



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Hon. Madeleine Ogilvie MP

Wednesday 8 June 2022

MEMBERS

Hon Rosemary Armitage MLC (Deputy Chair);

Hon Jane Howlett MLC;

Hon Tania Rattray MLC (Chair);

Hon Jo Siejka MLC;

Hon Rob Valentine MLC; and

Hon Josh Willie MLC

IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Madeleine Ogilvie MP, Minister for Small Business, Minister for Science and Technology, Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries, Minister for Racing, Minister for Heritage.

Ministerial Office

Sean Hollick Chief of Staff
Kylie Smith Senior Adviser, Small Business
Kathryn Newett Senior Adviser, Minister for Science and Technology, Minister for
Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries,
David Manshanden Adviser, Racing

DEPARTMENT OF STATE GROWTH

Small Business

Kim Evans Secretary, Department of State Growth
Mark Bowles Deputy Secretary, Industry and Business Development
Kate Mirowski Director, Business Tasmania

Science and Technology

Kim Evans Secretary, Department of State Growth
Mark Bowles Deputy Secretary, Industry and Business Development
Stan Corrigan Director, Science and Technology
Justin Thurley Acting Chief Information Officer, Digital Strategy and Services
(DPAC)
Nolene Kelly Acting Deputy Secretary

Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries

Lia Morris Chief Executive Officer MAST
Kim Evans Secretary
Amanda Russell Deputy Secretary, Business Services
Steve Gilmore Defence Advocate
Dennis Hendricks Acting Senior Director, Business Tasmania

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT TASMANIA

Office of Racing Integrity

Jason Jacobi Acting Secretary
Deirdre Wilson Deputy Secretary
Justin Helmich General Manager, Office of Racing Integrity

Heritage

Jason Jacobi Acting Secretary
Louise Wilson Deputy Secretary
Andrew Roberts Director, Heritage Tasmania

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The committee met at 8.58 a.m.

CHAIR (Ms Rattray) - Thank you and welcome, minister. Before I invite you to introduce your team at the table - and congratulations on your appointment to these portfolio areas that we will provide scrutiny to today - I would like to introduce the members of Committee B.

We have Josh Willie, Rosemary Armitage, Tania Rattray, Jane Howlett, Rob Valentine, and we have our secretariat support, Simon Scott and Julie Thompson and we have Liam from Hansard. This is Liam's second day on this committee and he is doing very well.

Minister, we will invite you to provide an overview and then we will commence our questioning and we will begin with your portfolio as minister for Racing.

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you very much, Chair. Today I have Acting Secretary NRE Tas (Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania), Jason Jacobi; the Deputy Secretary NRE Tas, Deirdre Wilson; and the Director of Racing, Justin Helmich with me. I thank them for their attendance.

The Office of Racing Integrity is responsible for maintaining the probity and integrity of thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing and breeding in Tasmania. The 2022-23 Tasmanian budget includes \$964 000 over four years of additional funding for three cadet stewards. Tasmania's racing industry is a vital part of Tasmania's social and economic vibrance, and the program will be structured into two-year contracts for three cadets in two separate programs running in 2022-23 to 2023-24, and 2024-25 to 2025-26.

Probity and integrity are critically important in the racing industry and they underpin confidence in all three codes in our state - thoroughbred, harness and greyhounds. That is why our Government has led the way by commissioning independent racing expert Dale Monteith to review the Racing Regulation Act 2004 and the broader racing integrity model in Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is pleased today to release the independent review into Tasmania's Racing Regulation Act 2004. The Government notes and supports in principle the recommendations within the report. Importantly, the Government will release the independent report publicly and I will be working closely with participants within the industry as we move forward. As we have said, given the importance of integrity and probity in racing, the review of the act is timely, ensuring that the industry continues to meet the expectations of the community in terms of integrity, functions and animal welfare.

Animal welfare is a high priority for the Government. The Office of Racing Integrity which ensures property inspections throughout the state are undertaken to ensure racing animals are properly cared for and licensed participants are complying with animal welfare legislation and the racing rules.

The Office of Racing Integrity contributes to a healthy, growing and competitive racing and breeding industry by ensuring that it is safe, fair and credible. Fewer dogs are being euthanased and more dogs are being rehomed than ever before. Euthanasia rates have been steadily decreasing over recent years. Changes to racing rules were also made in March 2020 to further reduce the rates of euthanasia for dogs. The Tasmanian greyhound industry is committed to rehoming every greyhound that is suitable for pet life. Over the past five financial

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years, the number of greyhounds rehomed, as a percentage of the overall number of greyhounds retiring from the industry, has been consistently increasing.

Before I finish, I should say there has been much commentary on employment matters at the Office of Racing Integrity. As the minister for Racing, I will not be delving into operational matters of the department. I wish to ensure that in all matters, everybody is provided due process and procedural fairness. This is very important.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government will do everything it can to support the racing industry with further investment so that those in the industry can thrive and succeed right here in Tasmania. Thank you, chair.

CHAIR - Thank you very much and interesting, minister, that the review of the racing regulations has been released today. We do not have a copy, but you have obviously seen it. We would be interested in hearing about some of the recommendations from that report. Thank you.

Ms OGILVIE - Certainly, and I can turn to a little bit of information about that.

CHAIR - Is it possible to have a copy of the report provided to members? Can it be tabled?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes and I think it is being sent out today.

Mr VALENTINE - Could that be emailed as well?

Ms OGILVIE - It is being emailed.

CHAIR - Some of us do not have an email. I have been looking for someone in IT for quite a bit of time this morning.

Ms OGILVIE - I am happy to table a copy.

CHAIR - Thank you. So, thank you minister, take it away.

Ms OGILVIE - As I was saying the Government remains a strong supporter of the Tasmanian racing industry which does make a vital contribution to our economy and employment, particularly in regional Tasmania. That is why, as outlined in my opening remarks, the Tasmanian Liberal Government is pleased to release the independent review into Tasmania's Racing Regulation Act 2004; the act.

I reiterate that probity and integrity are critically important in the racing industry and they underpin confidence in all three codes in our state - thoroughbred, harness and greyhounds. Integrity functions are defined in the act, and the act has not been substantially reviewed since its inception, I think that is about 20 years ago. That is why our government has led the way by commissioning independent racing expert Dale Monteith to review the act and the broader racing integrity model in Tasmania.

The Government notes and supports in principle, the recommendations within the report including: creating a Tasmanian Racing Integrity Commissioner with powers to set integrity

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and animal welfare standards, and comprehensive audit, compliance and investigatory functions, enhancing integrity governance within Tasracing, with Tasracing to become operationally responsible for all three codes of racing and a pre-race day and race day management including stewards and animal daily welfare. Also, providing a role for the RSPCA in animal welfare and retaining the power for independent investigation on animal welfare matters.

The new model proposes that the Tasmanian Racing Integrity Commissioner will have extensive powers to set standards and oversight of both Tasracing and the racing industry generally.

In supporting animal welfare, the Government will also consider that in addition to the reforms proposed in the Monteith review, TasRIC has staffing with animal welfare policy and regulatory experience. Importantly, the Monteith review proposes to retain the power for independent investigation of animal welfare matters under the Animal Welfare Act 1993.

The Government has also committed to amendments to the Animal Welfare Act to provide authorised officers, including the RSPCA representatives, with powers of emergency entry and the power to take possession of animals where authorised officers reasonably believe the animal to be at imminent risk and consider any dog welfare reforms that may be required.

These reforms are being progressed by NRE Tas as a priority. The Government will soon release a detailed response to each of the recommendations in the report, which you will be provided with.

I thank the many industry members and stakeholders right across the state who engaged with Mr Monteith through the extensive review process. Mr Monteith led an extensive consultation, meeting with 50 stakeholders individually and assessing 31 written submissions addressing the discussion paper.

I acknowledge Mr Monteith and his significant expertise, which informed his comprehensive review. I look forward to progressing the new chapter for racing integrity, probity and animal welfare here in Tasmania.

CHAIR - Minister, that was a lot to take in.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, it's a detailed report.

CHAIR - I do not write as quickly as perhaps some others. Can you explain to me, where does the Office of Racing Integrity (ORI) fit in this now? We're proposed to have a commissioner. Where does ORI fit?

Ms OGILVIE - There will be some structural changes, and I might ask Jason to pick up on this. In summary, there will be structural changes, ORI will effectively become TasRIC and there will be some other structural changes that occur to improve integrity. I might ask Jason to pick up some of the details.

Mr JACOBI - I might call on Justin Helmich in a minute. One of the most significant changes that is recommended in the review is the creation of what is called TasRIC, which is

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an independent team of people, led by an integrity commissioner. The integrity commissioner provides oversight for the integrity and functions of the entire racing industry.

CHAIR - Isn't that what ORI did?

Mr JACOBI - Within Tasracing there will also be an integrity team, led by the director of Integrity, that team will also provide the day-to-day oversight of all three codes of racing. In terms of integrity functions this is probably one of the most significant reforms to the act in a long time. It absolutely turns on its head the oversight of integrity across all three codes of racing.

I will call on Deirdre to add any more detail in relation to that.

Ms WILSON - To add to the minister's comments, what Mr Monteith is proposing, is improvements to the current integrity model. His recommendations are proposing building on the strength of the current model but clarifying roles and responsibilities. A good example is that the Office of Racing Integrity functions around the core integrity functions will remain with the TasRIC, so the powers of investigation.

CHAIR - The name ORI will be gone? Office of Racing Integrity gone? We now call TasRIC?

Ms WILSON - That is correct, TasRIC, the Tasmanian Racing Integrity Commissioner.

In terms of clarity, Mr Monteith, through his review, has indicated that clarity on integrity is really important, so one of the key reforms in this process will be that the daily operations of grading and track work will move into Tasracing so there is integration between thoroughbred, greyhounds and harness racing. Those functions move across. TasRIC will set the integrity standards and animal welfare standards; we will have compliance and audit powers; we will have capacity to undertake investigations and in that way we will provide important oversight of the racing industry, including Tasracing.

He also has proposed through this process reforms to Tasracing's governance. I could explain that more but I am in your hands.

CHAIR - Absolutely, this is significant change and I am not sure there is a budget to facilitate it. That will be an interesting discussion as we move forward, minister.

Ms WILSON - Integral to the reforms and in what he is proposing is that the Tasracing board must have two members that have integrity experience. Secondly, he is proposing a Tasracing integrity committee. Under his proposal this integrity committee will have two independent members appointed, one of whom shall be Chair. They will be appointed by the Minister for Racing.

Two members from the Tasracing board would also sit on that committee. That committee would have oversight by TasRIC - it is an integrated model. He also proposes that there be appointed a Tasmanian Integrity Director, who would report to the Tasracing Integrity Committee. Under that Racing Integrity Director will be a racing integrity unit.

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It is important to note there would be race day stewards transferring from the Office of Racing Integrity and non-race day investigations officers also transferred from ORI. A very important part of his model is that the Racing Integrity Director would report to the Tasmanian Integrity Committee with the CEO of Tasracing only having line [?] responsibility in terms of HR matters.

What this model does and what he is proposing within Tasracing is creating a governance structure that creates separation between integrity and animal welfare functions and the commercial operations of the board. This will require changes to the act, and potentially to the act that is governing Tasracing.

The other point is under his model the Tasmanian Racing Appeal Board remains. Those important checks and balances on the decisions of stewards and determinations under the rules of racing will remain. We have the Tasracing Commissioner, TasRIC, Tasracing governance changes and Tasracing, a pure board. All up, those three elements create the framework for racing integrity and probity going forward under his model.

CHAIR - It's a lot to get your head around in a very short time. It seems to me that is going to be super top-heavy. There is a budget of \$5.5 million for this. Can we have some indication of how this is all going to unfold with a very small increase? When do you plan to have this new arrangement operational,?

Ms OGILVIE - Firstly, as to funding the Office of Racing Integrity has approximately 24 FTEs which is a head count of 45 and an annual budget of approximately \$5.68 million. This is their existing funding arrangements.

These reforms will be funded by Government from existing budgetary allocations and from efficiencies gained in merging Office of Racing Integrity with Tasracing. We do not feel that there is going to be a need for a huge amount of additional funding.

CHAIR - You are going to have to pay a commissioner for a start. I doubt that you will get somebody as a Commissioner for Integrity for a politician's salary and they will need support.

Ms OGILVIE - Absolutely. As I have said, the Office of Racing Integrity does have 24 FTEs already which is a head count of 45 people and an annual budget of \$5.68 million, which is a substantial amount of money.

It is important to recognise in terms of supporting animal welfare, the Government will also ensure in addition to the reforms proposed in the Montieth Report, Tas (inaudible) has staffing with animal welfare policy and regulatory experience. We have committed an additional \$200 000 towards implementation and in particular, animal welfare initiatives. There is additional funding in relation to that \$200 000 for animal welfare. The \$200 000 will go towards the implementation of the reforms with a focus on supporting the policy changes required to implement the reforms and animal welfare initiatives involving NRE Tas and the RSPCA which I think is a very important piece. I have had a chance to exchange some messages with Jan Davis of the RSPCA and she is open to this conversation and I was very grateful for that.

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If there is more you need on the funding side and whether the department is comfortable they can manage this with the existing budget, I perhaps would ask Deirdre or Jason to comment.?

Mr JACOBI - I am entirely comfortable we can manage the implementation of the review and the regulation or the act reforms within our existing budget. In terms of the actual costs of the additional positions, it will only be a very marginal increase in salary costs because one of the positions of the director will be transferred across to Tasracing.

CHAIR - In my contribution to this process last year, minister, and you obviously were not the minister, I quoted from a media report saying that the Office of Racing Integrity was reported as being dysfunctional and the morale had hit rock bottom. Is this report reflective of exactly what was reported?

Ms OGILVIE - I am not aware of exactly what media report you were referring to so I am unable to do a comparison but what I can say, chair, is I believe there has been a general understanding there is a need for change, a need for improvement, a need for a contemporary approach to integrity and animal welfare and management of racing generally.

That is a little bit of my business experience and background and I am very pleased to be taking up the carriage of this reform. I should also mention that ministers who have held this portfolio in the past have been very strategic and very sensible in the way they have paced out the steps along this pathway. I am looking forward to making sure over the coming year - and you have asked a question about how it would rollout - we have those conversations; that we do develop detailed legislation and we also provide a detailed response to the report so you can go through each of those pieces you are concerned about.

I am sorry I cannot answer the question about the media report you are referring to because I don't know what that was.

CHAIR - Well, obviously, the establishment of the review was at concerns on the roles and functions of ORI so do you believe and you have obviously read the report.

Ms OGILVIE - I haven't.

CHAIR - My colleagues here at the table will not have yet, but do you consider that this is an acknowledgement that those reports were absolutely correct it was dysfunctional?

Ms OGILVIE - Chair, what I might do is ask Jason to comment on that.

Mr JACOBI - Over the past six months with the support of the people and culture team in my department and led by Justin, the Director of ORI, we have been working very closely on the culture across ORI. Employees had the opportunity to engage in a variety of workshops and discussions regarding the work environment.

The work is entering the next phase, where agreed values and behaviours are being socialised and integrated across the team. I am very confident Justin has had a significant impact on the culture in ORI. Certainly, any allegations of inappropriate conduct raised with me, I take appropriate action and have done, consistent with relevant policies and employment directions.

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I am entirely confident the culture of ORI is on the improvement and that Justin has had a significant impact on that.

CHAIR - In light of what has just been provided on your behalf, why would this report recommend a Director of Integrity and a Commissioner of Integrity, if the office is fulfilling its roles and functions to the level that is required to present to the Tasmanian community and beyond that our racing has integrity?

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you, Chair. It is really important for integrity in racing and animal welfare and the confidence in the sector, that we have the most contemporary governance and legislative model we can have.

It is timely that we do this work. The work will be detailed. The work has already consulted widely and I believe, with you also, Chair. I am very grateful for your comments, and feedback, but it is very important we have a governance model, that matches the state of the nation when it comes to a contemporary structure.

Those elements are essential. People have been asking for this work to happen and I am very pleased to be able to bring it forward today.

CHAIR - My last question before I open it up to other members. There is a petition being compiled at the moment and I believe it has 13 190 signatures asking for greyhound racing funding to be ceased.

I am interested in your and your Government's position in regard to this? A firm commitment is what I am seeking.

Ms OGILVIE - Petitions are a great way to engage in your democracy and I would say that as a general overview.

Our Government and the racing industry regard the welfare of animals as of critical importance. The vast majority of industry participants provide great care to their dogs. The Government is investing more money than ever before, into greyhound welfare, to ensure dogs are treated with dignity, and care, before, during and after their racing days.

Tasracing, the Office of Racing Integrity and the industry are working together, to examine ways to further improve animal welfare outcomes.

I am aware of the current petition to end public funding of greyhound racing, which is being sponsored by the Leader of the Greens. I am aware of the recent media activity calling on all dog lovers to support the petition.

The Government is a strong supporter of the Tasmanian Racing Industry which makes a vital contribution to our economy and employment, particularly, in regional Tasmania. The Industry generates \$185 million per annum in economic activity and we accept people have different views on the racing industry in Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Government regards the welfare of animals as of critical importance. The Government and Tasracing are investing more money than ever before into animal welfare,

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ensuring racing animals are treated with dignity and care before, during and after their racing days. The Greyhound Adoption Program program is central to this and doing a great job.

To improve transparency on animal welfare, Tasracing is providing information in their annual report on track injuries, euthanasia, retirement, and rehoming statistics. This is now transparently available. The majORity of industry participants provide great care to their animals.

We will, obviously, once the petition is tabled, we will take note of that. But, I do wish to point out the great deal of work that has been done in relation to animal welfare and greyhounds in particular and all of the appropriate statistics are trending in the right direction.

CHAIR - Can I take that as a firm commitment to funding the greyhound industry into the future.

Ms OGILVIE - We will be funding the greyhound industry into the future. There is no desire and no moves to change the deed. The deed of agreement, under which greyhounds are funded is in place until 2029 and there will be no change to funding.

Ms ARMITAGE - Can you give me the numbers of dogs euthanised? I have in 2018-19 and in 2021-30 to date, we are not to the end of the financial year, but can you give me the number to date?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, I have that information for you. I will confirm these are the correct figures. The greyhound industry is working towards zero euthanasia of suitable greyhounds by proactively monitoring breeding rules and supporting adoption programs that socialise greyhounds as pets. Greyhounds can be euthanised for a variety of reasons including serious injuries, medical conditions and unsuitable temperament for adoption.

Ms ARMITAGE - And the number?

Ms OGILVIE - It probably helps if I read the preamble, but I can go straight to numbers if you like, just a bit more information. Racing greyhound euthanasia rates have been trending downward over several years which displays an improved commitment to animal welfare practices within the industry. ORI must be notified when greyhounds are retired from racing and their intended management post retirement, so monitoring the industry is proactive and ongoing. It gives you a sense of confidence about the numbers. New retirement rules have been implemented further reducing the euthanasia rates. The rules require the following prior to the retirement rehoming efforts: that there is a 28-day wind down period, restriction on all racing activities and recording genuine socialisation efforts.

The greyhound euthanasia rates which I do have here, I notice I have some highlighted there. A comparison in the 2021-22 and I realise we are not quite finished that year, we have a number of 39 down from 309 in 2016-17.

Ms ARMITAGE - Perhaps we are looking at different figures. The figures we were given last year and this is after track related euthanising because the figures I have last year from the minister, for 2019-20 there were 18, 2020 there were 13 and at this stage in September last year at Estimates at that stage there was 7.

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Ms OGILVIE - Let me confirm for you and I might ask. On track euthanasia, is that the figure you are after?

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes.

Ms OGILVIE - That is okay, I was giving you the global figure. Between the 1 July 2021 and 31 March 2022, six greyhounds were euthanised on track from almost 9 000 starts following race injuries in accordance with prescribed guidelines. Does that tally?

Ms ARMITAGE - Not really, no because we were told it was seven at September and I am sure there would have been more since.

Ms OGILVIE - Let me read on. Right I can provide further information I am aware now that there was a seventh greyhound, *Fly Calypso*, who was euthanised on track on the 10 May 2022 as a result of injury during racing and comparatively euthanasia numbers in recent years was seven in 2020-21 from more than 12 000 starts, 13 in 2019-20 and 18 in 2018-19.

Ms ARMITAGE - Can you also give me the rehoming statistics?

Ms OGILVIE - For the GAP program?

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes.

CHAIR - Would Brightside farm sanctuary be included in those numbers?

Ms OGILVIE - Tasracing as you know is committed to increasing the number of adoptions for suitable retired racing greyhounds. I have met a few of them and they are beautiful dogs. The Greyhound Adoption Program is a key welfare initiative for the greyhound racing industry and facilitates the rehoming of retired greyhounds and promotes greyhound ownership in the community. On 20 January 2020, following an EOI process Tasracing purchased Tasmania's first ever dedicated greyhound rehoming facility situated at Mangalore in the south of Tasmania. The dedicated facility which is owned and operated by Tasracing, allows the public direct access enabling GAP to better demonstrate to the community the suitability of greyhounds as pets. The facility will be used to continue to run and expand Tasmania's Greyhound Adoption Program and these protocols enable them to address behavioural assessments to ensure a retired greyhound is suitable to be placed in a family home.

The dedicated facility has allowed Tasracing to increase capacity for GAP greyhounds and provides an emergency shelter option which is very important. Tasracing's goal is to reach a rehoming target of more 150 greyhounds annually.

The new rules will provide stronger control around euthanasia and ensure that responsibility for the health and welfare of dogs sits firmly with industry.

Owners must now make every effort to find their greyhounds a suitable, long-term home and must record evidence of their endeavours. Including the rehoming process is a mandatory 28-day wind down period which commences once the wind down notification form has been received by ORI.

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Importantly, from the 2 November 2020, Tasracing will cover the costs of all desexing operations for eligible greyhounds who raced in and are domiciled in Tasmania through the Interim Greyhound Desexing Program.

Ms Lianne Salerno has been appointed to the role of GAP Manager and will commence on the 12 April 2021. Ms Salerno has a strong background in animal health and welfare and she is a qualified vet nurse and currently completing a Bachelor of Veterinary Technology.

On the 4 April Ms Elizabeth Parsons was appointed Animal Behaviourist at GAP, bringing the GAP team to full strength for the first time. Ms Parsons has five years' experience as a dog trainer and completed her Certificate III in Dog Training and Behaviour through the National Dog Training Federation in 2016.

In relation to the data and the facts, in 2019-20 Tasracing spent \$467 389 on GAP.

GAP was funded to \$611 000 in 2020-21 through Tasracing's budget plus a further \$117 000 from the Greyhound Code Funding. GAP has been funded to \$720 000 in 2021-22 through Tasracing's budget plus a further \$119 000 from the Greyhound Code Funding.

Greyhounds retired and entered into GAP. In 2017-18 there were 104 greyhounds that went through the program. In 2018-19 - 73; 2019-20 - 96; 2020-21 - 72; 2021-22, in the year not quite finished - 58.

Greyhounds rehomed through GAP. In 2017-18 - 111; 2018-19 - 89; 2019-20 - 138; 2020-21 - 98; and 2021-22, in the year not quite finished we have 72.

Ms ARMITAGE - I might go back to the other figures you were going to give me regarding the total of euthanised dogs, not just on track, because it might be good to have that on the record.

Ms OGILVIE - I am happy to pull that up. The global figures?

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes, for completeness.

Ms OGILVIE - I think it is important.

I will read them out again if you would like to take note?

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes, that would be good.

Ms OGILVIE - Greyhound euthanasia rates decreasing. In 2016-17 there were 309; 2017-18 there were 198; 2018-19 there were 137; 2019-20 there were 90; 2020-21 there were 40; 2021-22, in the year not yet finished - 39. You can see a trend down.

Ms ARMITAGE - For *Hansard* can you explain what they encompass?

Ms OGILVIE - The global figure?

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes.

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Ms OGILVIE - I might ask Jason for the detail; I do not want to get this incorrect.

Ms ARMITAGE - Just so that anyone reading it can understand what it means.

Ms OGILVIE - I agree.

Mr JACOBI - I call on the Director of Racing, Justin Helmich, to respond.

Mr HELMICH - Greyhounds can be euthanised for a variety of reasons: serious injuries, as indicated in relation to the ones on track; medical conditions that might arise; unsuitable temperament for adoption, if they are put up for adoption but are unsuitable for that, and there are also a variety of other instances where greyhounds might be euthanised. The important thing to add here is that for any greyhound that is euthanised, the request must come through the Director of Racing. I provide authority for each of those instances with the exception of where it occurs on track at the direction of a veterinary surgeon, and it their viewpoint that it is a catastrophic matter at that point in time.

