as from 14 February this year. On 27 January, the Government, after a meeting with me—Mr Carter was there also, because we were discussing also the Carter Inquiry and it was, in effect, I suppose a Cabinet Budget Committee of sorts: it was the Premier, the Treasurer, the Attorney and Mr Cooper, the Police Minister, who met with us on that day—reinstated the funding for the JOCTF. Some \$500,000 was allocated for the balance of this current year. As you know, in the budget that is proposed for 1997-98, as I mentioned earlier, there has been a \$350,000 special allocation again for the JOCTF. The CJC will supplement that from its base budget to ensure that the JOCTF can continue through to the end of the year.

Subject to the CJC's review of the areas of organised crime in which the CJC considers that it has jurisdiction to be active—which might reduce those four areas or have even some other effect of indicating other areas of organised crime that fall within the commission's jurisdiction—the activities of the JOCTF will continue through until the end of this current calendar year.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Through you, Mr Minister—that is one area where you were expecting significant impact. There was impact and that has been reinstated?

Mr CLAIR: Yes.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: But the other areas have not materialised—the 60% and the 88%?

Mr CLAIR: Well, they have. I cannot quote the exact figures, but certainly travel has been reduced right across-the-board in this current year. Where that has perhaps had the greatest impact has been in the Corruption Prevention Division. When we formulated our final budget—when I say "our final budget", that is the first final budget just before Christmas for the Minister's approval—we cut travel right down to the bone. In the Corruption Prevention Division there has been a situation in which the officers who do the risk assessments in public sector agencies around the State have not been able to do those other than in the south-east corner. In terms of corruption prevention going to address public sector agencies or to talk to public sector agencies about corruption prevention, that has only been able to continue where the agency has been prepared to pay the fare for corruption prevention officers to go. That has occurred in a number of cases. We do not discourage that. We have imposed and achieved severe cutbacks in travel. I am sorry, Mrs Cunningham, the other areas that you mentioned—

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: You said that misconduct risk reviews would be reduced by 60%, misconduct workshops would be reduced by 80%, the Intelligence Division would be reduced by 66%—they are the major ones that you were able to quantify last year.

Mr CLAIR: I cannot actually speak to those percentages, but in respect of the risk reviews and the workshops that you mentioned, certainly there has been reduction in our activities to the kind of extent that we have indicated there, with this one

qualification: where the agency has been prepared to pay for the officer to attend, then we have been able to attend and carry out those reviews. So it may be that we have achieved a higher level of activity than we anticipated then, but only with the contribution from the other agencies.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: On page 1-17 the Criminal Justice Commission budget is included along with other budgets for criminal justice areas. It is a fairly convoluted process to actually find out what money the CJC got because there are footnotes of various types. If my calculations are correct, for this financial year the CJC received about a \$0.424m increase in its base budget. Would that be true?

Mr CLAIR: For this current year?

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: For 1997-98.

Mr CLAIR: Just bear with me for a moment, if you would, Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Best of luck.

Mr CLAIR: The base appropriation in 1996-97 was \$20.111m. The base appropriation in 1997-98 is \$20.253m. So we are talking about an increase in the base appropriation of approximately \$142,000. Then there is an additional amount of \$282,000, which has been provided to take account of the enterprise bargaining process. So you are talking about an increase then in the base of somewhere around the \$400,000 mark. I am a lawyer, Mrs Cunningham; maths is not my strong point.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: That is fine. Deciphering has to be a strong point on the budget document. Therefore, could you see that there is no measurable impact this year on the performance of the CJC?

Mr CLAIR: In those areas that you referred to earlier?

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Yes.

Mr CLAIR: We have still for this coming year kept the screws down on the travel area but I would think that while we will still encourage the public sector agencies who are prepared to pay for our officers to attend to do so, nevertheless I would expect that in the coming year we will be in a better position to attend to the workshops on corruption prevention and the risk reviews than we have been during the current year. As far as the Intelligence Division is concerned, we will still be reduced in our capacity and there will still be fairly tight limits kept on travel and other expenses. I would think that in the intelligence area for the coming year we will be able to address some areas of concern that we have not been able to address in the current year. One of those is to establish a pro-active financial analyst/intelligence function, which is designed to again pro-actively identify areas of corruption.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Thank you. Minister, with your approval I would like to place a question on notice. In the response last year, the percentage reductions proposed in various disciplines within the CJC area of responsibility were able to be quantified very clearly. I would be interested in getting back a response that in the same way quantified the actual percentage impact on those disciplines. Last year I

was concerned—and it has not been fully answered, and that is because you have not had time to work out the numbers—that a \$1.5m reduction in that \$20m budget had such a dramatic or potentially dramatic impact. I would be interested in a specific look at what actually did occur as a result of that reduction in budget, and with a one-third increase in budget this year whether there is not a proportionate increase in the ability of the various areas to perform better.

Mr BEANLAND: Yes, we are happy to take that question on notice. In relation to the CJC's budget—of course, at the end of the day, it is a matter for the CJC how that budget is prioritised, how the funds are allocated. Mr Clair and his commission decide on how the funds are allocated between the various sectors or divisions within the CJC itself.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: So should I ask Mr Clair, then?

Mr CLAIR: Mr Chairman, could I just seek to clarify something while Mrs Cunningham has it fresh in her mind? I take it that the figures that are being sought are those that relate to the areas that you have mentioned this morning reading from the Hansard record of last year?

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Yes. They are the ones that you raised last year with the \$1.5m cut. You were able to present to us specific areas of the CJC responsibility and specified percentage cuts. I am just interested to see whether they materialised as high as that in fact.

Mr CLAIR: Thank you, Mrs Cunningham.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, the matter and quantity of fees paid to lawyers in and about the CJC attracts public attention. In March this year, you answered a question on notice in this Parliament seeking a break-up of fees paid to barristers and solicitors. In relation to that, I observed that \$430,000 was paid in 1995-96 by the CJC and distributed between 22 barristers, apart from two paid as chairpersons. I ask: are you aware of claims that fees paid to many of the middle Bar in criminal matters either as prosecutors or defence lawyers are about one-third of the amount paid as a fee on brief to barristers hired by the CJC? Can you comment on that?

Mr BEANLAND: No, I am not aware of the detailed figures. I will ask Mr Clair if he can give us some information on that. I am sure he has the figures. Do you have that, Mr Clair?

Mr CLAIR: I must say that that figure does not immediately strike a chord with me. I would have to take the question on notice and perhaps even ask Mr Carroll to particularise just what it is that he is seeking because from the way in which the question is framed, he appears to be asking: are these fees paid by the CJC to lawyers three times as much as what is paid to barristers in practice in the criminal area.

Mr CARROLL: Yes, and I am asking really for you to compare the amount paid for individual items of work to those barristers with the fees on brief

recommended or specified in, say, the District Court scale for criminal and civil matters.

Mr CLAIR: I would have to take that on notice. I must say that the fees that I am aware of, first of all, are the ones that I referred to earlier. I cannot say for the moment just precisely how that compares with what is on the District Court scale or the Supreme Court scale.

The CHAIRMAN: We will put it on notice.

Mr CLAIR: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Mr BEANLAND: I take that on notice, Mr Chairman.

Mr CARROLL: I note that among the figures for amounts paid to barristers and solicitors by the CJC for the period 1995-96, \$217,000 was paid to C. E. K. Hampson, QC, and \$53,000 was paid to L. J. A. Hampson, and I ask: is there any relationship between those two barristers?

Mr BEANLAND: Mr Clair?

Mr CLAIR: I think that most of those fees were associated with the 1995 inquiry conducted by Mr Hanson, which was associated with the Wallah inquiry, which was a CJC operation. As I understand it, Mr Leofric Hampson is the son of Mr Cedric Hampson and Mr Leofric Hampson was Mr Cedric Hampson's junior in respect of that inquiry.

Mr CARROLL: What is the basis for the selection of barristers for CJC work?

Mr BEANLAND: Perhaps Mr Clair might care to answer that. I am not able to, Mr Chairman.

Mr CLAIR: Again to use the vernacular, it is horses for courses. One looks for counsel who is appropriate for the matter in which he or she is being briefed. When one is briefing senior counsel in a matter, it is customary to consult senior counsel about the briefing of a junior. It is not always necessary, but it is certainly customary to consult senior counsel. I was not there at the time, Mr Carroll, so I cannot speak specifically about the process that was adopted which led to Mr Leofric Hampson being briefed as Mr Cedric Hampson's junior on that occasion.

Mr CARROLL: Is there now a short list from which you choose barristers to do work for the CJC?

Mr BEANLAND: To Mr Clair again, Mr Chairman.

Mr CLAIR: Not that I am aware of.

Mr CARROLL: Is it a matter of random selection?

Mr CLAIR: No. We look at the nature of the matter and then consider which counsel might be available or might be approached to take a brief. If that counsel is not available, then we consider who else might be approached. I certainly do not refer to a short list when I am consulted about who is going to be briefed. I cannot speak about whether or not there is a list kept for briefs in official misconduct matters.

Mr CARROLL: Does this year's CJC budget include any provision for the payment of costs that

might be incurred by retired New South Wales judge Mr Carruthers in regard to his action in the Supreme Court of Queensland concerning the Connolly/Ryan inquiry?

Mr BEANLAND: Perhaps Mr Clair would care to answer that, again.

Mr CLAIR: Thank you, Minister. Of course, the CJC has to address its obligations in that regard, that is, whether it has an obligation to fund any action that might be taken by Mr Carruthers. In order to address those obligations, the CJC sought advice and, in fact, received that advice last week. The commission has considered the advice and, as a result of the advice, has recognised that it does have an obligation to indemnify Mr Carruthers in respect of his representation before the Connolly/Ryan inquiry and any action which he might take on the basis of bias in the Supreme Court of Queensland in respect of that inquiry.

Mr CARROLL: Do you have an estimate of the costs?

Mr BEANLAND: Mr Clair?

Mr CLAIR: It is difficult to make an estimate of the costs, Mr Chairman.

Mr CARROLL: In your estimate for this year, do you have any idea of the legal costs directly associated with any effort by the CJC to halt the Connolly/Ryan inquiry as it appears was threatened, at least through the press?

Mr CLAIR: I have no estimate of that. We first have to seek legal advice on those sorts of matters about the form of any action. Then the CJC will look at what steps need to be taken as a result of that. At the moment, certainly the CJC is addressing its obligations and responsibilities in that regard.

Mr CARROLL: Has any such action been commenced yet?

Mr CLAIR: No such action has been commenced.

Mr CARROLL: It has been reported that Mr Carruthers received legal fees of \$365,000 in relation to his part in the inquiry of which he was commissioner and that he incurred additional personal costs of about \$70,000 therein. Why is it that the CJC did not seek to recover any of that money when Mr Carruthers retired from this State before completing his report?

Mr CLAIR: Because there was no basis on which to seek to recover those costs. The nature of the consultancy agreement between the commission and Mr Carruthers provided for termination by either party on the basis of one week's notice. Mr Carruthers gave one week's notice at the time that he terminated the agreement.

Mr CARROLL: Have you taken steps to avoid that apparent problem in any other contracts of hire, such as the one relating to Mr Carter?

Mr CLAIR: I cannot immediately see what steps the CJC might take to avoid the problem which arose. The simple answer is: no. It is not as though one can enter into some sort of agreement

with a person appointed to conduct an inquiry that that person will produce a certain outcome.

Mr CARROLL: Certainly not, and I was not suggesting that. Is there not a way of ensuring that you perhaps have some recourse if a person engaged to do such an important job clears out before completing that work?

Mr CLAIR: If there is such a way, I cannot immediately see it. Mr Carruthers took advice on his situation and the advice he received was that he had no choice but to take the step that he did, and he took it. It is very difficult to try to provide in advance in an agreement with somebody appointed to conduct an inquiry that they will not behave in a way which they see at the time to be the proper fashion in light of advice that they have received. I cannot really see any way to achieve that.

The CHAIRMAN: The allocated time for that segment has now expired. I call non-Government members.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, page 1-24 of the Ministerial Program Statements refers to \$1.5m which was set aside for legal aid services but was not given to Legal Aid during the course of the last year. Are you not concerned about the withholding of that money from Legal Aid at a time when battlers and disadvantaged people are seeking access to legal aid in a wide range of matters?

Mr BEANLAND: I am very concerned about ensuring the continuity of services being provided by the Legal Aid Office to the battlers in the community, as you term them—those people who require legal aid services to represent them in the courts. Because the Federal Government indicated that it was to cease the continuation of the current joint State arrangements—it wanted to review and examine the whole exercise—we were very concerned that we might have to find additional money at the end of this year and that there could be some disruption to provision of legal aid services. To ensure that that did not occur, some additional funding was provided immediately to the Legal Aid Office. Other funding was withheld pending the resolution of the issues involved with the Commonwealth in relation to the continuation of funding for legal aid services.

Queensland has set up its own Legal Aid Queensland commission and I note that other States are tending to go down this track as well. I understand that New South Wales and Western Australia are going to do so and Victoria is also making changes to its system. We want to ensure continuity that, come 1 July, it will be business as usual for Queensland without any cuts to funding at all. We want to ensure that funds are available to pay for any unforeseen expenses. Once we resolve the issue with the Commonwealth, these funds will certainly be made available in the coming financial year, as will any other funding for the Legal Aid Office. At the time, this step was taken as a precaution, and I think it was a very wise precaution. Several months ago, it was difficult to discuss the issue with the Commonwealth in order to reach some agreement. A lot of work has now been done.

Mr FOLEY: Let us face it, they are a hard lot to deal with.

Mr BEANLAND: Not as hard as the former Government was to deal with. The former Federal Government's Budget was blown by \$10.5 billion, which led to the current Federal Government being faced with that situation.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, before we go into ancient history, can I draw to your attention the community legal services funding which you removed from the budget?

Mr BEANLAND: I am addressing the issue; I still have time left. Obviously, it had to look at areas to make some savings. That then led the Federal Government to make some changes in relation to legal aid services. We are looking forward to the new Legal Aid Queensland reaching an agreement with the Federal Government so that it can be a one-stop shop come 1 July. Lengthy discussions have taken place and work on resolving the issue will continue.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, under previous budgets, a budget line item was provided for community legal centres. I draw your attention to the answer to question on notice No. 4. Your Government has removed the specific budgetary provision for community legal centres. That was in addition to the \$400,000 or \$500,000 that they received through the Legal Aid Commission. I ask: why is your Government demonstrating a lower level of commitment to community legal centres than was previously the case by removing the specific budgetary provision for community legal centres from the budget and simply leaving it at the discretion of the new body Legal Aid Queensland? Does this not indicate a serious lack of commitment by your Government to community legal centres?

Mr BEANLAND: I recollect that I have answered this question previously in another Chamber not far from here. I have certainly indicated the position to the community legal centres when I have been asked about this. As far as the State is concerned—we will continue to fund community legal centres in the coming year, as we have in the past. As I think the answer to that question on notice indicates, the Government is committed to doing that. This has simply been placed on one line with other funds for Legal Aid Queensland. In 1997-98 there will continue to be in the Estimates \$275,000 for community legal centres and other funding for other aspects of legal aid, totalling some \$14.3m all up. So the funds are still there. We are not in any way, shape or form decreasing that funding.

I have answered this question previously. It will be in the agreement between Queensland and the new Legal Aid Queensland. Some months ago, I indicated to the community legal centres that this was so, and I indicated in the Chamber when the legal aid legislation was debated that there was no change to that. We cannot, of course, speak in relation to the Federal Government funding, although we are hopeful that that will continue at similar levels. I am unable to speak in relation to that. I make it quite clear to the Estimates Committee that the funding in the coming year will be as it is in the current year.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, can you indicate anywhere in the Budget papers where provision has been made for the appointment of a privacy commissioner? I remind you of your pre-election promise of 10 July 1995 to appoint a privacy commissioner—something which is set out in the document I tabled previously. I ask: do you regard it as sufficient compliance with your promise that the matter is simply being considered by an all-party parliamentary committee? Have you made budgetary provision for a privacy commissioner in the budget and, if not, why have you broken your promise to the Queensland people prior to the last election?

Mr BEANLAND: The matter of the privacy commissioner and privacy legislation has now been taken up by the all-party parliamentary committee. I dare say that members of the Estimates Committee would be critical if we were to continue with our proposals prior to the all-party parliamentary committee delivering its report to the Parliament. I was proposing to put in place some privacy legislation prior to it being brought to my attention by the all-party committee of Parliament that it was going to do down this track. It has now called for public submissions. At this stage I do not believe it is appropriate to put in place legislation prior to that committee reporting. Should that committee report before the end of the current financial year, we would be looking to move on some privacy legislation. I cannot tell you the timing of the all-party committee's recommendations.

We do not want to get into a situation where the Government decides on one thing and the all-party committee decides on a host of other matters and it becomes a bit of shambles at the end of the day. Members would appreciate that, in view of the fact that the all-party committee is now going into such detail, it would be more appropriate to wait for those recommendations to be forthcoming. That does not in any way allay my concerns about privacy matters and the need for us to be looking at some legislation once the all-party committee reports. Once it reports, we will be able to take that report and see how its recommendations relate to aspects that the Government might put in place, and we would be looking at moving on that legislation then.

Mr FOLEY: I ask that the member for Mount Gravatt, Ms Spence, be granted leave to ask a question.

Leave granted.

Ms SPENCE: Minister, I refer you to the Capital Outlays table on page 1-27 of the MPS and in particular to the line item relating to current grants and subsidies and explanatory note No. 3, which advises that the funds budgeted were drawn from the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund. I ask: why was only \$1.169m of the budgeted \$3.738m expended in 1996-97? What percentage of the money actually expended went to industry and what percentage of those funds was provided to community groups?

Mr BEANLAND: I do have that information somewhere, but perhaps I might ask one of the Consumer Affairs officers to provide that detail. Some of the applicants did not meet the funding

guidelines. However, we will ask Mr Lawson to provide a more detailed response to that question. Before he does so, I place on record my thanks to the Office of Consumer Affairs—the commissioner and his officers—for their sterling effort over the past 12 months. It has been playing a very active role in particular on the investigatory side. We also put in place new fair trading legislation and a whole range of other matters. We are working on auctioneers and agents legislation and so on. It has been very busy, particularly in relation to extending services to the various regional offices throughout the State.

Mr LAWSON: If I understood the question correctly, it asked why the funds allocated were not spent in their entirety in terms of grants to the community or industry associations. During that year, a number of applications did not meet the guidelines laid down for grants under the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund and, consequently, they were not provided. Unfortunately, off the top of my head I cannot give you a split in terms of the amount that went to industry associations versus the community organisations. Certainly there was a grant to the Real Estate Institute of Queensland—the REIQ—but I cannot give you the percentage.

Ms SPENCE: Since the answer cannot be provided today, can the Minister take that question on notice?

Mr BEANLAND: I have some more information. For example, grants were made to the Cairns Community Legal Centre, \$66,844; to the Townsville Community Legal Service, \$84,317; and to the Townsville Migrant Resource Centre, \$16,900. I think there were some more. There was also a grant to a Dr Richard Dunlop, \$18,500; to a Mr Mike Iveson, \$14,300; and to the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, \$61,630. That probably answers the question.

There is another round of funding currently in process that I should also make reference to. Applications were called back in April this year for submissions to be sent in. The ad was placed in regional papers and in the daily paper in Brisbane. I understand that the office is currently working on those funding applications that have been sent in. Is that correct, Mr Lawson?

Mr LAWSON: Yes, that is correct. We have had a record number of, if you like, expressions of interest in receiving grants under the A & A fund. Something like 63 people have registered an interest so far compared with 22 last year.

Ms SPENCE: I draw the Minister's attention to the Program Outlays table on page 1-27 which shows that budgeted fixed capital expenditure for 1996-97 was \$46,000. You had an estimated actual for the year of \$277,000—a difference of \$231,000 or an increase of over 600%. I ask: is this massive level of expenditure in any way related to the hasty decision to evict Emergency Services from its premises at Spring Hill and then moving investigation staff from the State Law Building to the Spring Hill office on the basis that the space left at the State Law Building would be sublet by the QCSC? Were you not then left to bear the cost of rental on the empty space at the State Law Building without

receiving rental income on the premises at Spring Hill, as had been the case when Emergency Services were the tenants?

Mr BEANLAND: I will ask the Director-General to answer that question.

Mr MARTIN: One of the problems we face with the State Law Building is that the base rental costs of the State Law Building are amongst the dearest in Brisbane. That means that the Department of Justice and its various agencies such as Consumer Affairs are paying from their base expenditures what could only be regarded as an extremely high rental. One of my obligations as Director-General of the department is to try and obtain the best value for money from the moneys made available to the department. Quite frankly, I would rather put money into service delivery than paying rental accommodation. Accordingly, we have put in place a program to consolidate and make available for subsequent on-letting as much space as we can in the State Law Building.

As part of the process so far as the Consumer Affairs Office was concerned, last year we took the opportunity as part of restructuring service delivery via that office to consolidate in the area at Metrology House investigations and trade measurements coming under the one program there. We did that on the basis that we would free up in due course the space in the State Law Building which we could then on-let, reducing the levels of expenditure of the department as a whole and also of Consumer Affairs. Naturally, to effect these changes, which take a period of time, does require some initial capital expenditure, and that was done on refurbishing at Metrology House. The new program organisation is working far more effectively than was previously the case, and greater service is being obtained. All reports back indicate the staff are happy at working at Metrology House. We hope through the auspices of the Department of Public Works and Housing over the next 12 months to be able to on-let the space which has been freed up in the State Law Building. In this way we will reduce our overall expenditures and more quickly focus the money on service delivery.

Ms SPENCE: I think it is interesting that Consumer Affairs investigators are not worthy tenants of an expensive Government building like the State Law Building but other public servants are, but I will move on to the next question.

Mr MARTIN: If I could just comment on that.

Mr BEANLAND: We want to answer that question.

Ms SPENCE: That is not a question.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr BEANLAND: I ask to be allowed to answer that question. The member has raised the issue. I think it is only appropriate and proper that that question be answered.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister will proceed.

Mr BEANLAND: I ask the Director-General to respond.

Mr MARTIN: The very basis of the comment and question by the member is completely ill founded. The staff of the investigation unit in the Consumer Affairs Office are people with whom we place a high level of responsibility and authority. Most of them spend an enormous amount of their time on the road conducting investigations into areas such as trade measurement, consumer protection, the enforcement of the censorship laws, etc. The office accommodation which is provided to them is at an area where it is easy for them to get out of the city to conduct their investigations. The standard of accommodation provided in Metrology House is of a more than comparable standard with the standard of accommodation provided for other public servants in Queensland and well accords with all requirements for workplace health and safety, etc. I reject any suggestion at all that we in the department are not providing our staff with appropriate standards of accommodation under which we can deliver the services that the people of Queensland employ us to do.

Mr BEANLAND: Does Mr Lawson wish to add anything in this area?

Mr LAWSON: I can add that one of the things that we aimed to achieve last year when we restructured the office was to create an investigation group that would be more focused, and we created a management structure to put that in place. One of the advantages of bringing the people all together under one roof at Metrology House is that the enforcement team—covering trade measurement, consumer safety and also issues of the investigation of breaches in consumer law—is under one roof and under one management structure.

Ms SPENCE: I refer to page 1-25 of the MPS, the Community Affairs Program, and draw your attention particularly to the fifth dot point, which points out that there were less infringement notices issued and less prosecutions in the 1996-97 financial year when compared with the 1995-96 year. The document draws the conclusion that this would indicate greater compliance with the relevant legislation by traders. I ask: how many investigations were carried out to result in the 128 infringement notices? Given that every set of scales at every supermarket, butcher shop and fruit shop as well as every petrol pump and item of prepackaged food sold in Queensland can be subject to investigation, how can the Minister conclude that the lower number of infringement notices indicates greater compliance with the relevant legislation by traders, unless a great many more than the obviously statistically irrelevant number of premises were subjected to investigation?

Mr BEANLAND: I thank the member. Mr Lawson or one of his staff could answer that.

Mr LAWSON: Certainly it is our belief that there is increased compliance. The trade measurement area, which is the area we introduced infringement notices in and the area which has been operating the longest time, has we believe been quite effective. In addition, we have been successful in getting some quite good prosecutions in the trade measurement area, including probably our highest-ever fine of about \$7,500, which is very significant in

trade measurement terms. That added with increased publicity certainly, we think, led to greater compliance in the industry. We believe that is one of the main reasons why the number of infringements issued actually fell. In terms of our activity—we have continued to respond to complaints that have been lodged with us in that area and, in addition, have maintained our random checks of particularly supermarkets, scanning machines or whatever needed to be done.

Ms SPENCE: How many investigations were carried out to result in the 128 infringement notices?

Mr BEANLAND: Do you have that figure, Mr Lawson?

Mr LAWSON: I do not think I have that precise figure.

Mr BEANLAND: Does one of your staff?

Mr LAWSON: I am not sure that anyone else can assist me.

Mr BEANLAND: Does Mr Samuel have that?

Ms SPENCE: Could I place it on notice, Minister?

Mr BEANLAND: Yes, we are happy to put that on notice.

Ms SPENCE: Is there any truth in the rumour that Consumer Affairs is going to move to the Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry?

Mr BEANLAND: Run that past me again?

Ms SPENCE: Is there any truth in the rumour that Consumer Affairs is going to move to the Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry?

Mr BEANLAND: I am not sure. You have obviously had a fairly disturbed period coming up to this discussion. The answer is: no. Next question. I have never heard of the rumour before. Where did you dig that one up from?

Ms SPENCE: It is out there.

Mr BEANLAND: It is out there around the Labor Party. It might have been around the Labor Party conference last weekend, but it is not around me. The situation is that the Office of Consumer Affairs is a very important part of the Department of Justice, the portfolio for which I have responsibility. We put a great deal of effort and energy and the resources of the State of Queensland into this area—

Mr FOLEY: You're filibustering.

Mr BEANLAND:—and into making it far more effective. No, I want to answer this question. This is a very important issue which has been raised by the member for Mount Gravatt. I want to put on record the effort and energy that the Government is putting into this particular area—a very important area of delivery of services not only to consumers but also to the various business groups of this State. Because of that, we are putting in more effort and more resources than ever before and producing far more legislation—we are rewriting, re-assessing, re-

examining a range of legislation which has been coming forward to the Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: The allocation of time for that segment has now expired. We will proceed with questions from the Government side. I ask the Minister: in referring to the Community Affairs Program, when was the current Consumer Safety Committee appointed? What was its role and for how long was the committee in abeyance under the previous Labor Government? The second part of the question is: what consumer safety testing surveys, standard updates and ministerial ban orders were undertaken by the investigations section of the Office of Consumer Affairs in 1996-97, bearing in mind the protection of the health, safety and wellbeing of Queenslanders?

Mr BEANLAND: In relation to that question, a very important area is consumer safety. It is one on which a great deal of emphasis has been placed under this Government. The committee is a body established under the Fair Trading Act. It was not functioning when there was a change of Government. Since that time, we have taken the committee, revamped it, placed additional personnel on it and it now meets on a regular basis. Members of the committee are Professor Fred Leditschke, Dr James Nixon, Michael Bryce, Dr Frank Bullen, Patricia Pearsall, Valerie Cocksedge and the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs is the chairman. All these members of the committee I might say serve on an honorary basis.

The committee met I think some four or five times during 1996-97. Major issues considered by the committee during 1996-97 were safety standards for shopping trolleys, safety issues concerning the regrooved tyres on passenger vehicles and cot safety—a very important issue. As a result of the committee's investigation into cot safety, I recently elected to make cot safety standards mandatory in this State. Also there have been recommendations to ban the Smoke Escape emergency devices; toy safety aspects have been looked at as have disposable cigarette lighters, vehicle jacks and Magic Bombs—the last being a matter raised in recent days. That is the range of issues being looked at.

This committee is doing a tremendous amount of work. I place on record my appreciation and thanks to those members who have been involved in its work. Perhaps the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs as chairman of this committee may wish to add some words.

Mr LAWSON: One of the things we have been doing is to look pro-actively at what we can do in terms of public education. One of the surveys that we carried out just prior to Christmas last year produced some disturbing results in terms of the frequency of toys being found on market shelves that were not really up to standard. We are at the moment instituting a public education campaign to heighten people's awareness about the protection of children by buying in a discerning fashion.

The CHAIRMAN: Again, in the area of Consumer Affairs, in view of the recent comments in Parliament on the relocation of the Maryborough office of Consumer Affairs, why was the office

moved and what benefits will clients receive as a result of that move?

Mr BEANLAND: I take that question because it is a very serious question about an important issue concerning the Maryborough Consumer Affairs office. The current Consumer Affairs office in Maryborough is located on the first floor of a street in Maryborough—Bazaar Street. The accommodation though is unsuitable because it lacks a number of amenities such as counter facilities, interview rooms, airconditioning and running water, just to name a few. The lack of counter facilities also translates to inadequate security for Consumer Affairs staff. This is crucial where, for example, staff are confronted by aggressive clients. The absence of any interview room is also unsatisfactory as there is regularly a need for the senior investigating officer to formally interview persons when conducting investigations into breaches of legislation.

Because of those reasons, the department and myself have given consideration to more suitable accommodation which is at the Public Trustee office building at 88 Ellena Street, Maryborough. The office will move there in refurbished premises around the middle of this month, I understand. Although this new office is located on the first floor, as has been pointed out arrangements have been made with the Public Trustee office to use its ground floor interview rooms—and I am sure members are aware that Public Trustee offices always have interview rooms available for their clients—where necessary to minimise any potential inconvenience to aged, infirm or disabled clients.

The Maryborough office is staffed by a full-time senior investigator and a part-time client service officer. Can I also add that, as the client service officer works only between 9 and 1 p.m. each day, the office is open to members of the public during only these hours. By moving it to the Public Trustee building, for example, when the client service officer is not available or is not there in the afternoons when people come in, those requests will be able to be taken by the staff of the Public Trustee and referred the next day to the Office of Consumer Affairs personnel who will then be able to follow those matters up. So, even though the office is not being manned or a person was not available at that particular time, the office will still be able to receive the inquiry.

That is an important additional service which will be added. As well as the interview rooms available, they can go downstairs and talk to any of those clients who cannot go upstairs. It will also reduce the amount of rental paid by the Office of Consumer Affairs, which of course will also make available funds for other purposes. I think this is a very good move and, far from being something that is criticised, it should be praised because it will provide a far better service than is currently being provided.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I refer to page 1-27 of the Ministerial Program Statements for your department. In the outlays for the Community Affairs Program for 1996-97, the actual budget was \$24.3m and the actual expenditure was \$20.9m. Once you

add in those two major categories, grants and subsidies, not allocated and the fixed capital expenditure, you come back to approximately \$23m in expenditure. Page 1-26 lists the additional work that the Community Affairs Program proposes to undertake. Almost 5,000 extra instrument tests are to be undertaken. How will those be funded given that much of the work is done out in the field?

Mr BEANLAND: Perhaps I might allow the Consumer Affairs Commissioner or one of his officers to answer that question.

Mr SAMUEL: Could you repeat what you just said? I did not quite get all of it.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: On page 1-27, in the actual budget for 1996-97, including a couple of categories where money was not expended, you have effectively got \$24.3m spent last year; there is \$23.9m for the forthcoming year, yet there is a significant increase in things such as instrument testing, which is field work. How will you be able to fund that extra work?