Ms ARMITAGE - Thank you for that. Can I ask a question on a different matter? I have had a concern raised with me regarding the lack of stewards or the heavy workload of the stewards. Can you give me an FTE for stewards and how many cadets you might have as well?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, we can. The full-time staff of the Office of Racing Integrity is currently 23, and we have 16 casual or contract staff. In relation to the management of stewards, vacancies and HR issues, I would refer that one to the department, but I also note that we have a program in place to increase our stewards' capacity. I would like to refer that one to Jason because I think that is to do with internal HR.

Ms ARMITAGE - That's fine. It would be good to know what the full-capacity number of stewards is and whether you have that.

Mr JACOBI - I will defer to the Director of Racing.

Mr HELMICH - A full complement is a racing integrity manager; three chairmen of stewards who manage each code of racing - the greyhound code, the harness code and the thoroughbred code; there are six stipendiary stewards; and currently we have two cadet stewards in line with the Cadet Steward Program also. In addition to those stewards, we also have a support steward program for our casual stewards; we have between 15 and 16 of those currently.

Ms ARMITAGE - We have a full complement? We do not need to employ any more stewards? We are not short of stewards?

Mr HELMICH - The number of stewards we have at this point is adequate to cover our workload.

Ms OGILVIE - I could perhaps add a little additional detail. We have the Cadet Stipendiary Steward Program, which will continue to provide important career pathways for young Tasmanians wanting to work in the industry, with funding secured for three more positions. We are looking to do that succession planning as well. It is important to note that. The 2022-23 Tasmanian Budget does include \$964 000 over four years for additional funding

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for three cadets to learn the trade under the direction of highly qualified and experienced stewards, to set them up for what I hope will be a fulfilling career.

Ms ARMITAGE - The question has been asked by some in the racing industry, is there any point of consumption tax being directed to funding the Office of Racing Integrity - and obviously it has changed its name - in order to provide more stewards and thus reduce their workload? The feeling was that there is considerable workload on the stewards there.

Ms OGILVIE - We have that additional funding for the Cadet Stipendiary Steward Program and I think that is a very good step forward.

Ms ARMITAGE - I am happy to ask the question about the point of consumption tax if you would rather I asked it in Grants and Subsidies.

Ms OGILVIE - Well no, it doesn't -

Ms ARMITAGE - If you have the answer there.

Ms OGILVIE - I am very happy to run through the point of consumption tax. I don't mind that it is not relevant to this topic, but I am very happy to provide some information. The Government's point of consumption tax on wagering was implemented with effect from 1 January 2020. The POCT is based on the residence of the customer, as we know, where you reside when you're gaming. It expands the taxation base to include other online betting operators not licensed in Tasmania, so that is a step forward. It's currently set at a rate of 15 per cent of the net wagering revenues of betting companies. South Australia and Western Australia have the same rate. Queensland had 15 per cent but has recently announced an increase to 20 per cent commencing on 1 December. Victoria and New South Wales have a 10 per cent model.

There is an annual tax-free threshold of \$150 000 of net wagering revenue to ensure smaller betting operators, particularly Tasmanian on-course bookmakers, are not captured.

The reform was informed by the historical licensing arrangements with Ubet Tasmania Pty Ltd for the provision of wagering services in Tasmania.

The Government shares 80 per cent of the additional revenue with the racing industry. In the 2020-21 financial year, point of consumption tax revenue of \$14.65 million was received, which was \$2.65 million above budget. Based on the point of consumption tax revenue for 2021, an amount of \$6.83 million was shared with Tasracing and industry. The contribution to the industry in the 2021 year was \$2.537 million, which is based on that 80 per cent of additional revenue received in 2019-20.

In the first nine months of financial year 2022, point of consumption tax at \$11.177 million is actually tracking slightly ahead of financial year 2021 revenue, which was \$11.165 million at the end of March 2022.

It is probably good to note that the point of consumption revenue is updated monthly for full transparency on the Treasury website. Feel free to look at that as well. I will note that the Tasracing share of point of consumption tax grant deed will expire on 30 June 2022. Renewal

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of the grant deed will be considered following the completion of the review of the Racing Regulation Act. There might be conversations that need to be had in parallel about that.

Ms ARMITAGE - For my constituent, the percentage of point of consumption tax being distributed as grant funding put investment in stakes infrastructure and animal welfare was - ?

Ms OGILVIE - To the industries, 80 per cent.

Ms HOWLETT - Can you outline to the committee the additional opportunities for greyhounds to be trained and assessed for suitability to be without a muzzle? How is that being provided after their racing career?

Ms OGILVIE - Greyhound welfare is a high priority for the Government and we're investing more money than ever before into greyhound welfare to ensure that dogs are treated with dignity and care before, during and after their racing career.

The Director of Racing is responsible under the Dog Control Act 2000 to approve a program in respect of the training and assessment of greyhounds for suitability to be without a muzzle.

There are now five approved programs in Tasmania: the Tasracing-operated Greyhound Adoption Program - GAP, RSPCA Tasmania, Brightside Dogs Home Tasmania and Great Life Pet Prep.

Once a greyhound has gone through the approved assessment program and been provided with a unique collar, this signifies to the public and authorities that the greyhound has successfully passed and is not legally required to wear a muzzle. The Office of Racing Integrity is responsible for approving the design of the collar, which must include a number specific to each greyhound and identifies the approved program. There are only three colours that have been approved by ORI. Other than the colour, each collar is unique with its own organisation's logo on it identifying which organisation the greyhound has been rehomed from. If an incident occurs, the greyhound can be identified from the logo as to which rehoming organisation it comes from.

It was determined by the Director of Racing that no organisation other than GAP should have its own unique-coloured collar. This would limit the number of coloured collars out in the public, eliminating any confusion and not diminish the importance of the collar which it represents. A greyhound that has successfully passed the assessment can be out in the public, muzzle free.

There has been a suite of new welfare rules around the retirement of greyhounds from the industry and their preparation for rehoming. The new rules provide stronger controls around euthanasia and ensure that the responsibility for the health and welfare of the dogs sits firmly with the industry.

Owners must now make every effort to find their greyhound a suitable long-term home, and must record evidence of their endeavours. Included in the rehoming process, is a mandatory 28-day wind-down period, which commences once the wind-down notification form has been received by ORI.

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Desexing is compulsory for all retired greyhounds. This is now undertaken and funded by industry, either through GAP or by the owner, prior to being rehomed through an alternative animal adoption agency or third party.

Mr WILLIE - It seems like the RSPCA is moving from a service-level agreement to acknowledgement in the act. Is that just an acknowledgement of their existing powers, or does it go further than that?

Ms OGILVIE - There is an opportunity to enhance and improve the RSPCA's capacity, and when it comes to funding animal welfare measures, there is additional funding that I spoke about earlier in this session.

Mr WILLIE - So they will access that \$200 000 and it is part of their greater role in the act?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, that is correct. That is the goal. It is a complex rethink of the legislation and structural change. I will ask the secretary to pick up on that issue. I think the animal welfare piece you have identified is very important.

Mr JACOBI - Under the proposed model, TasRIC will have extensive powers to set standards and oversight, of both Tasracing and the racing integrity industry generally.

In supporting animal welfare, the Government will also ensure that in addition to the reforms proposed in the Monteith review, TasRIC will have staffing with animal welfare policy and regulatory experience. TasRIC will have capacity, at the direction of the minister or on a motion, to investigate animal welfare matters.

Importantly, the Monteith review proposes that the power for independent investigation of animal welfare matters, under the Animal Welfare Act 1993 will continue by Biosecurity Tasmania and the RSPCA, and will be enhanced.

The Government is also committed to improvements to the Animal Welfare Act to provide authorised officers, including RSPCA representatives with powers of emergency entry and the power to take possession of animals where authorised officers reasonably believe the animal to be at imminent risk and consider any dog welfare reforms may be required. These reforms are being progressed by the department as a priority.

Mr WILLIE - I guess the follow-up there, minister, is trust either way is incredibly important, as is a social licence for the industry. If there is a particular incident, what protections will be in the act to preserve that relationship? I would imagine if it is particularly controversial, the RSPCA would come under pressure if they are having trouble investigating?

Ms OGILVIE - Sorry, just to clarify your question, trust between RSPCA and the industry? I might ask the secretary to address that.

Mr JACOBI - I will ask Deirdre Wilson, deputy secretary, to respond.

Ms WILSON - First of all I will start at the principle level. Animal welfare is really a key function of what we do in the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania. Through Biosecurity Tasmania, we have a service level agreement already in place

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with the RSPCA Tasmania. That sets the agreement regarding which elements of animal welfare are looked after between Biosecurity Tasmania, RSPCA Tasmania and the Office of Racing Integrity.

In these reforms, there is a solid basis already through that memorandum of understanding for animal welfare in the investigation of animal welfare matters.

Regarding the recommendations which the Government will provide detailed responses to, Mr Monteith is suggesting that the RSPCA could have an embedded role in the relationship. I believe that the critical element to that, and is acknowledged is that TasRIC will chair biannual consultative meetings with NRE Tas, Biosecurity Tasmania, the RSPCA and Tasracing, including the Office of Racing Integrity, which would allow for a cooperative relationship to be further fostered and developed. In terms of the statutory role of the relevant parties, they will have statutory functions. There is no doubt that, for example, if Biosecurity Tasmania, when you look at the compliance triangle we look at education, informing, ensuring that people are actually informed as to what they need to do to meet their obligations. On occasions we have to wield our stick and we have to take action.

In that relationship between the various parties and the racing industry, I see that no different in Biosecurity Tasmania. You build a foundation of trust, you work cooperatively but if there needs to be action, particularly under the Animal Welfare Act, there is a statutory obligation and that will occur. Hopefully, we have answered that question.

Mr WILLIE - The follow-up question is, when will these legislative changes be tabled in parliament? Do you have a time frame for that?

Ms OGILVIE - It is a good question. The first step is to release the report, then to release a detailed response from government. We have planned out some stages of the review. I will run through those for you if that will assist. We will soon release our detailed report to each of the recommendation so that will give you more detail in relation to the specifics. Amendments to the Racing Regulation Act 2004 and potentially the Racing (Tasracing Pty Ltd) Act 2009 will be required. Consultation will occur on the draft bills to implement the revised integrity model and the new model could be in place by mid-to-late 2020-23, subject to parliamentary processes of which we are all part.

CHAIR - It will be interesting to see how the industry actually receives the report. That will be one for a later discussion.

Mr VALENTINE - I have been contacted by people with quite a number of questions. I had to rework them because they needed that. They are important questions, and I think this report probably addresses some of the questions but if I can run through them and get your response.

CHAIR - It would have been useful to have the report yesterday.

Mr VALENTINE - It would have been. The first question was, when will the review of the racing regulations be released to the public? Supposed to be reported by the end of March but that is now on the table.

Ms OGILVIE - It should be out there now.

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Mr VALENTINE - I am sure people will find that of interest. The next was about the RSPCA's involvement. Given an animal welfare committee exists in other states, will the Government commit to establishing one in Tasmania which includes the RSPCA and other independent stakeholders, for example, researchers and ethics advisers, et cetera? You might want to address that in relation to what you have just released.

Ms OGILVIE - I believe the new structure that we propose will provide opportunities for broader engagement and there is a desire to elevate the status and role of the RSPCA within the new structure. I am not an expert in the RSPCA's operations but I would assume that they have stretch into research and all of those areas themselves as a national organisation.

We will be having deep conversations with the RSPCA. I have touched based with Jan Davis last night by way of a text exchange and I think she has welcomed the new conversation that we have started today. I will also ask the secretary - perhaps he may refer it to Deidre - to talk more about this elevation and enhancement of the RSPCA's role.

Mr JACOBI - I can confirm the minister's earlier comments, there will be a policy position in TasRIC and the policy position will have dedicated animal welfare expertise. We will be seeking people to be sitting in TasRIC with that knowledge.

Mr VALENTINE - I note through your earlier comments, minister, that the Tas board was going to have two people on it with integrity experience. What about people with animal welfare experience because that has been something is currently not the case? I am not intimately appraised of what training or experience of people who are on the current board, but can you let us know whether this new body will have animal welfare representation?

Ms OGILVIE - I do not want to preempt where the structure will go, but my general view about boards is you need a skills-based board. For me, animal welfare is a deep matter of integrity and I would hope these new roles are able to work across both of these areas. Without preempting what the final structure will be or who might be recruited, give you a real sense the welfare of animals is absolutely paramount and is the same level as the concern we have for integrity.

Secretary, would there be more that you would like to add to that?

Mr JACOBI - All I would add is the important factor of animal welfare experience on the TasRIC - that is where the integrity function lies and where it is most important to have animal welfare expertise. That is not to say it could not exist on the board and we could not actually appoint board members with that expertise, but the Tasric is where it should lie.

Mr VALENTINE - At the coalface is where it is important, if you call that the coalface but I will leave it for others to decide whether that is sufficient or not. They might comment on that.

Ms OGILVIE - There might be some dialogue about it.

Mr VALENTINE - Will the Government commit to providing detailed information that is readily accessible on a quarterly basis to the public on all funding provided to the industry, life cycle data, racing incidents, et cetera?

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Ms OGILVIE - There are three parts to that question. My understanding is we currently are providing racing incidents. It depends how you define that. I did run through the euthanasia rates. Was it broader than, Mr Valentine?

Mr VALENTINE - I do not have the deepest knowledge on that. This is the question coming to me.

Ms OGILVIE - The three parts are: incidents, life cycle data, and funding.

Mr VALENTINE - Funding provided to the industry; life cycle data and racing incidents.

CHAIR - On a quarterly basis because it is provided in the annual report?

Mr VALENTINE - But it is not readily available according to the people, obviously, who are asking the questions.

Ms OGILVIE - I understand, thank you.

Because there are three parts to that question I will ask the secretary to talk about the current arrangements regarding the release of information on incidents and life cycle data and then perhaps we can deal with the funding one as the last element.

Mr JACOBI - I thank the member for the question. I call on Justin Helmich, Director of Racing, to respond to each of those.

CHAIR - You have a reasonably strong voice, Justin, but could you choose a microphone will be useful.

Mr HELMICH - In relation to racing incidents - all stewards' reports for each code are routinely reported on effectively, within two days of the race meets. Those reports will contain details related to incidents that occur within racing. In addition, where there are instances which occur outside of race day, sometimes those matters also are reflected within the stewards' reports often.

Mr VALENTINE - Does that include euthanised animals, whether it be thoroughbred or greyhounds?

Mr HELMICH - If there are incidents in relation to animal welfare, similar to the matter related to Tah Bernard earlier in the year. That report was released publicly once it was completed and it is my expectation that type of thing would continue in those sorts of instances. As I understand it, Tasracing release an amount of data on a half yearly or quarterly basis - I will have to confirm that.

Ms OGILVIE - Tasracing, in scrutinising another forum -

Mr HELMICH - With relation to your question regarding life cycle, can I get some clarification on what you seek there?

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Mr VALENTINE - I wish I could give you that clarification but quite clearly it is an industry term - lifecycle data. I suppose it is in relation to greyhounds possibly and from start to finish they are tracking them during their lifecycle as to where they are commencing life, what steps there are involved in terms of the training, racing, and after-racing?

Mr HELMICH - We are talking about the greyhound code - the Office of Racing Integrity through the OzChase database, the database which manages all of those details and records that come in to the Office of Racing Integrity such as wind-down records, breeding records and those types of matters.

Mr VALENTINE - Are those publicly available?

Mr HELMICH - They are not publicly available. It would be a significant undertaking to publish that on a dog by dog basis I expect, but they are not publicly available currently.

Mr VALENTINE - Okay. What about thoroughbreds in that regard?

Mr HELMICH - Similar situation to throughbred and harness code. We have separate databases for each of those which are national databases. Each of those databases would have the information recorded. Some of the information is inputted by stewards into those databases, and also as I understand it, the various principal racing authorities. Also, the owners can add details in relation to where animals are within their lifecycle, if that is what the question is?

Mr VALENTINE - When will the review of animal welfare in the racing industry be completed? Recently commissioned by Tasracing and will the minister commit to publicly releasing the report.

Ms OGILVIE - This is a Tasracing review?

Mr VALENTINE - The title is a Review of Animal Welfare in the Racing Industry.

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you. I will see if I can find some information for you. Yes. The Tasmanian Government is committed to improving animal welfare outcomes in the racing industry across all three codes. The Government and Tasracing are investing, as I have said, more money than ever before into greyhound and horse welfare to ensure they are treated with dignity and care, before, during, and after their racing days. In the financial year 2022-23, an additional \$700 000 will be attributed to animal welfare from revenue obtained from the Point of Consumption Tax to Tasracing. This allocation of resources directly supports animal welfare outcomes. The funding will be used to continue the redevelopment of the GAP property at Mangalore and execute the short-term and strategic programs developed from the animal welfare review that is currently being undertaken by Dr David Sykes.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes it must be.

Ms OGILVIE - The review will be completed by the end of July. Animal welfare, as I have said, and reiterated, and believe is the highest priority for us as a Government, Tasracing, and the Office of Racing Integrity.

There is a little bit more on what we do on animal welfare.

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Mr VALENTINE - It was just a question. Will you commit to releasing it publicly?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, I believe that is the intention.

Mr VALENTINE - Okay. Thank you. When will the rules of racing be updated to bring them in line with other jurisdictions, especially concerning animal welfare?

Ms OGILVIE - Now that is a good and detailed question, but I will ask the Acting Secretary who has the detail on that.

Mr JACOBI - I will call on the Director of Racing to respond.

Mr HELMICH - Can I get some additional clarification in relation to what that question is?

Mr VALENTINE - When will the rules of racing be updated to bring them in line with other jurisdictions, especially concerning animal welfare? It is obviously the use of the whip.

Ms OGILVIE - I think it is whether they will be.

Mr VALENTINE - The use of the whip, those sorts of things.

Mr HELMICH - Each of the thoroughbred, harness and greyhound codes have national rules. They Greyhound Australasia rules, the Harness Racing Australia rules, and the racing rules under the thoroughbred code, those rules apply across the country. In addition to that, the principle racing authority, being Tasracing, has the capacity to make local rules in consultation with the Director of Racing

CHAIR - Like the use of whips and the like.

Mr HELMICH - Indeed yes, and we can create additional rules, either to provide additional capacity on top of the national rules or alternatively to alter them. There is the capacity within the national rules to create additional scope within those. The answer to your question is, currently Tasracing and the Office of Racing Integrity administer the race meetings and the rules of racing in relation to animal welfare in accordance with the national rules.

Mr VALENTINE - You don't think that Tasmania will be adding any other rules to those to suit public sentiment?

Mr HELMICH - It is a matter for Tasracing to make additions to the local rules. Those are done in consultation with industry and in relation to where issues are raised; for example, I will go back to the Tah Bernard investigation in relation to that matter. I made some recommendations in that report; those recommendations have been supported in principle by Tasracing and they will become a part of local rules or alternatively Tasracing policy.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you.

CHAIR - I would like to ask, minister, about the increase in annual stakes across the three codes. Last year, the minister gave us some information that for all three codes there would be an increase of 16 per cent over four years and last year they received a 6 per cent

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increase. Can I have the state figures and those increased numbers for this year and the forward Estimates?

Ms OGILVIE - I believe I have the information for you and we go across the three codes; you might have to bear with me.

CHAIR - I was beginning to think that there was only the greyhound industry in this industry.

Ms OGILVIE - Let's start with greyhounds. I am very happy to convey this information; it is not relevant to this topic because it really is a Tasracing GBE scrutiny question, but it is not a problem to answer it here.

CHAIR - With all due respect, minister, the industry is funded significantly by the Tasmanian taxpayer; hence the reason you are going to give us the answer.

Ms OGILVIE - Correct. I am very happy to answer it, but it is worth noting. Racing is a critical industry for Tasmania as it generates more than \$185 million a year in economic activity in the state. Importantly, 38 per cent benefits rural and regional areas. More than 5800 Tasmanians are either employed in the industry or are direct participants, with 63 per cent of those in regional communities. The industry sustains 1515 FTEs, of which 64 per cent are a direct result of racing industry activity. Our support for the industry gives it the confidence to continue growing with the Government and our support, with investment including an annual increase in stakes across all three racing codes of 16 per cent over four years, including 10 per cent to 11.7 per cent in 2021-22.

I am advised that Tasracing provides funding for stake money through the code funding allocation which is made to each code. Stakes increased by -

CHAIR - In my view, not equitable either, minister, but we will go on, that is not your view.

Ms OGILVIE - You may wish to write to me on that matter, Chair. Stakes increased by 7.71 per cent for the 2021-22 season, with this amounting to a \$384 892 increase to stakes. The stakes for the heats of the three group races - Devonport Chase, Hobart 1 000 and Launceston Cup - increased by an additional \$2000 per heat. In addition, all graded events and feature events linked to graded races, excluding short sprint races, increased by \$150 per race. The Government also announced a further 4 per cent increase to stakes from 1 January 2022 and this amounted to an annualised increase of \$215 179 or for the rest of the year, \$111 000. This resulted in a total stake increase of \$140 for all races, excluding group race finals. After the January increase of 4 per cent to stakes, the total stake money forecast to be paid is \$5 662 058.

That was for greyhounds. Would you like me to turn to harness racing?

Ms OGILVIE - I will not go through all the preamble details as well, but I will give the stake money elements.

Stake money is through the code funding allocation. The stake money allocation in the harness code for 2021-22 increased 6 per cent to \$6 891 539, with a further 4.3 per cent increase received effective from 1 January 2022, taking the annualised figure to \$7 167 203.

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The industry opted to allocate the initial increase to the following: base stakes to increase \$8750 to \$9000; maiden and open class races to increase \$8750 to \$9900; double O Country Cups to increase \$12 000 to \$14 000, and those Country Cups are: St Marys Cup, North East Pacing Club (NEPC) Cup, Burnie Cup, Carrick Cup, Brighton Cup, New Norfolk Cup, Ulverstone Cup, Sheffield Cup, and Meander Valley Cup -

CHAIR - As you can see, that is why I have an interest.

Ms OGILVIE - I can see now why. Very good.

The January increases saw the funds allocated to the following: Base stakes to increase - Secondary meetings \$5750 to \$5950, King Island, \$3400 to \$3600; introduction of new TASBRED series - 3-year-old and older TASBRED horses, no more than two life-time wins, \$12 000 per heat and \$20 000 finals to be held for both sexes.

Double O feature events to increase - Hobart Pacing Cup \$25 000 to \$40 000, Devonport Cup \$30 000 to \$40 000, George Johnson \$20 000 to \$30 000, Tasmanian Oaks \$30 000 to \$40 000, Tasmanian Derby \$30 000 to \$40 000, Tasmania Cup \$75 000 to \$100 000, and Easter Cup \$75 000 to \$100 000.

The following feature events have been noted for stakes increases in financial year 2023: Sires' Stakes Final \$50 000 to \$60 000, The Golden Apple \$30 000 to \$50 000, Golden Girls \$12 000 to \$20 000, and Golden Slipper \$15 000 to \$20 000.

I am glad that is all on *Hansard* and you will be able to refer to the details there.

CHAIR - And the thoroughbreds.

Ms OGILVIE - The last one, thoroughbreds.

The stake money allocation in the thoroughbred code for 2021-22 increased 7.7 per cent to \$14 135 714, with a further 4 per cent increase received effective from 1 January 2022, taking the annualised figure to \$14 701 143.

If you would like further detail, I can go through a bit more.

The additional funds were directed to increases to base stakes and selected feature races in two-staged increases.

Those stakes were increased from: MDN to BM70 increased from \$20 000 to \$22 500, Aged MDN increased from \$20 500 to \$25 000, CL3 to BM71+ increased from \$20 500 to \$25 000, Age HPC increased from \$21 000 to \$27 000, Open HCP increased from \$21 000 to \$30 000.

The following future races were increased: New Market HCP raised from \$100 000 to \$125 000, Summer Cup raised from \$50 000 to \$75 000, three-year-old classic raised from \$50 000 to \$75 000, St Leger raised from \$30 000 to \$50 000, Tasmanian Stakes raised from \$100 000 to \$125 000, Tasmanian Guineas raised from \$100 000 to \$125 000, Thomas Lyons raised from \$100 000 to \$125 000, and Mowbray Stakes raised from \$100 000 to \$125 000

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CHAIR - Thank you very much, minister.

Ms ARMITAGE - If I can take you to page 194 in budget paper no. 2 volume 1. The swabs taken by stewards, I thought it was interesting to notice that the actual in 2019-20 were 3070, and I do note the notes that it is both animals and humans. The target is 3500 in 2021-22, and 2022-23 the actual was 4249. Why were so many swabs taken when the target is actually quite a lot less?

Ms OGILVIE - I will ask the acting secretary, as that goes to operational matters.

Mr JACOBI - I'm deferring to Justin Helmich, Director of Racing.

Mr HELMICH - The number of swabs taken by stewards in 2021, in accordance with the paper is 4249, the target was 3500. Effectively, the number of swabs that are taken is largely dictated by the number of races that occur across the plethora of race meetings that are run each year.

As a general rule, in thoroughbreds, at least one horse is swabbed in each race, and the same in harness in addition to additional swabs that are taken in relation to TCO2 which is bicarbonate soda. In the greyhound code, a minimum of eight swabs is taken at each race meeting. That figure is largely dictated by the number of races that are done, and also the budget that is allocated to it.

Ms ARMITAGE - Were there more races in that financial year? Obviously, you have a target for a reason, you are assuming you know how many races you're going to have. It still doesn't answer why the target is 3500, because you would know how many races you were going to have each year, so if its dictated by the number of races.

The question is, the answer given is that it is dictated by the number of races. Obviously when you put your targets, you know how many races you're going to have each year. Your target is 3500. My question was and I can understand the answer that was given, that it is dictated by the number of races. My question is your target is 3500. When you put your target together you know how many races you're going to have, yet there were 1249 more swabs. If I can just have any understanding.

Ms OGILVIE - It's probably a good thing that there is additional testing.

Mr JACOBI - I am advised that the 3500 is because there is still some uncertainty about the number of races that will be scheduled next year. It is an approximate between the target actual received in the 2020-21 year and what we anticipate we can reach as a target in 2021-22 but it is still subject to the scheduling of the races.

Ms ARMITAGE - In 2019-20 it was 3070. It is just such a huge jump. So there were a lot more races then in 2021, is that to do with COVID-19? I don't want to give you the answers.

Mr HELMICH - Certainly, there are some fluctuations in race meetings that were abandoned as a result of COVID. In addition, the Office of Racing Integrity has over a period of time tested additional matters within the budget in terms of the addition of TCO2 testing, on a more global basis, especially within the budget in terms of the addition of TCO2 testing on a more global basis, especially within the harness code. That testing is not as expensive as full-

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scale testing of urine samples of horses within the thoroughbred category, which get a full screening in terms of drugs. TCO2 testing can be done more efficiently but it is a very good indicator of where horses or animals are being manipulated.

Ms ARMITAGE - I was interested to see that humans were tested as well, and they have tested for drug testing or alcohol. What were the humans tested for?

Ms OGILVIE - I would be happy for you to continue.

Mr HELMICH - Certainly, there are a number of substances which are also unlawful for humans to have within their system. Most of those are also illegal generally but they would be related to matters where jockeys, or particularly drivers who we target for alcohol testing and also urine screening for illicit substances - methamphetamine, cocaine and those types of things. That's included within the total testing amounts.

Ms ARMITAGE - Just of interest, you test greyhounds as well, I would imagine?

Mr HELMICH - Yes, absolutely, greyhounds. I have spoken significantly about horses here. Greyhounds get tested, a minimum of eight greyhounds per meeting. Normally, there are 10 or 11 meets. We tend to test the majority of the winners of greyhound races, as well as pre-race swabs in addition to those but we get a sample across at each and every meeting. We don't tend to test greyhounds for TCO2 because it is not something that generally gets added in the greyhound code.

Ms ARMITAGE - What is the cost of a swab? I know if you look at police testing drivers, depending on the type of test, it is quite substantial per test.

Mr HELMICH - The total budget for this is about \$600 000 a year within the Office of Racing Integrity. The cost of the analysis of an individual swab can vary. If it's a full screening in relation to all prohibited substances it can be around \$120. The Office of Racing Integrity currently is consulting with industry in moving towards saliva swabbing for human samples. As you've indicated, certainly it's an extensive cost for Tasmania Police but it would enable us to use that as a screening process to determine whether or not there is likely to be -

Ms ARMITAGE - And easier screening.

Mr HELMICH - Correct. At initial screening if it came up as a positive there would still need to be a formal screening based on urine but it is about a one-to-six cost cheaper to move to saliva screening. We are currently consulting with the industry at this point in time and I understand, it's been largely supported.

Ms ARMITAGE - I am assuming some of the follow-ups won't be blood tests. Is \$600 000 sufficient or do you need more?

Mr HELMICH - I consider that that is a sufficient amount, based on the work that the stewards do on the ground and, in terms of the amount of processing of the animals that they can do at the racecourses.

Ms ARMITAGE - With regard to the suspensions and the disqualifications, and the fines imposed by stewards, are you able to give some idea of what some of them might be? I noticed

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that they are up considerably - in 2019-20, 24, 23, 25, 44. I am not sure whether that's because there were more races in 2020-21, again possibly to do with COVID-19 but I will let you answer that.

Ms OGILVIE - I do have some information I can provide on that.

The Office of Racing Integrity is responsible for maintaining the probity and integrity of the thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing industries in Tasmania. ORI has four performance measures relating to its enforcement functions. Breaches of the racing rules vary from year to year and can be influenced by factors such as the number of races held - as we've discussed - detections, education and contemporary interpretation of the rules.

For the period 1 July 2021 to 31 March 2022, 286 fines, suspensions and disqualifications have been issued by stewards. The performance measure target being 450 infringements imposed for the entire financial year. For the same period there have also been 151 reprimands. Factors, depending on the rule breach, considerations are, but are not limited to: an early plea, degree of culpability, offence record, deterrence factors, personal circumstances, national and local penalty precedents.

For the period 1 July 2021 to 31 March 2022, 10 decisions by ORI stewards were appealed to the Tasmanian Racing Appeals Board. Options open to the TRAB are: to dismiss an appeal against a decision in the favour of the stewards, to uphold an appeal against a decision in the favour of the participant, or to uphold or vary a penalty. Eight of the 10 matters appealed were in relation to the decision of the stewards and the penalty. Two of the 10 matters were appeals in relation to the penalty only.

I do have summary to be captured on *Hansard*, you might want to come back to it later, stewards' decisions appealed there were eight, penalty only appeals there were two. And the breakdown is: one was withdrawn, one appeal against a steward decision was upheld, five had penalties varied - that does include one decision received in July from an appeal lodged in the previous financial year - two are to be heard, one was dismissed in the steward's favour, one decision was reserved.

Additionally, between 1 July and 31 March 2022, one licensing panel decision has been appealed to the TRAB which was then subsequently withdrawn. The number of suspensions, disqualifications, fines, and appeals are largely beyond the control of ORI. ORI continues to focus on continued improvement of the decisionmaking proficiency of the stewarding staff and the Director of Racing actively reviews all stewards' enquiries and appeals to determine if practices need to be improved.

Ms ARMITAGE - Do you have some advice on the reasons for the suspensions, disqualifications, the reason that the stewards

Ms OGILVIE - Individual circumstances, I will not go into those.

Ms ARMITAGE - Not individual. I am not asking individual, there are 544. I am asking what were the majority actually for?

Ms OGILVIE - Themes, is that what you are after?

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Ms ARMITAGE - Obviously, the reason behind the steward issuing an infringement.

Ms OGILVIE - I will refer that to the department, thank you.

Ms ARMITAGE - To give an indication of what the majority were for.

Mr HELMICH - There is a broad range of offences or breaches of the rules of racing across all three codes. The stewards review each and every race and indeed behaviour outside of race meets to make sure those matters are complied with. A lot of the suspensions, disqualifications and fines that are imposed tend to be about rider or driver behaviour. It can be things such as failing to ride a mount out, careless driving and those types of matters and in some, instances whip use. There are also a number of matters in relation to drugs that get dealt with. The minister has already put on the record, in relation to a number of the penalties, but the suspensions or the penalties issued by the stewards are done in line with what the determination of the panel is and that is informed largely by precedent. They consider the circumstances as the minister has already referred. They consider the circumstances of what has occurred, the severity of what has occurred and then they align that with precedential cases that have occurred either in Tasmania or in other jurisdictions and come up with a decision.

Ms OGILVIE - It is a quasi-judicial decisionmaking process. Quite legal.

Ms ARMITAGE - Thank you.

Mr VALENTINE - I do appreciate you tabled some information this morning. The question is there is currently no readily available current and consistent information on the GAP program including details such as all funding given to the program, the number of dogs moving through the program, retired, not in the program or rehomed. Will you support the provision of such publicly available data? Clearly, you have given us some information this morning, but will you support the provision of that on an ongoing basis?

Ms OGILVIE - I did provide you with the numbers. There is more information I can provide and will start with that. Tasracing, as I have been at pains to point out is committed to increasing the number of adoptions for suitable retired racing greyhounds. The Greyhound Adoption Program is a key welfare initiative for the greyhound racing industry and I am really pleased to see recently some of our good corporate citizens getting onboard with that GAP program.

GAP facilitates the rehoming of retired greyhounds and promotes greyhound ownership in the community. We went through the EOI process in 2020 in which Tasracing purchased our first ever dedicated greyhound rehoming facility.

CHAIR - It took about four years to finally get it.

Ms OGILVIE - I think everybody is happy we have it though. I am really aware it is something we are continuing to work on. It is a dedicated facility and it is wonderful we have it in place.

CHAIR - On the Mangalore straight..

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Ms OGILVIE - Yes, which is very good. It does increase our capacity for GAP greyhounds to come through the system and to be provided emergency shelter options. In relation to the figures I always like to err on the side of more transparency. I was very happy to provide the figures today, but I have a little caution, it does sit within Tasracing. I am very happy to speak to Tasracing to see if they would, as a matter of policy, release figures more often than in an annual report. I am very happy to do that, Mr Valentine and take that on board. That is probably the right way to go.

Mr VALENTINE - The important thing is the figures are available and people do have an interest in these things as you would understand. The Dogs Homes of Tasmania, Brightside, RSPCA and Grey Pet Life Prep (inaudible), as you mentioned earlier, are all accredited greyhound rehoming programs but are not funded in any way by Government. Can you tell us why that is the case?

CHAIR - I thought Brightside did get some funding in the past.

Ms OGILVIE - Everybody is absolutely doing their best and hearts are in the right place. The dedicated facility is the GAP facility funded by the racing funding. I am going to ask the deputy secretary if he has information on what, if any, funding arrangements are in place outside of the GAP facility.

Mr JACOBI - I am not aware of any other funding arrangements outside of the GAP facility. This particular program run by these independent organisations is an important part of our response to animal welfare. The funding for those organisations is distributed through Tasracing.

Mr VALENTINE - Quite clearly, if they are doing a job as equally as important it would be good they get some support.

Ms OGILVIE - GAP is obviously is the anointed organisation. I do have more information I can share with you. It is in relation to the de-sexing program which sits within GAP and a funding element provided. In relation to numbers going through, the Greyhound Adoption Program really is our key welfare initiative for the greyhound racing industry. It is given that prime role and it facilitates the rehoming of retired greyhounds and promotes greyhound ownership in the community.

Mr Valentine, that is not to say that everybody else who is doing a good job is not doing a fantastic job. The purchase of our facility at Mangalore was a key element in funding and investing in the GAP program which is the one that we fund as our prime facility. It has a kennel capacity of 27 and an emergency shelter option and it has a facility kennel licence for 100 dogs. I think it is probably a little larger than others. I want to be at pains to point out that all of the organisations are doing a good job but it has enabled our GAP staff to better demonstrate the suitability of greyhounds as pets by allowing the public direct access to greyhounds so it certainly has that element as well.

I can share that Tasracing is committed to expanding the GAP facility and has engaged engineers and planners to design plans and build a new kennel block, new administration block and new car park. The kennel block will almost double the current GAP capacity and the plans are in the final stages prior to a development application being submitted.

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I can also say, Mr Valentine, that only recently has GAP become fully staffed due to a number of reasons, including COVID-19 reasons and staff suitability. That does help a little bit. It might not be the answer you were looking for.

Mr VALENTINE - That's okay. Well, it's not okay; it is what it is. You state that the Government regards the welfare of animals as critical and I think that's supported by the people, given the numbers who are signing petitions and those sorts of things -

CHAIR - Some 13 191.

Mr VALENTINE - Is that what it is today? The issue of straight tracks, a lot of greyhounds are suffering as a result of curved tracks and leg breaks and those sorts of things. If you have figures then that's fine.

Ms OGILVIE - I do.

Mr VALENTINE - Has the issue of the track design been to the fore and is there any move to improve that circumstance?

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you, Mr Valentine. Certainly, track design is a question that has received quite a lot of interest.

Tasracing and the industry are working together to examine ways to modernise the sport of greyhound racing and to improve animal welfare outcomes. As part of this broad piece of work, improving track safety is an ongoing agenda item for Tasracing and Tasracing has developed a wide arm lure for use in racing and trialling. This has been implemented at both the Launceston and Hobart tracks, along with engineering changes to the catching pen gates to accommodate the lure. This technology is aimed at reducing the risk of greyhounds bunching at the start and on the turn. I think you were concerned about the turns, Mr Valentine.

Tasracing has implemented track benchmarking and testing procedures to provide a better, more consistent and thus safer racing surface for greyhound racing.

Tasracing has had all race tracks reviewed by national consultants to ensure best practice maintenance and preparation of the racing surface. Whilst the introduction of straight tracks was believed to be the best option to reduce stress on greyhounds and reduce injuries, it has been shown that appropriately designed single-turn tracks can have the same result.

It is Tasracing's responsibility to examine all options to improve animal welfare so any new track constructed in Tasmania will be in line with best practice for track design. In line with this, Tasracing has contracted Prof David Eager to carry out the design of the new greyhound track as part of the north-west tracks project. Initial estimates place construction of a new standalone greyhound track and facilities at between \$6-9 million.

Tasracing continues to focus on improvements in welfare with the recent implementation of the Greyhound Recovery Rebate Scheme, targeted at reducing the instances of euthanasia at race meetings due to injury by providing financial support for the repair and rehabilitation of those injuries.

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Tasracing has introduced increased funding to the on-track greyhound race injury rebate scheme payment to cover vet expenses from \$1500 to \$3000 per greyhound per injury. The scheme also now covers official trials.

Tasracing has undertaken a review of its tracks with Prof Eager. A survey of all tracks has been conducted and Prof Eager has analysed the racing and injury data and has provided ongoing advice on how to make existing tracks safer. Prof Eager has completed his review and Tasracing will use its outcomes to make ongoing improvements in track maintenance.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you. Back in 2016, in the Chair, chaired a committee into greyhound racing in Tasmania and it came out with about 31 recommendations. I would love to know the Government's response to the progress into all of those recommendations. Can I just run through a couple of them, is that all right, Chair?

CHAIR - Yes.

Mr VALENTINE - Recommendation 1, and this may have already been done and if so just tell me: That the government review the legal framework underpinning the prohibition of live-baiting in Tasmania. Can you give me a response to that?

Ms OGILVIE - I do have a response to this, and I just wanted to check in with you how you would like me to go through it because I can give you a detailed response to where all of the recommendations are at and -

Mr VALENTINE - Well if you have that.

Ms OGILVIE - I do, I think you might like that.

Mr VALENTINE - So just do that. I am more than happy.

Ms OGILVIE - I will also say, with great respect to everybody here, I took the time to read that report in full and all of the submissions.

CHAIR - Congratulations minister.

Mr VALENTINE - Well I am sure the Chair will be happy to know that.

Ms OGILVIE - Well I think the Chair might be happy. I just thought I would let you know because I have deep respect for everybody who has been on this journey for such a long time.

Perhaps if I provide the information that I have and then if there is anything further.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes thank you, I appreciate that.

Ms OGILVIE - The Tasmanian Government and racing industry participants, as I have reiterated here, take the welfare of animals very seriously. We are committed to improving animal welfare outcomes in the racing industry across all three codes. We are investing more money than ever before to ensure that all animals are treated with dignity and care before, during, and after, their racing days. We continue to work closely with industry to implement

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appropriate actions in response to the 2016 report Joint Select Committee on Greyhound Racing.

Thirty-one recommendations have either been addressed in full, or are ongoing actions.

Improvements from the review include: the development of a new local rule in greyhound racing that provides for higher retirement standards. Specifically, no healthy greyhound can be euthanased without the prior approval of the Office of Racing Integrity, and we heard a little bit about that this morning; the creation of additional licence categories (whelper and rearer) that are in line with the life stages of a greyhound; Tasracing funded de-sexing of all retiring greyhounds that are not retiring to breed; and the establishment of a Greyhound Recovery Rebate Scheme to assist in rehabilitation of injured greyhounds.

And I do have a response to each of the - it is quite long.

CHAIR - I think if the member does not mind, we might table that.

Mr VALENTINE - Can you table that?

Ms OGILVIE - Just live baiting?

CHAIR - Live baiting yes, and then table the rest?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes.

Ms OGILVIE - Recommendation 1 was that the Government review the legal framework underpinning the prohibition of live baiting in Tasmania. Mr Valentine, this recommendation is relevant to the Animal Welfare Act and changes to the legislation might be required.

In relation to progress, it is to be progressed by the Office of Racing Integrity in conjunction with other departmental policy and legal divisions. Its current status, local rule 159.1 providing a life ban for anyone found guilty of live baiting offences remains in place. Section 10 of the Animal Welfare Act also provides for a \$20 000 fine for an individual, and a \$100 000 fine for a body corporate involved in live baiting. Stewards continue to monitor for live baiting practices during inspections.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you.

CHAIR - Is it possible to have the rest of those responses tabled?

Ms OGILVIE - I think we can do that.

Mr VALENTINE - And that will be incorporated into *Hansard*.

Ms OGILVIE - I think that is appropriate.

CHAIR - Too many to read.

Ms OGILVIE - It is quite lengthy

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CHAIR - There were a number of recommendations.

Mr VALENTINE - If it is on the record, it is on the *Hansard* that is the important thing. Just two questions to finish. Will the Government commit to ending public funding of racing when the TOTE funding agreement expires in 2029 or sooner?

Ms OGILVIE - The funding agreement is a deed that will remain in place until 2029. I do have more detail information on that, but we will be not making any changes to the deed and there will be no changes to funding arrangements. I will just see if I can get you more information.

As we have gone through in some detail today, we know racing is an important industry for Tasmania, it generates more than \$185 million a year in economic activity in the state. Importantly, as we have heard this morning benefitting 38 per cent rural and regional areas.

More than 5 800 Tasmanian's are either employed in the industry or direct participants. With 63 per cent located in regional communities. The industry sustains 1 515 FTE's of which 64 per cent are a direct result of racing industry activity.

Consequently, the Government supports the racing industry and is keen to see the industry achieve long-term financial sustainability. The commercial arm of the racing industry, Tasracing, is funded through the racing industry funding deed, which is in place for a period of 20 years up until 2029. The deed provides an annual government provision of \$27 million indexed, resulting in \$32.062 million in 2021-22.

In addition, there is racing industry training initiative grant of \$500 thousand per annum over 4 years. From 2021-22, the industry training initiatives through TasTAFEs. That is in addition.

Other funding to the industry is revenue generated by the Point of Consumption Tax. We have spoken about that this morning, the split up of that and where that goes into specific codes. There is also race field fee income which is collected by Tasracing.

Tasracing receives from ORI \$350 thousand per annum, since 2018-19 towards thoroughbred and harness breeding programs and has committed to extend the funding of these programs until 2024-25.

Tasracing will also receive an equity contribution of up to \$8 million to assist in construction of the new North-west tracks.

Tasracing will also receive an equity contribution of up to \$3 million for the enhancement and development of training facilities at Spreyton, Longford and Brighton.

Since its inception, the funding deed has been providing an increase in the annual funding of CPI, less than efficiency dividend of 1 per cent per annum.

As part of its ongoing support to the Tasmanian racing industry and in light of recent positive returns to the industry, the Government has removed the 1 per cent efficiency dividend

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in 2018-19 for 5 years, up to and including the 2022-23 year. This will ensure annual funding to Tasracing increases at the same rate as the increase in CPI.

The Office of Racing Integrity receives funding through NRE Tas, worth \$5.809 million allocated in 2022-23. The funding provides for regulation of the industry to ensure Tasmanian racing is conducted with integrity and according to the rules of racing.

Mr VALENTINE - Sorry, NRE Tas, did you say?

Ms OGILVIE - Natural Resources -

CHAIR - The new department.

Mr VALENTINE - I am just clarifying that.

Ms OGILVIE - We are committed to the racing industry, it is too early to make any comments on deeds, the deed is in place. There won't be any changes, we will go through the process of the review and I am sure that there will be some commentary.

Mr VALENTINE - Given commercial greyhound racing is only legal in seven countries, and non-commercial in 22 countries do you see the writing on the wall for this industry, here in Tasmania? The ACT has already banned it and is that something that will flow eventually to Tasmania?

Ms OGILVIE - It is a hypothetical question, because we have just finished stating that the deed will be in place until 2029 and there will be no funding changes.

Mr VALENTINE - I appreciate it's past that point.

Ms OGILVIE - There is a review of the act underway and I'd welcome input on that.

Mr VALENTINE - We have to review it. It's very difficult for us to put input into an act which then we have to turn around and review.

I have just one quick question. There are a number of recommendations in the Tah Bernard review including that a veterinary surgeon must be present at all race meetings and official club trial events, or alternatively procured in a manner that provides for immediate on-track attendance in the event of an injury; Tasracing and the Office of Racing Integrity will review all local rules, animal welfare guidelines and associated documents related to euthanasia and the treatment of injuries to ensure that they are clear, concise and accessible and, importantly, non-contradictory, and that they clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of participants and adjacent personnel.

Do you have any response to those two recommendations?

Ms OGILVIE - I think I can assist with that.

As I have been at pains to point out, of course we take the welfare of animals very seriously. It is a key limb of the work that we are doing, with the future work that will roll out over this year.

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The Government and Tasracing are investing more money than ever before into greyhound welfare, to ensure that dogs are treated with dignity and care before, during and after their racing days.

The number of greyhounds euthanised at race courses because of injuries received during races is trending downwards over time. In pursuing improved animal welfare outcomes, both the Office of Racing Integrity - ORI - and Tasracing continue to work closely with veterinarians and the greyhound racing industry to minimise the risk of injury associated with racing greyhounds.

In terms of transparency regarding animal welfare, Tasracing is providing information in its annual reports on track injuries, euthanasia, retirement and rehoming statistics.

I am aware that the Director of Racing released a report in relation to the incident involving greyhound Tah Bernard. The report followed a comprehensive investigation by ORI and the RSPCA to determine the facts. The report made two recommendations. The first is -

Veterinary surgeons to be present at all greyhound trial events, or procured in such a way that allows for attendance in the case of injury within 15 minutes.

The second recommendation is -

That a review is undertaken of all policies and guidelines in respect of the euthanasia of greyhounds to ensure that the information available to participants and to the community is clear, consistent and transparent.

The Government supports the recommendations of the director.

Mr VALENTINE - Basically you support the Tah Bernard review recommendations in their entirety?

Ms OGILVIE - I have read that one as well.

Mr VALENTINE - You do, you support the Tah Bernard review recommendations? Thank you.

CHAIR - In last year's contribution to this scrutiny, it was indicated that there was \$500 000 provided by the Government to deliver training for apprentice training and mandatory training packages linked to licences in Tasmania through TasTAFE, and it was a four-year commitment. I am interested in the numbers of people who have taken up that apprentice training opportunity and what value there is for that. It would be \$1 million now because it was a \$2 million commitment over four years.

Ms OGILVIE - It is a very important commitment and I can provide you with some information about that.

CHAIR - Just the numbers would be useful. We rely a lot on jockeys, particularly, flying in from elsewhere.

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Ms OGILVIE - I am aware there have been negotiations underway with TasTAFE in relation to this. On the industry training election commitment, the Government will continue to deliver and support the industry through its election commitment of \$500 000 per year to deliver training for apprentice jockeys and mandatory training packages linked to licences in Tasmania through TasTAFE, which I think is great.

This is a four-year, \$2 million commitment. The \$2 million will be acquitted over the term. Now here is the bit I think you are interested in.

Tasracing reached agreement with TasTAFE on the curriculum delivery model recently. Animal welfare training will be included in the curriculum. Tasracing are meeting TasTAFE over coming weeks to progress the subject with the minister for education and support. It is yet to start.