Mr SAMUEL: It is not a question of funding, it is a question of reallocation of resources. There is no increase in resources as far as funds are concerned. There is nothing to do with funding; it is a question of redirecting the staff to do more work in the field. We are reviewing our operations on a regular basis. We are looking at better ways of achieving better results. It is an ongoing program. We have had some vacancies this year as well and we have now for the first time in a couple of years got full staffing. That will obviously give us more resources in the field to do this work. So it is a question of appointing staff to the vacant positions and actually getting the staff out in the field to do the work. So there is no increase in resources; it is just filling vacancies.

Mr BEANLAND: Does that answer your question?

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Perhaps so.

Mr CARROLL: Page 1-26 of your Ministerial Program Statements has an impressive list of objectives for the Community Affairs Program for the coming financial year. I ask you to let us know what percentage of the Community Affairs budget relates to this program of community education, training and consumer awareness programs.

Mr BEANLAND: Do you have the actual figures there, Mr Lawson?

Mr CARROLL: Just the percentage would do.

Mr BEANLAND: Do you have the percentage?

Mr LAWSON: I cannot see the actual percentage.

Mr BEANLAND: I will see if I can get for you the actual percentage, Mr Carroll.

Mr CARROLL: I am just trying to get some idea of what portion of that program relates to that important awareness work.

Mr BEANLAND: While the officer is looking for that—you would be aware that there has been a great deal of effort put into this in relation to a number of aspects, particularly in relation to schools. For example, material is being put on CD-ROMs and

sent around the schools. A great deal of work has been done in that area. Of course, there is the Internet. The Office of Consumer Affairs has a web site that is filled with consumer information. There is an eco-consumer kit to promote green consumerism, and a CD-ROM filled with information in relation to this for school children. On World Consumer Rights Day we launched a program of having the Consumer Affairs Office visit shopping centres, particularly in the greater Brisbane area. There has been an ongoing program for that, and that has been revamped. You get a whole range of people coming forward at those shopping centres with issues that they want to raise.

We mentioned previously the Consumer Safety Committee. There has also been an extension of services to programs into the regional areas. You will see there on that particular page that it is planned to extend the computerised system into the Toowoomba, Maryborough and Bundaberg regional offices. It has already been extended into other regional offices.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, do you have any idea of what additional funding has been directed towards improving those services in regional areas of Queensland?

Mr BEANLAND: Mr Lawson might have the exact figure.

Mr LAWSON: I do not have an exact figure, but what I can say is that we spent something like \$200,000, which would go into providing the preparation of materials and the professional fees involved in that, and in excess of \$250,000 in the grants. The Minister mentioned earlier the grants that had been awarded under the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund. A strong component of those grants is directed to information and materials that are going to be used in community education. From the list that the Minister read out, you may recall that they certainly went to areas such as Cairns and two areas in Townsville. Also, in terms of the industry association—the REIQ—that is something which is spread throughout Queensland.

We have a mixed portfolio, if you like, of expenditure on consumer education related matters. Through the grants system, we pay for particular initiatives, including training and the preparation of training materials and literature. We have our own budget for the preparation of brochure material, which we have just revamped, and we have prepared new ones. We support, for instance, the Kidsafe initiative, which looks at accident prevention for children by a grant there, which again helps them disseminate information and assists them in the education programs that they have. I cannot give you a percentage, but those are the types of things that we do and the order of moneys that we spend.

Mr BEANLAND: I think that the Director-General has some additional information.

Mr MARTIN: There are other areas of community education where we are undertaking activities through the OCA. In relation to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community—funding has been provided from the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund to the Cairns Community Legal Centre to employ an Aboriginal consultant who will undertake a program of community education through the gulf and Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal communities.

We are continuing to invest resources into contact with the non-English-speaking elements of our community. We are providing \$6,500 to the Brisbane Migrant Resource Centre to produce a resource kit on consumer rights and financial management. We translate brochures and pamphlets into appropriate ethnic languages where it is necessary to communicate with various groups. The Townsville Migrant Resource Centre is obtaining \$16,900 for the training of migrant community workers. We are going to undertake a major campaign during the course of the coming financial year in conjunction with the new retirement village legislation, which is specifically directed at the seniors element of our community for whom retirement village living is a viable option. I could continue on and on.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Gladstone has two minutes within which to ask questions.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: To follow up that earlier question—you said that the resources would be achieved by the reallocation of resources for measurement and testing. What areas have you previously addressed that will not be addressed now?

Mr SAMUEL: What I meant by that was that, until very recently, we had two full-time inspectors working in the measurement laboratory. Those positions have been taken out of the laboratory and put back into the inspectorate. The two positions in the laboratory have been filled by technical officers. So there has been an increase of two inspectors from the laboratory into the field. There have also been two recent appointments of inspectors. One is a trainee and one is an inspector. So the number of inspectors has increased by four in recent weeks. That is a significant increase.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. The time allocated for the consideration of the Estimates of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice has expired. I thank the Minister and his portfolio officers for their attendance. I now declare the hearing adjourned. We shall resume at 1.30 p.m.

Mr FOLEY: The Opposition joins in thanking the Minister and the portfolio officers.

Mr BEANLAND: I wish to extend my thanks to the Committee. I also give thanks to the officers of my Department of Justice, the Electoral Commission and the Public Trustee.

Sitting suspended from 12.06 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.

QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE
QUEENSLAND CORRECTIVE SERVICES
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF RACING

IN ATTENDANCE

- Hon. T. R. Cooper, Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing
- Comr J. O'Sullivan, Commissioner, Queensland Police Service
- Dep. Comr W. Aldrich, Executive Director, Operations, Queensland Police Service
- Mr R. Warry, Executive Director, Corporate Services, Queensland Police Service
- Mr J. Just, Director, Finance Division, Queensland Police Service
- Mr D. Gill, Director, Human Resources Division, Queensland Police Service
- Mr R. Carson, Director, Administration Division, Queensland Police Service
- Mr P. Rule, Acting Director-General, Queensland Corrective Services Commission
- Mr I. Stewart, Director, Audit and Evaluation, Queensland Corrective Services Commission
- Mr B. Peng, General Manager, Finance and Administration, Queensland Corrective Services Commission
- Mr G. Chambers, Director, Community Corrections, Queensland Corrective Services Commission
- Mr T. Carlyon, Chairperson of the Commission (Corrective Services)
- Dr R. Mason, Director, Office of Racing
- Mr M. Tolhurst, Executive Officer, Office of Racing
- Mr J. Paterson, Manager, Office of Racing

The CHAIRMAN: The next Budget Estimates to be examined relate to the portfolio of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing. I remind members of the Committee and the Minister that the time limit for questions is one minute and answers are to be no longer than three minutes. A bell will be rung once 15 seconds before the end of the time limits and twice when the time is up. An extension of time may be given with the consent of the questioner. The Sessional Orders require that at least half of the time be allocated to non-Government members.

I ask witnesses to identify themselves clearly by name and position before they answer a question so that Hansard may record the information in the transcript. I declare the proposed expenditure for the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing to be open for examination. The time allotted is three hours. The question before the Committee is—

"That the proposed expenditure be agreed to."

Minister, would you like to make a brief opening statement? If you do, I ask you to limit your comments to five minutes.

Mr COOPER: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I am delighted to say that this is an excellent budget for Police and Corrective Services and for Racing. For the Police portfolio not only is this a record budget—up 10.5%—but also it delivers 252 additional police to boost law and order services in our streets and suburbs. It delivers enhanced operational capacity to police at the coalface. Budgets in each of the police regions, which maintain policing services across the State, have increased substantially. I know members of the Opposition have done their best to knock and whinge about the tremendous budget for Police.

I will point out a few facts. It is false to claim that there has been a drop in expenditure over last year. Additional expenditure over and above last year's Police budget is a reflection of advanced transfers of Commonwealth funds for gun law compensation. Excluding gun law money, last year's budget was \$573m; this year it is \$644m. The continuing expenditure of Federal moneys on gun law compensation will again significantly exceed the budgeted figure. Expenditure on personal safety and property security has not been cut. There is a vast difference between operational budgets, which are based on everyday demand for police services, and the program budget, which guesses what that demand may be for the year. Funding allocations for operational policing are not tied to program budgets, they are distributed in bulk to regional commands which then spend their money according to operational policing on the ground. That means that, if money needs to be spent or officers allocated to personal safety or property security or any other type of offence, it is done. This budget funds police officers on the beat, not programs.

Similarly, attempts have been made to portray expenditure on road safety as a purely revenue-raising exercise. I reject that furphy outright. We are setting up a new State Traffic Task Force to provide operational support to the eight police regions. That program will deliver more police out on the road where everyone, including the Opposition, I believe, wants to see them. Contrary to Opposition claims, pursuing prostitution has been a high priority for police. There have been eight operations during the year resulting in 54 arrests, and 20 operations are ongoing.

As to the Corrective Services portfolio—\$100,000 has been allocated to establish a Concerned Persons Register to provide information to victims of crime regarding an offender's status and movement through the correctional system. That initiative will provide support for victims of crime and fulfils a major plank of coalition policy. Extensive funding has also been provided to progress major infrastructure projects that will address the legacy of prison overcrowding and cell double-ups inherited by this Government. Those prisons will be progressed as rapidly as practicable, given the

necessity to consult with residents, particularly in the Wacol area regarding the footprints of the prison on the Wacol site. Expenditure of some \$43m on those projects has been carried over while the consultation process proceeds.

Continued implementation of the Drug Strategy is also a major priority. An additional \$1m has been allocated to that important initiative, taking the total commitment to \$1.5m. In addition, \$200,000 has been earmarked to complete the work of the Mengler Drugs in Prisons inquiry. Corporatisation is a significant issue for the QCSC this year. I point out that all the QCSC expenditure will be subject to audit by the usual parliamentary process. I would also highlight the previous Labor Government's parliamentary committees legislation, which precluded the Parliament from examining Government owned corporations.

The budget also holds good news for the Racing portfolio. For the first time in almost a decade, the racing industry will benefit from consolidated revenue funds. \$2m has been allocated to maintaining important training track infrastructure around the State. This budget contains many positive initiatives too numerous to mention in this short time; however, progress on each major issue, such as deaths in custody, implementation of the Bingham review and Towards the 21st Century blueprint are bread and butter elements of this budget.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you Minister. The first period of questioning will start with non-Government members.

Mr BARTON: What is the actual strength of the Queensland Police Service as of today? What do you expect it to be on 30 June this year?

Mr COOPER: We have a funded strength of 6,563. The estimated actual strength is 6,564. That is at 30 June.

Mr BARTON: That is 6,564. What would that be in terms of the increase that you will achieve this year?

Mr COOPER: As we have said all through the year, we will achieve 139 extra new police. The figure now looks like exceeding that. We have not hit 30 June yet, but it looks like being around 158. You are looking roughly, by about 30 June, at an extra 19 or 20 police over and above what we had promised.

Mr BARTON: Is that after taking into account the separations between now and the end of June?

Mr COOPER: Yes it is—after taking into account separations.

Mr BARTON: So what do you think the number will be?

Mr COOPER: The promised figure was 139. We will exceed that. I do not have a crystal ball to 30 June, but we are getting closer. Come 30 June it will be around 158 extra new police, over and above the attrition rate.

Mr BARTON: How would you rate your performance in delivering 158 police in this year, given that at last year's hearing you told the Committee that an increase of 17 per month on

average during the life of the Labor Government was, in your opinion, not at all good? Those 158 equate to 13 per month, which is still fairly well short of the average increase per month for the entire period of the Labor Government. How do you compare your performance with the performance of the Labor Government that you criticised so vocally last year?

Mr COOPER: I would rate my performance as quite brilliant, actually. As to the 139—as I said, we have had to come from behind. During your performance in the previous Government, as we know, you suffered some losses around 1994-95 of 79. The numbers actually dropped in that time. That is common knowledge. We have had to pick it up. We had to get the academy going in Townsville, which everyone said we should not have; but we have it. It is a resounding success. We had to fill the academy at Oxley with recruits, which we have done. We have done that in the space of 12 months, which is no mean effort at all. As I said, it is quite brilliant. The numbers that are coming out of those loaded academies are demonstrative of the fact that we got not just 139 extra but, as I said, close to 158 and that the projected target for this coming year of 1997-98 is 252. That is extra new warm bodies. As far as the increase in numbers is concerned, it is quite an exceptional performance. Do not forget civilians. We have about 200 civilians. They will be assisting police to become more operational by pushing those police out into the street and onto the beat where we want them.

Mr BARTON: How many of those civilians will be actually taking the place of sworn officers? I take it some will be in straight civilian positions while others will relieve operational police.

Mr COOPER: I would like to give you the correct figure. That is additional staff members. I would like to clarify that, because I like to be right, too: 121 additional staff members out of that 200.

Mr BARTON: So that is 121 extra operational police, because 121 of the 200—

Mr COOPER: Will be new bodies—new civilian bodies.

Mr BARTON: I refer to the table titled "Staffing (Full Time Equivalents as at 30 June)" on page 1-6 of your Program Statements. In particular, footnote (b) states in part—

"When taking into account the graduation of these recruits in August in the respective years, the Service will meet the Government's recruitment commitments for both police and civilian staff."

What is the meaning of that footnote? Do I take it to mean that the target figures for 30 June in each of those years for additional police will be met only after taking into account police graduating in August the following year?

Mr COOPER: In August?

Mr BARTON: The following year.

Mr COOPER: Are you talking about August 1998?

Mr BARTON: August 1997 in this year, and you have said that, in fact, you expect to meet your

target. This footnote is rather confusing because it does seem to give the impression that you can only meet the numbers that are quoted in the staffing table if, in fact, you take into account the police who are graduating in August 1997 and August 1998.

Mr COOPER: My advice is that that footnote was pessimistic and that the numbers were met and will be met by 30 June.

Mr BARTON: So that footnote is redundant now?

Mr COOPER: Yes.

Mr BARTON: Just like some of the other information.

Mr COOPER: That is a bit of a slight against the officers and personnel who are here. So I would not get too cheeky about it.

Mr BARTON: I am not being too cheeky. So you can give this Estimates Committee an absolute guarantee that the 139 or better—

Mr COOPER: Will be met by 30 June.

Mr BARTON: Minister, in terms of achieving those numbers—and I refer to the some of the answers to questions on notice that we have placed—what do you say to the people of the central region, which includes Gladstone, Rockhampton and Mackay, who from your own figures have received just five police officers—for a region that covers almost half a million square kilometres or one third of Queensland?

Mr COOPER: Can you tell us where you get that figure from?

Mr BARTON: That is from the answer to the question on notice about the police to population ratios. I think that it was question on notice No. 1. Comparing it to the equivalent question that I asked last year, this year you indicate that in that region there will be 531 police officers. Last year, you indicated that there were 526. So that is a net increase of only five. I am just wondering how that equates with all the announcements that you have been making such as 14 to Mackay and various numbers to other places such as Longreach, which is located in that region, when by your own documentation there are only five additional police going in there.

Mr COOPER: I take your point. The numbers that I have given regarding Mackay and other places still stand. The allocation of additional staff—just so that you have a better idea of how the staff allocation model works, it uses this allocation model to determine appropriate strength for each region, district and division. The allocation takes into account the crime population and traffic statistics related to each division as well as the service delivery and specialist support requirements. The following characteristics are taken into account—and you probably know all this—population: total of demography, youth, Aboriginal people, tourists, crime against the person, crime against property and others, traffic incidents, domestic violence, extraneous factors, isolation of area, service delivery and specialist support services requirements. Those parameters allow for an equitable distribution of

sworn staff on the basis of the relative needs of districts and regions and as determined by a comparison of factors which are common to all regions. The allocation of additional staff increases in the overall funded strength of regions of 100 positions will result in the following increase in the individual regions. I can table this. We have limited the growth in Gladstone because it has virtually reached its full strength. I will come back to you on the Mackay figures.

Mr BARTON: Yes. I just find it strange that, by your own answers to questions on notice—and they are not questions that I am expecting you to answer off the top of your head—they indicate an increase in strength over for the year of only five. I make the point that you are handing out additional police in much more substantial numbers than the number contained in the press releases at least.

Mr COOPER: That is a fact. The Mackay numbers, as you are aware, will go into the new financial year as well.

Mr BARTON: I take it I will get an adjusted answer to my question on notice?

Mr COOPER: You will get the figures as they are.

Mr BARTON: Minister, I refer to prostitution. You made a comment about it yourself.

Mr COOPER: Sorry, say that again?

Mr BARTON: Prostitution.

Mr COOPER: Yes.

Mr BARTON: I refer to the work of the police Special Operations Task Force (Prostitution) and the figures in your Program Statements that only eight special operations will be conducted in 1996-97 compared with 28 in 1995-96. I have drawn those other figures from your last year's Budget Estimates. This financial year is just closing, with only 90 charges being laid compared to 132 the previous year and 54 offenders arrested in the current financial year compared to 63 in the previous year. I ask: how can your 1997-98 Estimates, which are much higher than that, be believed in the light of the performance on prostitution this current financial year?

Mr COOPER: Before giving you the brief, do not forget that eight operations were closed. Therefore, that indicates that the police are, in fact, doing their job. It is a very interesting subject that you raise. We can go into that a little bit further shortly.

In line with operational responsibilities, the task force refers operations to regions which, according to established criteria, do not involve major and organised criminal activity. As a result, the task force is increasingly concentrating on complex and sophisticated criminal activity focusing on the organisers of prostitution. This difficulty is demonstrated by significant increases in the time associated with court-related activities, particularly as illegally obtained assets are targeted by the task force.

In relation to the specific figures in the Ministerial Program Statements, a special task force reported for this period on the number of operations

closed rather than those actually conducted during the period. During this period, 28 operations were conducted by the task force, eight of which were closed while 20 are ongoing. As a result of the eight operational closures, 54 people were arrested, which represents a significant increase in the overall estimated performance for the 1996-97 financial year.

As outlined in the output table, 60 to 70 arrests were estimated to result from 20 to 30 operations during the 1996-97 financial year. The actual level of arrests resulting from the closure of the eight operations—that is 54—is just below that estimated for all operations conducted within that period, which is 20 to 30.

Mr BARTON: With due respect, that is not what your Program Statements say year to year. When will you be releasing your report on the review into the current prostitution laws which, I must remind you, you had indicated would be one of your first priorities on coming to Government some 16 months ago?

Mr COOPER: Yes, I am quite happy to. Boy, when you have a look at your record and your Government's performance in the six years, it is amazing that you would even have the hide to raise the issue! As to your statement that the answer that I gave does not accord with the Ministerial Program Statements figures, I am going to talk to you about prostitution and you are going to come back to me with the right answers.

As far as the prostitution issue is concerned, firstly, let us have a look at your record. Do not forget that back in 1992 you were going to play merry hell. You did not even bother consulting with any of the stakeholders or any of the players, that is, the people involved with the Bar Association, the Police Service, the Law Society or civil liberties. It does not matter which body it was, there was no consultation done. So God knows whom you consulted with, because out you came in 1992—and proclaimed in February 1993—with this mishmash of prostitution laws. You drove prostitution out into the suburbs, and you were quite happy and quite proud of that. I would like you to ask your leader, Mr Beattie, as to where he stands on the issue of prostitution. He had quite a bit to say when he was Chairman of the PCJC. It would not be a bad idea, when you get time, to ask him some questions, because I would be very interested in knowing where he now stands.

Having driven prostitution into the suburbs, you did not give too much consideration to the safety of sex workers. You removed any safety measures that they possibly had, be it from security providers, taxi drivers, lift drivers or janitors. It did not matter who they were; if they were found to have broken the law by having any knowledge of prostitution, they too could have been in the line of fire. A fat lot you did for them! Let us not forget that without clients there would be no prostitutes; without crooks, there would be no police. A fair bit of emphasis needs to be placed on that.

When "Wowser Wayne" was Premier he promised that his Police Minister at the time, Mr Braddy, would review the prostitution laws following

a trial period from 1993 to 1995, but nothing happened. We have promised a review and, amongst all the other reform work that we have done in the last 12 months, that has not been forgotten. A ministerial committee, which is published coalition policy, has been formed to review the Labor Government's prostitution laws. That review is ongoing. To answer your question about when we intend to report, the committee will report when it has completed its consultation procedure with all stakeholders and has completed the review—something that you people failed to do. Do you wish to continue?

Mr BARTON: I have another question; you ran out of time there. Will we get that report in this coming year or will you be looking at the whole issue again in light of the Liberal Party's policy decision of this week? Will your policy and your proposed laws be consistent with what the Liberal Party has determined?

Mr COOPER: We will have to wait and see. We will not pre-empt the outcomes of the review. We will ensure that the review is comprehensive and we will consult with stakeholders—something that you did not do. We intend that the review be very comprehensive. I cannot give you time factors, because we simply want to ensure that, unlike the Labor Party, when we do the review we get it right and that it is in the best interests of the people. We must not forget that the final arbiters will be the people, because they are the ones whom you often get most sense from.

Returning to your statement about the discrepancy in the figures shown in the Ministerial Program Statements, that can be attributed to the manner of reporting the 1996-97 actual figures. The figures relate to the operations of the special task force and do not reflect overall operations conducted by the service. A number of factors will affect the additional performance and so on. The number of reported prostitution offences for the 11-month period since 1 July 1996 was 304, which was a 40% increase from the 216 reported offences in the 12-month period from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1996.

The metropolitan north and south-eastern regions reported a high level of operations. The metropolitan south region is currently conducting an investigation into prostitution operations. The remaining regions reported that prostitution had not been identified as a problem warranting an operation. Both the south-east and metropolitan north regions, in which prostitution has historically been most prevalent, report a reduction in street prostitution as well as in the number of brothels.

Over the last few months, a Prostitution Enforcement Program has been conducted on the Gold Coast, the first campaign of its kind that has been conducted for many years. The South-Eastern Regional Special Operations Group, which was formed in March 1997, has conducted six major operations which have resulted in 40 arrests on a number of charges. The Metropolitan North Regional Prostitution Unit has investigated the commission of organised prostitution related offences and street prostitution related offences in the region over the

past year. Since 1 July 1996, the region has conducted numerous operations resulting in a total of over 300 arrests.

Mr BARTON: Perhaps that information could be provided in the Program Statements next year, Minister.

Mr COOPER: You can have it for nothing shortly.

Mr BARTON: I refer to the Police budget and the fact that the 1996-97 Police budget will be overexpended by \$73.94m, for a total of \$3.67m less than the Budget Estimate for Police for 1997-98. What is the estimated actual Police budget overexpenditure for 1996-97, taking into account the expenditure on the guns buy-back program?

Mr COOPER: The Police budget has not been overspent in 1996-97 and will not be overspent at the conclusion of the financial year. The Program Outlays table on page 1-5 of the Ministerial Program Statements shows an initial budget allocation for 1996-97, that is, at the start of the financial year, of \$573.839m, and an estimated actual expenditure for 1996-97 of \$647.779m. However, this does not represent an overspending, as Note (c) of the Program Outlays table states—

"Increases in 1996-97 estimated actuals in comparison with 1996-97 Budget figures for ALL programs, other than Racing, include a funding allocation associated with the national uniform gun control arrangements."

The national uniform gun control funding was included as additional funding in the Police budget for 1996-97 at the mid-year budget review following clarification of the funding allocations from the Commonwealth Government. A total of \$68.254m was provided for gun control, comprising \$18.254m for administration and systems development for the operation of the program and \$50m for the compensation of gun owners through the weapons buy-back scheme.

In addition, a further \$5.929m was provided to the Police Service at the mid-year budget review from State funds to enhance operational policing and to enable the commencement of the education and training initiatives recommended in the Bingham review. Therefore, a total of \$74.183m in additional funding was provided to the Police Service for the 1996-97 budget at the mid-year budget review.

The CHAIRMAN: The time for questioning has now expired. Minister, you have announced the Community Policing Partnerships Program, thus implementing an election commitment. What is planned for this style of community policing partnerships in Queensland?

Mr COOPER: This is the first community policing partnerships initiative in Australia. It is a crime-prevention strategy that the coalition promised to implement in 1995. In this year's Budget we received an amount for the commencement of the trial. It is a trial of seven different areas which are yet to be determined. The figure was \$550,000 for the seven trials to be conducted in various parts of the State.

The program is designed to facilitate a working relationship between all levels of Government and local citizenry for the resolution of locally identified crime and social problems, to assist Government in the design of policy and to reduce crime and fear of crime, improving the quality of life for Queensland citizens. The program will give effect to State and national policies in relation to a strategic and holistic approach to crime prevention, requiring cross-Government and cross-departmental responses to social problems that may cause criminal behaviour. The rest of this brief is available to you in answer to your question.

To give you an idea of how the program will operate, the CPPs will be formed mainly in local government regions. If they cross into two or three different local government regions, they will be chaired by the mayor. If there are two or three mayors, they will be chaired on a rotational basis. The CPPs will be headed by a central board, chaired by myself and including the Police Commissioner, criminologists and senior members of the media so that they can gain a better understanding of crime and the fear of crime. The coordinator of the Social Development Committee will also be a member of the central board, so that we have a whole-of-Government approach. Youth will also be heavily involved. The CPPs will reflect their local areas and people. For example, in a tourism region, the board would include representatives from the tourist association. Other members may include representatives from the progress association and the local chamber of commerce, ATSIC representatives, ethnic representatives and senior citizens. There will be no more than seven such representatives. They will reflect the wishes of the community. They will be able to bring about initiatives for the control and prevention of crime. The local authority would be foremost in providing assistance in the implementation of initiatives and strategies, as would the State Government.

This is a marriage of the social justice system and the criminal justice system. It has never been tried before and we are determined that this is one of the main areas where we can make it work. We can spend a lot of money increasing police numbers, as we are doing, and we can build more prisons, which we are doing. However, through this program we are targeting the other end, which is crime prevention. About time, too!

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Minister, you touched a little on the cost of weapons and said that the Commonwealth had provided \$68.25m.

Mr COOPER: Sorry? Can you say that again?

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: The Commonwealth provision for weapons, operations and compensation was \$68m?

Mr COOPER: Yes, it is about that. It was \$18m-odd plus \$50m.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Could you tell me what State allocations there are?

Mr COOPER: None.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I am not asking about compensation. What has been allocated from State

resources for administering the new weapons legislation?

Mr COOPER: The money has come from the Commonwealth.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: You said that there was a State allocation of \$5.929m. What was that?

Mr COOPER: Right from the start, Queensland held out to ensure that the Commonwealth, which dropped these laws into our lap, would be responsible for paying for administration and compensation. As you realise, we held out for about \$18m-odd, whatever the figure was. The compensation comes from the 1% Medicare levy, which was \$500m. As a State, we get our share of that. The Weapons Licensing Branch has always received income from licenses. While those funds are not new, they are the sorts of funds that have been used ever since licensing came into play in about 1991.

Mr CARROLL: In June 1996, the Bingham committee completed its report on the Queensland Police Service and made 197 recommendations to you. I ask: can you outline the process that you have undertaken to ensure that those recommendations are implemented, where possible?

Mr COOPER: Yes. We have done a lot in that time. As people will realise, it was always our intention to conduct a review of the Queensland Police Service in addition to all of the other reviews done previously. A lot of reviews had been done, be they by the PSMC, the PCJC, the CJC or the QPS. There were myriad reviews. It was a case of bringing those reports together under the expertise of Sir Max Bingham and others, because some pretty good recommendations were made in them. Retired police, the CJC and others were involved. They undertook a comprehensive review to bring all of it together. Out of that came 197 recommendations, some of which have already been implemented. Some will be implemented at nil cost, but others will cost.

In order to ensure that those recommendations received constant treatment and attention and did not just gather dust as other things have in the past, we appointed Sir Max Bingham, the Commissioner of Police and others to an overview implementation committee to ensure the smooth implementation of those various recommendations. Out of that, a number of working parties have been established to progress specific recommendations within their area of expertise. Each working party provides monthly status reports which outline intended actions.

Reported are approved by the working group and are forwarded to the overview committee, chaired by Sir Max Bingham, for endorsement. On 8 April 1997, 51 completed or near completed reports had been submitted to the working group. Twenty reports had been endorsed by the overview committee. Perhaps the Commissioner might like to give his impression of how things are going in respect of the implementation.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: The implementation is proceeding very smoothly indeed. As the Minister correctly pointed out, 51 of the recommendations

have been implemented and 20 further reports have been endorsed by the overview committee. It is anticipated that the recommendations will be in place within the next financial year at the latest. \$905,000 was allocated in the mid-term review to the Bingham recommendations. \$835,000 was allocated to implementing training recommendations, and the remaining \$70,000 was allocated to overview committee expenses. Training initiatives from the Bingham review have been addressed in the 1997-98 budget through a \$1m allocation that will provide additional funding for management development courses and constable development programs which relate specifically to the Bingham recommendations. In conclusion, the service will continue to implement these recommendations as a priority.

The CHAIRMAN: You may have an extension of time to finish your answer.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: In addition, priority will be given to improving police/community relations and enhancing policing services across-the-board for indigenous and ethnic communities, as well as recommendations relating to human resource management within the Police Service.

Mr FOLEY: I commend the Commissioner for being the first witness all day who has complied strictly with the time limits. That is very fitting for a Police Commissioner.

Mr COOPER: We work well as a team.

The CHAIRMAN: I have a question about the North Queensland Campus of the Queensland Police Service Academy. In 1996-97, capital works expenditure included an allocation of \$3.5m for the establishment of the North Queensland Campus of the Queensland Police Service Academy. Can you tell the Committee about the training at the new campus, where these trainees have been allocated, and what accommodation costs are associated with the facility?

Mr COOPER: \$3.516m was allocated to the north Queensland campus project under new initiatives for the Police Service in the 1996-97 Budget. The aim of establishing the campus in Townsville was to attract and retain police recruits from north Queensland. As I said before, when you are starting out on anything new, you often wonder how it will go, whether there will be enthusiasm and so forth. It has been extremely successful. We have been extremely successful in attracting Aboriginal and female recruits. The staff numbers at the Townsville campus include six police officers and eight staff members. The first intake of 40 recruits took place in October 1996. The official opening of the campus took place on 22 October. Thirty-nine recruits graduated on 28 April. Those officers have been assigned to northern police regions.

We were told that, if we did put an academy in the north, we might get a north Queensland flavour. I wondered how that could be equated with a south Queensland flavour. Nevertheless, I am pleased to say that in the north and south, the flavour is fine. The second Townsville intake of 40 recruits started training in May 1997 and will be inducted in December. The training program provided to the

Townsville recruits is modelled on that at the Queensland Police Service Academy at Oxley.

The building acquisition process will commence as soon as the Criminal Justice Commission has confirmed the viability of the north Queensland campus. North Queensland recruits based in Townsville for the first course could not have been accommodated at the Oxley academy, which is operating at maximum capacity. It is also a bit far away! The Townsville campus is incurring some additional accommodation costs until it has a permanent base. However, the cost now being incurred in Townsville would have been incurred in Brisbane had the Government not proceeded with the interim facility in Townsville. The cost of that accommodation is about \$810,000.

Mr CARROLL: I have a question about the replacement of Water Police vessels. I understand that there is to be a major investment in new Water Police vessels as well as new accommodation for Water Police planned during the financial year. Can you detail the planned expenditure for this policing function?

Mr COOPER: This is a most important policing function, given our coastline, harbours, bays and so on. The Police Service has a 15-year rolling plan of vessel replacement. Quite a number of those replacements have been undertaken over the past year. Two high-speed catamaran vessels, 10 metres in length and powered by twin 225-horsepower outboard motors, were purchased in 1996-97 at a total cost of \$420,000. One vessel was allocated to Hervey Bay and the other to Brisbane. A replacement vessel for the Cairns Water Police is planned for the 1997-98 financial year at a cost of nearly \$1m. Funds have been allocated in the 1996-97 budget.