CHAIR - What happened to the \$500 000 from last year's budget?

Ms OGILVIE - That is held over. There is a negotiation with an arrangement that has now been agreed for it to start.

CHAIR - It took Tasracing a year to have a conversation with TasTAFE on providing.

Ms OGILVIE - Curriculum development can be a complex thing but certainly, that is the status.

CHAIR - No wonder they need someone to look out for them. I am stunned minister and expect you are stunned. Here we are, trying to put some sustainability into an industry and it took Tasracing a year to organise. Is that correct? A year?

Ms OGILVIE - I do not know if it is a year.

CHAIR - This question was asked, not quite a year, just short of a year.

Ms OGILVIE - Our \$2 million commitment remains in place, the \$500 000 will be held over, the negotiations now have delivered the required steps and I am looking forward to it commencing.

CHAIR - Was it TasTAFE who were tardy or was it Tasracing or both?

Ms OGILVIE - I cannot go into details of negotiations I was not part of, but I can say curriculum development which sits outside of what an organisation would generally do can be complex and might be time consuming.

CHAIR - I am sure they do it in other states, you pick up the phone and you talk to somebody. Statement, not a question.

Ms OGILVIE - Noted.

Grants and Subsidies

PUBLIC

Mr WILLIE - Where will the new track be built for harness and greyhound racing in the north-west coast?

Ms OGILVIE - Tasracing continues to pursue a suitable outcome for the north-west greyhound participants. Participants are currently being provided with a travel subsidy to reduce any financial burden with transport and this subsidy continues to be reviewed. That is important because we need to keep things going while tracks are being built.

Following industry consultation and feedback, further enhancements to the travel subsidy policy for north-west participants was communicated to industry on the 30 May 2022. I was very pleased about that. The Tasmanian Government is a strong supporter of the industry and all of the people that work within the industry. The Devonport Showgrounds has been a vital piece of infrastructure for a racing industry for some decades. Following agreement between Tasracing the Devonport Agricultural and Pastoral Society and the Devonport Showground project, racing activities relocated from the showgrounds as of March 2022. The last harness meeting was conducted on Sunday 20 March and the last greyhound meeting was conducted on Tuesday 22 March.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government remains committed to new harness and greyhound tracks on the north-west coast and will invest \$8 million into the project. I note the decision by the TasRacing board to cease works at the preferred location of the proposed harness and greyhound tracks at Palmers Road, Latrobe, due to the findings of a consultant's report.

The decision to cease work at the Palmers Road site in Latrobe was disappointing for the participants in the north-west, however, work has already commenced on identifying a new and more suitable site. I am advised the work is well advanced. The consultant report identifies the Palmers Road site as a high priority for conservation management and presented a number of ecological challenges which made the development of this site unviable, which is very disappointing but it was an important report.

While this has been a setback, our Government's commitment remains for this exciting project which will ensure harness and greyhound racing has a long future on the north-west. I have recently met with the project team and remain in regular discussions with Tasracing about this matter. Any new proposed site identified will also involve extensive community consultation, similar to that undertaken with residents in proximity to the Palmers Road site.

Mr WILLIE - While you are still identifying a new track site, north-west greyhound and harness trainers have nowhere to train their animals. Greyhound trainers are struggling to stay afloat without a local track to train on. What is status of negotiations with the owner of the Devonport Showgrounds regarding a return to training for greyhounds on the track.

Ms OGILVIE - I can provide some additional information. You have raised three elements. I am advised that Tasracing has executed a lease for harness training to commence on a private facility in the Devonport area so that does assist.

Mr WILLIE - And greyhounds.

Ms OGILVIE - I am coming to that, Mr Willie.

PUBLIC

Participants have been advised by Tasracing and are able to commence training at the location from Monday 30 May. I won't go through the details of the difficulties with the Palmers Road site again but I will point to - and I hear you on the economic pressures on greyhound trainers. It's very important, and I have sat with and listened to industry on that. We are aware, and are providing, additional funding to assist, particularly those who have to travel. I know it's difficult and I have spoken with individuals at some length about these issues.

The answer to this is to build the track. I am advised that Tasracing is well underway at locating and securing alternative sites. Negotiations for use for training on the old show site, conversations have occurred. There is an opportunity for a further conversation but the interim arrangements will remain in place until such time as things change.

Mr WILLIE - I am aware of the travel subsidies -

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, which have been improved.

Mr WILLIE - but this is about a training facility and there's no solution.

Ms OGILVIE - The solution is to build the track. Thank you, Mr Willie.

Mr WILLIE - That will take a long time.

Ms OGILVIE - It will take a while. We are going to get it right.

CHAIR - Particularly, when there hasn't even been a site sourced. How can that be? Tasracing knew that this was coming quite a while ago. It didn't just arrive on their lap. You had nowhere to go. Minister, I am astounded. You would have to be as well.

Mr WILLIE - I have one more question, Chair.

CHAIR - Thank you, sorry. My blood pressure has gone up.

Ms OGILVIE - Don't let that blood pressure go up. We are here to help.

Mr WILLIE - As you mentioned, Tasracing has come to terms with Michael Maxfield to lease the training track on Pardoe Road -

Ms OGILVIE - It is a little hard to hear you.

Mr WILLIE - It's this microphone. I am speaking pretty loudly today. It's not great.

When will the harness racing training track be ready for fast work?

Ms OGILVIE - That's a very specific and operational question and it is one for Tasracing. I hate to do this but we might have to take it on notice because the relevant staff probably aren't here. I am not sure if the acting secretary can shed any light. Unfortunately, we may have to do that.

Mr WILLIE - It does fit under this line item because it is part of the grant subsidies.

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Ms OGILVIE - I am sure it is but the relevant staff would need to provide the detailed information.

Ms ARMITAGE - Most of my question with regard to the north-west has been answered.

CHAIR - It hasn't been answered.

Ms ARMITAGE - It has been asked.

Ms OGILVIE - I have answered it - you just didn't appreciate the full nature of the answer.

Ms ARMITAGE - It has been answered, maybe not to our satisfaction but there has been a response.

Is there any provision for further funding for any reconstruction of tracks throughout the state, apart from the north-west?

Ms OGILVIE - Upgrades?

CHAIR - Upgrades or any work that might be happening on other tracks throughout the state.

Ms OGILVIE - It's a very specific question. I will see if I can get some information.

Ms ARMITAGE - Particularly in the north of the state is always concerning.

Ms OGILVIE - I appreciate that. All of our sporting infrastructure, everybody would love to have upgrades across everything. I know the previous minister is aware of that but I can provide a little bit of additional information if that helps?

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes.

Ms OGILVIE - Perhaps, I can start with the Longford Race Track.

CHAIR - That's fine.

Ms OGILVIE - The Longford facility fulfils an important role as a grass and sand -

Ms ARMITAGE - They have great races.

Ms OGILVIE - Great, and I look forward to being there with my new fascinator.

CHAIR - How are you going to choose between New Year's Day race at Longford and the New Year's Day race at St Marys?

Ms OGILVIE - Which one will you be at; I'll come with you.

PUBLIC

CHAIR - Half each.

Ms OGILVIE - There you go, we'll go together.

The Longford facility fulfils an important role as a grass and sand training track for the thoroughbred code in northern Tasmania. Longford hosts one race meeting on New Year's Day annually with the conduct of the time-honoured Longford Cup. I know it's a great celebration that day.

Ms ARMITAGE - It is. I am wondering if you are going to do any work on the track?

Ms OGILVIE - We are going to get there.

The track conducts an average of 18 trial meetings a year but operates as a training facility all year round. I am advised that over the past three years, Tasracing has spent \$484 000 on various infrastructure improvements at Longford, including starting gates, track rail, irrigation works, bullring fencing and maintenance equipment. In addition, Tasracing spends on average \$400 000 a year on maintenance and occupancy costs at the Longford facility.

I am advised that Tasracing has been in talks with the Northern Midlands Council for some time regarding the Longford site and its key role in racing and the community, and agreed on the creation of a master plan which would benefit not only racing but the community.

Mowbray is the major racing centre for the north, only 20 minutes away. With no thoroughbred training occurring at Mowbray, Longford plays an important role in delivering this capability in the north, which you would understand.

Ms ARMITAGE - Do we have any further funding for work at Mowbray?

Ms OGILVIE - Very good question. The Government has no plans to close any regional tracks. However, Tasracing does review the financial viability of all tracks on an ongoing basis. This review is balanced by the tradition, historic and community benefits of operating race meetings at venues.

Tasracing has developed a five-year infrastructure plan right across the industry, and this document includes infrastructure options for the Longford track, including the creation of a 100-metre chute for horse trialling, new stables, track drainage, an equine pool and community equestrian facilities. These projects are all aimed at ensuring Longford continues to play a key role in the thoroughbred training landscape.

I am advised that the Northern Midlands Council has engaged consultants to provide a concept master plan for Longford racecourse. Tasracing is funding 50 per cent of the development of the master plan and Tasracing has outlined a proposed infrastructure spend of \$2.6 million along with a further \$1.5 million of additional funds for an equine multi-use facility. A total of \$700 000 of the proposed infrastructure spend is funded from the Government's \$3 million one-off infrastructure grants. The master plan was released for industry and community consultation on 12 November 2021 with submissions closing on 21 December 2021.

Ms ARMITAGE - I am delighted for Longford, but how are we going with Mowbray?

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Ms OGILVIE - I am just scanning the rest of the answer to see where we have got. Do you want to hear more about Longford?

Ms ARMITAGE - No, I really just wanted to know that work was happening at Longford and I am very pleased with that. Is any money going into other parts of the state, perhaps Mowbray and Elwick?

Ms OGILVIE - And Elwick as well of course.

Ms ARMITAGE - Well, they have had problems with Elwick in the past.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, they have, which have been remedied I understand. I will ask the acting secretary if he has further information specific to Mowbray, but just as a general comment, the infrastructure plan that sits right across all of the tracks will lead to investment.

Ms ARMITAGE - And I am very pleased with the work at Longford. It is a very important track.

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you. I will see if I can find something specific for you.

Mr JACOBI - The only additional information we have in relation to those tracks is that we are investing \$3 million in infrastructure upgrades across numerous training venues including Longford Racecourse, Brighton Training Centre and the Devonport Racing Club. This is providing certainty and confidence in the harness and greyhound codes with an \$8 million commitment to establishing a new north-west track following the sale of the Devonport Showgrounds. We have provided more than \$750 000 to projects across the state under the Community Racing Club Infrastructure Grants. Other than that, I do not have any further information.

Ms ARMITAGE - Nothing going into Mowbray or Elwick at this time?

Mr JACOBI - In relation to Elwick, we have completed the \$12.5 million construction of the Elwick Thoroughbred Track Redevelopment. That is it at this stage.

Ms ARMITAGE - So, the answer is no for Mowbray? Thank you.

CHAIR - It is good to hear, Minister, and I am sure that you will be pleased, and that is my question, that the Northern Midlands Council has engaged a consultant prior to undertaking the path that they are taking. Hence, Tasracing could take a leaf out of their book and undertake a consultancy report prior, rather than post.

Ms OGILVIE - I will take that as a comment.

CHAIR - Are you in agreeance, minister?

Ms OGILVIE - I think appropriate processes are always important and when we have important reports that show environmental issues we need to take them seriously.

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CHAIR - I thought that would be 101 of planning. Thank you, minister, the time being almost 11.15. I will suspend the hearings and we will resume again just prior to 11.30, and then we will head to your ministry of Heritage. Thank you we shall suspend.

The Committee suspended from 11.10 a.m. to 11.26 a.m.

Output Group 6 Heritage

CHAIR - Minister for Heritage, we would like you to introduce your team and provide your overview

Ms OGILVIE - We have Louise Wilson, Deputy Secretary and Andrew Roberts, Director, Heritage Tasmania.

The Acting Secretary has had to head into another committee.

It is a great pleasure to be here in my role as Minister for Heritage. As we know Tasmania's historic heritage remains a prominent element of brand Tasmania. Its value as a key driver of our visitor economy is generating many social and economic benefits across the state as places are being restored and their stories highlighted.

Having the opportunity to represent the premier of the opening of the new visitor center at Cascades Female Factory, highlighted for me the importance of protecting these places so they can continue to be used and valued.

For many decades, the Cascades Female Factory had all but been abandoned. Today, it is a World Heritage listed place. The new visitor centre allows visitors to re-engage with the history and the many moving stories of the females incarcerated at that site.

This Government's \$3 million contribution to the visitor center is a perfect example of how investing money into our most significant heritage listed places creates jobs and contributes to growing the economic future of our great state.

The staff at the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority have now started work with the National Trust in Tasmania to develop a convict heritage hub at the Penitentiary Chapel in Hobart. This \$1.25 million election commitment towards this project is another example of this Government's support for heritage tourism initiatives, that will drive increased revenue to support the future protection of these important sites.

The National Trust, like many in the tourism sector, are beginning a phase of rebuilding following the pandemic and they have had closures over the past two years.

To assist the National Trust an additional \$300 thousand has been provided to the board to achieve its vision of creating new experiences that will reinvigorate visitor attendances across its properties.

While this investment in the future of the National Trust is important, it is also important we consider how money is allocated across the breadth of the historic heritage portfolio.

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The Department of National Resources and Environment Tasmania has engaged a consultant to analyse and provide a clear and common understanding of the broader operating environment of historic heritage in Tasmania.

The findings of this review will help inform how best to prioritise and address the long term challenges and opportunities that arise across the historic heritage sector.

The work to protect our states historic heritage sites is not possible without the assistance of the Tasmanian Heritage Council.

It has been another busy year for the council as it continues to maintain the Tasmanian Heritage Register and review development applications for places entered in the heritage register.

As at 31 March 2022, the Heritage Council has already exceeded two of the 2020-21 performance measures with more than 5000 places entered on the Heritage Register and 15 per cent of those places being actively managed.

The Heritage Council has also approved 459 development applications and Certificates of Exemption, contributing to more than \$277 million of development activity across the state.

One of the most common questions the Heritage Council receives is whether a place is heritage-listed and why the place is of significance.

Earlier this month, I was delighted to join the Chair of the Tasmanian Heritage Council to launch the online version of the Tasmanian Heritage Register through LISTmap. Now, any person anywhere, at any time, can access the information they need, including the location, boundary and historic details of each register entry along with a statement of significance. Aligning the Heritage Register with the LISTmap is also creating efficiencies for the Heritage Council by generating automatic notifications of title information changes which will allow the Heritage Council to keep location and boundary details up to date. This has been a long-term strategic goal of the Heritage Council and I congratulate the council members and the staff at Heritage Tasmania and Land Tasmania for their work in delivering online access to the Heritage Register.

I also acknowledge the owners of our heritage-listed places. Many of these places are owned by the state and local governments but many more are owned or leased by members of our community. Thank you for maintaining these places and in some instances, adapting unused places for exciting new uses.

Finally, thank you to the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, the Parks and Wildlife Service, the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens and the staff in Heritage Tasmania in the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania for their advice and assistance, which is absolutely invaluable.

I welcome questions to provide further details on these and other historic heritage matters.

Mr VALENTINE - I will go to the financial questions first and then follow up with a couple on the other aspects.

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Minister, are you able to confirm that the works being undertaken on the Port Arthur Convict Heritage Hub Penitentiary Initiative are both on time and on budget? I think it has just been finished, but you can update me on that to make sure that is the case, according to the notes.

Ms OGILVIE - Tasmania's convict heritage is unique and filled with rich stories that link us to our past and to the rest of the world. I should say my own convict ancestors have made their way through these places.

Mr VALENTINE - I have a few too. I have nine, so you beat that.

Ms OGILVIE - We will probably be neck and neck.

Mr VALENTINE - People say that's pretty obvious in my case.

Ms OGILVIE - It's funny how we always end up as politicians, Mr Valentine.

This colourful history will be further embellished through the establishment of a convict heritage hub in the Penitentiary Chapel in Hobart. The Tasmanian Government has entered into a funding agreement with the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority to develop this convict memorial hub at the Penitentiary Chapel in Hobart. The initiative is a \$1.25 million commitment towards growing Tasmania's convict heritage tourism. The aim is to connect Tasmania's heritage sites to a global audience through a virtual memorial to the 75 000 convicts transported to Tasmania. The virtual presentation of our vast records of convict history will provide an immersive opportunity for local and international visitors to trace convict movements throughout the state and across the globe, and learn the stories of their ancestors. Some of us may know them; others may not be aware of them.

Mr VALENTINE - I know them only too well. That's probably the difficulty.

Ms OGILVIE - Indeed.

While the project has many collaborators, the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority is managing the establishment of the hub in cooperation with National Trust Tasmania. The hub has the potential to increase visitation to the Penitentiary Chapel. This is good. It also has the potential to encourage regional visitation to the sites where convict ancestors lived and worked, particularly to Tasmania's other World Heritage listed convict sites such as Brickendon, Woolmers, Darlington on Maria Island and to Port Arthur. The next milestone in this project is in July this year when PAHSMA is due to provide a fully-costed project plan and proposed operating model. The full project is due for completion by June 2023. Also, because it is of great interest to me, I might ask the department, Andrew perhaps, to shed a little more light on how the project is progressing?

CHAIR - Is it on budget?

Mr ROBERTS - July is the next milestone, so that will be the next point of measure for budget and performance against milestones of the grant. The two parties, Port Arthur and the National Trust, have been meeting regularly, building on their previous funding proposal to develop it up. The real work that Port Arthur is assisting with is putting some detail into the

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proposal and costing it out. They have just got the first draft of a conservation management plan specifically for a part of the site that they are going to be doing the work in, so that guides any future development. At the moment they are working cooperatively. It is a new project for the National Trust and it is a new project for Port Arthur, so that cooperation will build in time.

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you.

Mr VALENTINE - The forward Estimates will see it finished and delivered?

Mr ROBERTS - That is the plan yes.

Ms OGILVIE - I think the answer is the next milestone is July 2022 when PAHSMA is due to provide a fully-costed project plan and proposed operating model.

Mr VALENTINE - Will that be available interactively for people to go in and interact with that database? Will they be able to bring up their relatives? Is that part of the display screen inside as well?

Ms OGILVIE - I am very happy for you to continue.

Mr ROBERTS - That is the very reason that the grant is quite specific about getting some of that detail early. The concept was a site-based thing initially, a presentation within the Penitentiary Chapel. The realisation of this idea that I think you are latching onto, is that it reach across the state. That is where it really starts to kick goals. They are looking to see how much that can be done within the project.

Mr VALENTINE - This is Hamish Maxwell-Stewart and others.

Mr ROBERTS - Yes, tapping into those really rich records of convict stories which goes back uniquely so far through those generations.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you. It is noted that an appropriation of \$300 000 has been made in this year's budget for the National Trust Support Initiative, it is on page 178 (8.1). Minister, can you outline how this one-off funding support will deliver ongoing benefits for the National Trust in Tasmania?

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you for the question? Like all cultural institutions across Tasmania reliant on the visitor economy, the National Trust continues to respond to the COVID-19 related challenges. Its properties have reopened, however, continued shortfalls in revenue from property admissions, events and retail sales sadly remain a reality.

The availability of volunteers who help manage the Trust properties has also been considerably limited due to the COVID-19 vulnerabilities, largely associated with the age cohort of volunteers which I am sure we would all appreciate that.

The Tasmanian Government is aware of the Trust's current challenging financial position and has been working closely with the board to discuss and consider options that might be of assistance. The National Trust receives more than \$312 000 per year from the state government through a recurrent three-year funding assistance grant.

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CHAIR - Did you say three years?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes. The National Trust receives more than \$312 000 per year from the state government through a recurrent three-year funding assistance grant.

Mr VALENTINE - So that may not be just for three years? It might be ongoing into the future or is it reassessed at some point?

CHAIR - It is not in the forward Estimates.

Ms OGILVIE - Do you want me to stop and we will address this one?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes if you like.

Ms WILSON - Through you Minister, it is recurrent funding, but it is a triennium funding agreement, so for a three-year period.

Mr VALENTINE - Then it is reassessed at the end of that as to whether it gets a further triennium?

Ms WILSON - The conditions of the grant can be reassessed but it is recurrent funding.

Mr VALENTINE - Okay, so it is recurrent.

CHAIR - But it is not in the forward Estimates on page 178.

Mr VALENTINE - Well, part of it is, that is part of my next question.

Ms OGILVIE - Perhaps it would be helpful if I just finish going through the financials and then if there is still a delta we can look at it then?

Mr VALENTINE - That's fine.

Ms OGILVIE - In last year's budget the Government provided an additional \$300 000 to support the operations of the National Trust over the next 12 months and facilitate its strategic and business transformation activities.

Mr VALENTINE - Sorry, you say an additional, is that on top?

Ms OGILVIE - On top, yes. So this really related to the difficulty.

I understand that the Department of Treasury and Finance has released the Trust from its lease of offices in the St Johns Street building in Launceston. The Trust has now established its administrative offices within buildings it currently owns.

The National Trust has subsequently indicated that it is in need of further financial assistance, largely due to continuing COVID-19 impacts on revenue and operations. Recognising these exceptional circumstances and pressures, an additional \$300 000 was allocated in this year's budget. I am committed to working with the Trust board on a sound

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plan to help realise the Trust's strategic vision and set it on a more financially stable and self-sustaining path.

However, recognising that the National Trust shares many challenges and opportunities with other heritage property owners and operators, we have commissioned a situational analysis of the Tasmanian Heritage ecosystem. This work will provide a better understanding of the environment in which the National Trust operates.

It will also be important to inform my thinking regarding the longer-term strategic agenda and priorities for the heritage portfolio. I look forward to working collaboratively with the National Trust and Heritage sectors, more broadly, to identify how we can work together with others, for example tourism and hospitality industries, to realise transformative opportunities to strengthen the sector.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you.

CHAIR - Can I get some clarification before we move. The \$300 000 on page 178 of budget paper no 2 is the one-off amount, in addition to the one-off \$300 000 that was given last year?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes.

CHAIR - So they've had \$600 000 in the past two financial years?

Ms OGILVIE - I will just confirm. Yes.

CHAIR - In addition to their \$312 000 on-going funding that they receive. Is that all related to COVID-19?

Ms OGILVIE - That's related to operational management of the National Trust because of the impact of COVID-19.

CHAIR - Thank you. That's why there is no forward Estimates on page 170.

Mr VALENTINE - While there has been this one-off injection of \$300 000 in support of the National Trust, if you look at the appropriation for 2022-23, its only been increased by \$119 000 from the \$3.899 million provided in last year's budget. Can the Minister identify where the additional \$181 000 to support this initiative is being funded? Alternatively, what has been cut to ensure the level of funding for the National Trust can be met? Clearly, there is only \$119 000 extra, not \$300 000.

Ms OGILVIE - I just need to understand what you're asking?

Mr VALENTINE - I'm looking at two budget papers, last year's budget papers, and this year's budget papers.

Ms OGILVIE - There hasn't been a cut.

Mr VALENTINE - Well, effectively there has. I'll reread it. While there has been a once-off injection of \$300 000, in support of the National Trust, it is noted that the

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appropriation for 2022-23 - that is this year - has been increased by only \$119 000 from the \$3.899 million provided in the 2021-22 budget.

That is page 312 of last year's budget paper.

So when you compare the appropriation for 2022-23 its \$119 000.

Ms OGILVIE - Just for my own clarity, are you looking at the Historic Heritage Services, line item Output group 3, which is not the National Trust one?

Mr VALENTINE - It is 6.1 here but 3.2 there.

Ms OGILVIE - I think we are looking at two different sets of numbers.

Mr VALENTINE - We are comparing like with like between the budget papers. If this budget paper includes the National Trust then the previous budget paper does.

Ms OGILVIE - I see the argument you're making but I would prefer to get you that information in detail. My trying to do an analysis on the fly might lead us into two different categories.

Mr VALENTINE - I can appreciate that and I am happy for you to have that provided -

Ms OGILVIE - Is that all right?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, if the Chair is happy to have that provided -

CHAIR - I am just checking with the secretary that the secretary understands the question that it is the discrepancy between the line allocation from 2021-22 to the current allocation, 2022-23.

Mr VALENTINE - There is \$300 000 given and there is only \$119 000 extra that has come forward in this year so there is \$181 000 -

Ms OGILVIE - I wouldn't want to give you the incorrect information so I think it's the best idea if we look at that.

Mr VALENTINE - I am happy for you to take that, but if you can provide it before the end of the session then that's good too.