Invitations have been sought for the replacement of the Yeppoon Water Police vessel, the Vedette III, at a cost of \$990,000, scheduled for completion in the financial year 1997-98. Invitations have been sought for the supply of a 10-metre, high-speed catamaran vessel powered by twin inboard engines for the Gold Coast. An amount of \$235,000 has been set aside for that vessel in the financial year 1996-97. Invitations have been sought for the supply of one 4.3-metre rigid inflatable and trailer to Townsville as a dual purpose vessel to operate as a tender for the patrol vessel George R. Young, and a general utility vessel at an estimated cost of \$11,000. Invitations have been sought to supply a 4.3-metre aluminium vessel fitted with an auxiliary motor and trailer to be supplied to Burketown at a cost of \$15,500. Invitations have been sought for the supply of a 4.3-metre aluminium vessel fitted with an auxiliary motor and trailer to be supplied to Kowanyama at a cost of \$11,000.

The one I wanted to get on to was the site for the new Water Police headquarters situated at Howard Smith Drive, Whyte Island. The site was acquired from the Port of Brisbane Authority and gazetted as a police reserve in December 1996. I think they have been trying to move to that site since 1973, so this is a fairly big year for them. The site, on the boat passage between Whyte Island and

Fisherman Islands, is approximately a kilometre from the Fisherman Islands container terminals at the mouth of the Brisbane River. Construction of the new Water Police headquarters is presently in preliminary planning stages and a detailed plan has not yet been completed. It is anticipated that the new accommodation will be a single-level construction housing the Water Police and Diving Squad with a detached marine technical workshop to house boats during repairs and maintenance. A marina consisting of four pontoons will be constructed. At this stage a draft construction schedule has been prepared. Should this draft be adopted, tenders will be called on 10 November 1997 and construction will commence on 2 February 1998, with completion estimated to be 28 August 1998.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I would like to revisit the weapons licensing issue one more time. It is my understanding that whilst resources have been allocated to it—and you have just been through that—there are still hold-ups in actually issuing the licences. Is that a technical hold-up or a personnel hold-up?

Mr COOPER: I will give you a preamble, but Mr Bob Carson is the director of administrative services and he has had a lot to do with this issue. I commend him on the work he has done on the weapons compensation scheme since May last year. It has been a phenomenal effort on behalf of the Queensland Police Service. Anything brand spanking new, as this has been, is very traumatic and it is difficult not to experience some hold-ups. There have been some deliberate hold-ups in terms of the compensation for dealers in the last three weeks in order to make sure that that scheme is being properly run and is aboveboard. But in terms of any problems for licence holders, I hand over to Mr Carson, who might be able to tell you first hand.

Mr CARSON: The licensing aspects of the new gun laws fall broadly into two categories. The first is relicensing of those who previously held licences and then dealing with applications for new licences. As part of the changeover, we have spent a considerable amount of money on developing new information systems and decision support systems for the licensing process, and we have initiated that process. For obvious reasons, with the compensation deadline ending on 30 September this year, we have concentrated priority on the relicensing of current licensees so that they can make proper decisions about compensation for firearms they may own. We sent out some 300,000 information packages to current licensees. Of those, we believe only 2,500 did not reach their destination after some considerable background work and data upgrades on our part. We have had only 23,000 applications for relicensing at this stage. Of those applications, quite a number came in with less than adequate information. There is not only a need to license or relicense but also to register the firearms currently owned so that we can build the registration database required of us. In that case we need the full details of the firearms that people own. So first of all, we have not had, comparatively, a lot of licence applications—some 23,000; secondly, a lot of those

licence applications have required us to go back to the applicant to get more information. But the other part of that story is that with new systems, as you would imagine, we are doing this under some pressure and we are launching these information systems without adequate time to debug them. So we have had from time to time some problems in that regard as well.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: The IT systems and your support processes are coming out of the Commonwealth funding or State funding?

Mr CARSON: They are coming out of the Commonwealth funding of \$18.254m, the administrative funding, and they are on line now.

Mr BARTON: I was pursuing the issue of the Police budget. I think I was at the point of saying that it looked to me on the figures you had supplied for the total cost for the gun program that your budget had fallen within about \$200,000—or certainly less than \$1m—of the budget for this current financial year.

Mr COOPER: Sorry, this is for the——

Mr BARTON: I am going back to the Police budget, taking up where I left off.

Mr COOPER: Yes.

Mr BARTON: If you account for \$74.183m, the total costs associated with the guns project, then it means that your overall budget would have fallen certainly within \$1m of budget—or about \$200,000 was my quick calculation. Would that be your understanding of it?

Mr COOPER: You are talking about——

Mr BARTON: The Police budget, the overall budget.

Mr COOPER: I know. We have got the Police budget. Capital works?

Mr BARTON: The whole budget, the overall budget.

Mr COOPER: In addition to a \$1m capital works carryover that is included in the \$33.583m shown on the table, the service's carryovers in the 1997-98 budget comprise: base—that is, in the base budget—\$3m; radio communications, \$2.2m; speed management, \$1.2m; and juvenile justice legislation, \$0.018m, for a total of \$6.418m. The total, including a capital works carryover of \$1m, will be \$7.418m.

Mr BARTON: \$7.418m has been carried over?

Mr COOPER: Yes.

Mr BARTON: This is the Police total budget?

Mr COOPER: Of that order, yes.

Mr BARTON: If I could just pursue the guns costing again. You have given a fairly thorough explanation of it. The only reference to the guns costs was a reference on page 1-34 of the Program Statements that mentioned the allocation of \$18.254m, but every other Police budget program had a footnote indicating that there had been an allocation associated with the national uniform gun control arrangements. Why would the entire figure not have been placed in your budget documentation somewhere?

Mr COOPER: I will let Bob Carson respond to that.

Mr CARSON: I believe that total is contained in the Budget papers, but it is important to recognise that there are two different elements to this funding. The first is \$18.254m, which is the allocation to Queensland for the administration of the project, and that is continued until either we use it up or 30 June 1998. The other side of the funding is a continuous availability of compensation funding which we draw on as we need. The arrangement Queensland has set up is that we draw around about \$10m in advance of our needs from time to time and then consume that in compensation cheques. This is a fairly fluid process, and we continue to draw down from the Commonwealth in this regard. The figures that are reported in the budget are those that occurred at that point in time, but we have indeed moved on from the budget figures even in the final days of this——

Mr BARTON: If you do not mind, Minister—Bob, I accept that, but you have totals everywhere in each program for expenditure or predicted expenditure for estimated actuals, you have an estimated actual for the entire Police budget that only today we find out is a total of over \$74m, but the only specific amount identified is the \$18.254m. I appreciate that the money is there, but it is not identifiable in terms of the documentation that has been given to the Parliament.

Mr COOPER: I would like you to refer that question to Mr John Just.

Mr JUST: You are right. The money is there in total and it is under the Corporate Services Program in the first instance, and the Corporate Services Program is allocated over the other programs. We probably would have preferred to have it as a separate item in our papers to say "Gun money, \$68m", but because we have only the six programs and Corporate Services was identified by Treasury as the one in which to place the funding, that is where it went. We fall short in not identifying in the words that it is \$50m; is that what you are saying?

Mr BARTON: It makes it even more difficult to try to get a handle on just what is actually being spent and what angle the police work. That is the problem which I have and which I am sure every other member of the Parliament has similarly.

Mr JUST: Can I just finalise something with the Chairman's permission?

Mr BARTON: I am happy to listen.

Mr JUST: When we get the money from Canberra, the money does not come directly to the Police Service; it bypasses the Police Service and goes to Treasury and is allocated to the service as part of our normal allocations at mid-year review. That is another reason why it is not shown separately. We certainly can identify it as separate items if you wish.

Mr BARTON: Could I just ask one question as an example, because this one intrigues me. There is a footnote to the Road Safety Program that says there is an allocation being made from the guns program to Road Safety. It intrigues me as to why there would

be an allocation to the Road Safety Program—it does not appear to me to have anything to do with the guns buy-back program. What is that, just to give an example? Because if there has been an allocation, it must be included in the global amount for the Road Safety Program.

Mr JUST: The money for the guns has gone into the Corporate Services Program in total, which is \$68m; and as part of program budgeting, that Corporate Services amount has to be allocated over the total programs, the other five programs of the service. That is not broken up under individual items. The total amount of Corporate Services is allocated on a percentage basis on the amount of expenditure in each program, including Road Safety. That is how it is done.

Mr BARTON: So there is not actually any guns funding directly spent within the Road Safety Program other than in Corporate Services—

Mr JUST: The total Corporate Services being allocated.

Mr BARTON: —gets shared around between all and sundry.

Mr JUST: That is correct.

Mr BARTON: I think I have got it now. I refer to the Personal Safety, Property Security and Road Safety Programs. On face value, police numbers in the Personal Safety Program will drop by 29; Property Security, by 388; while Road Safety will be increased by 278. The Ministerial Program Statements all have a footnote advising that, due to a change in the way the allocations have been recorded for 1997-98, those resource allocations between programs cannot accurately be compared with those of previous years. But what is the actual change in police numbers between 1996-97 and 1997-98 for each of the following programs: Personal Safety, Property Security and Road Safety?

Mr COOPER: Police numbers?

Mr BARTON: Yes.

Mr COOPER: I will give you the brief but I will point out also that the Program Statements are obviously there for accounting reasons. As well, funding is allocated to the various regions so that they can allocate their funding according to their needs. That takes into account the Personal Safety, Public Safety, Property Security Programs and so on. The staff including police are allocated to the Personal Safety, Property Security, Road Safety and Public Order and Safety Programs on the basis of estimates of the times spent on functions associated with these programs. The reason for this is quite simply that many police, particularly the uniformed general duties officers, spend time on functions and activities covering some or all of these programs in the course of any one shift or roster. Even specialist officers such as detectives or traffic police undertake duties associated with more than one program. The four programs mentioned above reflect the core business of policing and enable some comparisons with other jurisdictions. However, it is not possible nor appropriate to assign individual officers or groups of officers exclusively to particular programs.

To indicate the resources including staff allocated to each of these four programs, the service used surveys of the time police spent on various activities. The 1996-97 allocations were based on the first Statewide activity survey conducted in 1995 which covered approximately one third of operational staff. The 1997-98 allocations, however, were based on the second Statewide activity survey which was carried out in June 1996 and which surveyed all regional staff over a one-week period. Results of this second survey were used to allocate the estimated expenditure for 1997-98 across those four programs.

This change has resulted in the fluctuations in dollar amounts to staff numbers shown in the relevant tables of the Ministerial Program Statements. It is important to stress that these fluctuations are between Estimates only. I draw your attention and the attention of members of the Committee to note (a) which accompanies each of the program outlays tables in the Ministerial Program Statements. This note sets out the basis of the differences between allocations in 1996-97 and 1997-98 and indicates quite clearly that the changes I have mentioned above were designed to provide a more accurate reflection of the service's activities.

There are three further points which need to be made in relation to this matter. Firstly, if the 1997-98 allocations have been based on the same formula as was used in 1996-97, all four programs would have shown increases. The Personal Safety Program allocation, for example, would have shown an estimated increase in funding of around \$7m. The operational budgets are not operated on a program basis. Assistant commissioners in charge of regions and commands are provided with global budgets and make allocations within those budgets in response to the demands and circumstances of these particular areas of responsibility. Also, the allocations for the Road Safety Program in 1997-98 reflect the results of the second Statewide activity survey conducted in June 1996, as did those for the remaining three of those four programs. I can state categorically that the allocations for the Road Safety Program have not been influenced in any way, shape or form by some perceived need to collect a pre-determined amount of revenue in traffic fines.

Mr BARTON: That leads me directly to my next question. With the increase in the fines and forfeiture sections in Budget Paper No. 2 that estimate that they will be increased by 48.4%, which is \$31.1m, to a total of \$95.4m—and I will quote the Treasurer's words in her document—

"... primarily reflecting the impact of revenue accruing from the introduction of the Government's speed management strategy, including speed cameras, late in 1996-97."

In reality, to collect that additional number of fines, how many additional police will have to be allocated to that police program? What is the cost to the Police Service in wages, capital equipment and costs to allow this amount of revenue to be collected? How many speeding tickets do you predict will have to be issued to make up that increase of \$31.1m?

Mr COOPER: Just in a preamble to an answer—and the Commissioner might like to comment on this as well as Mr Warry—I guess the first response I would give is to ask whether you people have any commitment to road safety and whether you have any commitment to the need for speed cameras, RBT or red-light cameras?

Mr BARTON: We are committed to them but in an appropriate balance.

Mr COOPER: I am pleased to hear it. Also, with the introduction of speed cameras quite obviously will go traffic fines. We know that; we know that from the red-light cameras and so on. What also comes with it are the benefits of road safety, that is, the prevention of the loss of life and also the prevention of the trauma of road accidents. Rehabilitation programs are required through the Health Department and many other institutions through which people must pass if they are the victim of a road accident. I do not think anyone out there would have any real opposition to the introduction of speed cameras as such because of the benefits that they will have in savings not just in loss of life and limb but also savings financially right across-the-board. The Commissioner would like to elaborate.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: I will comment in respect of the Road Safety Action Plan and I will ask the Deputy Commissioner to comment further if required. The Road Safety Action Plan is expected to commence on 1 July this year. It will focus on vigilance, visibility, enforcement, education and awareness initiatives. An integrated strategy will address issues of road safety and be complemented by a State Traffic Task Force and a number of speed management initiatives. The State Traffic Task Force is a new squad which will support the Road Safety Action Plan. The unit is to commence operations on 1 July, as I have indicated, and will be based at the Albany Creek Police Station. The primary role of the new squad will be to provide operational support to all police regions in Queensland. It is proposed to employ civilian intelligence officers to permit the disseminating of information for the most efficient use of police resources for road safety. That intelligence will be disseminated to all regions and the new squad, and will permit enhanced utilisation of police throughout this State.

The State Traffic Task Force 1997-98 estimated cost is \$1.57m. The resources dedicated to the unit in 1997-98 will be 18 police officers, four civilians, six motor vehicles, three motorcycles and various traffic enforcement equipment. The Motor Accident Insurance Commission has indicated a commitment to the service in the form of a grant to assist in the operations of the task force. The grant to be provided is approximately \$432,000. These funds will go towards providing two research officers and equipment and will supplement the operating costs of the unit.

The \$3.8m allocated to speed management and red-light cameras in the 1997-98 budget will provide additional red-light cameras, a computer system to enhance the processing of traffic infringement notices, speed cameras and enhancements to the

current red-light camera sites. Funding of \$1.273m has been identified for red-light cameras, with the balance of \$2.527m towards speed management. In addition, \$135,000 has been allocated towards the recurrent costs of running the red light camera program, and \$903,000 towards the recurrent costs of running the speed management program. We can continue, Minister, if you wish.

Mr COOPER: Do you want more?

Mr BARTON: Is there something relevant?

Dep. Comr ALDRICH: Yes. I just thought I would answer a question that Mr Barton asked regarding additional police. There will be no additional police required per se for the speed cameras simply because a speed camera is far less resource intensive than the former radar. One operator of a speed camera can do as much work, if not far more, than five operators previously did using a radar. So the extra speed cameras will not require additional operators. There will be additional staff in the processing only.

Mr COOPER: I am told that the cameras take very clear photos of drivers and passengers.

Mr BARTON: I have had a look at one. It was very clear on the car at least.

Mr COOPER: That is where the problems will come from.

Mr BARTON: Minister, I refer to the police capital works schedule, which details that \$4.769m was expended in 1996-97 but was not included in the 1996-97 Budget papers. It included the purchase of the two aircraft, and I ask: why was this funding expended on those capital works items when \$5.2m was not expended on mainstream capital works projects, such as the Rockhampton watch-house, the Brisbane City watch-house, the Emerald Police Station and watch-house, the Ferny Grove Police Station, the Horn Island Police Station and the police minor and other capital works that were budgeted for?

Mr COOPER: I will give you a run-down on the \$4.289m. It was one aircraft, that is, the Cessna Grand Caravan 208B at \$1.913m; the Townsville watch-house, \$0.7m; the Agnes Water residence and station—

Mr BARTON: Very effective work in the watch-house.

Mr COOPER: I was waiting for your comment.

Mr BARTON: I heard your pause, but I was a bit slow.

Mr COOPER: That is right—pause for laughter. There is the Agnes Water residence \$1.160m; the Dunwich barracks, \$0.15m; the Oxley Academy demountable, \$1.21m; the Mount Isa residence reconstruction, \$0.125m; the Longreach duplex, \$0.2m; the Emu Park Police Station, that is, the transportable, \$0.13m; and the Thursday Island triplex, \$0.79, making a total of \$4.289m. That expenditure was not listed specifically in the budget details for 1996-97 or in the previous MPS. It was incurred to meet specific operational police requirements and support services. The expenditure has been approved in accordance with financial

guidelines. That is through Executive Council approval that was given where appropriate.

In response to your query about delays in construction—that construction commenced on the replacement watch-house, a component of the Rockhampton Court House redevelopment, in 1996-97. Completion is expected in 1998. At the time of formulating the budget, it was intended that the QPS portion of works would be substantially completed and invoiced by the end of the 1996-97 financial year. The Department of Justice requested that this expenditure be spread over the life of the project. Therefore, in effect, the allocated funding is now being spread over two financial years. In addition, wet weather has delayed the project.

You mentioned the Emerald Police Station. The planning and design phases of the Emerald replacement station were completed. That is a complex project on a restrictive site. Documentation was delayed as several options required investigation before the final design was agreed on. Construction of the station is to commence in August 1997, with completion in March 1998. Planning and design phases for the new Ferny Grove Police Station were completed in 1996-97, and tenders were called in October 1996. Wet weather has delayed that construction. It is expected to be completed in September 1997. It had been envisaged that the Horn Island station could be delivered through a single-stage project, including both design and construction. It was decided that this could not guarantee the quality of the building. This has reduced the anticipated expenditure in the 1996-97 financial year as well as delaying the start of construction by a month.

In relation to the Brisbane City watch-house—design consultants were commissioned and the tender let for demolition of the existing buildings on the site. Demolition is now in progress. Construction is expected to be substantially completed in 1997-98, with \$7.5m allocated in that year. The anticipated date for completion of the construction is August 1998. Total expenditure there is \$13m.

The CHAIRMAN: The time for questioning from non-Government members has now expired. We will now go on with questions from members on the Government side.

Minister, I refer to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment program. The Program Statements refer to the traineeship for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Would the Minister outline any measures being taken by the service to assist the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

Mr COOPER: As you would realise, the PLOs, as we refer to them—the police liaison officers—that program is working extremely well. It was trialled some years ago. It was probably in 1989 that two Torres Strait Islanders were recruited. Then it grew through 1992, 1993 and 1994 to about 94 PLOs. Since then we have added two Vietnamese PLOs. So the whole program is extremely effective. They receive a considerable amount of training.

Just to divert for a moment—in relation to the Aboriginal people, the ATSIC people involved with the Queensland Police Service, we have about 1.3%. Our target is 2.4% by the year 2000. We have a bridging program with 10 trainees at the Innisfail TAFE and 10 trainees at the South Bank TAFE. That is an effective bridging program of traineeships from some Commonwealth funding as well as State funding to assist them into the Academy. It is not a direct entry to the Academy, but it gives them a hand as far as getting into the Academy is concerned. So again that is a major step up.

As I said, we have 96 police liaison officers. The experience of these PLOs might contribute to increased interest by such members in seeking appointment as police officers. They are not placed just in north Queensland. We had recent appointments to Warwick, St George, Toowoomba and many other country towns across the State, and Ipswich. They are working extremely well. They are very effective. The success rate is very, very high. As I said, we do want to try to reach 2.4% by the year 2000.

The statistics in the target groups are produced annually. Those produced in June 1996 showed that the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Queensland Police Service was 83 officers and 69 staff members, or 2.9%; altogether 115, or 1.7% of the total work force. These statistics include those members who have indicated their desire to be considered as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. In February 1997, that traineeship is specifically targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. That is helping them to qualify as police recruits. The strategy has been prepared by the ATSIC staff member especially appointed to assist in developing appropriate policies.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: If I may, I have one issue to clarify with the Director of Finance. You said that six divisions of the department have the footnote (b) that the money has been allocated from the uniform gun control arrangements. Given the draw-down process that you have just explained, it will not be possible to track the actual cost of administering that legislation.

Mr JUST: We do keep a record of that separately. While we record it in the MPS under the programs, we keep our records in a different manner. We will be able to record all the gun money as it comes in and when it is spent.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Not only for compensation but also for administration?

Mr JUST: Budget administration of the scheme as well.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, I want to ask a further question about the implementation of the Bingham recommendations. You mentioned earlier that you have implemented approximately a quarter of those. I am interested in those focusing on education and training issues. I ask: what action are you taking to implement those particular recommendations of the Bingham review?

Mr COOPER: I will not go back through what I said before about the implementation process. As the Commissioner has indicated, I am very pleased with the way it is going. That Implementation Overview Committee comprising the Commissioner, Sir Max and others is to remain there until we see the recommendations worked through. Some will take longer than others. Some will take a lot more time than others and maybe some more funding than others. I want to reiterate that that program is in place and ongoing. It deals with all manner of things that were raised during that review.

In response to your question, the training initiatives from the review have been addressed through the provision of additional funding to the Management Development Program and Constable Development Program. \$905,000 was allocated in the mid-year review to the Bingham review, of which \$835,000 was for the implementation of the training initiatives. The remaining \$70,000 was for the overview committee. A further \$1m has been allocated towards implementing the training initiatives in the 1997-98 budget. If you would not mind, I would like Mr David Gill to elaborate further on the Constable Development Program and the Management Development Program.

Mr GILL: The allocation arising from the Bingham recommendations, when added to the base budget of the Police Service, will be putting particular emphasis on the Constable Development Program and the Management Development Program. However, the main emphasis will be to put in place for the first time in the history of the Queensland Police Service a full, career-length professional development suite of programs for all police officers. We have obviously had the Recruit Training Program and the First-year Constable Program for some time. The Constable Development Program will then take them through to that fifth year—effectively the end of their apprenticeship. Having completed that basic five years, police officers will progress to the rank of senior constable—having completed the Constable Development Program.

The Constable Development Program is very nearly all work based. It draws on the work that those officers are doing in the field. It supplements that with assignments and workshops, but primarily it is work based. Those officers who are successful progress to senior constable. They are then able to progress through the non-commissioned ranks through the Management Development Program, where the bulk of that money is being placed. The Management Development Program is universally available to every single police officer in Queensland at the rank of senior constable, sergeant and senior sergeant. Those officers enter the program through a distance education mode. They can complete it wherever they are in Queensland. That will take them up to the commissioned rank.

The CHAIRMAN: I have a question in connection with the Brisbane City watch-house. To ensure that that the facilities provide appropriate standards for the detention of persons in police custody, I understand that the new watch-house is

to replace the existing Brisbane City watch-house and that that project was part of the additional \$5m allocation for the 1996-97 budget for the QPS capital works program. Could you outline the progress of that project to date and provide the service's expected plan for the completion of the new watch-house?

Mr COOPER: The replacement of the city watch-house is part of a joint project with the Department of Public Works and Housing, the Department of Justice and the Queensland Police Service to replace the existing Herschel Street watch-house. The courts complex replacement watch-house facility will provide 100-bed accommodation, 50 double cells and have three courts attached. The existing Herschel Street property will be sold and the proceeds will be directed towards the new facility. It was decided that development of a new complex on a site in Roma Street previously owned by Australia Post would provide the most efficient and cost-effective option. Design consultants have been commissioned and a tender let for the demolition of existing buildings on the site of the new watch-house. Expenditure to date totalled \$620,000. Construction is planned to be substantially completed in 1997-98, with the current date for completion of construction expected to be August 1998. Funding to the amount of \$7.5m in 1997-98 is planned, with total expenditure by the service on this project expected to be \$13m.

We adopted that as a policy in 1995—that we would replace the city watch-house. It was not a building or institution of any great note. It was not just the construction of a new one that we considered to be important but also the perception of the fact that that building was to be removed and something of a more humane and acceptable nature would be built in its place—remembering that the watch-house does house people, including police officers and Corrective Services staff, as well as people who have not yet been convicted. They are there being held prior to sentence and prior to going to court. As such, the facilities need to be of a better nature than what they are. Interestingly, we had Amnesty International out here about a year ago. It was interesting that we were able to say to them that, when they came back next time, they would probably see a new watch-house. We are going to be able to deliver on that promise. As well, we can deliver on that promise to the rest of the people who might pass through it. I have seen a few of them go through it on both sides of the fence. I have seen some police officers and the work that they have had to do in there and the mess that they have to clean up from time to time, as well as some of those from all walks of life and from all strata of society. Anyone who has had the experience of going through or having seen it will know that the decision that we have taken to rebuild that watch-house is one of some moment. We are very pleased to be part of it.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I wonder whether you could quantify for me the amount of moneys that have been allocated in two areas of your budget: the police beat initiative and the personnel who are involved and also your school-based policing initiative.

Mr COOPER: The school-based constable was an initiative of coalition policy announced in 1995. I commend the Police Service on its rapidity in getting that going, just as it was rapid in getting the Townsville Police Academy going. It was very quick to move and get those things in place. The school-based constable idea, as most people would know, is not a case of putting the Police Service into the schools to start flogging the kids or getting them to be pimps or whatever. It is a case of an educational process. The police had to be part of the school community. To that end we have five trials going—Mount Isa, Redbank Plains, Hervey Bay, Townsville and Cairns—and 20 police officers were trained in January last year. They were ready for the school year on 1 February last year. Five of those 20 were selected to go into the schools. That program, for as long as it has been going this year, has been enormously successful.

Yes, they mix, confer and consult with the teaching staff, with P & Cs, with the school community—that is, the shopkeepers and everyone else in the neighbourhood of the school—as well as the kids. They teach a program which incorporates the law, public safety and traffic safety. The list goes on endlessly. That has proven to be an extremely successful operation. As you would recall, from last year's budget \$250,000 was allocated towards the establishment of those school-based constables. Even the parents have to watch out, too. Just recently I was talking to one school-based constable who decided to have a look down at the shop to see if kids were down there without a pass. So in relation to responsibilities, some of the parents are going to be involved, too. It is something that has brought a bit of discipline back into it and it has helped enormously. It has also helped enormously for the Police Service to gain some respect—to take away the fear and to get the necessary camaraderie and trust between young people and the Police Service. To that end, it has been extremely successful. I think out of the five police officers, four are female. As I said, that has been demonstrated to be of a great success. I will refer the matter of beat policing to Mr Dick Warry.

Mr WARRY: We have to acknowledge that we have not aggregated the amount for the beat policing initiatives, so we would have to take that on notice. We have beat policing initiatives presently going into Toowoomba, two; Ipswich, two; and we have got modified initiatives at West End and Redland Bay. As I said, we have not aggregated the expenditure on those but we can do that readily for you. We are also looking at some further initiatives in the metropolitan regional area in the coming financial year.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: There are police beats in the regions as well, though?

Mr WARRY: Sorry, I was talking about the police beats. I am wondering whether you were talking about the police beat shopfronts.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Probably.

Mr COOPER: There are two police beats. There are police beats operating in Toowoomba, Ipswich and West End.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: And Redland Bay.

Mr COOPER: They are distinct from the shopfronts.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, earlier you gave us very precise information about operational police numbers and you also gave us some detail about the Brisbane watch-house reconstruction. I would like to take you to the other capital works in your budget initiatives. I am particularly interested in the Infrastructure Rejuvenation Package, which includes some other watch-houses and police stations, namely at Palm Beach, the Centenary station and the Gladstone district headquarters and watch-house. Can you give us a progress report on those?

Mr COOPER: Yes, I can. The tender was let for the design and construction of the Palm Beach station in 1996-97 at a cost of \$210,000. Construction is expected to be completed in January 1998 at an additional cost of \$1.09m. For Centenary station out at Mount Ommaney, that tender has been let for design and construction with an expenditure of \$140,000. Construction is expected to be completed in January 1998 at an additional cost of \$2.155m. In 1996-97, consultants were commissioned to conduct a feasibility options study for the Gladstone complex at a cost of \$50,000. Design and documentation and commencement of construction will take place in 1997-98. Site acquisition might also be required. An amount of \$2m has been allocated for this project. The new Brisbane City watch-house—we have mentioned that. Most of the construction work should be completed in 1997-98. I just want to go back to that Gladstone complex. That is to be on site—on the existing site.

Mr FOLEY: Minister, I have searched high and low but I have been unable to find the budgetary provision this year for the police beat shopfront facility at the Moorvale Shopping Centre at Moorooka. I am sure you would agree with me that this must have been an oversight, and I ask: will you be taking some steps towards establishing that police beat shopfront facility that seems to be the subject of so much support in the Moorooka community among the business people and the local council? Indeed, I would have to say that even the local member supports it.

Mr COOPER: Moorvale? Could you spell it?

Mr FOLEY: M-o-o-r-v-a-l-e. The Moorvale Shopping Centre in Moorooka.

Mr COOPER: What electorate is that in?

Mr FOLEY: It is in the garden suburbs of the Yeronga electorate.

Mr COOPER: Surely, the Yeronga Times is going to be very interested in the response. Firstly, I know you support the police beat shopfronts. I think most people do. They have turned out to be extremely successful. They also certainly take resources. Obviously, you go for those particular projects that work, and it has been shown that it works. You have raised this issue on a number of occasions. I guess that the squeaky wheel is going to get oil. I admire you for your persistence. Also, we

are very ecumenical in relation to the distribution of these things.

Mr FOLEY: Hope springs eternal in the human breast.

Mr COOPER: That is exactly right, and please do not forget it. Currently, there are 25 permanent police beat shopfronts in the State. The portable police beat shopfront units were all withdrawn during the year. Permanent shopfronts are staffed by two police officers and one administrative officer. Usually, that means extra staff. So if you are lucky enough to get one, it means two extra police plus an administrative officer.

On Thursday, 6 February, the police beat shopfront at Wilsonton, Toowoomba, was officially opened. Permanent staff have been appointed and all equipment has been provided. The shopfront is connected to the Queensland Police Service network. On that one, I acknowledge the contributions of the people in the community as well as the local authorities, particularly the one at Wilsonton. The previous member for Toowoomba South, Mr Berghofer, donated the shopfront and fitted it out. I think that it was worth about \$100,000. That is something for the record. Similarly, in Bundaberg the city council came to the party with at least 50% of the cost of that shopfront. Those contributions are all acknowledged. On Monday, 10 March, the police beat shopfront in Bourbong Street, Bundaberg, was officially opened and permanent staff provided. The police beat shopfront at Redbank Plaza was officially opened in April. Permanent staff have been appointed. In relation to the planned performance for 1997-98, it is anticipated that six additional police shopfronts will be established but the location of these has not yet been determined. Hope springs eternal.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Minister.

Mr COOPER: I am sure we will get some more representations from you.

Mr BARTON: I will have to do a couple of two-minute speeches in the Parliament just to remind you about it.

Mr COOPER: I would suggest that they would be forthcoming.

Mr BARTON: Speaking about oversights with regard to police stations or beats, does the forward capital works plan include a new police station for Coolum?

Mr COOPER: Where do you come from?

Mr BARTON: I do not come from Coolum. I note that on 16 May 1997, the Coolum Advertiser commented on representations by the member for Noosa, Minister Bruce Davidson, and stated that after urgent discussions with Police Minister Russell Cooper earlier this week, he is now very confident that funds will be provided in the June Budget for a new central business district police station in Coolum later this year. The article said that it was Mr Davidson's priority. I am wondering where it is. Does that say something about the quality of Mr Davidson's representations or is it another one of

those little issues that just has to be slipped out of the Treasurer's reserve fund later in the year?