CHAIR - There is a supplementary question on something that the minister has already read out.

Ms ARMITAGE - I may have missed what you were saying. I am checking whether the National Trust in Launceston is still located in St John Street or did I hear you say it is moving back to -

Ms OGILVIE - I did say they had been released from their lease.

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Ms ARMITAGE - Did they wish to be released from their lease or was that at the end of the Government's five-year contract?

Ms OGILVIE - I think it was to reduce the cost burden but I will ask Louise to speak to that.

Ms WILSON - The National Trust sought to be released from the lease because they wanted to move upstairs into the Old Umbrella Shop.

Ms ARMITAGE - Oh, okay, that's fine. Five years' ago, with the other two northern independent members, we fought to find them accommodation in St John Street and it was a five-year lease, which ended in October 2022. I wanted to make sure that the Government wasn't throwing them out at the end of the lease.

Ms OGILVIE - Good question. I think everyone is happy.

Mr VALENTINE - The appropriation has also been reduced by around \$175 000. Again, this is a comparison to last year. Looking at last year's Budget 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, et cetera, when you compare last year's budget papers with this year's budget papers, the appropriation has been reduced by around \$175 000 for 2023-24 and 2024-25 and maintained at this lower level into 2025-26.

Can you explain or advise which functions for this output group will be impacted by what amounts to a 6 per cent reduction in the appropriation in the out years? It's reduced by 6 per cent when compared to last year's budget papers. In this regard, it's noted that there is no change to the key performance indicators for the output group when compared to the indicators from last year's budget papers.

Ms OGILVIE - More efficiencies, Mr Valentine.

Mr VALENTINE - It might be more efficiencies or it might be a cut in services, who knows?

Ms OGILVIE - I have some information that I can provide, which I am happy to run through to see if it addresses the question that you're asking.

The department has implemented an output restructure of the 2022-23 Budget which is effective from the 1 July 2022. This restructure reflects the outcomes of the recently developed Department Strategic Plan, so that might account for some of the changes in language that we were speaking about earlier.

A new output group has been created and is called Output Group 6 Heritage. The former Output 3.2 Historic Heritage Services has been renumbered and renamed Output 6.1 Historic Heritage. The former Output 3.3 Aboriginal Heritage and Land has been renumbered as Output 6.2.

Under 6.1 Expenses by Output Historic Heritage, the increase of \$298 000 in 2022-23 primarily relates to the movement in funding for the Port Arthur Historic Site Convict Heritage Hub Initiative, increasing to \$1 million, partially offset by the completion at the Australian Government funding for National and World Heritage projects, which was \$317 000.

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The decrease in 2023-24 reflects the completion of the Port Arthur Historic Site convict heritage hub, \$1 million in 2023, with \$1.25 million over the 2021-22, and 2022-23 years. The National Trust support is the \$300 000 initiatives.

I hope that helps.

Mr VALENTINE - That helps to explain it. Looking at the importance of build heritage and tourism, in the press of late the Treasurer saying the Treasury buildings will not be put out for sale.

Ms OGILVIE - They will be retained in public hands.

Mr VALENTINE - They will not be sold. Do you have any vision for how that might be partially repurposed for the benefit of the Tasmanian community? I point to things suggested like an art gallery, performance space, museum, those sorts of things.

Ms OGILVIE - Such a beautiful and iconic building.

Mr VALENTINE - I point to the detached, the old Mercury building and what Bruce Neill and Penny Clive have achieved there. Quite a significant thing there and I am sure the member to my right would be able to expand on that, but that would be a conflict of interest. Can you give us your view?

Ms OGILVIE - You have asked a question that has two broad parts. One is about a strategic vision for heritage buildings and the second part is specifically on the Treasury building.

I will start with the Treasury building and then zoom up to the strategic thinking going on and a lot of work is being done on that within the department. In 2018, the then Treasurer announced the Government's plan to initiate an expression of interest process, to explore an alternative use for Hobart's iconic Treasury complex, and Franklin Square public buildings. That is some time ago.

This is an early and highly significant set of eight buildings whose heritage values are recognised and protected by a new entry in the Tasmanian Heritage Register. This new entry was permanently entered in the Heritage Register in April 2020 and includes succinct overview of the history of this place and its historic heritage significance. It also aimed to give members of public, confidence its heritage values were recognised and protected.

While a new conservation management plan was developed for the complex and the EOI process commenced, the Government made the decision to defer the EOI process considering the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government has since ruled out reinitiating the EOI process, however, this does not preclude other potential options for adaptive reuse, being considered that would be compatible with the complex's significance to the Tasmanian community.

I am grateful for the work that went into the preparation of the new heritage register listing and conservation management plan. These have better revealed the complexes features,

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values and stories and will guide its future use. That probably helps with the adaptive reuse which is a lovely phrase for, there may well be other ways to deploy such a beautiful and historic building in the centre of Hobart.

To turn to the second part of your question, which was the strategic thinking with heritage more generally. I can provide more information. This Government, has a strong record of protecting and promoting Tasmania's historic heritage places, as an integral part of the state's brand, and visitor economy. Funding initiatives demonstrate investment in Tasmania's iconic historic sites include:

- \$350 000 provided to the National Trust to finalise a range of conservation works at Clarendon.
- A contribution of \$3 million to the Cascades Female Factory for construction of the new history and interpretation centre at Cascades. This is paid as an equity injection by the Department of Treasury and Finance.
- \$1.25 million for the creation of the wonderful Convict Hub at the Penitentiary Chapel.

In addition, \$6.8 million has been provided for Stage Three of the Maria Island Rediscovered Project, which includes funding for further heritage building upgrades.

Funding for Maria Island and the Convict Hub at the Penitentiary are election commitments. The Legislative Council released its report into built heritage tourism in Tasmania in 2016. The Government released its official response to the inquiry in 2017 highlighting that the majority of the recommendations have been met. There are other initiatives of the T21 Visitor Economy Strategy that have benefited all tourism operators including heritage tourism sites which are best addressed by Tourism Tasmania.

Another significant investment in supporting heritage tourism was the creation of the Heritage Places Renewal Loans Scheme. This scheme was incorporated into the \$60 million Business Growth Loan Scheme launched in September 2020. Owners operating a business from a place entered in the Tasmanian Heritage Register have access to these loans to adapt, refresh or enhance heritage tourism experiences.

The inquiry also received comments from the heritage sector about ensuring best-practice management of heritage places. In response, the Tasmanian Heritage Council has been instrumental in promoting the Burra Charter through its work's guidelines. The guidelines are well recognised as an invaluable resource that encourages property owners, local governments and developers to conserve and adapt heritage places in the best possible way.

In the area of vocational education and training, the Centre for Heritage in Oatlands with assistance from Heritage Tasmania and others has developed a curriculum to upskill tradespeople wanting to understand best practice in working with heritage places. There are also many property owners, developers and local governments that make their own contribution to historic heritage tourism. This is a small sample of the many good things happening across Tasmania's heritage sector and tourism industry at that strategic level.

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While the final report and its recommendations were not adopted in full, the Government appreciates the work of the Heritage Council to highlight the importance of built heritage tourism. I hope, Mr Valentine, you saw some of your ideas in that.

Mr VALENTINE - It is not my ideas but it is the people that -

CHAIR - We only report on the evidence that is taken.

Ms OGILVIE - I need to let you know that unfortunately we are going to lose Louise, she has doubled up. Andrew will be here.

CHAIR - How come we lose them? Isn't this important? Thank you, Louise.

Ms OGILVIE - We went a bit longer this morning than people expected. I think it is important, that is why I am here. I think we can manage it. Michael Giudici will be joining us.

Mr VALENTINE - Can I have one more?

Ms OGILVIE - We have Michael Giudici joining us at the table.

Mr VALENTINE - One of the recommendations in that report that you draw attention to in 2016 was the inclusion of the Eaglehawk Neck Officers' Quarters and the Darlington Probation Station in the purview of the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority. I am wondering whether any further consideration has been given to that. I would suggest, given the collaboration with the Penitentiary Chapel that also be included because the National Trust may well be struggling there but it might be an opportunity to collaborate and get a better outcome.

Ms OGILVIE - Interesting question. I do not have the PAHSMA people here, unfortunately, so we can't go into detail about that but I understand what you are saying about the synergies between the projects.

Mr VALENTINE - Can I have the question taken on notice as to whether consideration has been given to the inclusion of the Eaglehawk Neck Officers' Quarters and the Darlington Probation Station and the Penitentiary Chapel under the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority's management?

Ms OGILVIE - I am happy to seek that information for you.

Ms HOWLETT - Minister, could you please outline to the committee the recently announced online Tasmanian Heritage Register?

Ms OGILVIE - Fantastic project. Very happy to do that.

CHAIR - I think you touched on that in your overview.

Ms OGILVIE - I did yes.

CHAIR - You might make it quite brief.

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Ms OGILVIE - I will yes. It is a very exciting project and I really was delighted to launch this. What a joy to see the digital world connecting with the world of heritage for those of us - and I am sure everybody at this table who loves heritage - want to see it used in a beautiful way. Information is key to that so this is very exciting. Online access to information held in the register is now available and no doubt will increase our appreciation of Tasmania's iconic heritage places which play a role in our very lifestyle and brand here in Tasmania.

Although relatively new to the portfolio, I know one of the most frequent questions the Tasmanian Heritage Council receives is whether a property is heritage listed and why? Now everyone has access to the location, boundary and historic details of each register entry. Increasing understanding and significance of these places is key to encouraging owners, prospective owners, developers and the community to learn more about how best to manage our historic heritage.

I know that the chair of the Tasmanian Heritage Council, Ms Brett Torossi, is thrilled with this result, as am I, and Brett and I spent time together recently looking at the history of Kelly's Steps. Each of the more than 5000 individual places entered in the Tasmanian Heritage Register has a distinctive and often largely unknown story to tell. This is just the first step for our online register. They are already working toward introducing more search options, for example, searching against an architect's name, or searching by architectural style. It is just generally a very good thing.

CHAIR - Thank you very much.

Mr WILLIE - Minister, how long is an appropriate time to contact owners about a change to their listed property?

Ms OGILVIE - Heritage listed property?

Mr WILLIE - Heritage listed property.

Ms OGILVIE - Let us have a look at that. The Government is committed to supporting heritage property owners to protect our historic heritage places. It is very important to us and while the maintenance, conservation and development of these places are the responsibility of the owners, a range of support is available, and we do reach out.

The Government has a strong track record of providing one-off grants to iconic publicly-owned heritage places through the Public Buildings Maintenance Fund, and further funding through growth loans schemes. Current grants being managed include money for conservation works to Clarendon, as I said Maria Island, the convict hut and penitentiary, Brickendon, Cascades Female Factory, and others. We have put funding towards these places to conserve and assist to support the historic and heritage values of these places. Some local governments offer grants and awards for places of local heritage values, and I know that local government also has planning and heritage registration processes depending on which council area you are in, and listings.

The Tasmanian Community Fund provides grants for a range of places and projects where there is a community benefit, and a variety of other grant opportunities are available as

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well. I wanted to sketch out for you that it is a multi-layered approach. There are different sorts of heritage listings and people have different arrangements in place as well.

When it comes to the Tasmanian Heritage Register and how listings on that are managed, it is very important to understand the process of how things are listed so that we know when people are engaged in that conversation. The Heritage Register recognises and protects our most significant places. For a place to be entered on the Heritage Register, it must meet at least one of the eight criteria listed in the Historic Cultural Heritage Act. Community members - and I think this is what you are interested in Mr Willie -

Mr WILLIE - I think you know where I am going.

Ms OGILVIE - Well, I cannot read your mind. Community members can make an application to the Heritage Council to enter a place in the Heritage Register. Applications are assessed by Heritage Tasmania staff to assist the Heritage Council in its decision as to whether to provisionally enter a place in the register. Consultation with owners and stakeholders is undertaken prior to the Heritage Council's decision. There are no statutory time frames for the assessment of applications to enter places in the register.

Following provisional entry, the owner is notified 21 to 28 days ahead of local government notification, and the publication of a notice in the relevant local paper and the *Government Gazette*. This commences a 60-day public representation period. Anyone may make a submission or objection on the provisional entry which the Heritage Council considers in deciding whether to permanently enter a place in the register.

Once the Heritage Council makes the decision on permanent entry for a place, the owner, local government and anyone who made a submission of objection is notified. A public notice is also published if any public representations were received. Only those who made a submission or objection can now lodge an appeal against the Heritage Council's decision with RMPT, which is now TasCAT, and they must do so within 30 days of the permanent entry public notice.

The Heritage Council is currently reviewing its policy and processes in relation to incoming applications to enter places in the register to provide a greater responsiveness and transparency, so I think that addresses your question.

Mr WILLIE - No. I am aware of 1800 letters that have been sent to owners who had changes made to their listings in 2014-15.

Ms OGILVIE - Some more detail.

Mr WILLIE - Why have these recent notification letters caused so much confusion with owners?

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you for the additional detail. I didn't know that was where you were going so I'm glad you specified.

Section 94 of the Historic Cultural Heritage Act allows the Heritage Council to amend an entry to update, correct minor errors or reflect physical events or legal or planning changes relating to an entry. Section 94 amendments do not allow for entries to be added or removed

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from the Tasmanian Heritage Register. The amendments allow the Heritage Council to improve and maintain currency of information in the entries.

The Heritage Council has policies and procedures to guide the amendment of entries and the notification to owners where this is required. Recently, the Heritage Council has sent amendment notifications to about 1800 property owners to advise of past amendments for which notifications had not been issued. The department has been advised that the amendments were valid, regardless of the delay in notifying an owner.

Mr WILLIE - So, the department hasn't had any advice that the changes were unlawful?

Ms OGILVIE - I would need to seek advice on that from the department.

Mr ROBERTS - The department has had advice that the changes are lawful.

Ms OGILVIE - It was a lack of notification, that is my understanding, Mr Willie.

Mr WILLIE - Eight years is a long time to follow-up with property owners. I can understand their angst and confusion. Do you find that acceptable, as minister?

Ms OGILVIE - I will take that as a comment, thank you, Mr Willie.

Mr WILLIE - It's a question.

CHAIR - The member did ask a question.

Ms OGILVIE - I think delay is not a good thing and people would like to have certainty but also when an error has been made and a lack of notification on these sorts of amendments has been made, for that to be remedied as quickly as possible is the right thing to do. That is what has occurred.

Mr ROBERTS - Why has there been a delay? It comes down to a definition of what's a minor amendment. In early years, post-2014, there wasn't a clear understanding of what was minor and what was major which constituted the threshold for advising. That further advice was requested to make sure that what was being done was accurate. The advice was probably move the bar back to what was more minor which picked up more notifications that needed to be made.

The notifications that are included in this batch are things like variations because a boundary has been varied because of a subdivision next door - things like this. They are administrative issues; they're not to do with listing or not listing or changing the nature of the listing.

Mr WILLIE - Just to clarify, the 2014-15 changes may be to list. This notification that's gone out isn't to unlist some of those properties?

Mr ROBERTS - Anything that involves the unlisting of a property requires the oversight and approval of the Heritage Council and requires a notification to owners.

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Mr WILLIE - So, no property owners have jumped through unnecessary hurdles in that eight-year lag because of changes in 2014-15, maybe through development works or whatever else?

Ms OGILVIE - Without reviewing all of the 1800 issues it would be hard to say but perhaps Andrew can shed some light.

Mr WILLIE - My concern here are that property owners have had to jump through unnecessary hoops in that eight years because of a lag in notification and potentially there may be other changes in those notifications.

Mr ROBERTS - The feedback we got from the notifications didn't identify any of those issues. The reality is that if someone is doing a development on a property they can make application for a Certificate for Affected Place, which identifies what is listed and how what constraints on that property are and they make their calls each time a development approval comes in. Heritage Council is notified of that. They make their contribution. There is advice also. The chances of any lack of notification causing an issue to a landowner are very low.

Mr WILLIE - I guess you touched on you have updated your policies around the thresholds and notification. Is that an under-resourcing issue that it took so long for the Heritage Council?

Ms OGILVIE - I will also ask Andrew. It is an operational matter and I would not want to speak about resourcing management within the department, but I think Andrew might be able to shed some light.

Mr ROBERTS - I do not believe it is related to resources. It is related to refinements and improvements in process and practice, that it happened continually over time, and each time they have a Heritage Council that has an oversight of Heritage Tasmania, and they ask questions and can you get further advice on that? That further advice is obtained and then there will be a variation to policy and practice. That is a part of the ongoing and improvement.

CHAIR - That was a useful question. The member for Launceston, with a lot of heritage in her beautiful Launceston.

Ms ARMITAGE - I do have a lot of heritage in my patch.

With some of the public heritage we have, obviously, Franklin House is one of our jewels in our crown in my electorate.

Entally House was falling into a state of disrepair and where does the state stand on issues like this. We were very fortunate with Entally House to have Rob Sherrard and Brett Godfrey come in as lessees, who have put a lot of money and work into it and kept it public.

I know at the time there was some criticism of the Government when they had the Expression of Interest process, letting private lessees come in, but we are very fortunate with these gentlemen they have kept it open to the public and have really done some wonderful work.

CHAIR - Beautiful garden.

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Ms ARMITAGE - Absolutely magnificent, but where does the Government stand on some of our public buildings falling into disrepair, because I note at many stages there is not public money going in. Putting them out to EOI processes.

Ms OGILVIE - Is it more a question on our investment in heritage.

Ms ARMITAGE - Investment in heritage and ensuring heritage for the future. This is a public building and I will ask you about private ones next.

Ms OGILVIE - Perhaps the best way to respond to that is to talk a little bit about what the strategy is around maintaining and investing.

Ms ARMITAGE - Maintaining, preserving and protecting, obviously, for the future, because what would have happened to places like Entally House if it had gone into private ownership or private lease. I said we were fortunate that it did not, because it was an EOI process and it was given to private people, just that they left it in the public hands.

They acted as custodians as opposed to taking it privately and stopping the public going in and we were fortunate.

Ms OGILVIE - There is a lot of different ownership structures and models in the Heritage portfolio.

Ms ARMITAGE - Well there are, but I am talking about public buildings that are here for the public to enjoy.

Ms OGILVIE - I agree. I think it would be helpful to talk.

CHAIR - We would not want you to read out three pages, if you can pick out the key points.

Ms OGILVIE - If it is specific in relation to Entally House?

Ms ARMITAGE - No, it is not. My question is, with regard to public buildings. Entally is one of them. We have Franklin House, Woolmers, Brickendon. We have a lot throughout the state. Obviously, we are heritage state.

Ms OGILVIE - Rich state.

Ms ARMITAGE - And in order to protect and preserve the heritage for the public to be able to enjoy, does the Government have a policy on funding these.

Ms OGILVIE - I would really like to give you a really good answer. What we can do, is talk you through the work we are doing in relation to that. I think Michael would be well placed to do that.

We are doing some strategic thinking on this issue. It is really important and if you are happy to speak, it is timely to do that now.

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Mr GIUDICI - I role at the moment is Acting General Manager of Heritage and Land Tasmania. I will pass to Andrew shortly, but to set the scene.

This goes to, and I apologise, I was not here at the beginning, but it goes to the question supporting the National Trust, but there is a whole ecosystem of heritage in Tasmania which is what the question was referring to and we have been commissioning historical heritage ecosystem situational analysis, because it is a complex and diverse system of public and private, as you have mentioned. The minister received a briefing on that a couple of weeks ago and at this stage we are considering that briefing and what to do next. Andrew Roberts, who has been intimately involved with the consultants who did the briefing would perhaps give an overview of what you were seeking to achieve there and in relation to the member's question.

CHAIR - And can we have the cost of the consultancy for that work as well? Thank you.

Mr ROBERTS - One of the reasons the minister requested this work being done is to get a clear understanding of how the bits fit together. An interesting finding so far, is who are the various owners of these historic heritage properties? The Government is a fairly big player in that market.

Ms ARMITAGE - You are talking about all heritage properties now, as opposed to just the public properties overall?

Mr ROBERTS - We are talking about historic heritage assets in this study at the moment, historic heritage property assets and the management of those. Largely looking at the publicly accessible ones as a key area, but the Government has a real role as the owner of some of these buildings, as the underlying landlord. Places like Salamanca Arts Centre, Theatre Royal, Treasury building, all of these and a lot of these buildings get preserved through that general use funding as in they are used for purposes that are not always public access. Then there is another side of the industry of the private delivery, like Brickendon, Woolmers, leasehold.

Ms ARMITAGE - Open to the public.

Mr ROBERTS - Open to the public like Entally House, Home Hill near Devonport. There are quite a few different models and when they looked at all of these, there is no one clear model. They are all a nuance of the history of the site, who owns it, where the funding comes from and things like that. Part of this review is trying to find, are there success points there that can be used to be shared amongst other players to bring things up? Whether this leasehold model at Entally House has got legs or not or is another way to do things. What would happen was, everybody had an idea, an understanding, but no one could actually explain it clearly in a short time frame. The idea, once we work this study up further, we would be able to say, here is a general summary of how it all fits together and these are the areas that the Government sees that they can pay a difference on.

Ms ARMITAGE - I am referring back now to an *Examiner* article back in 2013, but I believe it is still relevant and the question is to you, minister. This was with regard to Franklin House at the time, but it relates to all publicly accessible buildings such as Franklin House. A Launceston alderman and Franklin House committee member at the time, Robin McKendrick, who is no longer a council alderman. It said:

Funding responsibilities and management over heritage properties fell to government. They have to recognise that these properties are a vital part of Tasmania and a vital part of our tourism industry.

You would agree with that?

Ms OGILVIE - Of course.

Ms ARMITAGE -

Former National Trust State President, Lionel Morrell, said Entally House was just as important as other projects that receive government funding such as the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

I think this last sentence is really important:

Private enterprise would be driven by necessity to get a return and there would be significant pressure for inappropriate use as a conversion to commercial use.

That is one of the issues that people who have come to me have been concerned with, and I said in the first sentence:

Funding responsibilities and management over heritage properties fell to government.

In that case, do you agree that many of these properties obviously need work. The Government should be funding them.

Ms OGILVIE - There is a deep and complex, and we have called it an ecosystem, but a series of arrangements about who is responsible for which buildings including private sector, organisations, National Trust and Government and where Government owns buildings of course it has a responsibility for maintenance and management. I broadly agree with the theme of your question which is, how can we do this in a more strategic way and to elevate the importance of our heritage in Tasmania which is the drawcard for much of the other economic activity.

Ms ARMITAGE - But in a way to ensure that they're protected.

Ms OGILVIE - Absolutely.

Ms ARMITAGE - The concern I have is that some of these properties can fall into a great state of disrepair. What would the Government do if that were the case? Would they come in or would they not?

Ms OGILVIE - I can speak from some personal experience. I have previously been on the board of the Salamanca Arts Centre and that is in a heritage building. There is a great need for management and funding, particularly of roofs, with heritage buildings. I take this issue very seriously, which is why we've done this work and continue to do this work, looking at a

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strategic approach to the ecosystem and - Rob Valentine used the word 'adaptive reuse' and at other jurisdictions, such as UK and Ireland, and how they manage their old and somewhat crumbling properties. It is an issue not just germane to Tasmania, but right across the globe.

Ms ARMITAGE - I appreciate that, but I am more concerned with Tasmania and the fact that if they go into private enterprise, they are driven the necessity to get a return and the buildings are then not necessarily always available to the public.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, I agree. There are different sorts of models and structures. Thinking about the Treasury building, for example, which will remain in government hands - that's the commitment, but other uses might then be able to take place such as art galleries. There might be some uses that are good and lovely that people want, whereas there might be some, as you've described, which are inappropriate and not okay. The balancing act is always there. Having a strategic plan, which is where this work is headed, is essential and I couldn't agree with you more that it is so important that we protect, maintain, love and elevate our heritage - not just because it makes Tasmania beautiful but because it also lends ballast to our tourism sector. People want to come here because of the heritage. They want to come here and find out about their relatives. They want to come here and enjoy our beautiful places, so it's in the government's great interest to make sure things are maintained and protected. Having said that, if there's one that you're particularly concerned about or if you know of a heritage property owner who needs assistance, please send them my way.

Ms ARMITAGE - Then let me ask you now that you are bringing this up: private heritage buildings. In Launceston, 15 Brisbane Street, 1824, the oldest inhabited house, 'Sunnybank' - in desperate need of some work but it's very hard for owners with the cost of doing work on these heritage buildings. Did you mention earlier that there was some assistance for owners or is it simply a loan?

Ms OGILVIE - There is some assistance. I would be happy to update you on that.

We talked about some of the grants that are already in place but let's go to what owners could seek.

The Tasmanian Heritage Council through Heritage Tasmania also provides free professional advice to owners of places in the Heritage Register.

That's something.

The advice eases the statutory approvals process and helps owners identify solutions to meet their needs.

There is a high rate of approvals for development applications -

Ms ARMITAGE - I think they are fine with the advice. Money is more the issue with some of these heritage places.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, it's always the money, isn't it?

Some local governments offer grants and awards for places of local heritage value and the Tasmanian Community Fund provides grants for a range of

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places and projects across the state that benefit heritage where there is a community benefit.

There is some money out there.

A variety of other grant opportunities that can benefit heritage places also arise from time to time.

It is worth being in touch with the department.

These can include grant programs that might fund initiatives including general heritage, capital works, regional development and visitor infrastructure projects.

The long and short of it is that yes, it is a real issue. The department is here to help and if there is an owner who needs specific assistance, please ask them to reach out.

Ms ARMITAGE - I shall.

CHAIR - I think the answer is there are no funds directly available from government.

Ms ARMITAGE - It's sad when you see properties that fall into disrepair because it's very hard to bring them back.

Ms OGILVIE - I'm a heritage lover. I understand.

The cost of the consultancy, to fill you in, was \$43 000 exclusive of GST.

CHAIR - Is that completed?

Mr GIUDICI - That is completed unless we commission any additional work. At this stage what we will be doing in the next short time is considering that report in its fullness and then having discussions with the minister about what goes on next.

Ms HOWLETT - Minister, could you please outline to the committee how the Tasmanian Heritage Council and Heritage Tasmania did in terms of its previous performance measures this year?

Ms OGILVIE - We rely on the expertise provided by the Tasmanian Heritage Council as it cares for and advises on our significant heritage assets. The Heritage Council's responsibility under the Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995 are significant and require a considerable time commitment. I extend my thanks to all the members of the council for their work, who do a great job.

The Heritage Council exceeded two of their performance measures and met the third on all but one occasion. The staff of Heritage Tasmania help deliver the objectives of the Heritage Council in the research and analysis of new or revised listings in the provision of predevelopment advice and works approvals and in advocacy to promote the application of historic heritage in Tasmania. The effectiveness of this free pre-development advice has been a significant achievement by the Heritage Council in recent years. I am pleased to see

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approximately 99 per cent of the development applications are approved, which is a reflection of the cooperative discussions that have been undertaken with developers while they are still formulating their plans.

These discussions help the historic heritage listed site owners to obtain a clearer understanding of the relative significance of the elements of their properties and to appreciate ways these can be preserved, while still allowing adaptive reuse. As at the 31 March 2022, Heritage Tasmania had approved 459 development applications and certificates of exemption contributing to more than \$277 million worth of development activity across Tasmania.

Mr VALENTINE - Minister, in your opening preamble you mentioned 15 per cent of heritage registered properties were actively managed. I am wondering if you can give us a split on private/public management in that regard?

Ms OGILVIE - The ones we own you mean?

Mr VALENTINE - The statement you read out was 15 per cent of heritage registered properties are actively managed. I am interested to know the percentage of those that are privately managed and the percentage of those that are publicly managed.

Ms OGILVIE - I might some advice from the department on that.

Mr ROBERTS - That is in reference to the listing itself, not the actual property physically. If that listing is being upgraded or the details are being revised that is what that means.

Mr VALENTINE - That is a slightly different context.

Mr ROBERTS - It is not the physical -

Mr VALENTINE - If I was to put it on notice, can you find the answer to what I am asking? The ones that are on the register that are actively managed properties, as in for tourism, whether they are managed by government or they are managed privately. Do you have that figure?

Mr ROBERTS - The study we have just been running at the moment has explored that area. We do not have a full answer yet. The easiest one to find is property owner as in government, with all the others and whether they are in tourism or not is another stat.

Mr VALENTINE - It is something you would not be able do, that is okay, let us leave it in that case.

CHAIR - We have already talked about the additional funding to National Trust but in the previous Estimates transcripts it talks about the challenges that the National Trust is experiencing and, hence, the additional funding. What is your understanding of their financial position at this time? Will they continue to be a viable organisation?

Ms OGILVIE - Like all cultural institutions across Tasmania reliant on the visitor economy, the National Trust continues to respond to the COVID-19 related challenges. I think it is fair to say there have been quite a few of those. Its properties have reopened, however

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continued shortfalls in revenue from property admissions, events and retail sales, remain a reality, sadly. As I have mentioned, the availability of volunteers has been a substantial challenge -

CHAIR - Is that because they are an older demographic more often than not?

Ms OGILVIE - I think that is right. People join the National Trust early on and they tend to stay because it is such a good organisation. Those volunteers who have helped to manage the Trust properties have been limited, due to COVID-19 vulnerabilities and that is largely associated with the age demographic.

The Tasmanian Government is aware of the current circumstances and it's a challenging financial position. I have taken the time to meet with them in person. We have been working closely with the board of directors.

CHAIR - So there is no issue with their viability?

Ms OGILVIE - Not that I'm aware of. We do want to work very closely with them, to make sure that in their strategic planning there is a way forward that makes sure that they remain a viable organisation, and are able to do the great work that they do.

In particular, I'm really aware that with cohorts of volunteers, particularly ones in the National Trust, and those who love heritage, they are a great group of people. The organisation that facilitates their engagement with heritage is really important. I've got my eye on that. I want to make sure that we ensure that they are set up to succeed over the long term and that's why we have put that additional amount of funding in.

CHAIR - In last year's contribution to this process, it was suggested that the Government was aware that if things change there was a potential liability for government, which is on behalf of the people of Tasmania.

Ms OGILVIE - The way I would phrase that, is that we have put the \$300 000 additional funding in, to work on that strategic plan to make sure that they are able to set themselves some more financially stable and self-sustaining path.

There is some complexity to that; we are dealing with old buildings. There is a substantial amount of costs associated with those. There are questions regarding adaptive reuse and some of this work that we're doing with strategic thinking about our stock of heritage that we have in Tasmania. We will support that as well. I hope that answers the question.

CHAIR - Thank you, minister. We are watching with interest as are all Tasmanians.

Ms OGILVIE - We will do our best.

CHAIR - That's Heritage done and dusted. We now invite you to bring to the table your support for your role as minister for Small Business.

Minister for Small Business

Output group 90

COVID-19 Response and recovery

CHAIR - Minister, we welcome you back with your portfolio responsibility as the Minister for Small Business. As we know, Tasmania thrives on small business. It is an important area of our economy. I would like you to introduce your support team at the table and provide your overview. Thank you.

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you, Chair. Before I start I would like to introduce at the table we have Mark Bowles who is the Deputy Secretary of Business and Jobs, Kate Mirowski, Director of Small Business.

It is a pleasure to be here today in my role as minister for Small Business. Being a previous small business owner myself I do understand some of the issues that face our small business sector.

CHAIR - And myself as well.

Ms OGILVIE - Quite a few around the table, perhaps. However, I was not running a small business during the pandemic. I start today by saying how incredibly proud I am of the sheer hard work, resilience and grit that our small businesses have shown throughout the last two and a half years. I acknowledge the hard work and long hours that so many of our small businesses put in to keep their doors open, their shelves stocked and our communities supplied with food, groceries and other essentials they need.

I am also proud to be part of a government that is such a strong supporter of the small business sector. Having provided more than 31 000 individual grants to small businesses totalling over \$165 million during the pandemic, helping them survive one of the greatest disruptions imaginable, we are now concentrating on the immense future opportunities for businesses in Tasmania. We are now focused on the development of our new Business Growth Strategy. In partnership with the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Tasmanian Small Business Council and the business community, this will inform the development of new programs and initiatives to help our small business sector thrive.

From 15 June we will be consulting with small businesses for a series of roundtables across the state to ensure that our new Business Growth Strategy will meet the needs of our business community in both metropolitan and regional areas. This important process will inform the development of new programs, activities and initiatives that assist businesses as we chart our path forward and build on the strong foundations in our business sector.

Moving forward, it is also my intention to improve small business customer service experience with government. I believe that small businesses deserve to receive a high level of service from government and that is why we have allocated \$50 000 in this year's budget for the small business customer service initiative. The purpose of this project is to deliver customer-centric outcomes for small business. Business Tasmania will work with the small business advocate to develop an initiative that will assist in progressing this work. I am very excited about that.

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Finally, our small businesses demonstrated resilience, adaptability and perseverance and our government is committed to supporting our state's small business sector and the tens of thousands of Tasmanians it employs. Thank you.

Mr WILLIE - I will apologise for my cough. I do not have COVID-19. It is something that I have had from having COVID-19 in late April. I am finding it hard to shake.

CHAIR - You might move that microphone down a bit and that might help.

Mr WILLIE - Minister, the budget for peak body support shows a 20 per cent reduction in allocation in the forward Estimates. I am aware this is for the COVID-19 response. What do the organisations have to deliver for this contribution? Are the funds going to the Small Business Council of Tasmania, the TTCI, the small chambers? What do they have to deliver? What are their KPIs?

Ms OGILVIE - In the 2020-21 budget funding of \$500 000 was announced to support peak bodies and industry associations to support small businesses in their recovery from the impacts of the pandemic. This fund administered via a grant program aimed to assist small businesses by funding support programs and activities or projects undertaken by peak bodies and industry associations to assist their respective small business members recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

Projects funded under this program needed to commence before 1 November 2021 and needed to be completed within 12 months from commencement.

A total of \$500 000 was available under this fund - five grants of up to \$25 000 per peak body or industry association to deliver on one or more of the following objectives: enable peak bodies to increase their capacity and/or capability to deliver support to its small business members; to enhance, increase or expand on existing support programs or activities aimed at small businesses and their recovery from COVID-19.

It also has the objective to develop and implement small business support programs that contribute to small business COVID-19 recovery and/or small business resilience; to improve access for small businesses to support offered by their respective peak body or industry association; to increase information sharing and support networks between members and industry participants; and to encourage collaboration and drive networking opportunities between businesses, organisations and industries.

Funding was only available to new projects or to enhance or extend an existing project. Funds were not provided to any project enhancement or extension that has already been funded by a government body or third party organisation.

Six applications were submitted under this program. Only four were eligible. Successful applicants were the Tasmanian Minerals, Manufacturing and Energy Council, which received \$25 000 funding approved to support an annual conference, which is important for the mining sector and business supply chain. The Trout Guide and Lodges Tas Inc received \$5000 funding to support the redesign of their website that will benefit members and the broader community.

The King Island Regional Development Organisation, \$25 000 approved for funding to assist with programs associated for remote communities through the adoption of technology.

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Startup Tasmania were also successful for \$15 000; however, the applicant informed the department that it wished to terminate the deed. No grant funding had been distributed.

CHAIR - What was the quantum of those four initiatives?

Ms OGILVIE - A total of \$500 000 was available under the fund, for grants up to \$25 000 per peak body.

CHAIR - But, where is the rest of the money because it wasn't expended, not on those, as stated.

Ms OGILVIE - Good question. I will ask Mr Bowles to let me know how his budget is looking.

CHAIR - Where is the rest of the money?

Mr BOWLES - Those funds we intend to carry over to the next financial year and following the consultation that we are just about to conduct on this future small business strategy work that will inform the future rounds for those funds. The intention is to continue with those programs.

CHAIR - It doesn't show that in the budget papers on page 295. We need to know what figure is remaining and why it is not shown.

Mr BOWLES - The small business portfolio funding sits within the Industry and Business Development sub-output group. To give you a little bit more detail, for the small business portfolio the funding which in that output group is \$4.95 million for 2022-23. That includes all of the base funding for our regular programs such as the enterprise centres programs as well as all of the new election commitments from this year and last year.

CHAIR - There's nothing in this line item under 90.22 moving forward even though there's a significant balance still remaining, or am I reading this wrong? Please tell me if I am. I am happy to be corrected.

Mr BOWLES - I can confirm there is \$400 000 in the rollovers so that doesn't appear in that line item but it does appear under 1.2 Industry and Business Development.

CHAIR - So, there are no longer any funds available for the COVID-19 Response and Recovery for peak body support. Is that correct?

Mr BOWLES - There are still funds available, but the way these output groups were structured during COVID-19, and this was unique for the COVID-19 period, was that Treasury made allocations directly into, for example, the output group that you are referring to, but going forward that will be included in the main sub-output group, 1.2.

CHAIR - Minister, will you have any input or responsibility over the remaining \$400 000 that was originally allocated for the remainder of those funds, given that we still have a lot of small businesses recovering from COVID-19.

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Ms OGILVIE - Yes, and I am sure we will go through some of the other funding arrangements in this output session.

It is my understanding that the department is now looking at how best utilise that remaining funding - this is the peak body support funds - and how best enable them to support small businesses in their recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is our practice. I work closely with the department and I am out there listening to the community as well. That is something that I will have my eyes across. I have full confidence that the department is headed in the right direction with this matter.

Mr VALENTINE - Can I get some clarification? Is the line item 1.2 that Mr Bowles is talking about on page 297? Can I verify that is output group 1 Industry and Business Growth?

Mr BOWLES - That is correct.

CHAIR - That was the area that we covered on Monday.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, it seems so.

CHAIR - Mr Willie, I apologise. I completely overtook your line of questioning.

Mr WILLIE - That's fine. We are a team.

Mr BOWLES - If I could just make a correction. You will see that in respect of the \$400 000 that has been rolled over, that does appear in the output group expense summary. The expense summary includes rollovers, whereas the appropriation doesn't.

CHAIR - Page ?

Mr VALENTINE - What page?

Mr BOWLES - On page 274, and you will see under Minister for Small Business, output group 90.22, Budget 2021-22, \$500 000, and then 2022-23, \$400 000.

CHAIR - Thank you, that is very useful and not information that I had picked up. I think often there is a deliberate strategy for compiling budget papers. I have noticed over my 18 years that they change constantly.

I think it's a bit like taxation: they want to catch you.

Mr VALENTINE - With respect to small business support, the feedback that I received, and I mentioned this in my budget speech response. The amount that, what do you call it, the turnover amount I think for a business to be able to claim assistance under this was something like \$3 million. Am I correct in that?

Ms OGILVIE - No, because we were just talking about the peak body grant.

CHAIR - This is the peak body. We haven't got to small business yet.

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Mr VALENTINE - That is a question for the next item. I will hold it. I was not sure.

CHAIR - Obviously there is a myriad of peak bodies for small business.

Every area that I know of has a chamber of commerce. Can we have some indication of the engagement with those peak bodies and those chambers of commerce around the state, please.

Ms OGILVIE - I think the chamber of commerce one is important because it has that broad statewide focus. I'm happy to provide some information.

CHAIR - Small chambers are always connected to the larger chambers.

Ms OGILVIE - Those change too; chambers of commerce can come and go.

I think we all agree on the importance of small businesses as the engine room of our economy, and the contribution businesses make, particularly in our regional areas. That's why in the 2021-22 Budget, funding of \$300 000 was announced to support regional chambers of commerce over three years. This funding is to support regional chambers of commerce, small-business members, and to promote collaboration and business development across regional Tasmania.

On 15 December 2021, we opened the regional Chambers of Commerce Collaboration and Business Development Fund. This program closed on 11 March 2022.

On Friday 12 April, I announced the following successful applicants under the first round of this program: Flinders Island Business Inc., George Town Chamber of Commerce, Business Eastern Shore, Central Coast Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Kentish and Latrobe Independent Business Association Inc., Northern Midlands Business Association, Business Northwest and Launceston Chamber of Commerce.

Funding for these organisations totals \$175 960, with some of the organisations being successful in gaining funding over three years. A second round of grants under this program will be announced in the mid-2022-23 financial year, for the remaining funding of \$124 040.

CHAIR - Does that include the Break O'Day Business Enterprise Centre?

Ms OGILVIE - We are dealing with enterprise centres separately; I can turn to that if you would like.

CHAIR - Right, that's fine. Thank you. I got ahead of myself again.

Ms OGILVIE - No, that's good. Business Enterprise Centres.

CHAIR - The heartbeat of a lot of communities.

Ms OGILVIE - One-hundred per cent, I couldn't agree with you more. It's a matrix level of support that we have right across the state.

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The Tasmanian Government is dedicated to supporting small businesses and ensuring they have access to support under the Enterprise Centres Tasmania program. The ECT program is a statewide network of independent business advisers providing free business guidance and information to support businesses to start, run and grow.

The ECT program is another great example of government working and supporting business. Our professional, regionally based business advisers ensure the regional needs of our business are met and that businesses receive professional, independent advice.

The ECT program delivers business advisory services to enhance small business capacity, improve the resilience of new and established small businesses and promote growth by offering support in all stages of business development.

The ECT business advisers have continued to play a pivotal role in assisting small businesses recover and rebuild from COVID-19.

I am happy to announce that the current contracts will be extended to 30 June 2023 to allow a comprehensive review of the current service provision to ensure it remains relevant in a COVID-19 operating environment, and that the business advisers continue to have the necessary skills and qualifications required to deliver services.

CHAIR - I thank you and your support team for the work they did recently, on behalf of one of my enterprise centres.

Ms OGILVIE - The Department of State Growth has engaged an external provider to conduct this review and make recommendations for a future program.

I would also like to announce the Department of State Growth re-advertised for a new service deliverer to provide business advice in the northern region.

Since 1 July, 998 people have access to ECT program - 664 business operators and 334 people intending to start a business. Additional funding of \$300 000 was provided to the ECT program under the COVID-19 sustainability and recovery support program. This allowed an increase in the number of support hours available for all small businesses to assist them to respond to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19.

\$200 000 has also been allocated to a small business regional and referral support program, which aims to assist small businesses impacted by COVID-19 in identified regional and remote business communities, by funding a regional referral resource to support small business recovery.

The role of the regional referral resource is to connect impacted small businesses in the region with support services including Business Tasmania and the ECT program.

King Island Development Organisation and Flinders Island Business Inc, have done a wonderful job providing this service to the businesses on the islands and as a result we are extending their funding to continue this important work.

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The ECT program is delivered under the Business Growth Strategy 2019-2023 key action providing supportive programs and services to enable growth and increase productivity. Good news.

CHAIR - It sounds like there is no need to change the model minister, just a bit of advice from somebody who has been around a while now.

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you very much.

CHAIR - Be careful.

Ms OGILVIE - I will take that as a comment. Noted.

CHAIR - I hope you agree, that is my question.

Ms OGILVIE - We are doing a review.

CHAIR - Are there any more questions in 90.22?

Output Group 90

90.24 Small Business Sustainability and Recovery Assistance

Ms HOWLETT - Minister could you please update the committee on the work undertaken on the Business Growth Strategy?

Ms OGILVIE - Very happy to do that, this is an exciting new piece of work. Our Government continues to build a solid track record of investing in and growing the small business sector. That is why in May 2021, an election commitment was made to release a refreshed Small Business Growth Strategy 2022-2026 to build on our 39 000-strong small businesses. Given the ongoing uncertainty relating to the operating environment for businesses in the second half of 2021, plans to develop a new business growth strategy were delayed. Instead, an interim strategy was developed in consultation with the Tasmanian Chamber of Industry and Tasmanian Small Business Council and released in December 2021.

Given Tasmania's borders have now been open for some time and most restrictions have now been eased, planning has commenced in relation to the development of our Business Growth Strategy 2022-2026. Our new strategy will help in charting our path, helping us to build on the strong foundations in our business sector and allowing us to grasp opportunities that arise in the future.

Our strategy will outline how the private sector and the Government can:

- build on the strong business investment and consumer spending in recent years,
- seize emerging opportunities in our economy including population growth, increasing tourism exports and increased investment in enabling public infrastructure,

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- identify positive elements of our business sectors' work over past years to recognise innovations and improvements and ensure Government policies are aligned with business industry goals and targets.

Collaborative efforts in these areas will continue our close working relationship which is successful and delivers so many positive outcomes.

I am pleased to announce a thorough consultation process is about to begin, which will enable Tasmanian small businesses to have their say on how we can work together under our business growth strategy.

CHAIR - Another round table.

Ms OGILVIE - I am excited. It is going to be great. As part of this consultation process we are engaging with key stakeholder groups and the broader business community to ensure the next version of the strategy identifies the priorities that build the foundation for a thriving business sector. A series of face-to-face and online round table sessions are taking place across this state this month.

CHAIR - What did I tell you?

Ms OGILVIE - With me. It is going to be great. And the first one is next week on 15 June, which I am excited about. A public submission process will also provide the opportunity to contribute the development of the new business growth strategy. It is essential we capture ideas from Tasmanian business. It is vital we hear the voice of small businesses from both our metro and our regional areas. Everyone's input is welcome and feedback will enhance the design of our strategy.

There is no doubt the global business landscape will continue to evolve and change, but by working together we can ensure Tasmania's small business community will be in the strongest possible position to respond to whatever challenges might come our way. I look forward to hearing from everyone as part of this consultation process and I very much look forward to the delivery of the new business growth strategy later this year.

CHAIR - Thank you.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, the concern was that the turnover level was too high. It was \$3 million, correct me if I am wrong. There are a lot of small business that simply do not turn that over, they can have their houses on the line, having to borrow money against their own property. It is a concern with the number of small businesses below that level of turnover, but please clarify what the level of turnover is.

Ms OGILVIE - I am aware there are a number of different programs and will ask Mr Bowles to speak to that specific question.

Mr BOWLES - Thank you. Can I confirm which program you referred to?

Mr VALENTINE - It is programs that help small business with COVID-19 downturn. I am not sure what its name is but it was cafes and the like. I was told by a couple of the owners

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and others in passing it was set too high for them. They could not put in for a grant because they did not meet the turnover figure. I cannot tell you what the exact program is.

Mr BOWLES - The most recent programs or COVID-19 related programs was the Business Impact Support Program. We had a number of rounds. In the first round the lowest threshold was \$50 000 and it was subsequently lowered to \$25 000 to account for the micro businesses.

Mr VALENTINE - The turnover was that much?

Mr BOWLES - The minimum turnover requirement was \$25 000 per year

Mr VALENTINE - Obviously, the information that has come to me is incorrect, that is all I can say about that.

CHAIR - If you are talking about \$3 million, that is big business in Tasmania.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you.

Ms ARMITAGE - Can you give me an updated list of the funds expended under the line item? Formerly an \$835 000 and obviously, the budget of \$130 000 and also whether all the funds were expended?

Ms OGILVIE - This is Business Impact Support Programs?

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes, 90.24 page 295.

CHAIR - Probably an extensive nest for that amount of money and we are happy to have that tabled.

Ms ARMITAGE - Whether it has all been expended?

Ms OGILVIE - What I will try and do is give an overview.

Ms ARMITAGE - Give an overview and then table the document you can table.

Ms OGILVIE - There was a lot of money expended. There is two parts to it, in relation to the hardship experience from COVID-19 by Tasmanian businesses. The Government released a suite of support measures, there are a range of them. It has obviously been of critical importance to many small businesses. The support has been provided in various forms including grants, interest free loans, business counselling, fee and tax relief, free or low-cost training and skills development and economic incentives.

The Tasmanian Government is the nation's leading provider of COVID-19 support to Tasmanian businesses providing \$160 million in grant and support. Over 31 000 Tasmanian businesses benefited from support packages since March 2020 . The Government first started providing support for businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 when it launched the Small Business Emergency Support Grant program providing grants of up to \$2 500 for small businesses experiencing hardship during the pandemic.

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The program opened on the 26 March and closed on the 4 May 2020 after two rounds and this was followed by the Small Business Hardship Grants which provided \$26 million in \$4 000 and \$15 000 grants to eligible businesses. The Small Business Sustainability and Recovery Assistance package which allocated \$20 million to help small businesses through the challenges of COVID-19.

I do have a lot of detail about the grant rounds. How much would you like me to go into, particularly in relation to sectoral grants, fee and tax relief, would you like an overview? Or would you like me to go into some substantive detail about that?

Ms ARMITAGE - I would be happy with an overview and then table the other information.

Ms OGILVIE - The key statistics, I will check with Mr Bowles.

CHAIR - Does your overview include the balance of the account. That was the question the member asked.

Ms ARMITAGE - Whether it has all been expended?

Ms OGILVIE - Let us deal with that specifically first, while I address with this. Mark are you happy to address that question.