Mr COOPER: You never know, do you? There is always the mid-year review, which will occur in November this year. Obviously, I will be making representations on a number of issues. Coolum is not in this year's Capital Works Program. As you would appreciate—and certainly your former Minister would appreciate—particular centres, be it Coolum or anywhere else, have been left on a capital works list but getting them to finality is not quite as easy as some people think. Mr Davidson's representations have been very strong, just as Mr Foley's have been very strong. The matter of the Coolum station is still one for ongoing consideration as is quite a number of other centres around the State. Mr Warry would like to make a further comment.

Mr WARRY: Mr Barton, the representations have largely been about replacing the existing Coolum station, which is, in fact, in a house somewhat removed from the hub of Coolum with a facility in what is referred to as the central business district of Coolum closer to the activity. We have simply taken those representations on board. In the 10-year rolling plan, we have always envisaged that at some stage we would provide a replacement station at Coolum. The timing was yet to be determined. As you would appreciate, land in the hub of Coolum comes at a very high price. So that presents us with a difficulty. We have land for a future station elsewhere in the area, but unfortunately, in terms of the local representations, it is on the other side of Coolum and not smack bang in the middle of it.

Mr BARTON: I hope that if there is to be a new Coolum police station at some stage, it will show up in the Capital Works Program and the Budget Estimates, and is not slid in as a result of representations. I notice that it is not included in the document Towards the 21st Century: Resource Priorities for the Queensland Police Service.

Minister, the Community Policing Partnerships Program was recently announced. I must say that, contrary to public opinion, I am a supporter of that program, although I would do it a little differently. The Budget papers provide for funding of \$550,000 for the 12-month pilot at six locations. What are the locations of the six trials? What will the \$550,000 cover in terms of expenditure? Is there likely to be an expectation that the communities themselves will need to raise additional funds as part of those pilot projects to make them work?

Mr COOPER: I am happy to go into that. What was your first comment about something being contrary to public opinion?

Mr BARTON: I think that, contrary to your opinion at least, the Opposition does support the CPPs, although we would do them a little differently. It is a good initiative.

Mr COOPER: It would be interesting to know how you would do them.

Mr BARTON: We would pick our people, instead of letting you pick yours.

Mr COOPER: Let us talk about that: we do not want the politicians to take over. In our 1995 policy document, we mention that local MLAs—be they yours, ours, or whoever—would be involved, as would Federal parliamentarians and local authority personnel. On reflection and further consideration, we wanted to keep politics out of it as much as possible and give the process back to the community because it has a far better idea of the initiatives and strategies for crime prevention that would work in local areas. Often, local communities have extremely good ideas and we want to unleash them and give them the opportunity to make an impact.

The mayor of the local area will chair the CPP, whoever the mayor happens to be. The most senior police officer in the district will be involved, be he or she an inspector or a superintendent. The assistant commissioner for the particular region will also be required to attend. In this way, responsibilities will not be devolved down to a constable who has just arrived from Oxley. We are stressing that the CPP will not usurp the role of the police, but the police will be involved with the community. Various bodies would be required to put up two or three nominations. Depending on the areas, these bodies could include groups such as tourist associations, retired groups, ATSI representatives, ethnic representatives, youth and so on. The central board would be the final arbiter.

This is not a case of picking winners or cronies; the process is designed to ensure that the CPPs represent and reflect their communities' concerns. I reiterate that we are very much aware of the concern that they may become wailing walls or political footballs. That can happen with either side of politics. We want to be fair dinkum and we want to give people a chance. We believe that the selection method for membership of the CPPs is aboveboard and will reflect the districts' concerns.

The money that has been allocated will cover the costs of an executive officer to be stationed in each locality. We will require local authorities to survey their areas. For example, the Sunshine Coast, which consists of three shires and therefore has three mayors, we would like to see surveyed.

Mr BARTON: Please finish, Minister.

Mr COOPER: Thank you. The Gold Coast has already agreed to do a survey which will cover approximately 300,000 people. If a survey of that size is done, it will be the biggest in the world. The idea is that the local authority will do the survey so that local people can have a say about the crime prevention strategies that they want. The data from such surveys will be of enormous value. The CPPs will work on the basis of the information received.

The central board will ensure a whole-of-Government approach. The responsibility for the CPP will not fall only on the police, as often these things do. The local authorities will also be represented on the central board. Its responsibilities will be to assist the CPPs if they run into trouble. For example, they may run into trouble with Government departments as the program requires cooperation with the Departments of Families, Youth and

Community Care, Justice, Education, Health and so on. We want to utilise all resources so that, rather than having a scattergun approach, we can target specific problems. I guess that it is about citizens targeting crime. As a Government, we need to ensure that we target crime by utilising all the benefits that Government can offer, and not have an ad hoc, scattergun approach.

Mr BARTON: I note that the State Crime Operations Command, which is responsible for the investigation of major and organised crime and the coordination of intelligence for the Police Service, has incorporated a multidisciplinary team approach. As budget restrictions have forced the CJC to shut down two of its three multidisciplinary teams, has the State Crime Operations Command been able to pick up the ongoing investigations previously conducted by the CJC? Is it intended to continue with the Joint Organised Crime Task Force with the CJC beyond the end of this calendar year? Does the budget fund it?

Mr COOPER: I think this is an ideal question for the Commissioner to answer.

Mr BARTON: I am only too happy to listen.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: By way of initial comment, the Joint Organised Crime Task Force is attached to the Criminal Justice Commission and falls within the responsibilities of the commission under the Criminal Justice Act. In its present form, the task force is a joint undertaking of the CJC and the Queensland Police Service.

The future of the Joint Organised Crime Task Force is subject to the recommendations to be made by the Connolly/Ryan inquiry when it concludes its commission of inquiry into the Criminal Justice Commission. The Queensland Police Service has submitted to the Connolly/Ryan inquiry that it is in a position to take over this function, subject to the devolution of the funding provided to the Criminal Justice Commission for this purpose and a transfer of the necessary legislative powers to the Police Service to enable it to effectively carry out the role undertaken by the task force. In its submission to the Connolly/Ryan inquiry, the Criminal Justice Commission has submitted that the functions should remain under its control.

In terms of the ongoing investigations, due to the reduction in the multidisciplinary teams, the Police Service has no input into the day-to-day workings of the Criminal Justice Commission. Therefore, I would be unable to answer that question unless we take it on notice.

Mr BARTON: I put the question on notice. Minister, how do you rate your performance in claiming that you are combating crime in north Queensland when, despite a 10.5% increase in the overall Police budget, the allocation to the northern region is 4.7%, or less than half the total budget increase?

Mr COOPER: I will let the Commissioner answer this question as well. As the Minister, my job is to get as big a share of the cake as I possibly can. The Police budget has had a 10.5% increase at a time when inflation is about 2%. You asked me to

rate my performance; in relation to getting the funds, it is tops. The Commissioner then divides up the funds among the regions and then the regions divide up those funds among their districts and divisions. That is the role of the assistant commissioners in those areas. As you know, you and I must not get involved in that sort of thing. We have to give the bulk of the cake to the Commissioner, the assistant commissioners and the deputy commissioner, and let them get on with the job of allocating that money so that we can get the best possible result.

Mr BARTON: I promise not to interfere next year when I become the Minister.

Mr COOPER: Dream on.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: I will make a brief comment and, if you concur, I will ask Mr Warry to explain in detail. Every region has had an increase in this budget. The only area to take a reduction in budget is the corporate area of the department. Did you ask about the northern or far-northern district?

Mr BARTON: Northern.

Comr O'SULLIVAN: It has had an increase of \$1.3m for the next financial year. I will ask Mr Warry to elaborate on that.

Mr WARRY: I will make two observations. The 10.5% increase refers to the global budget of the service. As such, there are some elements contributing to that increase which are not immediately and directly passed on to the regional commands or the other operational commands. For example, that would include some of the money that is provided for additional new initiatives which might be centrally maintained. We have heard reference earlier this afternoon to the speed management initiatives and speed cameras. The additional funding provided for that purpose would not be reflected immediately in the budgets of the regions.

The other observation to bear in mind is that the 10.5% includes provisions for additional staff who will come on stream throughout the year. That money will not be allocated to regions and commands until those staff move through the system and are allocated to those areas of responsibility, in which case the money follows them. So you would in fact find that throughout the financial year moneys are devolved to the operational regions and commands. That is not reflected in the figures provided immediately for the initial budgets for those areas.

Mr BARTON: Minister, I refer to the Community Custody Program detailed on page 2-25 and the estimated expenditure of \$375,000.

Mr COOPER: Sorry? You are shifting into prisons; some officers might have to swap places.

Mr BARTON: I may well come back to police at a later point. However, for the moment, I want to shift to prisons.

The CHAIRMAN: We were going to ask about prisons in our next block of questions.

Mr BARTON: How much time do I have left?

The CHAIRMAN: You have time for one more question.

Mr COOPER: Are you asking about police or prisons?

Mr BARTON: Prisons. I cannot promise you that I will not come back to police before the end of the session.

Mr COOPER: Those officers can come back then.

Mr BARTON: I intend to ask a series of questions on prisons. I refer to the Community Custody Program detailed on page 2-25 and the estimated expenditure of \$375,000 for Maconochie Lodge in both 1996-97 and 1997-98. As Maconochie Lodge has demonstrated a failure to meet its commitment to accommodate its contracted number of prisoners—24—since January 1995, with its average number of prisoners right through that period being 16 per month, which represents an overpayment of more than \$200,000 of Queensland taxpayers' funds in that time, why have you again contracted to Maconochie Lodge on the same basis and what steps are you taking to ensure that Maconochie Lodge meets its contractual obligations during the coming financial year?

Mr COOPER: Maconochie Lodge was gazetted as a contracted community corrections centre in May 1990. As you probably realise, it is located at Burpengary, 45 kilometres north of Brisbane, and has operated under contract to the QCSC from the Shaftesbury Citizenship Centre. It has accommodation for 24 male prisoners who have been transferred as open security prisoners or who have been granted release to work. Since it commenced operations, 374 prisoners have been transferred to that centre. Since it opened, the average occupancy is 17 residents. This appears partially due to its geographical remoteness from employment opportunities and difficulties in accessing public transport.

Since August 1996, the average number of prisoners residing at the centre has been steadily increasing. The January 1996 unit cost statement indicates that the net daily unit cost per prisoner was \$63.37. This was directly related to the low occupancy rate, as a higher occupancy rate would have resulted in costs similar to those at other community corrections centres. Over the past three years, the annual operational costs have been \$320,000, \$345,868 and \$357,217. In the current financial year, the annual unit cost is \$14,884. A management fee is paid for a capacity of 24 prisoners. Since July 1996, prisoners at Maconochie Lodge have provided 18,391 hours of community service work at the equivalent monetary value of \$208,744. On 23 July 1996, the Shaftesbury Citizenship Centre advised that, as of 5 March, the Reverend Allan Male was no longer the chief executive. In March, they had 24; in April, 22; and in May, 22.8.

Mr BARTON: Are they going to be consistently that effective when their average was 16 for the two years beforehand?

Mr RULE: As you are aware, the QCSC will be corporatised on 1 July, subject to the Government's announcement. I can assure you that the service

purchasing function of Government will be keeping a very close eye on the bed states of the various community corrections centres and every endeavour will be made to keep those bed states at the contracted level of beds, in this case 24.

Mr COOPER: I believe that the Shaftesbury Centre has played a considerable role in the rehabilitation of prisoners, and no doubt you also would recognise that.

Mr BARTON: I am sure it has played a valuable role, but it has also taken over \$200,000 in public funds for which it has not delivered anything.

Mr COOPER: You could also take into account the value of the community service work which those prisoners have contributed back into the community.

Mr BARTON: Not when it ends up in Shaftesbury's pocket.

Mr COOPER: You are on the record.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allocation for that block of questioning has now expired. As I said before, we will be asking questions in this block about Corrective Services. Even a cursory glance at the MPS suggests that the taxpayer foots a huge bill for keeping prisoners in custody, yet we hear from time to time that life is pretty good on the inside. I refer in particular to a recent newspaper article about the luxuries being provided to the prisoners at Sir David Longland. Can the Minister tell us what is going on?

Mr COOPER: We often read in the press that prisons are now motels with all of the luxuries we could possibly imagine. I guess anything can be dressed up to make it sound good. I have been to many of the prisons, be they the old type or the new type. I can assure you and everyone else that the atmosphere is not great. There is not one that I could recommend to people. As usual, such articles are way off the mark. Unfortunately, such articles are from an irresponsible element in the press who want to dress up these things. The matter is a darned sight more serious than that.

It is a requirement that prisoners be provided daily with breakfast, lunch and an evening meal, one of which is to be hot. Menus and food portions adequate for daily intake of not less than 13,000 kilojoules are provided by a qualified dietitian. And the newspapers would try to dress up that, too. Meal portions and quality are considered appropriate for a working adult male. Special diets for medical, ethnic or religious reasons are provided as required. Ice-cream and fruit salad are supplied once a week in summer. In winter, ice-cream or fruit salad is provided once a week. Some prisoners at the centre are vegetarians, and prisoners are able to order dietary supplements such as iron and liver tablets and protein supplements which are readily available in pharmacies and supermarkets. The centre encourages prisoners to maintain good health and fitness. They do not encourage body building and, consequently, there are no weights and no body-building facilities available. Records indicate that five orders each fortnight from a prisoner population of 400 are placed for vitamin pills.

People talk about videos. Prisoners are able to view one video a day and at various times throughout the weekend. As to so-called luxury purchases—prisoners are encouraged to work while in prison. For this work they earn \$1.90 to \$3.90 a day. Prisoners who work in industries such as laundry/carpentry/workshops can earn a small bonus of between \$1.90 and \$3.90 a day for extra productive work. From this plus an amenities allowance of \$9 a week to enable the purchase of underwear, socks and toiletries such as toothpaste, soap and shampoo, they can make purchases from a limited range of items which includes soft drinks, lollies and chips. Some prisoners purchase those sorts of things for their children during their visits. They also send money to support their families. Apart from that, they are not allowed to have all the pornographic literature that people say they are allowed to have.

As to my own general observations apart from all that stuff—I did start off in 1987-88 by visiting Boggo Road. My own observation then, the first time that I ever visited a gaol, was that it was a place that I found to be absolutely abhorrent, in that people were lying around doing nothing. I thought, "We have to have a system whereby people, if they do go to gaol, are better occupied." So that is why there have been such major reforms and major changes, starting with Kennedy and moving on through to now. Those changes are going to continue. We are going to implement better programs so that we can try to produce a better person so that they can come out a darn sight better than when they went in. That is the idea. We work in closely with the Education Department, TAFE and many other Government institutions. We also work with industry to try to get as many industries as we can of a useful nature so that we can keep these people occupied. It gets blown out of all proportion if they do get to watch a bit of television or a video. Somehow, some way you have to keep people occupied—their minds occupied as well as their hands. The system is endeavouring to do that in a sensible, constructive way. But I come back to the beginning of the answer: no, they are not the sorts of places that I would recommend people go for a holiday.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Your department has just assumed responsibility for juvenile detention. I noticed from page 2-21 under "Programs" that there is no allocation in the juvenile detention area. That is because the Education Department organises the programs for juveniles. One of the concerns that many of us had when Corrective Services took over juvenile detention centres was that there would be a temptation, in an effort to control costs, to use prison officers who work at adult correctional centres to undertake work in juvenile correctional centres. Has that occurred?

Mr STEWART: No.

Mr COOPER: Do you want to elaborate on that?

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: No, that is fine.

Mr STEWART: There has been no contamination between the staff in adult centres and juvenile centres. A considerable amount of effort has

been put into the training of juvenile detention centre staff to ensure that their skills are enhanced.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I notice that the budgets have been increased in all of those areas.

Mr COOPER: Could I elaborate further? I think your question is an excellent one. The QCSC took over juvenile detention centres in August last year, so it is not such a heck of a long time ago. There were some major adjustments to be made. I believe that staff training has improved dramatically—and Mr Stewart can correct me if I am wrong—as have the programs within those institutions.

Mr CARROLL: I want to ask about the Concerned Persons Register. I see at page 2-8 of the MPS that you have identified new initiative funding to develop a Concerned Persons Register to be operated by the Queensland Corrective Services Commission. Can you outline how that will work and when it will be operational?

Mr COOPER: The Concerned Persons Register is something that is of benefit to victims of crime. It was again a coalition policy initiative announced back in 1995. This budget sees about \$100,000 allocated towards getting that going. As to the actual timing of getting it going, I will refer you to Mr Rule or Mr Stewart, but moves are in train to get it going now that the funds are available. It will work on a voluntary basis. Victims do not have to place their names on the register, but they can if they wish. In the initial stages while we get it going, it will apply to crimes of a serious violent nature—say for a sentence of five years or more—and we will gradually expand that so that the system can deal with the various people who place themselves on the register. The way it will work is that victims will place themselves on it. Right now a victim can contact gaol management and find out the status of a prisoner, be it their security classification, when their parole period is due, when their release to work is due, when their home detention is due or whatever. The difference here will be that the victims will be required to be informed by prison management of a movement, be it from high security to medium, medium to low or for changing gaols, a change in classification or whether parole, home detention, release to work or whatever is imminent. The victim cannot veto the movement, but it would be a very foolish management system to ignore the wishes and the thoughts of victims. Some victims do not wish to know anything further following the crime, therefore they are not required to place themselves on that register, but the register will be available for them to do so if they wish. On the question of timing, I will get Mr Rule to respond.

Mr RULE: We anticipate having the Concerned Persons Register operational in approximately the second quarter of the 1997-98 financial year. We believe that it will require the first three months of the financial year to achieve set-up and recruit appropriate staff and to put the appropriate information technology systems in place. We would hope then that the system would be fully operational towards the end of the current calendar year.

The CHAIRMAN: I note from page 2-5 of the MPS that the QCSC budget has been increased by

nearly \$40m over last year's allocation. I have listened to some of the comments about the place which would have us believe that because there has been a carryover of the capital works funding—\$44m, page 2-5 of the MPS—that means that the QCSC has less money to operate this year than it had last year. Can the Minister explain just what the situation is with regard to that?

Mr COOPER: I can. Last year's budget contained an allocation of \$97m in capital works funding. \$54m was spent—there were a number of reasons for the delays—and \$44m was carried forward. The Government added a further \$75m to this to provide a capital works budget for 1997-98 of \$118.5m. Capital works carryovers are not uncommon. They are part of the Budget process. You only have to consider the six years from 1990 to 1995 to see evidence of that. We can look at the recurrent funding which pays for correctional operations. Last year's allocation for this was \$186m. With supplementation this was increased to \$192m. The current budget for this year is \$202.5m. Therefore there is an increase in the recurrent budget of \$16.5m over last year's allocation—an increase of approximately 9%—at a time of low inflation when the commission has made efficiency gains through enterprise bargaining and the prison numbers have been relatively stable.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I noticed in your answer to question on notice No. 8 that, almost consistently in the Secure Custody Program for correctional centres, there were a number of clients consistently above the cell capacity, and presumably a couple of the new prisons to come on line will address that problem. What additional moneys are allocated to address the social complications that occur with that overcrowding?

Mr COOPER: On that I will let the Commissioner have a go, but I want to comment on the overcrowding which you quite rightly raised. When we left office in 1989, every prisoner was in a single cell. When we came back in, about 1,400 had doubled up. The overcrowding was a result of the taking away of the Woodford prison. The unfortunate part of it is that we had to then embark on a major reconstruction and construction program, which we are doing. We have heard enough about the Woodford facility recently. That is picking up its numbers and will soon be up to 600. You also may wish to discuss the new Wacol prison, that is, the prison reserve for 600 prisoners there plus provision for a couple of hundred female prisoners. We are moving the female prison from Boggo Road out to that site. That is what we call SEQ1, and SEQ2 is to be found on a site somewhere in south-east Queensland for a second major construction which we wish to try to get under way later this year. As far as the social cost of that overcrowding that you are concerned about, Mr Stewart will answer that.

Mr STEWART: Each time we increase the population of a prison by doubling up, additional funds are provided to the prison. They do not cover just the cost of feeding the inmate; there are additional funds for staffing, for security and for programs. In the overall context of the management

of the centre, the social needs of the prisoner are accommodated as much as possible within that additional staffing arrangement. The area in particular that we cannot increase as rapidly as some of the others is the industries area where active work is limited by the size of the industries buildings and those sorts of things. Sometimes that area has suffered from the overcrowding.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: There is no special allocation in the budget to recognise the complications of overcrowding? It would just be absorbed into the general budget votes?

Mr STEWART: It is absorbed in the general budget.

Mr COOPER: I will get Mr Rule to elaborate further but, as far as the overcrowding is concerned, when a double up occurs Treasury pays an additional \$70 a day for that particular prisoner. So there is a financial recognition of the doubling up in that regard.

Mr RULE: That amount of money would usually be sufficient to allow us to maintain programs, counselling and recreational capabilities at the correctional centre as well as provide for the daily needs. That is at a full unit cost of funding for extra doubled-up prisoners, but our experience to date is that we have managed within that budget allocation from Treasury at a marginal rate.

Mr CARROLL: I notice that at page 2-23 of your Ministerial Program Statements there is an additional \$7.6m over and above last year's estimated actual expenditure in the budget allocation for offender management. As I understand it, there has not been any major increase in prisoner numbers. How will those additional funds be applied or what is the purpose of those?

Mr COOPER: As you will see from notes 1, 2 and 3 below, that table is made up of a number of things. For example, the allocation to the Drug Strategy has been doubled over the allocations made by the former Government. It has gone from \$500,000 to \$1m. An enterprise bargaining agreement has been reached—

Mr BARTON: Ours was \$1.5m. You dropped it.

Mr COOPER: Sorry, \$1.5m it is. We will come back to you. An enterprise bargaining agreement has been reached with the QCSC and the Government sharing the costs of increased salaries for improved productivity. The costs of Government supplementation are included. Some of the new initiatives listed on pages 1-2 and 1-3 of the MPS are attributed here. You can have a look at those. The staffing of the Crisis Support Unit and improved medical services at Townsville Correctional Centre is one of those. The other factor here is the figure for juvenile detention. That represents a full-year cost, not just the cost of 10 months' operation as was recorded in last year's budget.

The CHAIRMAN: There are numerous references in the MPS to the issues of corporatisation. Could the Minister explain just why the Government decided to corporatise the QCSC,

the process involved in corporatisation and where the process stands right now?

Mr COOPER: The Government took an initial decision to corporatise, that is, to increase the effectiveness, the efficiency and the competitiveness of the system. That does not mean to say that the Government is bailing out of the corrective services business at all. But there needs to be that competitive side of things as in the public arena: we have public hospitals and we have private hospitals; we have public schools and we have private schools. It was one of those things that Kennedy suggested way back in 1987-88, that there could and should be that element of public and private. That is one of the reasons why Arthur Gorrie was contracted out and another reason why Borallon was contracted out. It does not mean to say that when they have to come forward for market tests they cannot come back under Queensland Corrections and vice versa. Anything under Queensland Corrections now from the juvenile centres to the gaols as such will have to go through market tests in order to qualify for a contract. That again is not making money out of people's misery at all; it is making sure that we have a system that is effective and that the programs, standards and evaluations are right.

What corporatisation really does is separates and clarifies the role of the purchaser and the provider. It also removes any perceived conflicts of interest in that the same organisation is no longer both the purchaser of the service and the provider. This was highlighted in the Woodford Correctional Centre tender bid where the previous Government required the QCSC to bid against the private sector. The perceptions were that the QCSC was both bidder and assessor of the bids, so that will not occur again. It cannot occur again once we have corporatised.

Corporatisation also provides a level playing field. It is the principle of competitive neutrality and it ensures that, where the Government and the private sector own entities which compete against each other, they do so on an equitable basis and the taxpayers can be confident that they are getting the best value for money in service delivery. Corporatisation should ensure the continuation of both the Government and private sector in the delivery of corrective services in Queensland. It creates the optimum level of competition and should in turn achieve the best outcomes for the Queensland taxpayer.

As to the process—the Government Owned Corporations Amendment Regulation 1997 declared the service delivery elements of the QCSC to be a candidate for a Government owned corporation on 27 March this year, with the responsible Ministers being the Deputy Premier and Treasurer and myself. The Government Owned Corporations Regulation 1997 also on 27 March created Queensland Corrections as a corporate entity and an associate to the candidate GOC. The Government Owned Corporations Act requires that, in general, a corporatisation charter be declared and implemented prior to a candidate GOC becoming a GOC. The

charter sets out the steps and the basis on which the candidate GOC is to become a GOC, and so on and so forth.

Mr CARROLL: In your answer to my last question you mentioned the drugs in prisons inquiry. That is also mentioned on page 2-10 of your Ministerial Program Statements. I want to ask you: how successful has that program been? Is it worth investing more money in?

Mr COOPER: It has certainly been successful. As most people know—those who have an interest, that is—there are drugs in gaols and it has been generally recognised that they are in every gaol right around the world. The thing is what to do about it. Either you can keep them high and keep them happy or you can do something about drugs going into gaols and all the methods and means of getting drugs into the prison system. That has been exposed. They certainly go in with visitors; they certainly go in sometimes with prison officers; and they certainly are transported in there one way or another by prisoners themselves.

This is something that has been of extreme concern to this Government. Yes, there is extra funding for the inquiry in the budget. I make no apologies for that. I met again yesterday with Carl Mengler who, as you would know, is a former Assistant Commissioner of Police in Queensland. We appointed him to the task of carrying out the inquiry into drugs in prisons in Queensland. That is still ongoing. One of the recommendations in his interim report was the establishment of a pro-active investigative unit to head up the attack on drugs in a pro-active way. We already have the CSIU, as you would realise, and often they are reactive. So with a combination of the two, and with the gathering and use of better intelligence—which is what that unit is for—you are going to see an even better system, I think, in place than we have had before. We are dead serious.

The report of the commission of inquiry was completed and delivered to me on 12 December. That is still ongoing in the sense that Mr Mengler is overseeing it probably until September. It made 63 recommendations. The QCSC is still evaluating the recommendations in the context of the overall drug strategy. I have been advised that a number of issues raised by Mr Mengler have already been addressed. I will get a detailed response on that very shortly.

Numerous criminal investigations have been conducted in respect of drug-related and ancillary matters at custodial correctional centres. One former prison officer has been arrested and charged with 16 counts of supplying a dangerous drug inside a correctional institution, one count of trafficking in dangerous drugs and one count of official corruption. That officer has been committed to stand trial in the Supreme Court in Townsville in respect of those matters. Briefs of evidence in respect of criminal offences committed by a serving prison officer were forwarded to the DPP. The inability of the prosecution to prove beyond reasonable doubt the questions of ownership of the property by the QCSC resulted in that matter not proceeding.

Since the commencement of the commission of inquiry, a total of 30 persons have been charged with a total of 73 charges. Of that figure, 13 persons have been charged with a total of 35 charges which relate to supply, trafficking and possession of dangerous drugs or utensils, nine persons have been arrested on a total of 16 warrants, and another 12 persons have been charged with a total of 22 charges, which include assault, misappropriation, false pretences, official corruption, contravening a court-imposed publicity ban, and firearms offences. Comprehensive reports in respect of two prison officers have been referred to the QCSC for consideration in relation to taking disciplinary action against those officers. Further investigations are being conducted in respect of the offences of drug-trafficking in prisons and misappropriation of QCSC funds by a senior QCSC employee. Other disciplinary matters will be referred to the QCSC.

A comprehensive report on the investigations conducted by the commission of inquiry into drugs in prisons is to be completed and delivered to me by mid September 1997.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: A fairly complete response was given to question on notice No. 17 about community corrections and work orders. One of the most repeated criticisms, I guess, of the work order process has been that the responsible person does not show up for work. In relation to enforcement and supervision, the answer stated that if directed work is not completed then contravention action may be taken. But again, over time, it does not appear to be effectively encouraging people to fulfil their obligations. Are there any allocations in this year's budget to address that problem?

Mr COOPER: Greg Chambers might like to come forward.

Mr CHAMBERS: I am sorry, Mrs Cunningham. Would you mind asking the question again for me? I did not quite hear it all.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Question on notice No. 17 detailed a lot of information about community service work and community service hours. One of the most repeated criticisms is that there appears to be a lack of tools to require people to fulfil their obligations. The answer talked about contravention action, but I wonder if there is any funding allocated in this year's budget to firm up the process and to require offenders to fulfil those work hours.

Mr CHAMBERS: There is no allocation as such. The situation is this: a person who is subject to a community supervision order, which involves working on community service, is given two warnings. Should that person not heed those warnings and action is taken, there is some digression from that in certain cases under exceptional circumstances. Generally speaking, the rate of prosecution is such that something in the vicinity of 35% to 36% of persons who are subject to orders are prosecuted successfully for not completing those orders within the required time. The policy and procedures manual that is available to the field staff actually prescribes those actions to be taken. At this point in time, the rate of prosecutions—as I have just outlined—indicates that

the staffing that we have is adequate to ensure that that policy and procedure is carried out.

I think it is more a public perception, rather than an actual set of circumstances, that people are not always being held to their obligations under the orders. I think that occurs because, from time to time, people are aware of a particular offender, they know that the person is subject to an order, but action does not seem to be taken immediately. It takes some time through the court processes to have a person brought before the court. They have to be summonsed. You have to give a certain number of days' notice, and you have to be able to get them onto the court timetable. So it could take up to six weeks. In some cases, the offenders have absconded and warrants have to go into circulation for them, and it may take some months before they are picked up on those warrants.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allocated for this segment has now expired. I call the member for Waterford.

Mr BARTON: Minister, I refer to your answer to question No. 10 on notice in relation to the new male and women's prisons in south-east Queensland planned for the Wacol prison reserve. If the social impact report makes it clear that the two new prisons should be substantially moved from their current planned locations on the Wacol prison site rather than the minor relocation referred to in your answer, will you agree to follow the report's recommendations and the wishes of the neighbouring residents?

Mr COOPER: We are very mindful of the wishes of the neighbouring residents. I just want to elaborate on that for a moment. I believe that the prison reserve has been there for about 40 years. It was put there for a purpose. We have the Wacol and Moreton prison facilities out there now, as you know. In the vicinity we have the training centre. I am sure you would agree that, over the years, there has been developing an overcrowding problem. The Wacol site was chosen for the women's and the men's prisons. It was announced clearly in our policy in 1995 that that is what a prison reserve is for: building prisons. That is why very rarely do you see Governments having a bit of forward planning. They actually planned for some 40 years. Whoever the Government was that introduced it can be commended, because they did have some foresight. That is what it was all about. So it was commonly known that that was a prison reserve for building prisons. That is what this Government did in 1995. As the Opposition, we knew there had to be a reconstruction program and a construction program, so that was clearly announced.

As far as the social impact report is concerned—we have undertaken to do that and, quite frankly, with quite considerable consultation. We will await the outcome of that report. I must point out also that we, as a Government, and you, as an Opposition, also have a responsibility once we have made announcements and our intentions are clear. The overcrowding problem, the cost of the delays and the consultation process are costing in the order of millions. That is taxpayers' money for which we

have a responsibility. I sincerely hope that you, too, realise that further delays are costing the Queensland taxpayer a lot of money.

We are commissioning the social impact report at this time. We will await its outcome. To elaborate a little bit further, Mr Rule has had a lot of consultations with the people concerned—the residents out there. As to the footprint that you mentioned, we understand completely the need to remove the prison complex as far from their lifestyle as we possibly can. We are doing everything we can to accommodate them. We understand the difficulties. We also understand our responsibilities to act as a responsible Government and carry out its commitment to the people.

Mr BARTON: So you will move it even if it is a substantial shift in the location of the footprint?

Mr COOPER: We are looking at all the options we possibly can in order to alleviate the problems that those people have. We cannot do the impossible. We are not going to try to do the impossible. We will certainly try through that consultation to alleviate the effect of that construction on them as much as we possibly can within the bounds of commonsense. We also have to take into account the added cost that that does entail. We are prepared to wear some of the added cost. If that cost is exorbitant, obviously—as you would have to agree and everyone would have to agree—we have to act in the public interest. To that end we have to be financially responsible. I would like Mr Rule to comment further.

Mr RULE: We are in current discussions with an organisation called CRAMP, the Concerned Residents Against More Prisons, in that area. The terms of reference for a social impact report are currently being discussed. There were a number of iterations of those discussions and drafts. I would hope that by about next week we should be able to conclude the final terms of reference and select and appoint a consultancy to undertake that task. Hopefully that would report within approximately a month or so of the commissioning of that report. We have given an undertaking to the residents, the CRAMP organisation, that they will have the opportunity to comment on that social impact report prior to the matter being finally considered by the Government. The Minister has also indicated to the group that he would be prepared to discuss alternative sites on the Wacol prison reserve. Three alternative options have been provided to them for consideration. At a recent meeting the organisation also requested that we investigate other Wacol and regional properties in that environ. We have taken that on board and we are currently having those investigated. We would hope to get back to CRAMP within a week or so in relation to those matters.

Mr BARTON: I refer to the unexpended amount of \$43.6m from the 1996-97 prisons capital works budget, and its transfer to the 1997-98 budget. Why was that capital expenditure not expended in the 1996-97 financial year? Does it not make a farce of your \$118.178m capital works budget—of which \$43.6m, or 37%, has now been

announced twice—and your Government's stated commitment to capital works to provide jobs?

Mr COOPER: There is an adequate explanation. One of the explanations of the \$43m-odd is that we are entering into consultations in deference to the people about whether the SEQ1 women's is to go. Major projects scheduled for commencement in 1997 failed to commence with the Queensland Building Services Authority and the financial approval process also delayed the commencement of some projects. The major underspends will occur in the following projects: SEQ1 and SEQW, it was originally planned to spend \$14m combined in 1996-97—that is the men's and women's prisons at Wacol. The preferred design is being developed by the board of the QCSC. Construction has been deferred while the social impact report is being prepared, hence the delays in spending and getting jobs going. The social impact report is intended to address measures raised by the Concerned Residents Against More Prisons, who are opposed to the construction of new correctional facilities on that Wacol reserve. Total expenditure on that combined project will now be limited to approximately \$2.2m. That represents an underspend of \$12m.

The Juvenile Centre Enhancement Program originally planned to spend \$28m combined across the State in 1996-97. That funding was transferred to the QCSC on 15 August 1996, when juvenile detention became part of the commission's responsibility. That has resulted in very limited expenditure in the program. Some funds have been spent doing upgrading work at the existing centres. Some of that work was ongoing when it was taken over by QCSC. Some has been initiated by QCSC. That program was supplemented with an additional \$1.7m during the year and that has resulted in a net underspend in that program of approximately \$28m.

The Lotus Glen Correctional Centre expansion originally planned to spend to \$6m. That project was delayed while consideration was given to the construction of an Aboriginal prison in the cape area. A consultation process was implemented. It was agreed that the project would be split into two stages, namely, address the current double-up in the existing centre and then consider other options available to house prisoners in far-north Queensland. Consultation confirmed that that was the appropriate strategy and it was agreed to construct 96 beds inside the existing centre. The project was carried out as a design and construct project and was won by ADCO Constructions, which has commenced work on that site. While initial discussion with the contractors indicated up to \$3m expenditure was achievable this financial year, the eventual expenditure could be as low as \$1.6m. The total underspend on the project could be as high as \$4.4.

The overall capital works program—during the last quarter of the financial year the remainder of the overall program has slipped behind with up to \$7m of expenditure slipping into 1997-98. That will result in the overall QCSC capital works program being underspent by between \$42m and \$47m for those reasons just given.

Mr BARTON: It is not a pretty report. Turning to capital works allocations for juvenile detention, is it intended to build a new juvenile detention centre in south-east Queensland to replace John Oxley and Sir Leslie Wilson?

Mr COOPER: Yes, it is.

Mr BARTON: When will that progress.

Mr COOPER: Just wait until I get you the detail, but the answer is: yes. In April 1997 the QCSC board approved the development of an infrastructure plan for juvenile detention centres. That plan involves the following: for southern Queensland, retention of the John Oxley centre as a remand and reception centre supplemented by a number of smaller juvenile development centres in various locations each with a capacity of approximately 20 beds and the closure of the Sir Leslie Wilson centre by 1998. As an interim arrangement, the John Oxley centre will be expanded to 95 beds through the addition of three temporary units during 1997. One or two juvenile development centres will be established on a trial basis. This plan retains options to construct a new centre to replace John Oxley or to construct further juvenile development centres in the future.

To elaborate—the consideration is for, say, one major centre or the development of a number of smaller centres that might be better manageable and might be better spread. I am saying that, be it for Aboriginal people or others, we need to be able to focus attention on the fact that they are juveniles. The idea is to try to make sure that we get the system right, so that we can direct a better focus on having people rehabilitated in a far better way than it has been done in the past.

For northern Queensland the proposal is for the retention of the Cleveland centre as a remand and reception centre with supplementation by a number of smaller juvenile detention centres in various locations each with a capacity of approximately 20 beds. As an interim arrangement, the Cleveland centre will be expanded to 50 beds with an emergency capacity of 55 through the addition of one temporary unit during 1997. The establishment of one or two juvenile development centres will be considered on a trial basis. This plan retains options to construct a new centre to replace Cleveland or to construct further juvenile development centres in the future.

The broad consideration of the plan was based on the philosophy of best practice for juvenile detention that requires detention facilities to be sufficiently secure to protect the community but also to provide opportunities for detained children to be rehabilitated and reintegrated with their families and communities.

Recently, the board released a discussion paper explaining the philosophy and future directions of juvenile detention to all staff and approximately 200 community agencies, academics and Government departments. To date, feedback has been strongly supportive of the proposed philosophy. Similarly with the Cleveland centre, we do not expect that centre to remain exactly where it

is. We do intend to relocate it. Prior to the construction of these facilities is the time to make sure that you have got your philosophy right. Of course, what we are building is for the next 40 or 50 years and, if it does take a little bit of time to get it right, then we are prepared to take that time.

Mr BARTON: Minister, I refer to a statement in the departmental overview of the Queensland Corrective Services Commission Program Statements which states—

"Initially the function of Juvenile Detention will be managed under contract by Queensland Corrections."

Does that indicate that consideration is being given to either privatising juvenile detention centres or contracting the management of these centres to a private sector organisation? If so, what organisations are being considered?

Mr COOPER: As to the corporatisation of the service delivery elements of the QCSC on 1 July 1997, the existing Juvenile Detention division, which includes the directorate and three juvenile detention centres, that is, Leslie Wilson, John Oxley and Cleveland in the north, will be operated under service contracts and specifications by Queensland Corrections.

Initially, it is intended that the public sector entity, Queensland Corrections, will operate and manage the three existing juvenile detention facilities. At a time set out in the schedule of market testing yet to be determined by the QCSC board, arrangements will be made to market test each of the juvenile detention centres. It is likely that tenders will be submitted by Queensland Corrections and the three private prison companies in Australia, that is, Corrections Corporations of Australia, Australasian Correctional Management and Group 4.

Some of the private contractors have overseas experience in the management and operation of juvenile detention secure facilities. It is likely that the right to manage and operate a juvenile detention centre will be awarded to the tenderer that can deliver the requirements and standards as set out in the contract and specifications and who delivers the best value for money to the Queensland taxpayer. The responsibility for the selection of the successful tenderer will rest with the new QCSC post-corporatisation.

Mr BARTON: As you have acknowledged that the privatisation or private operation of the juvenile detention centres is a possibility, how can you be confident that the juvenile detention centres will be operated in the best interests of rehabilitating young offenders rather than in the pursuit of private profits as we have sadly seen with Maconochie Lodge?

Mr COOPER: I reject your criticism of Maconochie Lodge. Obviously, you have a philosophical or ideological problem with the people involved.

Mr BARTON: No, I have a problem with people ripping off the public purse and not paying it back.

Mr COOPER: You have made your statement. You might like to prove it when you get outside, and we will see how good you are.

Mr BARTON: They are your figures I am quoting.

Mr COOPER: As I say, you can take it outside and you can make your allegations there and then prove them. I wish you well. As far as the privatisation of the juvenile centres is concerned, or contracts let or tendered in that direction, it is the same as the adult centres.

Mr BARTON: No, it is a much more sensitive issue.

Mr COOPER: They are all sensitive issues. Anything to do with human life, be it incarceration or whatever, is a sensitive issue and should be treated as such. You have already seen Arthur Gorrie and Borallon tender to the private sector. They are audited and they are evaluated. They have pretty stringent tests put upon them to see that they are delivering the proper services. You are right when you say that there must be a system so that they can be checked and tested, and they are.

So it is not a question that automatically the juvenile detention centres will go to the private sector. There will be tenders called when the QCSC is ready to do so. Then evaluations of systems, programs—all of those sorts of things—will be put in place. They will be evaluated and they will be scrutinised according to the wording of the contract. So it is not a question of just rushing out there and privatising as such. You have said that it is making profits out of misery. We have said that it is not that at all; it is to make sure that you have got the best and most effective system possible—not just value for money but value for the programs that are delivered so that emphasis can be placed on rehabilitation programs which, of course, is of the absolute most vital importance. Mr Rule might like to elaborate further on that.

Mr RULE: Mr Barton, in terms of the level of detail, your concern is a reasonable one and it is real.

Mr BARTON: Parliament was not told of this when it agreed to the transfer of the juvenile detention centres from the Department of Families to Corrective Services. Parliament certainly was not told about any possibility of privatising these operations.

Mr RULE: That is a question of Government policy, Mr Barton. In terms of what I am trying to outline, the board of the commission is looking very carefully at the philosophy that is necessary to deliver juvenile corrections operations in the future. That philosophy will be enshrined in the contracts and the specifications which are put out for market test. Only contractors that can deliver to that standard against that philosophy are likely to be accepted as acceptable tenderers for this process. If the private sector does not measure up, or for that matter the public sector does not measure up, then under the arrangements that will be in place at that point in time, the tender will be awarded in the accordance with the value-for-money tenderer which can deliver the service in the most effective way.

Mr BARTON: I am more interested in rehabilitating young people than making dollars for the private sector, I am afraid.

Mr COOPER: So are we.

Mr BARTON: I think that you have conned the Parliament of Queensland.

Mr COOPER: I have not conned the Parliament of Queensland. I reject your statement.

Mr BARTON: We will see how they feel about it. I refer to the comprehensive drug strategy in prisons and the allocation of \$1m for this strategy. The 1996-97 Budget allocation was half a million dollars and \$300,000 was advised as the cost of the Mengler inquiry. The table on page 2-10 titled "Program Outlays—Corrections Policy and Development" and footnote 2 to that table indicates that non-labour operating costs was overexpended by \$620,000 due to the costs associated with the inquiry into drugs in Queensland custodial correction centres and the devolution of Crown law funding. Footnote 2 of the table also indicates that part of the blow-out in contracted services to adult custodial corrections was due to the expansion of the QCSC's drug strategy. What will be the total cost of the drug strategy and the Mengler inquiry in 1996-97? As the cost of the drug strategy in 1996-97 appears to have been more than the budget allocation of \$1m for 1997-98, will the Queensland Corrective Services Commission have adequate funds for that important function, particularly when the Labor Budget of 1995-96 allocated \$1.5m? That was accepted by you last year.

Mr COOPER: You allocated in 1995-96—

Mr BARTON: That is right.

Mr COOPER: About \$1.5m.

Mr BARTON: \$1.5m and you have not matched it since.

Mr COOPER: You allocated then the following year \$500,000.

Mr BARTON: In our last Budget it was \$1.5m.

Mr COOPER: And \$950,000 of that was recurrent and \$0.55m of that was capital.

Mr BARTON: Do you want me to read your words from last year's hearing?

Mr COOPER: You have asked the question, I will give the answer. You can read whatever words you like.

Mr BARTON: I suggest that you read your own words of last year.

Mr COOPER: In your own time. In 1996-97, there was an allocation of \$500,000. For 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000, we have guaranteed \$1.5m in each of those years.

Mr BARTON: Why is the budget only \$1m?

Mr COOPER: Which is far more than you allocated. You asked the question about the cost of the Mengler inquiry. Initially, it was intended to last from June to December 1996 at an estimated cost of \$300,000. In January 1997, the term of the inquiry was extended to September 1997 at an estimated additional cost of \$225,000. The actual costs

incurred from the start of the inquiry to the end of April 1997 amount to \$469,000, of which some \$59,000 relates to consultancy fees paid to Mr Mengler. The total cost to the end of June 1997 is estimated to be \$500,000. Funding of \$200,000 has been provided in the 1997-98 Budget Estimates to cover the period of the inquiry to 10 September 1997. As for further comment on the cost and the allocations for the drug inquiry, I refer to Mr Rule.

Mr RULE: The reference to \$1m is a new initiative funding for this year. A base allocation of \$0.5m has been carried forward and that equals \$1.5m in 1997-98 to 1999-2000.

Mr BARTON: So the total funding for 1997-98 is \$1.5m; it is a pity that the Program Statements did not say that.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allowed for that segment has expired and we will move onto the racing industry. The member for Toowoomba North, Graham Healy, wishes to appear at the hearing. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

The CHAIRMAN: I call the member for Gladstone.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Can you give a breakdown of funding allocations for horseracing, in particular—not the TAB or other non-track betting—and also harness and greyhound racing? Can you provide the funding allocations for regional areas, that is, not central Brisbane and the Moreton statistical division? Would you have a breakdown of the south-east corner versus the rest of the State?

Mr COOPER: We can provide the answer, but a lot of figures are involved. If you do not mind, we will take it on notice.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: That is not a problem.

Mr HEALY: Can you explain how the Budget will address the issue of training track subsidies for race clubs, particularly in light of the statement that you made in opening this afternoon in relation to the \$2m from consolidated revenue?

Mr COOPER: While I think that it was stated that it has been 10 years since there has been an allocation from consolidated revenue, as this is an ongoing payment I think you will find that it is probably the first of its kind. As you know, the bookmakers' turnover tax produces about \$3m and we have \$2m to put towards the training track maintenance scheme. Some time ago we asked the Queensland Principal Club to put together a formula. It is a policy of the Government to make racing more affordable and we have managed to do that through the first charge scheme of \$1.25m, which alleviates the costs of registration, licensing and so on. This is on top of that.

Rather than try to assist the industry on an elite basis, that is, benefiting only the major clubs, we asked for a formula that would apply to clubs and racetracks in every nook and cranny of the State. Obviously, we would not do that unless we had funds. The \$2m will go a long way towards providing for tracks which might hold races only two or three times a year. As we know, such tracks are the glue

that holds together the communities in the western and northern parts of the State. As such, they will be given just as much consideration as any other track.

I commend the scheme and I commend the Treasurer for seeing fit to support it. It will go a long way towards assisting clubs in the provision of horse training facilities. I know that you, Mr Healy, have had a tremendous amount to do with the racing industry in the Toowoomba area. As you will appreciate, the scheme will mean a lot to Toowoomba as it will to Gladstone, the Sunshine Coast, Gympie and all other parts of the State. It is one of those schemes that comes along every now and then, and you know that it will have a very beneficial effect on the racing industry and all who participate in it. It is one of the real boons of this Budget.

Mr HEALY: Turning to harness racing, I refer you to the election commitment of the recommencement of harness racing in Townsville. Has this commitment been fully implemented? If so, can you expand, please?

Mr COOPER: The commitment has been implemented, and I will say "fully" implemented. On 8 February 1997, for the first time since 1991 harness racing was held in Townsville when a full program of racing was conducted by the North Queensland Harness Racing Club. Prior to the recommencement of harness racing at the Townsville showgrounds, the following conditions were negotiated: the funding of approximately \$110,000 for capital works from the harness code financial package, the funding of prize money for the first six months to 30 June 1997 to be provided by a grant from the RDF of up to \$270,000, an undertaking from the Racing Industry Coordinating Committee and the Queensland Harness Racing Board to include the North Queensland Harness Racing Club in TAB distribution arrangements for 1997-98 and the guarantee that prize money levels at Mackay and Rockhampton would be unaffected by the implementation of this election commitment.

The Government is committed to supporting a trial period to determine the viability of harness racing in north Queensland. That was an election promise and we have kept that promise. As everyone knows, we made it abundantly clear that we would support that trial and, after that, the industry would have to stand on its own. We have told clubs, be they in the greyhound, harness or thoroughbred industries, that the handouts are over. Clubs have to manage on a sound financial footing and management practices have to be of a top requirement.

Mr HEALY: On 24 December 1996, the trustees of the Albion Park Raceway submitted a report. Could you outline to the Committee what progress has been made towards determining the future of Albion Park?

Mr COOPER: For quite some time people have been wondering about the future of Albion Park. Obviously, it was set up some time ago to provide a centre for harness racing in the middle of the city. It used to work extremely well. Along with Silks Restaurant, the raceway was very popular and very successful. When the dogs left the Gabba they

moved to Albion Park, and I guess there has been a little bit of uncertainty about the future viability of Albion Park that we need to resolve. Albion Park has certainly had some financial worries and we have taken those extremely seriously.

I will point out a few of the things that we have done. On 24 December 1996, the trustees of Albion Park submitted a report on the options available in relation to the future use of Albion Park. This report revealed a significant divergence of attitudes between the key stakeholders that the consolidated revenue fund and the Racing Development Fund had been ruled out as possible sources of funding for recapitalising the venue, relocating tenant clubs or subsidising continuing operating losses underscores the difficulty confronting all stakeholders, including the Government. The trust was requested to undertake direct consultation with the Greyhound Racing Authority, the Queensland Harness Racing Board and, through them, the two occupant clubs and to inform them of the seriousness of the trust's position and the ramifications for the venue and the clubs operating there.

On 2 May 1997, I approved a trust proposal for continuing racing operations at Albion Park for at least the next 12 months. The proposal involved outsourcing of the venue's catering and beverage sources and, after a competitive tender, the Morris Corporation was successful. Outsourcing the catering offered significant savings in administrative expenses and, combined with earlier steps to contain and reduce operating costs, should result in the trust achieving a 1997-98 net operating profit before depreciation of about \$30,000.

The approval for continued racing at Albion Park was given as a consequence of: the trust providing evidence that its financial position had stabilised, the trust furnishing confirmation from an engineering consultant that major rectification work to the glass panels at Silks Restaurant is not required, and the Greyhound Racing Authority and the Queensland Harness Racing Board underwriting any further trust operating losses and minor capital requirements should this be necessary. The commitment to continuing racing operations in 1997-98 will give an opportunity to stakeholders to further examine options for this venue and its tenant clubs. There is also a need to consider any consequential opportunities, given Cabinet's recent decision to examine the option to privatise the TAB, which may reveal the longer term viability of the venue.

Mr HEALY: In that answer, you mentioned briefly greyhounds. One of the initiatives of the Government has been the Queensland Greyhound Breeding Incentive Scheme for greyhounds. Can you outline the progress and achievements made so far of the scheme for the greyhound industry?

Mr COOPER: Again, we have not left out the dish lickers. We know very well that harness racing has been the success story of the racing industry over the past couple of years. We have done an enormous amount in thoroughbred racing as well. I refer to the recent review and enhancement of the QRIS scheme. In addition, there is the harness racing breeding incentive scheme. The greyhounds also

have their own breeding incentive scheme. The scheme is funded from the RDF to the tune of \$750,000. That is quite a considerable amount of money, particularly when it is compared with the Victorian scheme, which operates on about \$60,000. That amount was approved to be used to fund QBIS for 12 months from 1 January 1997.

Following close consultations with industry participants, including an open forum held at Albion Park in November 1996, a number of the scheme's conditions were changed by the GRA. Current conditions are not set in concrete and, should further amendments be required to achieve the scheme's objectives, the GRA has indicated that it is prepared to do so. Since the scheme commenced on 1 January, 559 winners have shared in additional bonus prize money of \$219,725. The number of greyhounds registered in the scheme has increased dramatically since January. Current registration numbers are: 944 named greyhounds; 2,933 unnamed greyhounds; and 28 stud dogs, for a total of 3,905. In order to optimise the scheme's benefits, a mid-year review will be undertaken by the GRA to determine whether additional modification of the scheme's conditions is needed.

I take the time also to commend members of the Greyhound Racing Authority, who have picked up the industry and given it a much-needed boost and impetus through good, sound management practices—and they will follow that form. The money provided to incentive schemes such as this one is money well spent. As I said, the days of flinging money to bad managers and having to get people out of trouble, no matter where they were around the State, are gone. Providing money for sound investments with a view to the future and to improving the greyhound breeding industry and thoroughbred and harness racing is the way to go and it is the way we intend to continue.

Mr HEALY: Minister, quite a few times throughout the Ministerial Program Statements there is mention of the Racing Industry Training Centre. With the extension of facilities at the Deagon Racecourse, could you outline how the Racing Industry Training Centre is satisfying the needs of not only the domestic market but also boosting growth in the international training market?

Mr COOPER: As you would again be aware, the Deagon Racing Industry Training Centre came into being in about January last year, with about 44 Japanese trainees. They pay the cost of the training. The spin-off effect from their families and so on coming into the country was worth about \$2m. That number has been increased and there are now 77 Japanese jockeys here. That is estimated to be worth about \$5m. We do not have to go telling the world about it, because Jeff Kennett might try to pinch it from us. It is a Queensland initiative and it is working extremely well. We intend to keep expanding not just in the Japanese market but also to Korea and other Asian countries. The training provided by the Deagon centre cannot be obtained in countries such as Japan and elsewhere. They have training centres in those areas, but the sheer force of numbers means that all of the Japanese students

simply would not get that training unless they came here. That has been very well recognised.

Also, on the local scene, regional apprentices were able to access structured block release training through the Racing Industry Training Centre. In April 1997, the first group of nine apprentices from the Capricornia and central west regions travelled to Brisbane to complete a week-long training program at the facilities at Deagon. This was a first for the racing industry and represented an exciting opportunity for regional apprentices, many of whom had never been outside their home region. The offering of block release training to regional apprentices is part of the centre's commitment to ensuring that the skill base of regional centres is not drained by a flux of apprentices to metropolitan centres. This will result in the growth of the skill base of regions and will improve the quality of regional racing.

The racing centre is currently funding and coordinating the delivery of a part-time training course to potential licensees and other interested persons in the harness racing industry, based on the nationally accredited certificate IV harness racing trainer/driver. This is a result of the Harness Racing Board's decision in October 1996 that all new licensees and current trial and probationary drivers will need to undertake basic training.

As I have outlined, domestic training is clearly not being sacrificed to concentrate on the international market. The main funding source for the QRITC is money generated through conducting those international courses. As I said, the management of that facility is to be commended. It is a top operation. Members should take the time to visit it.

Mr HEALY: Minister, earlier you mentioned Mr Jim Kennedy's appointment to undertake a review of the Queensland Racing Incentive Scheme—QRIS—and to report on the efficiency of the scheme and areas for improvement. Can you advise as to the progress of that review?

Mr COOPER: The review has been completed. I received the final report today, not so long ago. I commend Mr Kennedy and Mrs Helen Coughlan. Both of them played an enormous part in uniting the racing industry—the breeders and the owners. That is no mean feat. The work that he has done has set the QRIS scheme—and we are now calling it Super QRIS—on the road to further success. There is no doubt that it has been a successful scheme. It started about four years ago and we recognised the need to review and improve it. There is \$3m from the RDF for the breeding incentive scheme. We recognise the need to improve and enhance it at this time. The final report is with me now. Over 65 industry-wide submissions have been received. A special 18-person industry consultative committee was formed to analyse and discuss the submissions and define the new direction for the scheme.

I reiterate that only someone of Mr Kennedy's standing in the community, be it in the prisons area, the racing area or wherever, would have pulled this off. It is no mean feat to try to knit the racing industry

together. The politics of racing would top the politics here and elsewhere. This was not an easy job to do. The wisdom of Solomon was required, and I believe Mr Kennedy has it. I cannot praise him enough. If we can get the industry working together to improve the breeding industry in Queensland, it would put us on a far better basis to be able to compete with the southern States, and that is what we need to do. We need to compete with them and improve on that if we possibly can, and we will.

The CHAIRMAN: Minister, we are running out of time.

Mr COOPER: I realise that we might be running out of time. Interestingly, the Opposition spokesman on Racing has not shown a great interest in asking too many questions on racing.

The CHAIRMAN: I will give you two minutes.

Mr CARROLL: I have a question on the importance of the live racing industry. Can you outline what attention is paid to the importance of the interrelationship between the success of the TAB and the health of the racing industry?

Mr COOPER: That is a top question. Obviously, various investigations are being done now into the TAB privatisation. Incidentally, no decision has been made on that. It is a question for

the industry and then the Government as to what will be best for the industry and the State as a whole.

The excellent operating performance of the TAB has provided both the Government and the racing industry with increased returns through taxation and distributions respectively. The industry primarily derives its funding from the profit of the Queensland TAB, as depicted by the following statistics. In 1995-96, the TAB had a \$56m operating profit. \$54.6m is forecast to be returned to race clubs during the 1996-97 financial year. During 1995-96, levies on turnover, unpaid fractions and unpaid dividends and refunds totalling \$22.55m were remitted to the Racing Development Fund. The racing industry in Queensland is seen as a significant contributor to the Queensland economy. In 1990-91, it was estimated that racing contributed some \$407m to Queensland's gross domestic product. Employment in racing was equally significant, with about 5,760 full-time employee equivalents.

The CHAIRMAN: I will have to close the hearing now. The time allotted for the consideration of the Estimates of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing has expired. I thank the Minister and his portfolio officers for their assistance and attendance here today.

Sitting suspended from 4.30 p.m. to 4.38 p.m.

**DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES
OFFICE OF SPORT AND RECREATION**

IN ATTENDANCE

- Hon. M. D. Veivers, Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport
- Mr J. Hocken, Director-General, Department of Emergency Services
- Mr M. Hall, Acting Chief Commissioner, Queensland Fire & Rescue Authority
- Dr G. FitzGerald, Commissioner, Queensland Ambulance Service
- Mr J. Noye, Acting Executive Director, Emergency Services Division
- Mr K. Cullum, Director, State Emergency Service
- Mr M. Kinnane, Executive Director, Support Services Division
- Ms M. Smith, Director, Human Resource Services, Support Services Division
- Mr G. Taylor, Director, Financial Services, Support Services Division
- Mrs J. Burrows, Executive Director, Strategy, Planning & Regional Services Division
- Mr R. Plastow, Executive Director, Office of Sport
- Mr I. Whitehead, Director, Program Development, Office of Sport

The CHAIRMAN: The next Budget Estimates to be examined relate to the portfolio of the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport. I remind members of the Committee and the Minister that the time limit for questions is one minute and answers are to be no longer than three minutes. The bell will ring once 15 seconds before the end of the time limits and twice at the end of the time. An extension of time may be granted with the consent of the questioner. The Sessional Orders require that at least half the time is allotted to non-Government members. I ask witnesses to identify themselves clearly by name and position before they answer a question so that Hansard can record that information in the transcript. I declare the proposed expenditure of the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport to be open for examination. The time allotted is three hours. The question before the Committee is—

"That the proposed expenditure be agreed to."

Minister, would you like to make a brief opening statement before answering questions? If so, I ask that you limit that statement to five minutes.

Mr VEIVERS: Thank you, Mr Chairman, I would like to do that. Good afternoon to the panel and all. I want to thank you for the opportunity to make this short address. This is a portfolio that is vitally important to all of Queensland. There is not a city or a town or a community in this State that is not affected by emergency service delivery and/or sport, and the same can be said for sport and recreation

activities. So I am very pleased to inform you that the overall outcome for the portfolio is one of consolidation and, indeed, improvement on last year's budget, when outlays under the coalition for Emergency Services were boosted by more than 8% after six years of shabby neglect under Labor. This year there will be further real increases for Emergency Services.

In 1997-98 my department's total budget from all sources, excluding the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority, of \$279.05m represents an increase of 13.7% on 1996-97. Under its vastly improved statutory structure, the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority's budget for 1997-98 will be \$191.82m—an increase of 8% on 1996-97. Taking into account the CPI rise during the past year of less than 2%, these are very worthwhile increases and further proof that the coalition is delivering on its commitment to redress the years of Labor's run down of equipment and particularly staff morale. Last year funding for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority was increased by more than 10%, and with the 8% increase this year the coalition has provided this vital service with an additional \$30m in two years. Compare this with the situation under Labor when we had firefighters marching on State Parliament and unrest in the service right across the State.

Turning to rural and regional Queensland—just as I promised, I am now delivering. This year funding for the Rural Fire Division will be increased by a massive 55% from \$6.86m to \$10.67m. My special package for the Rural Fire Division will inject \$13.5m over three years and has been met with enthusiasm in the bush. It will mean new stations in the bush, new firefighting units, improved communication equipment, higher subsidies and support staff for improved coordination.

After six years of run-down services when Labor ripped the heart out of the bush and its services, this is a really great initiative and it will help firefighters right across rural and regional Queensland. As a former international sportsman, I am proud to announce the State's two-year \$33.5m National Standards Sports Facilities Program. This is a great program that will upgrade and develop venues catering for State and regional needs and hosting international teams in the lead-up to the Sydney 2000 Olympics and the Paralympic Games. Queensland, as you know, has already been chosen by the British team for the pre-Olympic training on the coast, as well as the US team squad. With this great package we will really put our State on the map as a major international sporting destination.

Other budget initiatives for this portfolio include \$6m for a replacement helicopter up in the Townsville Air Unit. The new aircraft will have an enhanced range as well as equipment for search and rescue, air and medical retrieval transfers and counter disaster work. More funding for community helicopter providers is up from \$0.3m to \$0.6m for the four community helicopter providers that ensure services to the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Rockhampton and Mackay regions. There is an extra \$866,000 for the State Emergency Service. That is

up 14.4%. There is an extra \$8.8m over three years for the Government's Youth Working for Queensland Program, including funds for the SES cadet scheme that will result in better training and more units in rural and regional Queensland and sport and recreational programs for Queensland's youth.

There is a range of improvements for the Ambulance Service including new state-of-the-art vehicles and a new ambulance service on Mornington Island. The increase will provide 20 additional staff: south-east Queensland, 10; north coast, 4; Townsville, 2; Cooktown, 2; and Mornington Island, 2. There is also a \$2.8m increase for new capital works for the Queensland Ambulance Service. That will provide new ambulance stations for Cooktown, Dalby, Macleay Island, North Rockhampton, Redland Bay and west Toowoomba. It will also replace the Bribie Island station. There is provision for an additional \$1.3m for new ambulance vehicles. The coalition is firmly committed to providing Queenslanders with the best emergency services as well as the best possible sporting facilities. This budget again delivers on those commitments, as I have said.

The CHAIRMAN: The first period for questioning will start with non-Government members. The member for Bundamba is seeking leave to appear before the Committee.

Leave granted.