Mr BOWLES - Across all of the COVID-19 support programs - and I can go through the funds allocated if you wish. They appear both in the output sub-group 90.24 but a lot of the larger grant programs, including the Business Impact Program and the Border Closure Program actually provided for a request for additional funds so they are far in excess of what is allocated here in this budget line.

Ms ARMITAGE - So they're in RAFs.

Mr BOWLES - They're in RAFs. Because those programs were initiated -

Ms ARMITAGE - On the run.

Mr BOWLES - Rapid response. We had to roll those programs out before they were allocated so -

CHAIR - It was uncharted territory.

Mr BOWLES - Yes. Those larger amounts were RAFs.

CHAIR - Is there anything remaining of the \$4.835 million that was allocated under 90.24 for Small Business, Sustainability and Recovery Assistance Package.

Mr BOWLES - I believe that there was about \$3.5 million retained from that allocation.

CHAIR - But that's somewhere else because all we have in the forward Estimates is \$130 000.

PUBLIC

Mr BOWLES - That's right.

Ms ARMITAGE - Where has it gone, into which area? It is really nice to have little footnotes there sometimes just to tell you where it's gone.

CHAIR - Where else to look.

Mr BOWLES - So, rollovers, where they've been approved -

Ms ARMITAGE - If you go to Output Group 1 Industry and Business.

Mr BOWLES - That's right, page 297 - Output Group 1.2 - Industry and Business Development. That includes the base funding for small business.

CHAIR - At times like this you need the minister you had on Monday tomorrow.

Ms OGILVIE - Which minister did you have on Monday?

CHAIR - Mr Barnett who is responsible for Industry and Business Development. We didn't ask the question then because we thought we'd ask it of you, minister.

Ms ARMITAGE - We didn't know. Most of us had gone back unprepared.

Mr VALENTINE - Those are the perils of the system.

CHAIR - Is it possible to have a list of those businesses that received the funding of what has been distributed at this point in time?

Ms OGILVIE - Ask that question again.

CHAIR - Is it possible to have a list of the businesses that received funds under that output group at this point in time, which from memory is about \$1 million because you said there's about \$3 million.

Ms OGILVIE - Chair, I think the difficulty with that is that when businesses were applying for grants, particularly Hardship Grants, there's a confidentiality and privacy issue so I don't think we are going to be able to provide -

CHAIR - We received them last year.

Mr WILLIE - We went through this in the Public Accounts before the election and there was a motion to the House to the Legislative Council.

Ms OGILVIE - I am happy to check but I would be concerned to commit to something that I can't deliver on.

Ms ARMITAGE - I think it was a 'no' in last years.

CHAIR - I thought we received them in the end last year.

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Ms HOWLETT - No, they're hardship grants.

Ms ARMITAGE - No, we didn't.

CHAIR - I stand to be corrected.

Ms OGILVIE - I don't want to impact people's businesses.

CHAIR - Neither do we but these are public funds.

Ms OGILVIE - I appreciate that and there is a balance to be struck and I take your point.

CHAIR - Further questions, members?

Mr VALENTINE - I need to do some homework. I will bring mine to the Floor of the House if I need to.

Ms OGILVIE - Mr Valentine, I think I could help a little bit.

If we are able to table some information about the range of grants and the categories, it might actually assist so if you're asking me to do that, which I think you are?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, I would like you to do that.

Ms OGILVIE - Then I think I can provide you with some assistance on the tiering and how that worked.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, please.

Ms OGILVIE - I am happy to do that.

Mr VALENTINE - Excellent, that might uncover the conundrum.

Ms OGILVIE - It is complex.

CHAIR - Thank you, minister. If there are no remaining questions members then we shall suspend the broadcast.

Suspended from 1.10 p.m. to 2.15 p.m.

Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries

CHAIR - Minister, I welcome you back to the table. You have some new team members at the table. This is scrutiny of your portfolio as the Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries.

There is no output item, but I believe you are going to explain that to us. I expect you will have a brief overview.

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Ms OGILVIE - Thank you. I do. Could I introduce the Secretary, Kim Evans; Steve Gilmore, Rear Admiral retired and Defence Advocate; Mark Bowles, Deputy Secretary Industry and Business.

It is great to come before the committee as Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries.

Manufacturing is a priority sector for Tasmania. Its industries gross value added grew by 2.9 per cent from 2019-20 to 20-22-21, generating almost \$1.9 billion for our state, and it directly employs more than 18 000 Tasmanians.

It has been estimated that manufacturing in Tasmania also generates \$3.2 billion in flow-on impact, and supported an additional 31 400 non-manufacturing jobs in related sectors.

We have committed \$10.4 million to fully implement our Advanced Manufacturing Action Plan 2024 and related industry development activities to help the sector continue to grow, build resilience and adapt to rapid technological changes underway.

I am also pleased that taking on this role has allowed me to be part of representing Tasmania and Tasmanian industry at one of the industry's most important promotional events, the INDO PACIFIC International Maritime Exposition in Sydney. This is an event that has hundreds of the region's top defence, defence industry, manufacturing and technology leaders and decision-makers in one place. I am pleased to report that the Tasmanian delegation of 10 companies under the Defence Tasmania banner, and the solutions they have created, was a particular standout. This was the biggest delegation we have taken to a defence expo since we first began attending them in 2016, under our first Tasmanian Defence Industry Strategy. We are now well into the second iteration of the strategy, which has recognised that this sector in Tasmania has matured and is now well and truly in the game. I am very pleased to advise the committee that more than 120 connections were made by delegation members over the three days of INDO PACIFIC with senior defence decision-makers, major contractors and buyers.

Tasmanian delegations to the event, as well similar expositions over the past five years, are estimated to have helped secure more than \$30 million in contracts for our local companies and organisations. Overall, more than \$129 million in defence-related contracts have been won by Tasmanian companies over the last three years; in the current financial year alone, more than 50 defence supply contracts were awarded to Tasmanian companies. Collectively, they are worth more than \$74.5 million.

It is estimated that Tasmanian companies have the potential to realise considerably more than \$100 million in new contracts into the defence sector over coming two years. When we think of Tasmanian defence companies, we think of advanced manufacturing, but this is not the whole story. The sector covers many industry areas from research and scientific services, through to long-life food supplies. Advanced manufacturing innately fits perfectly with defence industries in this portfolio.

I am also delighted to advise that Tasmania has now joined the national Industry Capability Network, with ICN Tasmania going live on 28 July 2021. Fully supported by the Tasmanian Government, ICN Tasmania now has a team of four dedicated staff whose main role is bringing supplies and project donors together to help more Tasmanian companies win even more contracts both here and around the nation, and in New Zealand. This includes

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projects in manufacturing, construction, energy, technology and more. Already, almost 400 Tasmanian businesses are actively engaged with ICN Tasmania and connections to more than 250 project opportunities valued at over \$57 million have been made.

We will also shortly commence a new push to get even more Tasmanian businesses on the ICN books to help them get in on even more projects and, importantly, even more contracts. Across advanced manufacturing the outlook is extremely bright. We believe that as we continue through the remainder of our Advanced Manufacturing Action Plan and our Tasmanian Defence Industry Strategy, we are helping provide the solid footing, confidence and support these industries need to grow further.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, minister.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you, Madam Chair. There is no specific output item for this output area, although it is identified that a portion of the appropriation provided to output group 1.2 Industry and Business Development under the Minister for State Development, Construction and Housing includes support for strategies and activities relating to the output. Can you advise us how much funding support is available for this unitemised output group? Can you indicate what strategies and activities this funding will be applied to and how success will be measured?

Ms OGILVIE - I have been through some things and there are a range of -

Mr VALENTINE - Can you be a little more specific? It is \$10.4 million you were talking about to help the sector develop, so it will be interesting to know how you are going to apply that.

Ms OGILVIE - Our 2021-22 election commitments were :

- Advanced Manufacturing Accelerating Growth grants - a total of \$2 393 000,
- Advanced Manufacturing Action Plan, non-salary - \$2 869 000,
- Tasmanian Defence Advocate, non-salary - \$60 000
- Tasmanian minerals manufacturing and energy council industry advancement, \$300 000.
- Tender incentive grant program \$460 000.

Then specific initiatives previously funded:

- defense strategy is \$1.229 million.
- Manufacturing in competitive environments is \$185 000.

When it comes to salary in operational expenditure business growth teams salaries include Defence Advocate, \$7 470 000 and business growth team operational funding is \$220 000. Bringing us to a total of \$15 186 000.

Were you wanting some specifics about project expenditure?

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Mr VALENTINE - I would be interested in that.

Ms OGILVIE - I will go to the Advance Manufacturing Tender Incentive Program and Accelerating Growth Program. It looks at our strategic approach.

Tasmanian advance manufacturers are among the best in the world and the Tasmanian Government is committed to supporting out manufacturers to innovate, expand and create jobs and opportunities for Tasmanians.

In addition to the \$5 million we have provided to implement the advance manufacturing plan, we have also committed a further \$3 million over 2 years for the Advance Manufacturing Accelerating Growth Program to assist Tasmanian manufacturers to invest in capital equipment, to become more innovative, competitive and resilient in the global market.

The first round of the program was launched on 2 August 2021 with a strong message to encourage advance manufacturers to invest in new and modern equipment. Enabling them to increase their capability and capacity to enter new markets, attract new clients and offer further employment opportunities for Tasmania.

Grants between \$10 000 and \$100 000 are available and will provide up to 50 per cent contribution towards the purchase price of capital equipment or total project cost for innovative activities. To date, two rounds have been opened and closed, with the total of 79 applications received and 20 grants approved.

Total projected full-time equivalent positions created for the 20 grantees is 98 roles, total projected investment for the 20 grantees is \$7.55 million.

The Advance Manufacturing Tender Incentive Pprogram was launched with \$600 000 over two years, to support Tasmanian advance manufacturers to engage professional services, to prepare defence and other specialist tenders. There is a significant opportunity for Tasmania advanced manufacturers in the defence center, in particular. Securing these contracts can be complex, time consuming and expensive. The tender incentive program is designed to assist businesses with some of those expenses.

These grants provide up to 50 per cent contribution towards the cost of engaging specialist consultants to support tender preparation. It is designed to encourage Tasmanian advance manufacturers to think a bit bigger and give them the best chance to secure those lucrative tenders in these highly specialized fields.

To date, three applications have been received, with funding approved of \$140 000.

Mr Valentine, to preempt your question, we do not release the names of grantees.

Mr VALENTINE - I appreciate you don't. Interesting to know what sort of collaboration you might be having with interstate manufacturers, other national manufacturers. Is there a lot of that going on or is this all Tasmanian focused?

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Ms OGILVIE - Those two programs are Tasmanian focused. The secretary might talk about those collaborations, because there is some good work happening with missions and visits.

Mr EVANS - Lots of collaborations. If you think about our advance manufacturing industry, it is very specialised. Often in defense products or maritime products.

Mr VALENTINE - Or Antarctic stuff.

Mr EVANS - We are providing specialist niche products into supply chains. A lot of that is manufactured within Tasmania, but it also is important in terms of interstate collaborations with manufacturers interstate and even overseas.

For example, Liferaft Systems, based out at Prince of Wales Bay, produce fantastic life rafts and they are critical to construction of ships right around the world. They have contracts all over the world.

Those collaborations are really important. We support, through our trade division, and also the Advanced Manufacturing Defence Industries Group those collaborations. Trade is really important. Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries feature very heavily in our trade agendas and when we go on missions, we will often take a range of businesses and will have specific appointments around supporting those businesses do trade overseas.

Mr VALENTINE - Basically, Tasmania is concentrating on the niche components others might not have the expertise to produce. We are not actually competing with other states. Would that be a fair assessment?

Ms OGILVIE - Well, there is a fair amount of competition, I have to say. But I think you are right.

Mr VALENTINE - We have certain expertise on this island which is world class and to know we are spending our money wisely, in terms of some niche industries.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes. Of course, we have a great depth of expertise in maritime industries. This might be an appropriate time to invite the Rear Admiral to make some comments around our capabilities and what we do.

Mr GILMORE - The very nature of our manufacturing sector, particularly those that are involved in the defence and broader maritime domain is about expertise and quality, not necessarily quantity and often very unique. A couple of great examples have already been given, but there are many more. Those examples often represent the only national producer of a particular product or a service. There are only six companies in the world that make bridge simulation systems in the maritime environment, and five of those are multi-nationals, the Kongsberg's of the world. There is one in Australia, and it is at a place called Legana, Tasmania, and they are making world-class, in fact, world-leading bridge simulation systems. There are many more stories along those lines.

Mr VALENTINE - For instance, the lightning arrestor people is a significant expertise with regard to that technology.

PUBLIC

Mr GILMORE - Absolutely. And that is very much what we do across our Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industry Unit, is tell those stories, nationally and internationally, to make those connections to enable those contributions to be made. It is very much about collaboration and not so much about competition, certainly within Australia. I work on a routine basis with my interstate colleagues and we are constantly working out how we can best work together to produce the overall requirements.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr EVANS - If I can just add one more example. The Rear Admiral and the minister and I were in Sydney a couple of weeks ago for the INDO PACIFIC trade fair where innovation awards were handed out, and Tasmanian companies won three of about nine, including the major innovation award, and that went to CBG Systems, again, based here in Hobart.

Ms OGILVIE - It was a great success for us. Does that answer your question?

Mr VALENTINE - It answers my question.

Ms OGILVIE - I know you have an interest in technology.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, I do.

Ms HOWLETT - Could you tell me how has the Defence Advocate supported Tasmanian businesses grow to their capacity in the defence sector.

Ms OGILVIE - I am pleased to update the committee on our wonderful Defence Advocate.

The Tasmanian Defence Advocate, retired Rear Admiral Steve Gilmore, who is at the table with us, continues to do an exceptional job to support and guide the implementation of the Tasmanian Defence Industry Strategy.

The defence Advocate has played a pivotal role in the delivery of outcomes for our defence industry, including millions of dollars' worth of new contracts. The Tasmanian Government has committed \$900 000 to support the Tasmanian Defence Advocate to continue to work with Tasmanian manufacturing businesses for another three-year term through to 2024. His role incorporates strategic defence and maritime advice which has proven pivotal during the visit to the state by a senior US Coast Guard delegation looking to understand Hobart's Antarctic gateway status. He has conducted four familiarisation tours for senior defence members, representatives from the Naval Shipbuilding College and Defence Primes across the state.

He has also continued to lead engagement outside Tasmania, meeting with a number of defence representatives in Canberra and leading Tasmania's presence at events including the Sea-Air-Space exposition in Washington USA during April 2022 and at the Indo-Pacific exposition in Sydney during May 2022. He has assisted many Tasmanian businesses to navigate the complex defence sector and to identify future opportunities suited to Tasmania's niche industry capabilities.

PUBLIC

We can say with confidence he has had a key role in the growing number of significant outcomes, including three companies that had not had defence contracts before. These businesses now either have a contract or are at a preferred tenderer status with the value of the contracts around \$80 million. The defence advocate has been crucial in identifying and pursuing key international defence and maritime market opportunities in New Zealand, Indonesia and the United States. In particular, we are now seeing success in the New Zealand market with substantial contracts being achieved by companies such as PFG and Pivot Maritime International who have each received significant support from the defence advocate.

The defence advocate led Tasmania's largest ever physical presence at the Indo-Pacific International Maritime Exposition 2022 with a total of nine companies exhibiting. A number of these exhibited or attended for the first time. I was very fortunate to be included in that visit. In addition to advocating for companies and organisations to pursue maritime and land tenders, the defence advocate has also been supporting companies with ICT and cyber capabilities and promoting Tasmania as the centre for space domain awareness in Australia, which is very exciting.

CHAIR - Can you give me an answer as to grantees that receive funds to help with tenders, once they win a tender, can they keep coming back for more funds?

Mr BOWLES - All of our grant programs are assessed on their own merits. For example, theoretically they could if they have won in one round a particular grant, then a new round occurs every applicant will be assessed on their merits.

CHAIR - Even if it is in the same field?

Mr BOWLES - As long as they are completely different projects they can apply for different projects but not the same project twice.

Ms ARMITAGE - As there is no line item it is a bit hard. It is not clarified and no reflection at all on the Rear Admiral. They are questions we need to ask because it is public money. The \$900 000, it says to support the Tasmanian Defence Advocate, is that a stipend or is that money to assist with tours and other things? I am trying to work out whether that is a salary or whether it is to actually support, which would tend to lead that it might be when you take a tour so that money is coming out of that.

Ms OGILVIE - You want to know what the \$900 000 is expended upon?

Ms ARMITAGE - Whether it is to support and then there is the stipend that comes out of the other budget. I am trying to clarify because there is nothing there to show us.

Ms OGILVIE - For the benefit of the committee I do have a more detailed brief about other funding which might help as well.

Ms ARMITAGE - I have some questions to ask.

Mr EVANS - Those costs of those funds relate to the costs over three years of supporting the advocate, including salaries but also other on-costs and costs like travel and the like.

PUBLIC

Ms ARMITAGE - So, its expenses and other things as well. I wasn't sure when you when you were talking about doing tours whether that was included or whether that was out of another area.

CHAIR - Is there is a breakup available of that?

Ms ARMITAGE - I am going to ask that as my next question.

I noticed that \$2.4 million was the budget, it was told last year, 2021-22 was the budget of salary and operations. Could we have a clear breakup of how many FTEs in the area of the Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries Unit, the budget and a breakdown of the figures.

Ms OGILVIE - The secretary has some details for you.

Mr BOWLES - The salaries budget for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries, including the defence advocate for the 2022-23 financial year is \$2.3 million. The breakdown by head count across the group is 16 staff and that includes three in the north-west, three in the north so the Launceston office, 10 in the south and they are split across three groups. There is an Advanced Manufacturing Group which has eight, the Defence Industries Group which has three plus the Defence Advocate and the Industry Capability Network is four staff.

Ms ARMITAGE - Who has lost out because I notice it has gone down. It was \$2.4 million last year and now it is \$2.3 million so have we lost a staff member? Normally, things go up. It's unusual to see it going down.

CHAIR - It's \$100 000 short.

Mr BOWLES - That's attributed to a vacancy that's currently unfilled.

Ms ARMITAGE - Are you seeking to fill it?

Mr BOWLES - In time, yes.

Ms ARMITAGE - So, shouldn't the budget then be \$2.4 million if you are looking to fill it because you won't have money to pay them otherwise. Otherwise you would come back with a request for additional funding (RAF).

Mr BOWLES - Salary costs in our system are allocated according to the head count that's currently there.

Ms ARMITAGE - Okay, I was looking at the budget thinking if you're actually advertising for someone you'd need that money in the budget but that's okay.

Looking at 2021 and the 40 contracts that were awarded, can you give us a little bit more information on those?

Ms OGILVIE - Hopefully, it will help if I give you a broad idea about what's going on and contracts and projects.

PUBLIC

Ms ARMITAGE - Absolutely, and the length of contract as well - whether they are longer term, short term; how long they might be.

Ms OGILVIE - So these are the ones that have been won?

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes.

Ms OGILVIE - I will give you as much as I can and then I will also put the Rear Admiral on notice. He might pick up.

CHAIR - I hope the minister is not going to read four pages.

Ms OGILVIE - I wanted to give you a bit of detail so I will try to summarise as I go.

CHAIR - You can always table that information.

Ms ARMITAGE - I would be happy for you to list with a little bit of information rather than reading all the pages. We would like a list of who they are and perhaps how long they are for.

Ms OGILVIE - Do you want to be really specific about contracts.

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes.

Ms OGILVIE - The best information on that sits with the Rear Admiral if you want to get into that level of detail but I would note that there are probably commercial-in-confidence concerns about it.

Ms ARMITAGE - I appreciate that but you might be able to tell us the type of contract they are so we can get an understanding of what type of contracting we are attracting to the state.

Mr GILMORE - Thank you, minister, and thanks for the question. Of course, there is commercial-in-confidence for a lot of them so I wouldn't identify a figure to a company -

Ms ARMITAGE - I appreciate that and I certainly don't need to know the figure.

Mr GILMORE - To give an understanding of the diversity of those contracts - one significant one is to Elphinstone CBG Systems and Penguin Composites for their work on the Hanwha Defense self-propelled howitzer project. The shells, the hulls of those vehicles will be manufactured in the north-west of the state over a two or three-year period. That's a significant contract in dollar terms and was announced publicly and attributed to those companies.

The PFG Group here in the south, in Hobart, is a boat manufacturer with a \$6 million contract to provide littoral manoeuvre craft to the Royal New Zealand Navy. That was the first defence-related contract for that long-established boatbuilder.

PUBLIC

Another example, jumping back to the north-west, is the Jabin Group in Cooee. It won its first defence contract to provide launch systems for uninhabited aerial systems for the Australian Army.

Also, perhaps again for the north, Pivot Maritime, which I mentioned before, has achieved contracts for the New Zealand Defence Force.

Whilst we are on Indo Pacific, as the minister referred to a few moments ago, the Royal Australian Navy announced its intent to acquire systems for use in training our servicemen and -women in mariner skills.

Ms ARMITAGE - Does our Maritime College feature very much?

Mr GILMORE - Yes, it does. It is developing the Defence and Maritime Innovation and Design Precinct and a lot of work is going into that; and there is investment of that Commonwealth funding into development of the physical facilities.

Contracts relating to defence have included, more recently, a three-year contract to continue the training of uninhabited underwater vehicles for the Royal Australian Navy. That is, from the top of my head, about a \$3 million contract and requires an extra - I believe it was three or four - staff to continue that project.

Ms ARMITAGE - Do we have any ongoing tenders? It is great that we have those, but they will come to an end. Do we have some ongoing tenders at the moment that we are hoping to get some more business through?

Ms OGILVIE - What's on the horizon?

Ms ARMITAGE - What's on the horizon, yes, because it is a bit like building work. There are a lot of builders with plenty of work now, but it will come to a stop.

Ms OGILVIE - What is the food chain? What I can say is that work that is being done to connect our businesses with Defence Industries is delivering those opportunities. I know that the Rear Admiral would be aware of exactly what is coming down the pipeline and negotiations, I understand.

Ms ARMITAGE - I don't need to know exactly what they are, but it would be good to know that there are tenders that we are hoping to get more work from, to continue on rather than all of a sudden, in two years' time, they come to a stop and we don't have any business.

Mr GILMORE - There most certainly are. Success breeds success. The fact that we have made our mark across such a diverse range in recent times is highlighting the quality of our advanced manufacturers.

There are a number of tenders anticipated in the next few weeks that relate to maritime tactical watercraft and landing craft, and I would expect a couple of our companies to be highly competitive, perhaps in a leading position for both the national - the Australian - tenders, one that we anticipate from the Royal New Zealand Navy and a very significant one is pending for the Infantry Fighting Vehicle project for the Australian Army. That is the largest land project in the history of the Australian Defence Force, with an overall project cost of between - and it

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is a big bracket - \$18 billion and \$27 billion. Hanwha Defence Australia, headquartered in Victoria, is one of the two contenders, and Rheinmetall Defence, headquartered in Queensland, is the other. Their products have been on assessment by the Australian Army over the past year or so. Whoever wins that, if it is Hanwha there is a significant Tasmanian component to that project, which would be probably the largest ever defence investment in Tasmania, and that would be over many years of manufacturing.

Ms ARMITAGE - I think it is important, isn't it, to have the ongoing business.

Ms OGILVIE - Oh, 100 per cent. I was just going to say there is a little bit more information on the Maritime College. Do you want me to go through it?

CHAIR - It's a \$100 fine, Rear Admiral, in this committee.

Ms OGILVIE - I know it is important to you and your area to have a little more detail. We heard about the precinct, which is being co-developed with the Commonwealth Defence, Science, and Technology Group - DSTG, and it will form a national hub for defence industry and research collaboration, enhancing the University of Tasmania's national and international networks, supporting and promoting Australia's defence expertise. It is getting a real competence in place there, which I thought you would like to hear about.

The Australian Government has also committed to invest \$30 million in the precinct under the Launceston City Deal. The AMC continues to have a strong national and international reputation for cutting-edge marine research, education and training, notably demonstrated last year when the AMC entered into a new \$4.7 million three-year autonomous marine systems training deal with the Australian Navy. It is full steam ahead.

Ms ARMITAGE - Thank you, minister.

Mr WILLIE - One of the good advanced manufacturing stories being the BusTech manufacturing in Wynyard, what is your understanding about that Metro contract being terminated; and what impact is it going to have on that manufacturing business and any indirect businesses? I think Penguin Composites makes parts for those buses. What is your understanding of why, with only eight buses in to 26, that has been terminated?