Mr GIBBS: What proportion of the carryover money from the 1996-97 budget has been incorporated in this year's budget for the Statewide Sports Development Program, the Community Sports Development Program, the National Standard Sport Facilities Program and the Community Recreation Centres Program?

Mr VEIVERS: As you know, there are always carryovers in endeavouring to do what we are doing in Sport. When you are doing it, you have to get the clubs and the recreational areas to have their management plans in order as well as their progress—wherever they are going to lead to as far as money returns on what they are going to do. That holds things up, especially when you are trying to get your plans through. I will defer to Mr Roger Plastow for further comment.

Mr PLASTOW: The bulk of the carryovers has been \$11m in the capital grants and subsidies. That is made up mainly of projects that were announced in February last year or after last year's Budget and have not been completed; some of them have not started. There has been some carryover Statewide under the administration side where we have gone through a period of restructure in the department and some of the positions that were supposed to have been filled in that period have not been filled—certainly have not been filled for the full 12 months. So there has been a carryover there. There has also been a carryover of funds in the capital expenditure on Sports House and on the recreation camps. That has been included in the spending for this year.

Mr GIBBS: What guarantee can the Minister make to the sports and recreation community that all

the money allocated in the 1997-98 budget will actually be spent, given that only \$21.1m of the \$32.1m allocated in the 1996-97 budget was actually spent? What happened to the other \$11m?

Mr VEIVERS: As the member well knows, to say unequivocally that we are going to get through spending that money in the one particular financial year would be ridiculous because you would never know what may have to be carried over, and I would not want to mislead Parliament. As you know, we have got many things to put in line, as I said in my preamble. We have the British coming for two years to the coast for training. The only part of the teams that they are not bringing is the yachting and the equestrians—because of horses. We are trying to get our plans in place right throughout Queensland not just for the Olympics but so that the Olympics can use those facilities and they will be in place and up and running for our young people. Once again, I will allow Roger to finish that for me.

Mr PLASTOW: In the allocation this year, we are endeavouring to put funds into projects that are ready or almost ready to start. Hopefully, those projects covered by the \$11m that you mentioned was not spent will get under way now. You must realise that this is a capital grant scheme whereby we give the money to organisations and it is up to them to spend it. We do not actually spend it ourselves, so we have to rely on their performance as far as the spending of that money is concerned. We are confident that the bulk of these projects that we will be approving will be able to be completed within the 18-month period, and that the projects that are hanging over from previous allocations will also be completed. The majority of those are supposed to be completed by February next year.

Mr GIBBS: Could I have a list of those projects that are being carried over and not yet started?

Mr PLASTOW: We will take that on notice.

Mr GIBBS: I accept that the next question that I am going to ask you will probably have to be one that you respond to later. I am asking you to provide a detailed listing of grants to sports and recreation groups in Queensland on an electorate boundary basis for the forthcoming financial year.

Mr VEIVERS: I will take that on notice. We have it, but reading that out would take plenty of time.

Mr PLASTOW: The national standards assessment period has not closed yet, so they have not been allocated at this stage. The CSDP and the minor facilities have been. I can provide you with those now.

Mr GIBBS: I also ask you to provide a listing of monthly cash flows for 1997-98 from the Office of Sport to various bodies based on previous years' experience.

Mr VEIVERS: We will do that if it is at all possible. It would be comparing apples and oranges, but we will do the best that we can for you.

Mr GIBBS: Minister, I refer to page 1-17 of the Ministerial Program Statements in relation to the

State-wide Sports Program. In relation to funding for the Queensland Athletics Association, was it stated by your officers that funding for 1997-98 was contingent on the association accepting the formation of two zones for athletics in Queensland, that is, a northern zone and a southern zone? Could this be interpreted—as it has been, I understand, by the Queensland Athletics Association—as an exercise in pork-barrelling the north Queensland zone, particularly Townsville and Cairns, in the lead-up to the next State election?

Mr VEIVERS: As the honourable member knows, there have been some conflicts of interest in Queensland athletics regarding the northern part of Queensland and the southern part. As you would no doubt know, a meeting was held between those particular groups. I believe that they are coming to a sensible arrangement. For more on that, Roger might fill you in.

Mr PLASTOW: I actually chaired a meeting in Townsville last month which was attended by representatives from Queensland Athletics, Athletics North Queensland and Athletics Australia. The proposal for a split with two zones came initially from north Queensland. They wanted two totally different organisations. A compromise was reached at the instigation of Athletics Australia. The president, Terry Dwyer, put a proposal to the meeting that one State body be restructured and that the State be divided into two zones. From a management point of view, there was a suggestion that it be split on a seasonal basis, whereby the north and south run their seasons at different times. The proposal did not come from us. We were purely there to facilitate the meeting. The proposal actually came from Athletics. I understand that Athletics Australia are arranging for a consultant to come in and work with both bodies to try to bring about reconciliation between the north and the south. We are hopeful that, before the end of this year, that will occur and that all clubs in the north will reaffiliate with Queensland Athletics and there will be one body. But it could be that, if they agree to the proposal from Athletics Australia, it will be split into a zonal basis.

Mr GIBBS: I refer to the women's affairs budget or the Ministerial Program Statements on pages 16 and 17, where it is stated that the affirmative action program for women's coaching at elite level of the sports of canoeing, cycling and swimming will cost \$0.085m. Can the Minister confirm that this miserly amount of money is to cover two years for this program, that is, 1997-98 and 1998-99, and that these three sports will receive just \$27,000 each?

Mr VEIVERS: As the member well knows, we have done very well in Queensland with funding. You may call it a measly amount, but with funding to any sports—no matter how small or large—you cannot make comparisons. I feel that doing so does not do any sport any justice at all, because some need more than others. A very good example in sport is the massive amount that surf-lifesaving gets from Queensland. Surf-lifesaving probably gets more than all the other States put together. Those figures—where did you get them from?

Mr GIBBS: It is \$0.085m to canoeing, cycling and swimming.

Mr VEIVERS: What page?

Mr GIBBS: Pages 16 and 17 of the women's affairs budget. That is your Ministerial Program Statements on pages 16 and 17.

Mr VEIVERS: Women's affairs is in Premier's.

Mr HOCKEN: It is not part of our responsibility.

Mr GIBBS: I refer to page 17 of your statement and ask the Minister to state the projected budgetary figures for the program of enhancing girls' participation rates in sport and physical activity. What staff are specifically devoted to this program?

Mr VEIVERS: Could you speak up a bit? I did not get the first part of that.

Mr GIBBS: I am referring you to the Ministerial Program Statements page 17. I ask the Minister to state the projected budgetary figures for the program of enhancing girls' participation rates in sport and physical activity. What staff are specifically devoted to this program?

Mr VEIVERS: Once again, looking down here, that is out of women's affairs, is it not? That is a budget statement out of women's affairs, which is Premier's.

Mr GIBBS: I understand it is yours in terms of the sporting area of responsibility.

Mr VEIVERS: It is not in this Program Statement.

Mr GIBBS: I will put that question on notice if you wish to follow that up.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes.

Mr GIBBS: I refer to pages 1-16 and 1-17 of the Ministerial Program Statements and note that \$6.5m will be spent in 1997-98 for the development of special sports and recreation programs for young persons and that these programs are designed to "reduce the risk of young persons entering long term unemployment or engaging in self-harming or anti-social behaviour." That is on page 83 of Budget Paper No. 2. Could you advise the Committee what proportion of this funding will be spent on the psychiatric, psychological and/or medical component of the program, behavioural management experts and employment professionals who will be required to be employed to ensure the success of the program?

Mr VEIVERS: As you know, our aim—and the policy of the coalition—is to keep young people occupied and make sure that the unemployed are occupied so that they do not get into gaol. A youth program has been put in place. I think that Mr Noye might be able to talk a little about the youth program, rather than Roger. Perhaps Roger could start, and then Jack can take over.

Mr PLASTOW: The allocation to the Department of Emergency Services through the Office of Sport is a total of just over \$11m over a three-year period. Part of that whole-of-Government program is divided virtually into three sections. The first section is where we will be working with indigenous communities and providing local

indigenous recreational officers. That part of the program will provide funding to support a network of young indigenous people employed to develop recreational and sporting opportunities in their area.

The second part of the program will involve the Emergency Services side of the department, where we will be working with the State Emergency Service Cadets Units right throughout the State. That part of the program is being developed so that those people in those cadet units will be working in areas such as fire management, first aid, rescue, navigation, sport and recreation skills. We are working on the third part of the program at the present time. We are hoping that we will be able to involve training young people who have had contact with or may still have contact with the criminal justice system. Again, our part of that program will be aimed at diverting people away from their antisocial behaviours. They will develop skills in the sport and recreation area. Again, we are hoping that those sorts of programs will also spill over into the indigenous and more remote areas of the State.

Mr NOYE: Part of the funding will be coming to the SES cadet scheme. Some of that funding will be going to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups. We have had expressions of interest from two ATSI groups who are interested in setting up SES cadets and we will be putting some funding towards that.

Mr GIBBS: I would like you to advise me of the cost of the sports advisory committee in terms of staff support, cost of airfares, number of frequent flier points accumulated by members and staff, cost of accommodation, lunches and an indication of any reports that the committee has produced for the benefit of sports generally.

Mr VEIVERS: Is that the Ministerial Sports Advisory Council that you are talking about?

Mr GIBBS: Yes.

Mr VEIVERS: They do not get paid anything. They are not paid.

Mr GIBBS: What about the travel?

Mr VEIVERS: Remuneration for turning up to meetings—they do not get that. I do not know of any time that they have had to fly. I have to be quite honest. They are all reasonably based in south-east Queensland. They have not had to move, from what I can recall. No money has been outlaid there at all.

Mr GIBBS: But you will double check that for me?

Mr VEIVERS: I will, yes.

Mr GIBBS: As Australia is currently the world champion of netball, what funds have been allocated specifically to that sport to maintain a high standard? What funds have been allocated to encourage young women to strive to the elite level?

Mr VEIVERS: Of course our Government is very aware that women in sport has probably been an area neglected over the years, possibly by your Government as well as prior Governments. We are making the necessary arrangements that that does not continue. It is part of my Sports Advisory Council's program. Let me say that I had the pleasure

of watching the Australian netball side play the South Africans over at the centre. Unfortunately, that is a Commonwealth Games sport but it is not an Olympic sport as yet. One would hope that the head body of the Olympics would see its way clear to make it an Olympic sport. We are making sure that funding goes to netball. Once again, Roger will take you up with the final figures.

Mr PLASTOW: The direct funding for Netball Queensland under the Statewide program this year was \$200,000. Under the CSDP Statewide to clubs it was \$22,245. Under specific netball projects under minor facilities it was \$100,325, but that did not include the majority of minor works funding that went to multipurpose facilities, which would have also included netball as one of the components. On top of that, the Academy of Sport has a netball squad. I do not have the exact figure that is allocated to it. I think it is around \$80,000, but I am not too sure.

Mr GIBBS: I refer to page 1-15 of your Ministerial Program Statements. Could you give me a clear definition of what is described at the third dot point as a "physical asset management program"?

Mr VEIVERS: It is one of those marvellous—

Mr GIBBS: I was wondering whether you are going to take it up.

Mr VEIVERS: Obviously you are quite aware that I need all the help that I can get. I am sure that I can get the answer to that from Ian Whitehead who is sitting quietly in the corner.

Mr WHITEHEAD: A physical asset management program relates to capital owned by the Government—our recreation camp facilities, our office structures, those physical structures that we actually manage and coordinate through there.

Mr GIBBS: I refer to page 1-14 of the Ministerial Program Statements. I ask the Minister—and again I accept the fact that you may have to forward the information in relation to this question—exactly which facilities will be upgraded and developed and for which sports? What specifically is being done to encourage other countries' national teams to prepare in Queensland prior to the 2000 Olympics?

Mr VEIVERS: As I said earlier, we have Olympic teams coming, but we will be working with the Queensland Olympic Council on that particular program. We are still negotiating with other teams from overseas right at this moment. That is about teams coming out and training for the Sydney 2000. I believe that there is a memorandum of understanding with the Queensland Olympic Council. Once again I will defer to Roger.

Mr HOCKEN: I might answer first. We have had a number of meetings with the Queensland Olympic Council. As the Minister said, we are working with the council to determine what facilities it believes would put us in the best position to attract teams to come to Queensland. We have had a couple of meetings with the council. We have two more meetings to go, so we can identify first what are the areas where we can spend a little money and get the facilities up to international training standard,

and then those facilities that will need some sort of major injection of funds to make sure that the teams we want to come here—for example, the US swimming team, the Great Britain team, negotiations are continuing with the Italian team, those teams that really do have some money to spend—can be attracted here. We are also taking into account the needs of the regions, because it is not just a south-east Queensland drive to attract teams. We have also got to look at teams going to the regional areas such as Toowoomba, which is very keen. We have already met with the Mayor of Toowoomba. We have met with the Mayor of Cairns. We are already, as the Minister announced last week, putting another academy into Townsville. We are looking at the requirements both in terms of the needs of the facilities from the Olympic point of view and also what are the needs of the individual regions. I might pass it to Roger now.

Mr PLASTOW: The funding for the National Standard Sports Facilities Program this year—expressions of interest closed on 2 May. I am hopeful to be able to put recommendations to the Director-General within the next two weeks. From there, letters to the successful applicants would be going out asking them to give their final application, which would have all the detail including funding and management plans. We should be in a position to make an announcement on those by the end of July.

Mr GIBBS: I turn to page 1-17 of the Ministerial Program Statements which indicates that the staffing resources have increased from 144 to 166. I note that the major increases are in Business Development and State and Regional Development Programs, and I ask: what classification levels will the four staff be at in the Business Development Subprogram? Will they be based in Brisbane or regionally?

Mr VEIVERS: I think it would be better if Roger took that question.

Mr PLASTOW: In relation to the Business Development Subprogram, at this stage the classifications have not been decided. They are being evaluated now by the human resources section of the department. It is envisaged that two in the Business Development Program would be looking after recreation camps. I am expecting the manager position to come out at around about an AO6 and a project officer at about an AO4. The other two positions will be involved purely on working with overseas delegations to do with the Sydney Olympics. Those positions are expected to work for only the next three years or up until the Games. The manager of that, again, I would think would be maybe a 6 or a 7 and a project officer at a 3.

Mr GIBBS: I refer again to page 1-17 of the Ministerial Program Statements. Why has the allocation of corporate services been reduced to \$2.5m? Does that mean that there will be redundancies or will more of this work be performed in each of the subprograms?

Mr VEIVERS: For that answer, I will go straight to Gary Taylor.

Mr TAYLOR: The allocation for the previous year included carryovers of \$500,000. So there has been really no decrease in the actual allocation of the corporate services other than that carryover figure.

Mr GIBBS: Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: Page 2-11 of the Program Statements shows a substantial increase in the Rural Fire Division budget for 1997-98. That increase has been welcomed by the people throughout rural Queensland. Can you outline how this increase came about? What will this mean for the people in those communities?

Mr VEIVERS: As I promised last year, although there was a minor Budget review, I waited for the major Budget review to come along because I did promise the rural firefighters of Queensland an increase. As I said, that increase was a massive increase, and I was able to produce that like I said I would. For further on that, I would go to the acting Chief Commissioner for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority, Mike Hall.

Mr HALL: The increase in the rural budget came about as a result of a detailed submission from the Rural Fire Division, which was supported by volunteer firefighters actively promoting the service in conjunction with the rural community. In addition, when the issue came before Treasury the increase sought was strongly advocated by the Minister and departmental officers. A \$13.5m, three-year funding boost for rural firefighters is the highlight of the fire budget. The significant new initiative of \$4.5m each year for the next three years will enable the Rural Fire Division to substantially increase and improve equipment and assist with station building throughout the State.

Included in this funding is a major boost to rural fire appliance production with 64 vehicles, collectively worth more than \$3.6m, programmed for delivery during the financial year. It will also allow an increase of \$0.75m in subsidised firefighting equipment for brigades, a 250% increase in funds for communication equipment and more personal safety equipment such as overalls and gloves and more field training officers to assist in increasing the skills of individuals and the operational efficiency of the brigades.

The additional funds will allow more fire appliances for volunteers across the State, more radio communication sets for volunteers across the State, more hand tools for volunteers, more handout material, a more effective public education program on fire prevention, and additional field staff to directly support volunteers. The outcome of this will be a better prepared and self-sufficient community and volunteers who are better trained and equipped to combat wildfires.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Minister, in relation to question on notice No. 4, you gave a response in regard to the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority and the QAS and the south-east corner split that is going to occur. In both areas you have said that no uniformed officer positions will be taken from the service. Could you tell me how those two new entities in both of those services will be staffed?

Mr VEIVERS: In the short term, the Brisbane south region will operate from Logan Court at Mount Gravatt and the Brisbane north region will operate from the Kedron Park complex. Eventually, the Brisbane south region will also operate from the Kedron Park complex. The Spring Hill complex should not come into the equation as this is a communications centre and it does not have front-line operational staff of the Queensland Ambulance Service. Basically, it has communications staff only. I think that I should send that question also to Commissioner FitzGerald of the Queensland Ambulance Service.

Dr FITZGERALD: From the ambulance point of view, we will not be splitting the regions. Our regional office will be remaining exactly with the same number of staff that it has now subject, of course, to the restructuring that has been foreshadowed following the program evaluation. We do not anticipate a requirement for any additional support staff over and above that which are currently available as part of a collaborative conjoint support structure at the regional office.

Mr VEIVERS: The regional office will be based at the Kedron Park complex as well.

Mr CARROLL: At the end of 1996, you visited several South East Asian countries. I want to know whether or not that visit allowed you or your departmental officers to produce or enter into any arrangements which will allow the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority to generate any income in that region.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, we did go to South East Asian countries—to Thailand, China and Indonesia. It was most beneficial to the emergency services of Queensland. I think that it would be better if the Director-General continued to answer that question.

Mr HOCKEN: Yes. I will take them country at a time. The first successful outcome was in Thailand where the Minister was able to organise the signing of an agreement—just a memorandum of understanding—with the Asian Institute of Technology, which is based in Bangkok. The Asian Institute of Technology has a regional focus and through its Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre it works in all the countries in the region including India, Pakistan and the South Pacific, including Vietnam. The Minister saw that there were opportunities to link through one particular organisation and get into as many countries as we could.

The other reason to get involved with an organisation which had such a credible name as the Asian Institute of Technology is that they are able to and have been very successful in obtaining aid agency funding from a number of agencies around the world including Canada, the United States, France and, of course, Ausaid. So by linking in with the Asian Institute of Technology, that gave us the opportunity to work with them in a cooperative partnership and to link into those quite significant amounts of aid agency money that is available through the region.

The immediate need as they saw it was road accident rescue training. We have our first course down to start in August. We will be running that in conjunction with personnel from the Asian Institute of Technology. We believe that once we get a good name as good providers of training, those courses will continue. Of course, we will be doing business plans on all of those once they settle down. They want paramedical training because they are building a research hospital on the site and they want chemical hazard training. That is with the Asian Institute of Technology.

The Minister also met with the Governor of Bangkok. Bangkok has a major problem in making its children, in particular, understand the need to be well trained in basic first aid and also in rescue generally. They are particularly interested in running a cadet scheme. In Indonesia, the Minister signed an agreement with the Ministry for Public Welfare to provide it with SES training and, of course, the fire service from Beijing has just visited. All of those things give us the opportunity to really put Queensland on the map as the centre of excellence for the provision of these services.

The CHAIRMAN: Page 2-2 of the Program Statements refers to QFRA's Strategic Plan 1997-2000. What are the key features of this particular document? Will staff and community consultation be used to assist with the development of customer service standards?

Mr VEIVERS: As you know, against all the odds we were able to turn the Queensland Fire Service into the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority, which is a statutory authority, thus giving it greater autonomy in the workplace. We were able to lift the morale of firefighters, which is basically what this is all about. To add more to it, I defer to the acting Fire Commissioner.

Mr HALL: The key features of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority's Strategic Plan 1997-2000 are: statements of the organisation's strategic direction including mission, vision and values; key community outcomes for service delivery; an outline of our key services, including the QFRA's integrated approach to service delivery and integrated service delivery models; key result areas including goals, strategies and performance indicators; and an outline of regional and rural service delivery strategies. The process involved in compiling the QFRA strategic plan incorporated extensive consultation.

The following case study depicts the processes used by the QFRA in gaining staff and key stakeholder participation in the development of its strategic plan and incorporating output specification and commitment to the future direction articulated in the plan. The specification of outputs was an integral process in the development of the QFRA strategic plan. Focus groups incorporating employers and major stakeholders were established to provide input to inform the planning process. The focus groups identified innovations for achieving improved community outcomes, outputs valued by consumers, outcomes for the community and performance measures to determine success. The collated

information was presented to the strategic planning conference.

A three and a half day strategic planning conference and enterprise agreement best practice forum was convened and approximately 90 staff representatives from across the State and major stakeholder groups attended the conference, including major union and association groups. The outcomes of the conference included a clarification documentation of community outcomes, the identification of outputs and strategies which would best achieve the outcomes—and this was done by drawing upon staff expertise and stakeholders' views—and the identification of appropriate performance measures and targets. Goals were formulated on the basis of the community outcomes that the organisation was trying to achieve. International speakers from best practice organisations made an inspirational contribution to the conference. A draft strategic plan was then prepared using the information collected from the above process. Further forums were held across the State to articulate the draft strategic plan as an important element of the organisation's improved strategy and to link the plan to the enterprise agreement.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Minister, returning to my previous question, I have your answer on the QAS, but what additional staff would be required for the break-up of the QFRA, given that you have said that no uniform positions will be lost?

Mr VEIVERS: I defer straight to the acting Commissioner.

Mr HALL: In terms of splitting the Greater Brisbane Region into two new regions, Brisbane North and Brisbane South. That has been done using existing uniformed staff. There has been neither an increase nor a decrease involved in that. The restructure uses the existing staff more efficiently.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: What of administration staff?

Mr HALL: The Greater Brisbane Region was by a long way the largest region in the State and had a correspondingly large number of administrative support staff. At this point, the way in which that administrative support may be split between Brisbane North and Brisbane South is yet to be decided, as the Brisbane South office is not yet functional. It is envisaged that any additional staff that may be required will be absolutely minimal, but the numbers are not known at this point as the issue is still under review.

Mr HOCKEN: I would add that the long-term goal is to have both the regional offices located at Kedron Park. Of course, there is no need to have regional offices spread all over Brisbane, but that was entered into before we finalised the purchase of Kedron Park. Once their leases are finished, they will return. Any short-term administrative addition that is needed will then be used in other areas.

Mr CARROLL: Last year, the Government promised to provide 135 additional firefighters in the triennium of which one year has almost finished. How

far has the QFRA progressed towards that objective?

Mr VEIVERS: As the member for Mansfield well knows, prior to the elections a promise was made in north Queensland that those extra firefighting places would be provided. That promise was made by the Premier and was backed up by the then shadow Minister, Mr Littleproud. So far, we are delivering on the program. In addition, the numbers that we state in the program have been backed by the United Firefighters Union. Once again, I defer to the acting Commissioner for the answer.

Mr HALL: The Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority is enjoying an increase in firefighting staff of 122 over the number that was available in the previous Budget year. That staff increase comes from two components: an increase of 62 firefighters which was budgeted from 1 January 1997 to allow for the staffing of additional stations and appliances, and a further 60 firefighters who have effectively been released to operational duties by a restructuring of the way our firefighters take their leave. This was done following extensive consultations with the United Firefighters Union, which is very supportive of that move. The union is very ready to acknowledge the fact that that arrangement has released an additional 60 firefighters for public use. That is where the 122 comes from.

The CHAIRMAN: Page 2-6 of the Program Statements refers to the establishment of a joint training facility at Amberley with the Royal Australian Air Force. What is the current status of that project and how will it benefit the QFRA and the people of Queensland?

Mr VEIVERS: In actual fact, this was done at my behest because our firefighters needed a professionally equipped area for a hot fire training facility and we really did not have one. Through negotiations with the Air Force at Amberley, we entered into an arrangement. Once again, I will defer to the acting Commissioner to finish that answer.

Mr HALL: The Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority is a major training provider, training between 80 and 100 new firefighters each year. In fact, last year we trained 130. Recruits receive practical and theoretical training designed to prepare them for Fire Service operations. At present, the QFRA conducts its practical training of recruits at the Lytton training facility, which will be resumed by the Department of Main Roads within five years. A replacement training facility must therefore be developed. Firefighters are in need of realistic and safe training to prepare them for high-risk operational situations and to ensure that the QFRA is meeting its full workplace health and safety obligations. This need applies to recruits, in-service and auxiliary firefighters. The current Lytton facility has a finite life due to the expected resumption for a port road. Following two years of investigations of sites around Brisbane, the QFRA has entered into discussions with the Royal Australian Air Force to develop a new training facility on the Amberley air base.

A Cabinet decision of 22 April 1996 endorsed the commitment to the construction of a practical training facility over the next three years in

conjunction with the Royal Australian Air Force. The Air Force Development Committee dealt with this proposal in October of last year and has agreed to the development of a joint facility at Amberley. The Royal Australian Air Force met with Defence estate management in Canberra in November 1996 in relation to this project. Cabinet has approved funding over the next three financial years to a level of \$5m for this project—\$1m last year, \$2m in the coming financial year and \$2m in the following year.

Recent estimates indicate that further project funding could be required over the next four to five years for a staged development of infrastructures, support facilities and a burn building capable of safely simulating dangerous fire and other hazardous environments. Such expenditure would require further consideration of Cabinet based on a full cost-benefit analysis of all options. Site surveys were completed and a project management plan is being prepared. The QFRA is negotiating the lease with the Royal Australian Air Force, and the project manager position will be made available shortly. Through agreement with the Royal Australian Air Force Training Command, it is expected that Australian Defence Force firefighting trainees will use the facility on a fee-paying basis. It is further proposed that any excess training capacity of the facility will be used to provide training to other parties on a commercial basis.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Page 1-3 of the Ministerial Program Statements mentions program outlays for Sport and Recreation. \$68.1m was budgeted in 1996-97 and only \$54.8m spent. Even allowing for the increase in the 1997-98 budget compared to the 1996-97 budget—and I am referring to the budget allocations, not the actual amounts—there is a shortfall of almost \$6m. Will that money be made available for programs in your portfolio? I cannot see it anywhere; it appears to be lost money.

Mr TAYLOR: I am not sure where you are getting the figures from. Can you explain the figures?

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I am referring to page 1-3. Of the 1996-97 budgeted amount of \$68.177m, you expended \$54.874m. The budget allocation for 1997-98 is \$75.586m. It is \$20m over what you spent last year. That is an additional allocation. But it is \$7.4m over the budgeted amount in 1996-97. The amount not expended in 1996-97 is \$13m.

Mr PLASTOW: The actual figure spent last year was down because of the carryover in the national standards program, that is, the number of projects that were not completed or started that were allowed for in that year. Those projects will continue and will be completed in the next financial year.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: As an additional amount of money?

Mr PLASTOW: They are not additional programs; they are ones that have been carried over.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Is that an additional amount of money to the 1997-98 allocation?

Mr PLASTOW: Yes, the carryover is all included in the \$75m.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, you established the QFRA Board. What benefits have flowed from that board's establishment? Will it be helpful in the future with respect to developments for the QFRA?

Mr VEIVERS: As I said initially, it was turned into a statutory authority because the Fire Service had been run down and was low on morale. The only way to give it greater autonomy was to turn it into a statutory authority and put a board into place so that the workers—the firemen at the coalface—had somewhere to go. Under the system that I inherited, they did not have anywhere to go and no-one knew what was going on. The morale was through the floor; it was terrible.

Mr HOCKEN: The board is now in place. It started meeting on a fortnightly basis to bring itself up to date with the issues and concerns within the Fire Service. It has now gone to three-weekly meetings. The board itself will not be involved in the day-to-day operations of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority. The board is there to set policy and to give advice to the Minister in terms of the delivery of that service throughout Queensland, and that includes all of Queensland. As you would be aware, the board is made up of people from the community who have a background in the delivery of the Fire Service throughout Queensland. An operational firefighter is also on the board. That operational firefighter certainly brings a new way of looking at a number of the problems that the board has dealt with so far. It was a very good decision to have an operational firefighter on that board.

The benefits for the community are twofold. The first is that, around the world, fire services have to become more commercial in the way they look at doing their job. That is commercialisation, not privatisation. Commercialisation must be looked at very seriously in the delivery of our services. We have some great resources and it is a matter of using the resources that we have in a very effective way. The board is looking at other ways to use the resources. As you would know, road accident rescues now make up around 50% of the workload.

You would also know, Mr Carroll, that the firefighters do not save lives in most cases; by the time they get to the fire, the people are normally dead through smoke inhalation. Through the education program, there is a drive to have smoke alarms fitted in all homes. Those are the sorts of things that the board is concerned about. It is directed at ensuring that the basic goal of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority, which is to have no preventable deaths through fire in the Queensland community, can be met. That is a big ask in any organisation. The board of the QFRA does not want to get into day-to-day operations but wishes to look at community needs and expectations in order to be a good public safety Fire Service that responds to the needs of the community.

The CHAIRMAN: The time for questions from Government members has now expired.

Mr WELLS: I have a couple of detailed questions for you, Minister. However, before we get down to tintacks, how did you enjoy the chopper ride yesterday?

Mr VEIVERS: The shadow Minister for Emergency Services has got it all wrong again. I did not go for a ride on the chopper; obviously there was not room for me! I assure Mr Wells that it was all about public relations. As you know, Queensland is a major destination for Japanese tourists. I know I am not the Minister for Tourism; however, I come from the Gold Coast. Last year, 600,000 tourists came to Queensland. I hope the shadow Minister is taking this on board. We are talking about private enterprise—something that he, as a socialist, does not know a lot about. He could learn from this. They spent literally hundreds of millions of dollars, creating thousands of jobs for Queenslanders.

In 1995, 565,114 Japanese tourists came to Queensland. In 1996, 585,724 Japanese tourists came to Queensland. That is a growth rate of 4%. For the benefit of the honourable shadow Minister and for the benefit of anyone else who may want to know, I point out that a key reason why Japanese come to Queensland is that our State is seen as a safe destination with top medical care and emergency service facilities available. If they get into trouble, if they get sick, if they get lost in the bush or if they get hurt in a car accident, they will be looked after and they will be picked up. What better publicity could we get for our State in the eyes of the Japanese than having their gods—and I say "gods"; that is the status of the sumo wrestlers at home—being lifted by one of our Emergency Services helicopters? It proves that they will lift anything, for starters.

Mr WELLS: That is why you did not get in!

Mr VEIVERS: That is right. I know. That is why I did not get in.

Mr WELLS: They could get the gods in but they could not get "Mick ishi san" in!

Mr VEIVERS: Instead of bitching and sniping and whingeing, you should get behind the wonderful job our emergency services do, not only in looking after Queenslanders who need it but also in looking after tourists who need a helping hand.

I take umbrage at what you were trying to portray. I saw your little press release. I have wonderful people in my Emergency Services Department. They are all hardworking people, and they do not want to be denigrated by some nit-wit talking about me spending lots of money and putting people's lives at risk because I have three sumo wrestlers flying in an Emergency Services helicopter. For your benefit, I point out that last night the negatives of the stills that were taken were put on board a Japanese flight and flown home. That particular photo will probably—and I say "will probably" because you can never say for sure—be on the front of the Japanese version of Sports Illustrated. What better place to have our Emergency Services helicopter than in a photo with their gods, the sumos—and he is a marvellous big fellow; I felt like a half-back when I stood beside him—and what

better way to have the profile of Queensland and Australia lifted overseas?

If there had been an emergency at that time, they would have been put down immediately, as I was put down during the cyclone in far-north Queensland in the Daintree when I was in an Emergency Services helicopter. I was dropped in the middle of a cane patch in the pouring rain and the helicopter took off to pick up a child who had sugar diabetes, so I was left sitting on this row. It was a bit worrying because I thought they would never come back to get me! I know that you wish they hadn't, but they did. So that is what that was about: simplicity. It is private enterprise in full flight—something you really would not know anything about.

Mr WELLS: Yes, I understand—and lifting Australia's profile by exhibiting yours in comparison to that of the sumo wrestler.

Mr VEIVERS: I was not in the helicopter. You did not listen.

Mr WELLS: How much did it set you back?

Mr VEIVERS: The engine time was 34 minutes; the flying time was 28 minutes; the track was from Archerfield to Mount Cotton down to just on the edge of Moreton Bay, up the Brisbane River to the city and back to Archerfield. The direct cost to the department was \$650, excluding salaries of course. Yesterday I had the pleasure of representing the Premier in hosting these people, along with Doug Slack, who picked up the bill for lunch—I thought you would like to know that this department did not have to pick it up. During that lunch I had the pleasure of sitting beside the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party, one Jim Elder. I believe he is in the AWU faction, and you are too now since you jumped from the bottom to the top, so I thought you would know about this. When I mentioned this to your Deputy Leader he said, "What a marvellous idea for a promotion."

Mr WELLS: He was right, too.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes. Obviously you did not agree with your Deputy Leader, so you might not be there that much longer!

Mr WELLS: It may have been great—

Mr VEIVERS: It is great no matter which way you look at it.

Mr WELLS: It may have been great PR but it is kamikaze politics, Mick. What are the processes that a Minister has to go through if he wants to use the helicopter for a portfolio-related exercise? I refer to page 1-20 of the—

Mr VEIVERS: Is this another question, Mr Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: Is that another question you are asking?

Mr WELLS: Yes.

Mr VEIVERS: This is three now. I just thought I would tell you.

Mr WELLS: I am allowed to ask 20 minutes of questions. Sorry to disappoint you.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, I know. I just wanted to get it right.

Mr CARROLL: Point of order, Mr Chairman. I am offended by the way in which the member for Murrumba has referred on three occasions so far, apparently with disrespect, to the Minister by his first name or nickname. Perhaps he could refer to the Minister by his position.

Mr WELLS: Mr Chairman, acceding to that point of order—I address a question to the Honourable the Minister and I refer him to page 1-20 of the Ministerial Program Statements, and I ask: what are the processes that a Minister must go through if he wants to use the helicopter for a portfolio-related exercise?

Mr VEIVERS: I will get the specialist on this for your benefit, the Director-General, Mr John Hocken.

Mr HOCKEN: The processes depend on the need at the time. As the Minister has rightly said, if there is an emergency, then priority is given to that incident. However, when the Minister asks the department to use the helicopter, I get in contact with the executive director in charge of the particular aviation unit and then he contacts the chief pilot in particular to see, firstly, whether or not the helicopter is available; secondly, whether or not it is appropriate that it go at that particular time; and, thirdly, whether or not the pilots are available and also have the appropriate lead time to get that helicopter out. I will just get Mr Noye to confirm that, as he is the executive director in charge of the Aviation Division.

Mr NOYE: That process was followed yesterday. The DG contacted me, contacted the director, and we both spoke to the chief pilot and confirmed that the aircraft was available and not required for any other flights. The understanding was that if an emergency did arise, the sumos would be let down gently somewhere and we would go off and do the flight. No emergency arose, and the flight occurred.

Mr WELLS: Mr Chairman, through you to the Honourable the Minister and with passing tremendous respect to the member for Mansfield—I say to the Minister: the process then is that you asked the Director-General who asked the aviation unit, and the aviation unit said that would be okay because the pilot said that the flight was available. That is what I just heard you say. So this seems to imply that there are no processes, no guidelines relating to the appropriate use of SES helicopters or Emergency Services helicopters. Is that correct?

Mr VEIVERS: No, that is not correct, and that is not what I said because I was not answering the question; Mr Noye was answering the question. Let me just add a little further to this because you seem to have a bee in your bonnet about how this is done and how it all comes to pass.

Mr WELLS: I am just intensely curious as to whether—

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, you are always curious about little things instead of getting behind me in a bipartisan manner and supporting these wonderful people and Emergency Services in general

throughout Queensland instead of nitpicking about ambulance and fire issues. You have had to give the fire one away because I have beaten you on that one—I have settled it all down. I often wondered why you got the position of shadow Minister for Emergency Services, because I must admit that I thought Robbie Schwarten, the member for Rockhampton, was doing a magnificent job, but he had to go up. Be that as it may, I am sure—

Mr WELLS: The point is: are there any Government guidelines?

Mr VEIVERS: Excuse me, I have not got to do anything because I am the Minister and I can answer the question any way I like. Seeing you are getting a bit upset—

Mr FOLEY: So you are not accountable to Parliament?

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, we are all accountable to Parliament. If you read Standing Orders—and you are a legal eagle; one who I would not like defending me in a court of law—you would know that a Minister can answer the question any way he likes. Mr Chairman, in deference to you I will let Mr Noye answer that particular matter that the member for Murrumba was talking about.

Mr NOYE: You asked the question: are there any guidelines? There are guidelines for the use of the Squirrel helicopter—the single-engine Squirrel helicopter used by the Ministry and other departments for ministerial-type flights. It is unusual that the emergency helicopters are made available for ministerial or other flights. That happens on occasions. It is up to the Minister as to which process happens with that request.

Mr WELLS: So it is very unusual for the Bell helicopter to be used for ministerial purposes at all, and there are guidelines only for the Squirrel and not for the helicopter that you used for this purpose yesterday?

Mr VEIVERS: That is not quite right, either. There are all these times that come along regarding that helicopter or others—I will not nominate any particular helicopter because they are similar. The only difference is that the Premier basically has use of the Squirrel unless it is an emergency to get a Minister from somewhere—and it has to be an emergency as far as politics is concerned, I presume. What you are really saying is that the public safety of Queenslanders is really the prime concern of me as a Minister. That is what I am about.

What I wanted to say also is that you would not like to see—as has happened in the past under the governance of your particular party for six years—that helicopter not be allowed to be used at Christmas to carry Santa Claus around—which it used to, I believe—and bring presents to the children at different hospitals. I do not want to make comparisons, but there are times in private enterprise when you have to make a decision about what you think is good at the time, and that is why I am the Minister and that is why you—

Mr WELLS: But you are not in private enterprise; you are in Government, and there are processes of Government—

Mr VEIVERS: Quite frankly, this statutory authority—

Mr WELLS: Can I finish the question? There are processes of Government and there are guidelines to follow—

Mr VEIVERS: They were followed yesterday.

Mr WELLS: —for the Squirrel helicopter. There are no guidelines for the Bell helicopter because it is so rare and exceptional for it to be used.

Mr VEIVERS: That is not true, either.

Mr WELLS: What happened in this case was that you just made up your mind to ride in the Squirrel helicopter and you rang up and asked if it was free and the answer was: yes. It is a rare and exceptional event for the helicopter to be used. I think that this is interesting information.

Mr VEIVERS: You see, your facts are wrong. It is not the Squirrel, for starters; it is a Bell 412. You were talking about the Squirrel, so you are confused already.

Mr WELLS: You have guidelines for the Squirrel but not for the Bell. You used the Bell. That was an advantage to you because there were no guidelines; you could just ring up and get it. Perhaps you should have guidelines for the Bell helicopter.

Mr VEIVERS: I think it was explained rather diligently to you that there are guidelines. On top of that, I do not think you heard that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition supported what I did yesterday. So you had better go and ask Jim Elder as well, because you cannot seem to be told anything. I have seen you in the Parliament—and I know this is the Parliament, but inside the other Chamber—and I have tried to tell you things about leaks; I have tried to warn you about it, but you will not be warned and you cannot be told here. I do not think it is worth continuing further. That was a bipartisan approach yesterday.

Mr WELLS: I ask: is it the case that you had Estimates briefings scheduled for that time that you were doing the exercise with the Bell helicopter and that you had to keep large numbers of the people of whom you have spoken so highly today waiting for you while you did that little PR stunt?

Mr VEIVERS: Not at all. It was at our discretion that they could gather their books and come down to Forbes House. Consideration was given and there was no trouble at all. That is not true.

Mr WELLS: I would like to ask a question about fire. Earlier in questions that have been asked by other honourable members, there was reference to an increase in firefighter numbers. I refer to page 2-12 of the Ministerial Program Statements and I note there that the number of permanent operational firefighters budgeted for in this financial year was 1,842 compared with 1,925 in the previous year, which by my arithmetic is a decline in numbers of 83. Can the Minister explain how a decline of 83 can be translated in other questions into an increase of 62?

Mr VEIVERS: It is not like you say, but I will defer to the Commissioner for Fire.

Mr HALL: Let me say first of all that there has been no reduction in permanent operational firefighters; in fact, the numbers have been increased by the figures which I quoted in a previous answer. The comparative difficulties lie with the use of what is known as the minimum obligatory human resource information—MOHRI—establishment figures. The document from which you quoted contains figures which the Fire and Rescue Authority has recorded against the MOHRI requirements. The figures provided for 1996-97 in the MPS document in the Government's required full-time equivalent format show permanent staff for 1996-97 broken down into Operations and Business Services. The figure of 1,925 is Operations and 105 is Business Services, which makes a total of 2,030 permanent staff. Of these 2,030 staff, 1,919 are operational staff.

Mr WELLS: Excuse me, could you explain to the Committee the difference between Business Services and Operations staff?

Mr HALL: Yes, I can. If I may, I might do that when I have finished answering the staffing question.

Mr WELLS: What you are saying to us is essentially the answer to a question that was placed on notice before this Committee. The Committee has that and we value the reply. But if we could just assume an understanding of that and move on to a question of—

Mr VEIVERS: Hang on, you asked the question on this. He is allowed to finish answering that. Why ask the question if you are now saying you had the answer to that?

Mr WELLS: With great respect to you, we have that information and I thank you for it.

Mr VEIVERS: But you still asked the question, so he is entitled to answer it before you get to the next question.

Mr WELLS: In order to make his answer intelligible, we need to know what are the functions being performed by these Business Services people as distinct from the Operations people—whether they are the same people or not.

Mr HALL: The breakdown between Operations and Business Services is as follows: the Operations figures include response management staff, incident response staff, fire communications centre staff, recruit course figures, the rural subsidy funding and the funding for the Department of Emergency Services computer aided dispatch. The Business Services figures are for corporate services, marketing staff, technical support staff, dedicated training staff, strategic planning staff and include regional and headquarters staff expenses and expenses for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority Board.

The CHAIRMAN: That allocation of time has now expired. I call the member for Mansfield.

Mr CARROLL: Page 1-14 of the Ministerial Program Statements mentioned that \$11.6m has been provided over three years for the Youth Development Strategy. How will this money be allocated and what will be the expected benefits for young Queenslanders?

Mr VEIVERS: To get a quick run-through I defer the question to Mr Roger Plastow, Executive Director of Sport.

Mr PLASTOW: The total allocation of \$11.5m includes, I should point out to start with, \$3.3m of the new initiative funding for the whole-of-Government Youth Development Strategy and that will go towards the upgrade of Currimundi Recreation Camp, which will be one of the recreation centres used under this program. \$8.8m has been allocated over three years—\$3.2m this financial year and \$2.8m for the next two financial years.

Direct employment of young Queenslanders will occur through the Local Indigenous Recreation Officers Program, which is one of the components of the whole-of-Government Youth Development Strategy. This program provides funding and a support network for young indigenous people employed to develop the recreational and sporting opportunities in their own local communities. The three years of available funding, and the support network developed in the first year and subsequent years, will ensure that the young people who are employed are given the necessary assistance to remain employed.

The program is also aimed at developing health-giving opportunities for recreation and sport for all community members as well as developing their communities' appreciation of the contribution that recreation and sport can make to community life. Young people's development of work-related skills will also occur through three programs. One, as we explained earlier, is the existing State Emergency Service's cadet program. I did say earlier that the skills that will be developed under this program include fire management, first aid, rescue, navigation, and sport and recreation. Discussions are currently occurring with Emergency Services regarding the exact funding for the allocation under that program. I also outlined previously the work that we will be doing with young people at risk through our outdoor recreation centres.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: As an aside—the response to my previous question about page 1-3 numerically did not add up. Can I get a clarification from you later?

Mr TAYLOR: The reason for that is that you cannot just take the figures for 1996-97 as the base for that program, because there are carryover figures from the 1995-96 figures already included in there. So that is where your missing dollars are coming from.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Thank you. Minister, the replacement of the helicopter in Rockhampton has been done, I believe. Was that all funded through insurance?

Mr VEIVERS: I believe it has been replaced. I do not know about insurance or anything like that. I will let Jack take that up. While it was away, and while they did not have a helicopter, we had the Squirrel up there doing the emergency work in Rockhampton.

Mr NOYE: The Rockhampton helicopter is being replaced mainly under insurance dollars. The

company that provides the helicopter to the Rockhampton community has purchased a helicopter from Malaysia, I understand. It is in Australia at the moment undergoing a fit-out. I think the purchase price was about \$1.3m, but I am not sure how much insurance covers that. I understand that it covers most of it. The helicopter that is actually in Rockhampton at the moment is one of the SEQEB rescue helicopters from the Sunshine Coast—the small one, I understand—which will remain there until the purchased one comes on line. The Government's Squirrel was up there from a day or two after the accident and remained in location until another one was provided by the company. For the first 10 days, we did that out of our budget. After that, we picked up the contract costs of the company that was to provide it, because the contract for the company stipulated that they were to provide a helicopter within X number of days.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: With that reply in mind, and because this is an examination of the budgets, I take this opportunity to thank you for the coverage after the incident. It was a bit of a shock for everybody, but that region values the access to a helicopter for rescue purposes. Thank you.

Mr VEIVERS: I thank the member for Gladstone.

The CHAIRMAN: Under the Department of Sport, page 1-17 of the Ministerial Program Statements shows an increase of 22 in the full-time staffing levels of the Sport and Recreation Program. How are these additional officers to be employed?

Mr PLASTOW: In an earlier answer, I explained that there were four additional staff in the Business Development Unit. Two of those will be employed in the recreation centres management area and two will be employed in the year 2000 Olympic area. There are seven additional staff showing under "Recreation Camps". These are not actually additional staff. The staff have already been employed there. There are six maintenance staff at Tallebudgera and one maintenance staff member at Currimundi. Until now, they have been employed as Crown employees. They are now employed as permanent Public Service employees, so they are now registered as public servants on our books. They have always been there, just under a different name.

There are 11 additional staff showing under "State and Regional Development". There are seven redeployees whose positions will be clarified either by the end of June or the end of December. There are three supernumeraries who, as a result of the restructure, are still employed, and naturally they are showing on the books. There is one who is an individual long-term workers' compensation claimant. Those are the three areas that make up the bulk of that.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, page 1-13 of your Program Statements refers to a strategic plan, that is, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young Persons Sport and Recreation Program. How does funding for the 1997-98 year compare with the 1995-96 program, and how will these extra funds be used to benefit those communities?

Mr VEIVERS: As you know, Mr Carroll, this is a most important area: keeping our friends up there in sport and giving them the services in sport and recreation that they really need. I have to say that, under progressive Governments, that has not always happened. However, it is the policy of the coalition, and it is up to me as the Minister, to drive that policy very strongly. Hence the increase. I will defer to Mr Plastow to round you off on specific figures for that.

Mr PLASTOW: In 1995-96, a total of \$745,000 was made available to support the young persons program in a bid to provide indigenous young people with development opportunities and better health through sport and recreation. This figure was fifty-fifty split between the Commonwealth and the State, with the funding coming from both areas. Under that program we employed six officers. In 1997-98, a total of \$1.9m has been made available under this same program. The Commonwealth's contribution will be about \$514,000. The Office of Sport and Recreation will be providing \$1.44m, which is a substantial increase. In the coming year, additional positions will be created, making a total of nine to be employed in our offices throughout the State. We have taken the initiative of bearing the costs of employing all of these officers so that we can free up the Commonwealth money, which was previously used to support their employment, and will channel the Commonwealth money back into employing recreation officers in local indigenous communities. We will be employing the officers in the department and the Commonwealth money will be employing officers in the communities themselves. Funding from community-based programs will provide alternatives, hopefully, to alcohol and substance abuse for those young people.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: On page 1-5 of your Ministerial Program Statements under Ambulance Services, the second dot point states—

"... 210 permanent and honorary ambulance stations and 10 communication centres."

In your capital works program on 1-11 you have indicated seven new stations. Are the seven new stations included in that 210? Do you have any plans to reduce the number of stations in the State?

Mr VEIVERS: For an in-depth answer I will get Commissioner FitzGerald to answer that particular question for you.

Dr FITZGERALD: I think I need to make the point that the majority of what are listed as new stations are, in fact, replacement stations for existing stations. There are a number of locations where there are new services going into play. Cooktown, North Rockhampton and Redland Bay are new projects, but the vast majority of other locations are replacement stations: Bribie Island; Bundaberg; Cleveland; Cloncurry; Cooroy; Dalby; Edmonton; Meandarra; Pimpama, which will replace the station at Coomera; and Proserpine. Macleay Island is a new honorary station that has not existed before. Mission Beach is a new station. West Toowoomba will be a new station that will take staff from the main Toowoomba station; the staff will be split between the two areas. In effect, to answer your question, that will mean that at the end of the next financial year we will have a

combination I think—from my maths—of 214 permanent and honorary stations.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Could I go back to your list? Cooktown was a new station, not a replacement one?

Dr FITZGERALD: Cooktown is a new station. It is currently run by the hospital service up there.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Macleay Island is a new honorary?

Dr FITZGERALD: There are honorary ambulance officers on Macleay Island. There is no station; they just work out of somebody's house.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Mission Beach is a new station?

Dr FITZGERALD: Mission Beach is a new station.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: North Rockhampton—new?

Dr FITZGERALD: North Rockhampton will be a suburban depot.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: It did not exist before?

Dr FITZGERALD: It did not exist before, no.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Pimpama?

Dr FITZGERALD: Pimpama will replace the station that is currently working out of Dreamworld.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Redland Bay and west Toowoomba?

Dr FITZGERALD: Redland Bay will take staff from the main Cleveland station. They will be split between those two locations. West Toowoomba will take staff from the Toowoomba station.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Are there any plans to close any ambulance stations?

Dr FITZGERALD: Apart from those that have been replaced, no. There are no plans at all to shut down any services.

The CHAIRMAN: The Ministerial Program Statements for Sport indicate on page 1-14 that \$34.5m was spent in 1997-98 on the National Standard Sports Facilities Program. Can you explain how that program operates, how the funds are allocated and how that program fits in with the Statewide Sports Facilities Program?

Mr VEIVERS: I turn to Roger Plastow, Executive Director of the Office of Sport and Recreation.

Mr PLASTOW: The 1997-99 National Standard Sports Facilities Program provides financial assistance to eligible organisations to construct, extend, upgrade or develop sports facilities. That is money for regional, State, national or international levels of training and competition. The majority of organisations that are eligible to apply for those fundings are sport or recreation organisations, including peak bodies and also local government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils, education institutions or organisations with non-profit sport and recreation objectives. The program is being conducted over a two-year funding period, with applicants approved to receive financial

assistance being allowed a period of 18 months to construct their facility and acquit their financial assistance.

The process of application under the program has two stages. The applicants have been invited to submit an expression of interest. If successful at that stage, they will be invited to submit their final application. As I said before, the expressions of interest closed on 2 May. Applications have been assessed. Those applicants recommended to proceed to final application stage are soon to be advised. Funds are allocated following a process of assessment of applications, which are assessed according to the eligibility of the organisation, the eligibility of the project, the financial viability of the organisation and the financial viability of the project. Applications are further assessed against the criteria of planning, management design and the Statewide Facilities Plan currently being developed by the Office of Sport and Recreation.

The approved financial assistance is paid on a subsidy basis. The 1997-99 National Standard Sports Facilities Program is linked to the Statewide Sports Facilities Program through the Statewide Facilities Plan. The Statewide Facilities Plan is being developed in conjunction with the State's sporting organisations. That plan will ultimately determine the priorities of sports facilities throughout Queensland in terms of training and competition venues.

The CHAIRMAN: I call the member for Murrumba.

Mr WELLS: Mr Chairman, through you to the Honourable the Minister and with due deference to the delicate sensibilities of the member for Mansfield, I would like to pursue the matter that the Assistant Fire Commissioner was just explaining to us in which he indicated the job descriptions of people involved in Business Services. The job descriptions that we got just then at any rate were not the job descriptions of people who were sitting in fire stations waiting for a fire to break out so that they could jump into the fire appliance and put it out. They were other sorts of job descriptions than that.

So we conclude from that, with respect to page 2-12 of the Ministerial Program Statements, that the increase in Business Services is not actually an increase in firefighters who are actually engaged in putting out fires. They are not the people who are putting the wet stuff on the hot stuff. This piece of paper that we all have in front of us says that the number of operational and permanent firefighters has gone down by 83 and that full-time equivalent temporary casuals has gone down by 46. Does that not mean that there are 129 fewer bodies being paid for in this budget to put the wet stuff on the hot stuff than there were in the last budget?

Mr VEIVERS: I will go straight to the Commissioner.

Mr HALL: If I may just correct one thing there—under the operational listing that I gave you previously I did include incident response staff, which, of course, is a firefighting staff. I think I have to say that the numbers that you have there, as I explained previously, come from the MOHRI

reporting system. The MOHRI reporting system really gives a momentary snapshot of the organisation. It does not accurately indicate the true number of firefighting staff available. I illustrate that by referring you to those numbers that you have in front of you, and particularly to one figure there—the auxiliary firefighter numbers. You can see that indicated at 152. That is a reflection of the way in which the reporting system requires us to report our staff. In fact, there are over 2,000 auxiliary firefighters in the State in the urban part of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority.

To get a true picture of the numbers involved, we have to look at the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority's budget. The Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority's budget shows quite clearly that from 1 January this year there was an increase of 62 firefighting staff, that is, the people who put the wet stuff on the red stuff. That is quite clear: those numbers were increased. In fact, over the last 12 months, the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority has recruited approximately 144 additional firefighters.

That is not the true number in the service because, obviously, people leave. The true numbers ebb and flow over the course of the year. In fact, the firefighting staff was increased by 62 from 1 January. As I said previously, an additional 60 numbers have become available by an agreement made between the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority and the relevant firefighting unions.

At any point in time, it is not appropriate to say that there is an exact number. People leave the organisation at all times. In actual fact, at this point in time we have a slight number higher than the 122 that I alluded to earlier because of the recruiting cycle. At any point in time, people leave the organisation on a continual basis. We recruit and put the numbers back in the service usually three times during the year because of the complexity of the recruitment process. Notwithstanding the figures that you see there on the back page—at page 2-12—they really reflect a reporting mechanism that does not accurately describe the actual numbers of operational firefighters and officers in this State.

Mr WELLS: But this is the Minister's signature at the front of this book. These are not my numbers; they are the Minister's numbers, they are the department's numbers. These numbers say that there are 129 fewer. Maybe this was a snapshot taken on a single day which was a bad day when you just happened to be down 129.

Mr VEIVERS: With respect, if you could just stop tossing your head around and note something which you have ignored on purpose—

"Due to the restructure effective from 1 July 1997 certain employees will change classification between Operations and Business Services."

Mr WELLS: So this is just a paper shuffle then, is it? You are redefining people? Is anybody going to be doing anything different as a result of this budget?

Mr VEIVERS: I will refer you to the acting Fire Commissioner.

Mr WELLS: Is this the implementation of the Staib review recommendation that the Fire Service should be more business oriented? Are we going to make the Fire Service more business oriented by redefining people who were previously defined as "Operational" to "Business Services", thus satisfying the recommendations of the Staib report? Is that what is happening?

Mr VEIVERS: Mr Wells, with due respect, would you listen to the acting Fire Commissioner? He explained it quite well. Now, all of a sudden, you do not want to listen.

Mr WELLS: I do. Minister, if you think he explained it well, could you repeat the explanation?

Mr VEIVERS: Would Commissioner Hall go ahead?

Mr HALL: If I may, Mr Wells. Once again, as I explained, the MOHRI figure is a snapshot on one particular day of the organisation. The figure represents the organisation at a given point in time. It does not represent the whole financial year. Staffing levels can fluctuate with staff turnover and recruit intakes, as I explained. The MOHRI figures did not include the vacancies existing at the time the snapshot occurred. Again, unlike the MPS estimated establishment figure, the MOHRI includes employees from other divisions who are contracted for a period of time.

The MOHRI provides a snapshot of full-time equivalent staffing levels at the time of reporting. That snapshot does not provide a sound basis for forecasting future staffing levels as is required by the Budget process. The difference is brought about by the MOHRI method of recording and includes differences such as vacancies and additional staff.

Mr WELLS: I understand the snapshots and so forth. I also understand very clearly that the 1997-98 Budget Estimate is not a snapshot of any kind; it is a Budget Estimate of a future that cannot be snapped nor yet shot. That says that you are going to pay for only 1,842 operational permanent firefighters. Is that correct?

Mr VEIVERS: I am leaving that to the acting Fire Commissioner.

Mr WELLS: But Minister, this is your signature.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, I know that.

Mr WELLS: Is it correct that you are going to pay for only 1,842 operational firefighters? Is this budget figure correct?

Mr VEIVERS: Once again—

Mr WELLS: That is an easy one: it is a yes or a no.

Mr HALL: Mr Wells, all I can do is repeat what I have said already regarding the MOHRI figures simply being a snapshot. The estimates there are based on the MOHRI snapshot figures and not on actual budgeted numbers under the QFRA's budget. Let me say again that the QFRA's budget, which budgets specifically for establishment numbers in each operational category of the organisation, clearly

shows an increase in the number of people available to put the wet stuff on the red stuff for the community. I cannot answer the question any more clearly than that.

Unfortunately, the way in which the full-time staff equivalent figures are required to be reported brings about this deficiency. Let me assure you that, as the acting Commissioner for Fire Services, the number of people I have available to go and fight fires has increased by the numbers that I have indicated to you.

Mr WELLS: Thank you. I refer the Minister to page 1-9 of the Ministerial Program Statements. Let me see if I can understand these figures. It is said that the budget for 1996-97 for the Ambulance Service was \$157.502m and this year it is \$158.033m. Are those correct figures or are these just snapshots that I should discount?

Mr VEIVERS: I will refer to the Ambulance Commissioner, Mr Wells.

Dr FITZGERALD: The budget for the 1969-97 Estimate was \$157.502m, of which we currently estimate we will expend \$149.264m. Therefore, the budget for 1997-98 is \$158.033m.

Mr WELLS: That is an increase of much less than the rate of inflation. Is that not so?

Mr VEIVERS: Once again, I will defer to the Ambulance Commissioner.

Mr WELLS: This is hardly a matter for his particular expertise. It is either less than the rate of inflation or more than the rate of inflation.

Mr VEIVERS: I can answer the questions any way I like.

Dr FITZGERALD: There is perhaps one clarification that might help in explaining the figures, and that is the impact of carryovers. You will recall that the Budget for 1969-97 was actually formulated or brought down in September. So carryovers were positively identified. Because the Budget this year is early, we are estimating our carryovers. The actual carryovers that are included in the \$157.502m figure is \$11.483m, which means that, in effect, the new funds for 1996-97 was \$146.019m. The similar Estimates for 1997-98 are a \$8.482m carryover. So the new funds for 1997-98 are estimated to be \$149.551m, which is an increase of \$3.5m or 2.4% in new money available, if that helps.

Mr WELLS: Minister, I would like to thank you for the courtesy you have extended to me in the past in inviting me to visit fire stations and ambulance stations. As a result of that process, I have met a number of firefighters and ambulance officers. Of course, I have met many others who would have got in touch with me even if you had not extended that courtesy. In every case, I found that they were deeply committed, compassionate people of great courage. I congratulate you on having that kind of team behind you. I ask you the question: if you are actually reducing in real terms the amount of money that is available to the Ambulance Service, how on earth are they supposed to save more lives?

Mr VEIVERS: Of course, once again you have picked up a supposition that you are going to run

with. We have possibly the best emergency services in Australia—I feel they are. I will refer quickly to the Fire Service, because it has become a statutory authority. Even though the ambulance is a statutory authority, we have not got the board in place. However, I assure you that the response times and the ability of the ambulance officers to do their job will improve with the improved training that we have. To answer your question in much more detail, I will ask Commissioner FitzGerald to take up the baton.

Dr FITZGERALD: I am not sure what else I can add. It is probably worth pointing out that there has been a continual growth in the amount of expenditure within the Ambulance Service over the last several years and that that growth will continue. There are obviously some limitations affecting our income in 1997-98, particularly on the subscription scheme. We are starting to hit the wall in terms of growth in our subscription scheme market because of competition from private health insurance funds in particular. We do not anticipate the growth that we have experienced in the subscription scheme over the last several years to continue. Together with the inflation rate, that means that the revenue from the subscription scheme is not increasing at the rate that it has done over previous years.

The Minister has just reminded me that some of the competition from health insurance funds is providing us with some challenging problems to deal with. Many of the health insurance funds do not provide complete coverage. Some of them provide emergency-only coverage and, as a result, are able to provide coverage at a cheaper rate than our subscription fees. Therefore, they are currently able to undercut our subscription rates.

Mr VEIVERS: Because they do not pick up code 1 cases.

Mr WELLS: That is understood. Indeed, I understood all of that, but what I really wanted to know was the answer to what is essentially a political question: how on earth are they going to manage if you send them backwards financially by cutting their budget in real terms?

Mr VEIVERS: I do not feel that we are cutting their budget in real terms. Once again, I defer to the Commissioner.

Mr WELLS: That is a useless exercise, because he is a bureaucrat and the question is a political one.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, he is a bureaucrat, but he has answered your question suitably, I think.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you finished your question?

Mr WELLS: No, I have not. Minister, you are going to have four new ambulance stations and you have said in answer to questions from honourable members who support the Government and in answer to questions on notice that those stations will be staffed through the redeployment of existing staff. That means that the ambulance officers who are already spread desperately thinly on the ground will be spread even more thinly. Is that not so?

Mr VEIVERS: Once again, I will ask the Commissioner to answer that question.

Dr FITZGERALD: The staff will be redeployed from areas where, at the moment, there are essentially two crews operating. Locating two crews in a central city location does not give us the best and most effective coverage. For example, there are often two crews at Cleveland station, whereas the population is expanding into the southern bay area. A second depot at Redland Bay from which, at particular times, we can assign the second crew from Cleveland station improves the coverage and, therefore, we hope, will improve significantly the response times.

It is worth making the point that because we build new ambulance stations does not mean that the demand increases. The number of patients remains the same, but services are being delivered from more locations than currently. It is an effort to try to get our resources closer to where the patients are.

The CHAIRMAN: The allocation of time has expired. I call the member for Mansfield.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, turning to page 1-21 of the Program Statements, can you explain the difference of \$3.5m between Emergency Services program outlays as budgeted for 1996-97 and the actual figure for that year? Apparently there was an increase of \$3.5m. What is the reason for that?

Mr VEIVERS: I defer to Mr Noye.

Mr NOYE: The variations between the 1996-97 budget and the 1996-97 estimated actual can be answered by looking at a number of points. Salaries have increased slightly due to the transfer of public education functions to the division, staffing support to the volunteer marine rescue area has increased and some provision has been made for some special project support.

The increase in non-labour operating costs is largely due to the anticipated expenditure of \$1.232m associated with the Commonwealth/State natural disaster relief arrangements. The 1996-97 budget provision for the NDRA arrangements was \$0.5m. Partially offsetting this expenditure is \$25,000 in savings in helicopter maintenance costs, due to new helicopters provided for Cairns and Brisbane which are covered by warranty arrangements. There had been some increase in grants and subsidies to community helicopter providers at the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Rockhampton and Mackay. These operators received \$200,000 each, a total of \$800,000, to maintain their operations and fund their increased operating costs. Capital grants and subsidies represent grants for equipment to volunteer organisations. The \$30,000 recorded against capital grants and subsidies in the 1996-97 budget should have included approximately \$560,000 for volunteer equipment. That was recorded initially against plant and equipment.

The difference that remains relates to the proposed purchase of long-range helicopter tanks for the Brisbane helicopter, which should be provided this financial year. The long-range tank will give the helicopter increased capability, particularly for the treatment of extreme emergency patients

inside the aircraft. Other capital outlays represent the allocated outlays for the purchase of the site at Kedron Park. The variation in retained revenue represents the increased recovery of aviation operating costs in disaster relief arrangements above budget and the transfer of the King Air fixed-wing aircraft from Townsville to the Royal Flying Doctor Service. That should explain the difference, Mr Carroll.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, on page 1-21 of the Ministerial Program Statements, a table divides the same total expenditure into the five main subprograms. I notice that the total expenditure for Emergency Services in the year under review is a very substantial increase on last year's actual figure and last year's budgeted figure. How will the extra money assist the functioning of Emergency Services units in the State?

Mr VEIVERS: Of course, as a Government we have taken into consideration services outside the metropolitan areas, that is, the services in the country that were absolutely devastated by the former Government. We are endeavouring to replace those services. I will defer to Mr Noye again.

Mr NOYE: Firstly, on the State Emergency Services budget increase, the 1997-98 estimate includes departmental-specific funding of \$525,000 which will cover a range of increases in funding for SES units. One in particular is an increase of \$100,000 for SES cadet units, which is in addition to the \$200,000 already provided in the base budget. With the money coming from the Government's Youth Development Program, we hope that that figure will be increased by twice that amount. We are not exactly sure of the amount that will be forthcoming. As Mr Plastow mentioned, that matter is under discussion, but we hope that it will be double the figure available.

Another \$150,000 has been provided to upgrade vertical rescue equipment for SES units. There is a \$105,000 increase for SES training. That is an increase of \$45,000 on the figure for the last financial year. Remote area development is mainly aimed at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We have an increase there; it has been allocated \$100,000. As I think I mentioned in response to an earlier question, two ATSI communities have expressed an interest in forming SES cadet units, and we will be moving to do that in the next calendar year. We are providing \$50,000 for basic equipment, such as head wear, for SES volunteers and for the maintenance of SES radio repeaters.

The other increases in funding also have to do with the provision of a new Bell 412 helicopter in Townsville at a purchase price of \$6m. As the Minister mentioned earlier, that will increase the capability in that region. The Townsville helicopter performs some very spectacular offshore rescues as well as supporting and backing up the community helicopter provider in Mackay. It is also used for disaster relief work. The Disaster Management Service has had an increase to its departmental special funding, and that will allow it to undertake some projects, such as following up the Charleville

floods with some research so that the lessons learned from the floods—two in seven years—can be provided to the rest of the community.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Mr Hall, you have spoken at length about the MOHRI and talked about the fact that it provides a temporary snapshot and does not reflect the true firefighting numbers. Question on notice No. 13 states that the snapshot does not provide a sound basis for forecasting future staffing levels as is required by the Budget process. Tonight, we have seen a misunderstanding of the true situation. Why on earth do you use MOHRI? Why not use the staffing mechanism that complies with the Budget process?

Mr HALL: That is a good question. We use it because I understand that we are required to do so, because it is a standard Government reporting system that gives consistency across all departments. That is the best I can do.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: The MOHRI is required by the Government, but it does not comply with the Budget process?

Mr HALL: No, it does not relate directly to my establishment numbers which we use for budgeting. I would have to quote from the notes again.

Mrs SMITH: We use IHRS—an integrated HR system—for the Queensland Fire and Ambulance Services. Basically, we have been told that they are not interested in our simply reporting on head counts. They want us to report on every dollar expended in the payment of salaries. Within the establishment of the Queensland Ambulance Service and the Queensland Fire Service, we have a mixture of full-time staff who are paid on a permanent basis. We have some staff who work on a part-time basis—they might work a 0.5. Some staff are paid on an hourly basis. The MOHRI system brings all of those dollar figures together and equates them to full-time equivalents. That is the same type of reporting system that we have to conduct on a quarterly basis, whether it be for public servants or ambulance officers.

In saying that we have 2,000 employees, that may mean that we have 2,400 people employed; not all people are on a full-time basis. With the MOHRI system, we take a snapshot of who is on the payroll on a permanent, casual or part-time basis at that particular stage. The IHRS system has only been implemented recently and is still in the process of being implemented for the Fire Service. We are going to have a look at the program over the next financial year and link in the reporting of MOHRI with the budgetary cycle. The reporting is confusing.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: So the head count last year was accurate and the one this year is inaccurate because of MOHRI?

Mrs SMITH: The MOHRI gives a full-time equivalent. The MOHRI system does not count vacancies, because they are not being paid for. It is about the number of employees on a payroll at a particular time.

The CHAIRMAN: Over the weekend, I attended a surf-lifesaving trophy night. Would you provide the details of the funding provided to the

Surf Lifesaving Association of Queensland for 1997-98? What provision has been made for workers' compensation cover for these volunteers?

Mr VEIVERS: We all know how marvellous the surf-lifesaving movement is. It is one of our great traditions in Australia and particularly in Queensland. As the responsible Minister, I want to make sure that that continues. However, we still have to be careful to make sure that the money is spent on the right areas. I will defer to Mr Noye, who will explain the situation to you.

Mr NOYE: The Surf Lifesaving funding for 1997-98 amounts to \$2.438m. This figure includes a grant of \$250,000 to the organisation for workers' compensation. The figure in the MPS under Surf Lifesaving includes \$48,000 for the royal lifesaving clubs—the still-water clubs. The Surf Lifesaving allocation is based on a dollar-for-dollar amount up to \$24,000 per club, and there is a funding rate for the State Centre of Surf Lifesaving of \$700,000 for administration. The State centre also receives 12.5% of the subsidies due to the surf clubs. Subsidies are paid by the department to the State centre, six branches and 56 individual clubs. Not included in the Budget papers is an indexation amount of \$44,360 for the next financial year.

Surf Lifesaving has also been advised that it could expect to receive up to \$50,000 which would be available for the development of youth programs. Those youth programs would be aimed at training SES cadets in remote areas. The aim would be to bring the SES cadets to the recreation camps along the coast to undertake some surf training. That indexation and the \$50,000 for the youth programs equates to about a 4% increase in funds to Surf Lifesaving over the last financial year. Surf Lifesaving also received some funds from other Commonwealth and State Government departments, such as that in previous years from the Gaming Machine Community Benefit Fund and the Sports Development Fund. We are discussing with Surf Lifesaving a service agreement.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I wish to clarify the line item on page 1-20 for Surf Lifesaving. Does the figure of \$2.486m include the workers' compensation contribution which they now have to manage?

Mr NOYE: From 1 July next financial year, Surf Lifesaving will be managing its workers' compensation. That workers' compensation amount of a quarter of a million dollars will be paid to Surf Lifesaving on 1 July and, after next year, it will be indexed. So Surf Lifesaving will then have the opportunity to find its statutory and common law cover where it wishes.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I seek leave to ask a question on notice on the Program Outlays. I have already asked, but they do not know.

Mr WELLS: To the Minister—whether the figures on page 2-12 are real or imaginary, whether they represent real people or whether they represent paper shuffling, whether they represent a decline or whether they represent a reclassification, I put it to you that you do not have enough operational firefighters—you do not have enough people who

are out there ready to put the wet stuff on the hot stuff—because over the period of your administration you have had a small—not alarming, but significant—increase in fire response times. That should be, I think, a warning that would be taken up by a Government that would specifically direct resources into increasing the numbers of operational firefighters. I ask: in the light of the increases in the response times, in the light of the fact that you have told me in answer to a question on notice that you are going to be diverting 53 firefighters from existing stations to staff new stations, is it not necessary that you should be increasing the operational firefighting force?

Mr VEIVERS: Before I defer to the acting Commissioner for Fire—in terms of the department's public report process, the department has won an award for the best disclosure of internal audit in the annual report and an award of merit for my annual report. So the member can be assured that the reports meet and in fact surpass public annual reporting requirements. But to answer your question on figures, I will defer to the acting Fire Commissioner.

Mr HALL: Do I understand from your question that you are suggesting that response times have increased steadily over the last 12 months?

Mr WELLS: Yes. I refer to the answer to question on notice No. 235.

Mr HALL: I do have those figures in front of me. When I look at, for example, the figures for March 1996, the whole of Queensland 7.2 minutes, and for April 1997, the whole of Queensland 6.75 minutes, I have trouble—

Mr WELLS: You did well there, but look at the greater Brisbane region and compare 6.3 with 6.89. That is more than half a minute more for greater Brisbane. Your problem is concentrated in Brisbane, is it not? I do not want to get it out of perspective. I do not say that it is a big problem. I do not say that it is a matter for alarm. I say that if you draw a graph of this you will see a steadily increasing response time and it is because you do not have enough operational firefighters because you are either reclassifying or transferring people into paper shuffling out of operational firefighting.

Mr HALL: If I could perhaps respond further to that. If you look at February 1997 you will see 6.21 minutes. There is a reasonable fluctuation in these figures, and that is fairly normal. There are a number of factors that affect those figures. Climate is one example. During the annual spring bushfire season, it is quite normal for those figures to increase because of pressures on the organisation.

Mr WELLS: They did, yes.

Mr HALL: That is perfectly normal. There can be an increase during the wet season when the roads are difficult to travel and the traffic is heavier and going slower and slower. So there is a degree of a variety between months, and that is perfectly normal, and there will be some statistical movement either side of the norm. Let me say that there are no firefighters being transferred from operational positions to non-operational positions and there are

no firefighters being transferred away from the response part of the organisation. The reverse is true, as I have indicated in answer to previous questions. Certainly, over the next 12 months there will be three new fire stations opening in Queensland, two in the rapidly developing area of the Gold Coast. They are designed to deal with those rapidly expanding areas and to make sure that those response times indicated remain within the acceptable variation.

Mr WELLS: Mr Chairman, to the Minister through you—Minister, I put it to you that exactly the same situation exists in ambulance. You are reducing their budget in real terms, and ambulance officers are already too thinly spread on the ground—they desperately need more—and additional pressures are going to be put on them by virtue of the fact that you are going to be opening new ambulance stations, and you have told me in answers to questions on notice that these are going to be supplied by means of diverting them from existing ambulance stations. That will stretch the elastic even more. Given that and taken together with the fact that ambulance response times are increasing—and over the period that you have been in Government they have increased steadily for every dispatch code—I put it to you that you do not have enough ambulance officers. There is no criticism of either fire officers or ambulance officers in what I say. All I say is that you do not have enough, you are not funding enough of them, and it is a dangerous practice not to fund enough of them. If you stretch the elastic too tightly, it is going to break. I put it to you that you do not have enough, and I ask: do you agree that the budget is insufficient to fund adequate numbers of Emergency Services staff?

Mr VEIVERS: You go on response times and you change it round from dollars and then you go to response times. I think it is simply the equivalent of what the Fire Commissioner was saying, that in south-east Queensland in the last three or four months we have had cyclones, we have had the single road closed down there, and that adds to the length of response times. Of course, you have to be able to compare apples with apples, and you are endeavouring to compare the first four or five months of this year with last year in the overall scheme of things, and you cannot do that. But to answer your question in more detail, I will defer to Commissioner FitzGerald.

Dr FITZGERALD: Thanks, Minister. I think a couple of key issues are raised in the question. The first is with respect to staff. I am sure the Ambulance Service, like all other service delivery agencies, would like additional staff. However, I think it is worth making a few points about the staff that we have. For a start, we actually have the most number of ambulance officers per 1,000 population of any State in Australia. This budget provides for an additional 20 ambulance staff, and they are all directly operational staff; there are obviously no support staff involved in those 20 additional people, with the possible exception of two staff positions that may go into communications. The other thing that is worth comparing is the trends that we have tried to achieve over the last four or five years. We

have sought over that time to reduce the number of staff positions that are tied up in all of our support areas and increase the number of actual ambulance officers. Over those last five years, the number of ambulance officers has increased by about 90 whereas just about all other categories have reduced. Certainly I think we are doing whatever we can within the available resources in terms of ensuring that our resources are applied to the sharp end of our business.

The issue with respect to response times is a fairly complex issue and one we have been watching very closely. As you are aware, we report our response times in terms of the number of patients that we get to in code 1s in or equal to 10 minutes. The latest figures we have suggest that there has been a slight decline this year. However, it is worth noting that our response times right across the State are probably the best in Australia. We have some figures there, for example, in Melbourne which suggest that they get to about 50% of cases within 10 minutes. We get to 74% of cases in 10 minutes. Areas such as Brisbane and the northern region have nearly 80% of cases responded to in less than or equal to 10 minutes. We are watching the trend and examining it very closely, but just looking at the last couple of months, there seems to be some positive turnaround.

Mr WELLS: Your response times might well be the best in Australia. If that remains the case, I congratulate you on that. That would be due to the quite remarkable and sterling effort by the ambulance officers. They might be the best in Australia, but they are between one and two minutes worse than they were a year ago. Surely you must see the writing on the wall from that and surely you must realise that this means that you need to fund them more.

Mr VEIVERS: Any Minister, no matter of what ilk or what Government he represents, is always looking for more money and of course this Minister is no different from any others. At the next Budget round, I will be asking the Treasurer for even more money.

Mr WELLS: Next Budget round you will be sitting here.

Mr VEIVERS: In your wildest dreams. It is going to be a nightmare, but I know you do it not with a great deal of seriousness. We are doing a great job, as the Commissioner for Ambulance has pointed out. Of course, when the board is put in place and certain directions are taken, it will go even better. I have to say that because the board is not in place Commissioner FitzGerald has been wearing the operations of the ambulance squarely on his shoulders. I have been endeavouring to get the board in place as quickly as possible, and hopefully that will happen in the next week and a half to two weeks.

Mr WELLS: You would be disappointed if I did not ask you a question about computer aided dispatch, and I ask with respect to Firecom. The current Firecom computer aided dispatch system has one operator taking the emergency call who immediately alerts the nearest fire station. With the new QESCAD, which is now being installed at

Spring Hill, it is necessary for one operator to take the information, type it out on a screen and then transfer it to a second operator and it is the second operator who alerts the nearest fire station. This will undoubtedly add time to the processes of dispatch and, therefore, add to response times. How long is it anticipated by Firecom that that extra time will be?

Mr VEIVERS: Of course, it was your Government that introduced this particular system and of course we are diligently carrying it along. I defer to the Commissioner for Fire once again to give you an in-depth answer to your question.

Mr HALL: I cannot answer your question about what Firecom think about the system, but I can answer your question about what I think about the system. There is a misunderstanding in the way the new system operates in that people think that because call takers and dispatchers are now two separate functions that there will be an additional time component in handling the calls. In fact, this is not the case. Certainly, if you look at the way the system operates, the screens on which the information is recorded by the call taker are duplicated throughout the whole of the room. They are duplicated not only on the Fire Service dispatcher side, but also on the Ambulance Service dispatcher side and they are done in real time so immediately the call is taken, the call information is appearing on the fire dispatcher's and ambulance dispatcher's console in a concurrent fashion.

In fact, the fire dispatcher is able to see the calls as they come in without being distracted between a number of different calls which may be competing for his or her attention. In that regard both the fire and ambulance dispatchers really have a better picture of the way the calls are coming in—and we are not talking about just one call; there may be a number of emergency calls coming in at the same time for the same incident or there may be a number of emergency calls coming in at much the same time for a number of different incidents. Because of the way the technology is set up and because the displays are concurrent, not only is there no delay in switching between the call taker and the call dispatcher, in lots of circumstances the operation will in fact be slightly quicker because the actions of taking the call and recording the information and the action of dispatching the emergency vehicle can occur concurrently because the information is being dealt with concurrently on two screens.

Mr WELLS: I refer to page 1-9 of the Ministerial Program Statements and the parliamentary question on notice No. 314. In your answer you indicated that 82 ambulance stations have electronic operating doors, while 93 have manually operating doors and an additional 11 stations have no doors at all. I refer also to page 1-9 of the Ministerial Program Statements which indicated that the fixed capital expenditure budget of \$12.5m for 1996-97 was underspent by something more than \$4.5m and ask: why did you not fix the doors?

Mr VEIVERS: Obviously, some of them were not there to fix. As you noticed in my answer to you in that question on notice, I was advised that I was

not aware of any survey that had been undertaken which indicated the egress of the station at night necessitates the opening and closing of manual roller doors adding an additional two minutes to ambulance response times. I was advised of that, but for an explanation I refer once again to Commissioner FitzGerald.

Dr FITZGERALD: Could I firstly deal with the issue that you have raised about the underspending of capital works, the \$4.5m? It is worth saying that that money is not available to spend on alternative projects because it is in fact committed to the projects for which it was originally intended. Some of those projects such as the construction of the Cleveland station are delayed because of a whole host of reasons, including finalising the design. If we were to spend those funds on alternative approaches such as automatic doors, we would have to find additional funds in next year's budget to actually complete those projects.

With respect to the issue of the doors, I am aware that just recently a project was completed to put automatic doors in the Gympie station. I think there are a number of locations where automatic doors are being added. They are included in the minor works. You will notice in the capital works Estimates on page 1-11 that there is \$2.7m of minor works, which includes such projects as putting automatic doors onto ambulance stations. I would not have available the number of locations that that will occur in during the 1997-98 financial year, but as those projects are identified funds will be made available to complete the acquisition and installation of automatic doors where necessary. Obviously, with all new stations that are being purchased or built and any stations that are being significantly refurbished, that matter would be attended to in that process.

Mr WELLS: I have some questions relating to the SES. I refer to page 1-20 of the Ministerial Program Statements and note that grants to local government have decreased for the second year in a row and building subsidies have declined. What is the reason for this?

Mr VEIVERS: I defer the question immediately to Jack Noye, SES.

Mr NOYE: If you do not mind, I will ask the Director of SES, Mr Ken Cullum, to give you a detailed comment on that.

Mr CULLUM: Can I just have your question again please, just the area that you are referring to?

Mr WELLS: Page 1-20 of the Ministerial Program Statements, grants to local governments have decreased and building subsidies have declined.

Mr CULLUM: I think this is where we are starting to plateau out on the number of buildings being constructed for local SES units. Most of the viable units already have headquarters constructed for them and those grants respond to the request by local government to provide their dollar for dollar subsidy—or whatever the range may be—to complete their facilities. At this particular time, we are remitting all the requests by local government and we are estimating that that plateau will continue over

the next couple of years. So we do not anticipate that we will expend any greater funds than what we have allocated for the 1997-98 budget.

Mr WELLS: You may be interested in my next question also. Minister, I wrote you a letter—of which I have furnished you a copy, and to which you responded—concerning a desire by the SES units to have the use of red flashing lights when they were going to an actual emergency. You kindly made representations to the Minister for Police but got knocked back on the spurious grounds that other people who have flashing lights have special training programs. Minister, would it be a possibility for the SES, among its other training programs, to provide the very same training programs in driving so that a future application could be made to the Minister for Police in the interests of the safety of the SES volunteers and others so that they could then have the red flashing lights to protect them and the public when they are going to an emergency?

The CHAIRMAN: You have one minute to answer that.

Mr VEIVERS: The Police Commissioner did write back to me, as you know, Mr Wells. In my letter to you, I said—

"... the primary purpose for the fitting of red warning lights and sirens on emergency vehicles is to gain priority travel ... The Police Commissioner is of the view that the provision for the fitting and use of amber flashing lights under the Traffic Regulation was essentially designed to cater for the aspect of safety, particularly, where an SES unit is working at an accident scene.

For these reasons, the Police Commissioner has not approved the fitting and use of flashing red lights and sirens on SES first response vehicles.

The Police Commissioner has confirmed, however, that the fitting of appropriate bar strobe flashing amber lights ... pursuant to the provisions of section 18A of Schedule One ... is an acceptable practice.

Under the circumstances, I regret that I am unable to provide further assistance with this matter."

And I could not, either. Ken may take that up.

Mr CULLUM: Thanks, Minister. We did initiate the request to the Commissioner of Police for red flashing lights on the understanding that our people can be placed at risk on the side of the road, particularly those who are carrying out road accident rescue response.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allocated for questions from members on the non-Government side has expired.

Mr FOLEY: Mr Chairman, surely you could grant an indulgence to allow the—

Mr VEIVERS: Could I ask that the gentleman be allowed to finish the answer just quickly?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr CULLUM: At this stage, as the Minister has said, the Commissioner has refused us permission, stating that he does not wish to confuse the public more by additional emergency service vehicles using red lights, and also the fact that perhaps we do not have the appropriate driver training in place for emergency vehicles. The reason that we do not have the appropriate driver training in place is that we have no emergency vehicles at this stage of the game because we do not use red lights and sirens. This is moving into a catch-22 situation. We have no problems in developing the appropriate training, if the Commissioner is prepared to approve the use of red lights.

The CHAIRMAN: Continuing with questions about the Ambulance Service: what procedures have been developed in recent times to assist ambulance and fire officers to locate incidents to which they have been required to respond?

Mr VEIVERS: I will defer to Commissioner FitzGerald once again.

Dr FITZGERALD: A number of initiatives have been put in place to try to improve the ability of ambulance officers to locate incidents. For a start, all communication centres throughout Queensland now have calling line identification installed. Calling line identification produces an instantaneous print-out of the address and phone number of the phone from which a 000 call is made. This information can then be confirmed with the caller, thus ensuring the exact or correct location of the emergency. There is a problem associated with the use of mobile phones, as you would be aware, in terms of calling line identification. It is hoped that, over the next few years, that matter can also be addressed.

Once the call has been received, the map reference details can be passed on to the crew via radio from information using the map info system. This provides a visual map which can be referred to by the communication operators, who can physically locate the location of the incident or of the caller. This map info database enables a reference of the address and, in most instances, provides an up-to-date map of the area.

In some shires the councils, in association with the officers in charge, have implemented and developed rural road addressing strategies. These initiatives are joint projects of Emergency Services and the Local Government Association of Queensland with the support of the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Main Roads. That initiative has assisted in identifying properties, particularly in rural areas. This strategy works by assigning a rural property with a unique number based on the distance of the property entrance from a designated starting point along the road. The model allocates a number every 10 metres along the road, and this number is then a measure of the distance of the property entrance from the starting point of the road.

Members will also be aware of the introduction of computer aided dispatch, which has been mentioned already. This will be progressively rolled out to the rest of the State in due course. Computer aided dispatch, with its map support, will also assist

ambulance officers to locate incidents to which they are required to respond. In effect, these initiatives are using modern technology to supplement the local knowledge of officers, particularly those working in rural stations.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Your response just a moment ago, when you read from a couple of sheets of paper with a compressed time frame—could I interpret your response to mean that they would be able to use yellow flashing lights?

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, they could use yellow flashing lights. The answer is: yes.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Does the SES have some problem with that?

Mr CULLUM: Yes, the SES does have some problems with yellow flashing lights. Because of the propensity for everybody to use yellow flashing lights, their value as an indicator of people working in hazardous conditions is somewhat diminished. As we drive down the highway, every low-loader, every fruit stall and every Myer sale tends to use a yellow flashing light. Therefore, we are very keen to have our volunteers protected as well as we can. We believe that red flashing lights are the way to go. The department supports that move. The Director-General has written to the Commissioner of Police and, once again, unfortunately was refused.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: On the basis that there would be an accumulation of vehicles with red flashing lights?

Mr CULLUM: Exactly. We can, under legislation, use yellow flashing lights while we are moving, but we believe that the protective safety level is somewhat less than what we would like.

Mr CARROLL: Minister, I would like to go back to ambulance services and refer you to page 1-7 of the Program Statements. At the top of that page is a brief description of the Workforce Modelling Project. How will that project improve the prompt delivery of high-quality ambulance services to Queenslanders?

Mr VEIVERS: The Commissioner of the Ambulance Service touched on that. However, I will defer to Commissioner FitzGerald once again.

Dr FITZGERALD: The Workforce Modelling Project is a particular project of the Queensland Ambulance Service which has been under way now for about 18 months. The project is being conducted by the Ambulance Service under the supervision of some leading professors from the University of Queensland and the Australian National University. What the project is trying to determine is what factors influence the demand for ambulance services and, therefore, how we can predict future demand for ambulance services based on changing trends in the demography of our population and, therefore, how we can best tailor our services to meet that demand.

The first aspect is which factors influence demand. The second aspect of the project is how we can best locate our resources, both human and otherwise, so as to meet the needs of our patients. Generally, our resources have been distributed on

the basis of historical trends. It has been on the enthusiasm and energy of the local committee. As a result, there are some inconsistencies in terms of our resource distribution. This is the first major study of this kind that we are aware of in the world. It is being closely watched by a number of other ambulance services. In effect, the result should produce an objectively based resource allocation formula, which will enable us to allocate our resources fairly and equitably across the State and ensure that, within the overall resources available, the distribution of our resources is as appropriate as it can be to the needs of our patients.

The CHAIRMAN: The local ambulance committees, the LACs, are mentioned in a number of places in the Ministerial Program Statements. Could you advise this Committee whether those groups are simply fundraising organisations or do they have a more significant role in providing advice for the direction of ambulance services in Queensland?

Mr VEIVERS: Local ambulance committees are much more than that. They are an integral part of the Ambulance Service working successfully in Queensland. They are a most important part of our program. When the board is in place, they will be talking with that particular group in a big way—let me put it that way. The LACs, local ambulance committees, are from all over Queensland. I had the pleasure this year of going to their triennial meeting on the north coast at the university at Caloundra. They all travelled there from all over Queensland to meet. As I said, that was their three-year meeting. I was lucky that we were in power and I was able to meet those magnificent people, because you could not say that they were anything else but that. They do a marvellous job. I think I will defer once again to Commissioner FitzGerald who has an equally high respect for LACs right throughout Queensland.

Dr FITZGERALD: Indeed, Minister. At last count this morning there were 157 local ambulance committees scattered throughout Queensland. They contribute about \$1m to the Queensland Ambulance Service each year in terms of donations of equipment and money. The role of the local ambulance committee is actually defined in the Ambulance Service Act. Those functions, if I may summarise them, are to liaise with the community, promote community participation and awareness, provide advice to the commissioner in respect of ambulance services, undertake fundraising activities for the benefit of the Ambulance Service and the community it represents, manage money held in trust and such other functions as the Minister agrees to.

But, in effect, local ambulance committees are, firstly, a quality assurance body—they advise the Ambulance Service whether we are meeting the needs of the community; secondly, an advisory body that advises the Ambulance Service about the particular needs of that local community; thirdly, an advocate for the Ambulance Service—they in turn apprise the community of what the Ambulance Service is trying to do in terms of service delivery to the community; finally but not unimportantly, they are fund-raisers for their local stations.

The Minister has already referred to the State conference, which was a very successful conference despite the mistake of scheduling it on the Mother's Day weekend, which caused us no amount of consternation as you can imagine. It is worth making the point that local ambulance committees are all unpaid. They are very committed. There are nearly 2,000 people involved in them. The other group is the local ambulance committee reference group—a group of two representatives from each region—which gives us a Statewide group to refer matters of strategic policy, etc., for an opinion from local ambulance committees in general. I share the Minister's support and high regard for our local ambulance committees.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: As to the 000 emergency number—I can understand the practicality of 000 in urban areas, not only in Brisbane but also in densely populated areas right throughout this State. Urban maps make sense. They can be plotted for the geographic location of incidents. But in rural Queensland, the 000 dispatch has proven to be less than practical. Obviously nothing has been allocated in the budget for a better approach to dispatch in rural Queensland. I wonder whether there is any intention to allocate money to that.

Mr VEIVERS: I understand what you are saying about the 000. Hypothetically you could be in Toowoomba when you ring the 000 number and you would get someone answering you in Townsville or somewhere like that. I think we are getting out the particular bugs that have been in there, but in instances like that, we are now asking for particular areas—"Where are you?" In the old days they used to say, "We're on the edge of the mountain." The people who were injured assumed, "Yes, that's fine. We're on the edge of the Toowoomba range." In actual fact they were on the edge of the Great Dividing Range up in north Queensland. Over the period since I have been Minister for 15 months, we have gradually been getting on top of that problem. We are on top of that problem now. I think it would be remiss of me if I did not say that the remote area system that we have for numbering where they are from cities—this is a local government project as well as a State Government project—is working. Unfortunately, you cannot make it go with just a snap of the fingers. We have some local government areas that are not responding as quickly as I as Minister would like, but we are getting them. For more details I would refer to Mike Hall, Commissioner for the Queensland Fire Service.

Mr HALL: Exactly the same circumstances obviously apply to fire services in country areas as to the Ambulance Service. One of the major reasons that we cannot go to local numbers with any great deal of success is the advent of the mobile phone. People with mobile phones are often not local. They have no idea whatsoever of local numbers and they must have access to a national emergency services number that allows them to gain access to

emergency services anywhere in the country from mobile phones. As you are well aware, Australia boasts one of the highest rates of mobile phones of any developed country. Getting the emergency calls from mobile phones and getting accurate locations and then being able to dispatch the appropriate emergency service in response to whatever the particular problem is is something that causes emergency services great difficulties. That is why we need to use computer-assisted systems and why we need to develop support structures such as the rural road numbering system.

Mr CARROLL: If we have a look at the middle of page 1-6 of your Program Statements, you mention this Government's endorsement of the Queensland Emergency Medical System as an apparently new concept. I wonder what is the value of that approach and what is the current status of implementation?

Mr VEIVERS: To save time I will go straight to Commissioner FitzGerald.

Dr FITZGERALD: I think it is worth saying that the best outcome for a patient suffering some illness or injury is going to be achieved if all of the organisations responsible for caring for that patient act in a coordinated and integrated way, rather than in a way in which they act almost separately. This is a core concept of emergency medical systems. The Queensland emergency medical system, as it currently exists, is well regarded for its integration and coordination within Australia, but we can always improve. Recently, the Government released a public discussion paper titled QEMS—the Queensland Emergency Medical System—which outlined the standard whole-of-Government policy framework for the further development of Queensland's emergency medical system.

In addition, associated with that the State Emergency Medical System Committee has been reconstituted and a range of specific initiatives are being developed. The major benefits of QEMS include improved efficiency and accountability, greater flexibility in terms of our service delivery, ability to take a long-term comprehensive view, improved service delivery to patients and improved community awareness and involvement.

The CHAIRMAN: On that note, I am afraid that I will have to call you to a halt. The time allocated for the consideration of the Estimates relating to the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport has expired. I thank the Minister and all of those portfolio officers for their assistance again today. I thank also the Committee for the role that it has played today.

Mr WELLS: Mr Chairman, on behalf of the Opposition, may I also thank the officers who appeared today and the Minister and his staff.

Mr VEIVERS: Thank you.

The Committee adjourned at 7.30 p.m.