Ms OGILVIE - I understand that Mr Ferguson has answered some questions in relation to BusTech during his Estimates hearing yesterday. We are committed to supporting our advanced manufacturing companies and we will be listening to them. The questions that you ask relate to a contract that I am not in a position to discuss as it is not in my area, not in my portfolio. However, I understand that Metro Tasmania released a statement regarding BusTech yesterday, of which you might have a copy already, Mr Willie? No? I do have a copy here and I am happy to let you know what it says if that helps.

Mr WILLIE - Yes, it would be good to go on the public record here.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, I think so. Metro Tasmania BusTech statement, Tuesday 7 June 2022:

Between 2017 and 2021, BusTech and its Tasmanian construction partner Elphinstone delivered Metro 100 low-emission, fully accessible buses.

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BusTech was engaged to supply an additional 26 buses; however, due to problems relating to the fulfilment of the contract, Metro has decided to end the contract and seek alternative sources for its future bus fleet. Eight buses of the 26 have been received. Metro's CEO, Katie Cooper, said Metro will now explore other bus supply opportunities to ensure its fleet is available to continue to deliver public transport services for the Tasmanian community. Ms Cooper said it was inappropriate to provide specific detail while the issue was subject to legal discussion.

That is probably all I can give you.

CHAIR - I would say they are being sued.

Mr WILLIE - Who knows, it sounds like there is more to come in that story, but I guess a follow-up question is: are there other Tasmanian companies that could manufacture buses and is the Government looking at those? I know that to make the BusTech buses, Elphinstone sent workers to Queensland where they skilled up, and they brought that technology back here. Are there other companies in Tasmania that could do something similar?

Ms OGILVIE - I will ask the secretary to provide some additional information, but I think, really, Metro's words are where we will have to leave it, and it says Metro will now explore other bus supply opportunities. Obviously they are going to do that. Secretary, you may have some additional information.

Mr EVANS - No, I don't have any more information specifically about the status of the contract other than what has been publicly reported, but we are aware that there are a number of Tasmanian companies that are potentially impacted by this arrangement - suppliers as part of the supply chains. We have spoken to a couple of those companies and will continue to do so to understand the implications for them, understanding this is very recent news.

Mr WILLIE - Last Friday. It wouldn't have been in the public domain unless we had asked about it yesterday.

CHAIR - My question is about the commissioning; there is a \$750 000 commitment from last year's Budget to the Tasmanian Defence Industry Strategy 2023, for an independent report commissioned by the Department of State Growth through SGS Economics & Planning to understand whether our initiatives under the Tasmanian Defence Industry Strategy are working. Can I have some understanding of the status of that report and are the initiative's working?

Ms OGILVIE - The Rear Admiral retired might have some information.

Mr GILMORE - Thank you. The study was completed and the baseline year was the 2018-19 pre COVID-19. The point of that review was to establish just that, a base line so we would know where and how we were progressing each subsequent year.

CHAIR - This says clearly here, from the previous minister, the report was commissioned by who I said to understand whether our initiatives under the Tasmania Defence Industry strategy were working. It does not indicate anything about any baseline.

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Mr GILMORE - Respectfully, that is how we would determine our strategy is working. We needed to understand from where we were coming at the start of the implementation of our strategy.

CHAIR - I will read on. The report revealed that a total combined value of defence and national security directly and indirectly in Tasmania was estimated at \$211.8 million per annum as at 2018-19 with an estimated direct employment of over 1 300. Isn't that a baseline?

Mr GILMORE - Yes, it is. That is what we now have a factual baseline of what, in that year, we were achieving in defence or what defence committed to Tasmania and the people that are posted here, the operational activities that occur here, the cost of developing and maintaining infrastructure by defence, the salaries for those defence members both ADF and public service here. The value of projects that are achieved and the indirect costs are associated with that.

CHAIR - Is that report available? It says subject to final consultation, Mr Bowles' words. The stakeholders will be in a position to release the report of the economic value of the Tasmanian Defence National Security Sector. Is that available? This is 2022.

Mr BOWLES - We are just reviewing the report to ensure there is no commercial confidential information in it and a variation of the report will be made available to the minister.

CHAIR - Will it be publicly available, minister?

Ms OGILVIE - I better have a look at it I would say.

CHAIR - Was it intended it would be publicly available?

Mr BOWLES - The intention is it will be subject to the commercial information being taken out.

Ms OGILVIE - It is a question of commerciality and making sure there is nothing that its commercial in confidence.

Mr BOWLES - If I could add to what the Rear Admiral said, one of the features of the defence industry is that unlike manufacturing, for example, the Australian Bureau of Statistics does not actually publish information about the size of the industry as constructed as being defence industry because defence industry can corporate manufacturers, service providers, technology companies and so forth. The purpose of that report was to do the basic level survey of how big the industry is or was at that point in time so at some point in the future we can then do another survey to establish the growth outcomes.

CHAIR - It is effectively just modelling.

Mr BOWLES - It was more than modelling, it was a detailed survey of the industry.

CHAIR - That we cannot share.

Mr BOWLES - The intention is that it will be published.

Ms OGILVIE - I do not think that is what they said. The intention is to share it. I have to make sure there are no commerciality issues.

Mr GILMORE - It has been tabled to the Defence Industry Advisory Committee in its first instance after it was completed. They have been part of that review process to make sure from their defence industry perspective it does not contain anything that could not be put into the public domain. It was a very good document that really did allow us to understand the so what and what are we achieving. We needed to understand from where we were coming, and that is what this is all about.

CHAIR - I mean obviously it would not have cost \$750 000 that is for the industry strategy, can I have a cost for the SGS economics report?

Mr EVANS - We will take that on notice.

CHAIR - The cost of the independent report commissioned by the Department of State Growth by SGS Economics.

Science and Technology

3.1 Information, Technology and Digital Services Strategy and Policy Development

CHAIR - Minister, again, welcome you back as under your area of responsibility for science and technology and invite you to introduce the new member of your team to the committee.

Ms OGILVIE - Very happy to do that, and for the purposes of Hansard we have the Secretary Kim Evans, Mark Bowles Deputy Secretary Industry and Business, we welcome Justin Thurley Acting Chief Information Officer - Digital Strategy and Services, Department of Premier and Cabinet and we also may bring to the table Stan Corrigan, Director - Science and Technology, Department of State Growth.

Thank you to the committee of the recognition of the importance that science and technology plays in the lives of everyday Tasmanians in our future and economy, recognising this, we continue to support a number of initiatives, ones that foster exciting new projects, with international significance, to those that improve the lives of everyday Tasmanians or support local businesses. In recent times, we have seen a renewal of interest in this area worldwide, which has created what is essentially a new industry that is much more accessible than it once was.

It is predicted that the Australian space sector will grow to around \$12 billion a year and support around 20 000 new jobs by 2030. Through our engagement with the Australia Space Agency late last year Hensoldt, a global leader in space radar technology, established its Southern Guardian Space Domain Awareness System in Tasmania and just recently moved its Australian headquarters from Canberra to Hobart. It was the first step towards our goal of positioning Tasmania as a leader and as a national leader in space domain awareness, space communications and tracking.

With support from the Tasmanian Government as well as our engagement with both the Australian Space Agency and NASA, Tasmanian company, Fortifiedge, has just secured

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\$750 000 in funding from the Australian Space Agency to develop and test its technology on the International Space Station.

Fortifyedge is developing astronaut biometric technology that will be able to do everything from ensuring the security of space facilities, including the International Space Station, through to tracking the real-time health and wellbeing of astronauts. This initial seed funding has shown that for a small investment we can get a big return for our state and our economy. That's why we believe a half-million-dollar space technology seed fund will really kickstart the growth of our local space industry.

The fund will support Tasmanian businesses to extend, adapt or develop new products or services for the space economy. The fund aims to grow Tasmania's space sector, drive innovation, strengthen industry collaboration, increase investment and create new skilled jobs for Tasmanians.

I am pleased to advise the committee that the first round of successful applicants will be announced by the end of this month and that a second round of funding is expected to open in October.

CHAIR - But you won't be able to share who they are?

Ms OGILVIE - We will. It will be a big celebration.

To change pace, now just consider how many devices we have in the room here today. I ask you to imagine what if you couldn't access the internet through those devices? If you couldn't check your emails or do your banking or make important medical appointments or even keep in contact with family and friends? Increasingly, we know these are all done through connected devices.

Unfortunately, not everyone has access to the connected world and for some - be it older members of the community, those with low literacy levels or those from disadvantaged backgrounds - getting to a computer, getting online or even knowing how to use a device or the cost of it, isn't a given. This is why we are continuing our popular Digital Ready for Daily Life program through to at least 2025. It gives everyone the chance to learn how to use technology, even as simple as the internet, email or Skype, and it gives them access to computers and the internet as well as locally-based digital coaching and training sessions free of charge which are now available at 135 locations around the state.

Feedback has been super positive from as far afield as Bridgewater, Brighton, Chigwell, Coles Bay, Orford, Rocherlea, Ravenswood, Rosebery, St Marys, St Helens, Swansea, Triabunna and Wynyard. Equally, we receive strong feedback from project partners such as the Smith Family, Bucaan Community House, the Council on the Ageing (COTA), and Dress for Success.

Of equal importance, especially through the pandemic, has been the digital literacy of Tasmanian small businesses. Participating in the modern market place almost always needs some digital knowledge and ability, whether it is IT security, accounting systems, stock or HR software or website and sales platforms, we recognise that some businesses really do value the support of our Digital Ready for Business program.

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I am pleased to report that last year the program helped more than 670 Tasmanian small businesses through one-on-one digital coaching sessions. In the same period, our Digital Ready for Business website experienced some 17 000 unique user visits - that's a lot - and Digital Check-Up tool generated more than 350 small business digital health reports. In fact, since we went live with the Digital Check-up tool in May 2019, more than 1300 diagnostic reports have been requested by Tasmanian small business. In conclusion, whether it is establishing a space support industry in Tasmania or making a difference to the actual daily lives of ordinary Tasmanians and supporting Tasmanian small businesses, science and technology will continue to play an important role in the future of our state.

Mr WILLIE - According to the budget papers, this output funds a whole-of-government approach to cyber security, including the development of strategies and policies. Cyber security is an ever-growing issue, as you know.

Ms OGILVIE - Absolutely.

Mr WILLIE - And we've recently seen attacks on Tasmanian businesses and superannuation funds. Why is the funding declining by nearly 25 per cent over the forward Estimates?

Ms OGILVIE - It is a very important question and area, and luckily, we have Justin here who lives and breathes cyber security. I will ask him to walk you through some of that. If there is more information you need I will be happy to help with that.

Mr THURLEY - It's a four-year program that we have developed out of the cyber security strategy that we developed back in 2019. The idea is that after four years, and before that time comes to end, we will review it. The review comes through this year so we'll look at all the assumptions and objectives of our cyber security strategy, particularly in the context of increasing risk. This will include an examination of the current program's effectiveness, and also various risks that we need to address in the changing threat environment.

That review will inform and update our strategy and that strategy will be used to look at what we need to do to change and position ourselves for cyber in the future. That means new programs, new ideas and an uplift further into the strategy that we develop.

Mr WILLIE - I appreciate the sensitivities here, minister. We don't want to outline where some weaknesses may be. You're fairly confident that you will be going back to government after that review for further funds?

Mr THURLEY - We would look at that in its holistic context as we're implementing uplift in our agencies. So the agencies are a part of this as well. They are investing and increasing their capabilities within their own cyber security requirements. We would expect that it will be a combination of looking at where we're at, and what we need to uplift. Yes, we would ask for more investment if it's appropriate and where the effectiveness can be put in best place.

In other words if it was Health that needed it invested, we would suggest that Health did the investment, but if it's a whole-of-government side of things, we would invest in it.

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Mr WILLIE - Some of it's in the public record through Auditor-General reports and others isn't it?

Mr THURLEY - Yes.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, good work is happening.

CHAIR - The other person we have who has a huge interest in technology, is Mr Valentine. He probably knows how to work quite a bit of it, unlike myself.

Mr VALENTINE - It is getting less and less, the further I get away from the industry. I like to keep in touch and I suppose, minister, what I do see and I'm sure you like to be across quite a number of the areas in the governance space, given your legal background in this area.

Can you outline how you might draw together the threads of digital activity, across the state service to achieve what many others haven't, over many years, and that is a coherent focused digital strategic direction for all agencies? I spent 38 years in the ICT area, through five different government departments, and each department does its own thing, quite often. There have been attempts to pull it together, centralised Human Resources systems, all of those things. Can you give us some hope that you're going to see some coherent strategies put in to play, so that the state service is on similar software systems and not reinventing wheels?

Ms OGILVIE - I do think we're making progress and I do appreciate your question, which goes to the highly matrixed nature of the sector, not just within government, but right across.

Mr VALENTINE - Fragmented is a word that some would use.

Ms OGILVIE - You say fragmented, I say matrixed. I'm not sure who is correct.

However, there is fresh leadership and there are good projects happening. Again I would like to put you on notice, Justin. I will ask Justin to talk about what we're doing about digitisation. There is the Service Tasmania work and the other transformational work, I think that is worth speaking of.

I would also say, Mr Valentine, I know your background is deep and your interests very genuine, knowing that government takes a leadership role with staff as well, and that people move in and through government. So what we do does matter, it does matter from a leadership perspective as well.

Having said that, I will ask Justin to talk a little bit about the transformation work and then perhaps we can come back to the question of leadership if we need to.

Mr THURLEY - Just answering directly probably more on the governance?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes.

Mr THURLEY - There are been some fairly significant changes in recent times. Mr Valentine would be aware of the State Service Review and the focus that review had on digitalisation. There were components of that review with the recommendations that the

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Government accepted that would look at changing some of the governance around how we coordinate ourselves as a whole-of-government. In March, the Government established a new management board called the Secretary's Board that comprises the heads of agencies.

That board established a sub-committee to look at the data and digital side of things. The Data and Digital Sub-Committee was established with members from the former Digital Services Advisory Group which is made up of the chief information officers, and we looking to establish some data SMEs to assist with that committee. That committee has only met twice, it is just in its infancy, but it is about pulling together all the projects and whole-of-government related matters in one place. Also, to look at the recommendations for digitalisation across the State Service.

The focus areas are building up a work plan and a work program. It has not been fully formalised yet, but the program loosely looks at the core areas of common systems and platforms. It looks at digital services, data and information management, cyber-security and digital workforce capability.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you very much for that. That sort of approach was taken about 20 years ago, but it is not to say this will not work and I do not want to put the mockers on it before it has a chance to perform. Clearly it is needed and efficiencies, proficiency of staff and all of those sorts of things need to be taken into account. Thank you for that overview, and you point out in your overview about the need for digital literacy and connection of the community. It is good to see the Digital Ready for Daily Life happening. The Digital Service Tas portal, \$4.3 million was to begin development last year, can you give an update on that?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, I can. As part of the work Justin was speaking about, which is Our Digital Future, the Tasmanian Government's digital transformation strategy broadly, we are setting a vision, priorities and principles for digital transformation across three critical priority areas including community, economy, and government. We know people need to be able to access everything they need online. There has been a desire over many years for the Tasmanian Government to have a more sophisticated digital interface with its consumers and customers and the Service Tasmania portal is doing that.

The Government released a response to the State Service Review on 11 November 2021, and there were five recommendations which related directly to Service Tasmania and four were fully supportive, while one was supported in principle. \$4.3 million was committed over four years to begin development of a Digital Service Tasmania portal. This is to provide Tasmanians with a secure and easy to use access point for government services accessed through a single logon. Mr Valentine I have seen a Beta version and it is very exciting indeed. Initial deliverables include a new Service Tasmania website which is due July 2022, and what I find interesting, a life events framework which will be delivered from mid-2022. You are probably interested in knowing what this is.

Mr VALENTINE - You can tell me that. Sounds like I am going to hear it.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, I will ask Justin to describe some break through thinking.

Mr THURLEY - The Life Events approach is for those familiar with customer journeys and how you review that a customer will come into a service and not necessarily be wanting just to use one service. They may actually have a tie to a range of services.

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With Life Events, they try to organise it around Government Services and your life events. An example would be maybe we will use the birth of a child. When a child is born, you go into Service Tasmania and you are looking for a Birth Certificate. We know you have got a young child. You are looking for the Birth Certificate. That transaction is taken care of, but we then look, and go, well do you realise that in two years' time, you are going to be needing advice on where to put them into school. You need to start now.

Mr VALENTINE - Vaccination program.

Mr THURLEY - We take them through that whole journey.

CHAIR - Hope we are not going to put them into school at two.

Mr THURLEY - The events that proceed is we look at trying to set them up with their services into the future, you are not just coming in and getting one transaction. It actually becomes about what you need, what advice you can obtain through the services we offer.

Mr VALENTINE - The thing that must go hand-in-hand is obviously the connectivity side, where you talked about the digital ready for daily life.

How much more has that been progressed? Because there are a lot of people in Tasmania, probably in the older cohort who simply are not connected and would not know how to log on. Would not know how to do anything like that. Digital literacy is really important.

Ms OGILVIE - I agree with you completely and there will be some people who never want to go fully digital for good reason and there are certain cohorts that perhaps are just more comfortable with paper, or need additional assistance.

What I see happening, and what Justin has explained to me in the past is that, by making digital interactions, particularly through Service Tasmania portal, easier for the consumer to use, and more aligned with what our customers want. We free up staff members and the capacity of people who are currently in Service Tasmania to facilitate individual interactions with those who might need more support.

That is good to know, it has this positive effect. If we get our processes and systems in better shape, it frees up some human capital to do more of the caring work.

But we do know that digital capability is significantly influenced by literacy. Educational attainment, income levels, as well as the availability of adequate telecommunications infrastructure. Many vulnerable Tasmanians were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 pandemic because they had to immediately shift to more on-line service delivery and it was hard. I know it was difficult and credit to our IT sector for helping people step up as quickly as possible.

Our Digital Ready for Daily Life program commenced in late 2019 and it is working to help improve the digital skills that Tasmanians, particularly the more vulnerable in our community.

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The program provides targeted small group training sessions and workshops around the State to build confidence and digital literacy. In March 2021, the Government reconfirmed its commitment to improving Tasmanians digital inclusion by providing \$700 000 to extend the Digital Ready for Daily Life program to June 2025.

Mr VALENTINE - That is through libraries.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes. 2025 is a good start. I can add more.

Mr BOWLES - The funding will go through Department of State Growth and programs are delivered in partnership with a number of other community sector organisations.

We do have partnership with State Libraries and they are able to provide facilities, outreach and promotion for us.

Mr VALENTINE - Community associations, or whatever, might have a special day. Those sorts of things.

Ms OGILVIE - Partnering arrangements such as The Smith Family, Council of the Ageing. Others of that nature are able to partner. There is a lot of energy on this topic now and people have realised, particularly through COVID-19 pandemic, it has been laid bare about the gap that we have. We are working hard on that.

Mr VALENTINE - Digital Pulse, are you aware of the Australian Computer Society's Digital Pulse report that comes out every so often? It always goes to issues of things digital and three things that they bring out in the 2021 report: encourage more women to enter and stay in the technology workforce; investigate ways to assist IT capabilities of contractors for government procurement and digital projects and re-energise digital strategies across Australia.

In your policy position do you see that there is room to look at some of those and keep a track on some of the things that are brought up in that paper?

Ms OGILVIE - You would appreciate that I have a particular interest on women in tech and we have seen some great improvements in women in the tech sector. I am thinking about TasICT. When I first returned from Sydney and first started going to those events there were very few women in the room and now there are a lot more. The work is happening; what is happening for women is the doors are open, it is not just about we want everybody to do STEM and engineering and maths. It is about understanding that a career in the tech sector might not necessarily mean you need to be a programmer. I am a prime example of that as a lawyer then there was room for me in the tech sector, so that has helped.

I would say we are doing some work on the ICT sector. We work closely with partners and TasICT is one of those. We have an ICT sector capability scan that Deloitte Access Economics undertook. It resonates with what you have raised this morning. It was the first survey of its kind in over a decade. That data will also help us to better understand sector demographics, industry players, their capabilities, what export markets might look like, aspirations and workforce outlook.

As I move around the sector, particularly in advanced manufacturing and defence industries, the cry from the heart of everyone for more engineers and more cyber people and

more tech sector, all of that is real. If we get the workforce development and participation piece humming, it will help on those other elements.

Mr VALENTINE - That goes to their connectivity to the networks and whether the networks are sufficient. Is there anything you are doing in that space to work with external providers?

Ms OGILVIE - We are certainly looking at, and working across, black spot programs and connectivity, looking at our schools. As you noted previously, it is highly matrixed so in every portfolio there is work being done. You have asked a question which is quite strategic in nature about where we go. I would like to invite Justin to chime in on this because I think he has a good vision of the sector generally.

Mr THURLEY - In terms of the ICT sector? Could I defer to Mr Bowles.

Mr BOWLES - In addition to the capability report that the minister mentioned, we also have a workforce development action plan for 2020-23. That has been published and the first implementation report for 2021 has been published. This action plan identifies 10 strategic priorities that are being addressed by a range of collaborative actions and partner initiatives.

The advisory committee for that workforce development report has been appointed to oversee the activities to deliver on the priority actions and includes representatives from TasICT, the Australian Computer Society Tas branch, TasTAFE, the University of Tasmania and the state government. We will be releasing a further progress report on that workforce development plan in the coming months.

Mr VALENTINE - The consultation with the providers like Telstra and Optus and those sorts of things, any hope there?

Ms OGILVIE - I can pick up on that, if we are thinking about infrastructure programs, which is what you were referring to.

Mr VALENTINE - You cannot do your fancy tech stuff without that.

Ms OGILVIE - We have made investments over time and we will continue in infrastructure and digital infrastructure. We will continue to monitor those investments and commitments to various infrastructure projects that are deployed in partnership with the Australian Government. These projects include approximately \$1.6 million in co-investment commitments across State Growth and in education portfolios, I think it is important to note in the closed rounds of the Australian Government's mobile black spot program and regional connectivity programs. You may have already seen some of those places and that would be very good to know that work is being done.

An additional \$683 143 has been committed by the Tasmanian Government for applications under round 2 of the Regional Connectivity Program subject to an Australian Government funding decision. The Tasmanian Government's co-investment activity aligns with the Government's commitment in relation to recommendation 33 of PESRAC, which you have referred to. Their final report was released in March 2021.

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I note no new specific funding for digital infrastructure investment was provided in the 2022-23 program. I do not want to bore you but I do have quite a lot of detail on what we are doing in the Mobile Black Spot Program and the Regional Connectivity Program.

Mr VALENTINE - I suggest it be tabled.

Ms OGILVIE - Probably what would be helpful is actually to give you the announcements that have been made which tells you all where they all are and you might be interested in those, something that could be provided. I will check whether this is the right way to do it or whether, I will just confirm.

I will take it on notice and they will get it separately tabled. I want you to see the work and those geographic locations.

CHAIR - You are going to provide the committee with a list of all the Mobile Black Spot Program work and the funding that has been provided?

Ms OGILVIE - And the Regional Connectivity Program details. There are quite a few tables involved.

Mr VALENTINE - That would be good to have on the record.

Ms OGILVIE - I think you would like to see that because it will go into everybody's electorates.

Ms ARMITAGE - Some of it has been covered, the member for Hobart was talking about having internet and a variety of things across the agencies so that everyone can be accessible. The Launceston General Hospital, for example, I know outside pathology could not access the hospital pathology. On occasions, I had heard that patients needing procedures that had already had procedures - maybe radiology or pathology - at the hospital would then have to have that procedure again because it could not be accessed by private radiology. Has that been improved? Has that been sorted now because I know it is a big issue and a huge cost?

Ms OGILVIE - I am nervous to wade into somebody else's portfolio.

Ms ARMITAGE - I am talking IT.

Ms OGILVIE - I know that is right. This is where the matrix nature of it happens. What I can say is that the Premier did announce a major project to address the digital record issue. I cannot remember exactly what the figure was, I think it was \$4.3 million. Do you know what it is?

Ms ARMITAGE - Is that across agencies or would that also include people like your private pathology and your private radiology?

Ms OGILVIE - It is to connect medical digitisation of medical records.

Ms ARMITAGE - Is it across the private enterprises as well so that people do not have to have another MRI or another CT when they have already had it in the public sector.

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Ms OGILVIE - I want to be careful, the digitisation of the person's medical records so it can travel with them.

Ms ARMITAGE - I am not talking about My Health because a lot of people do not want to have My Health.

Ms OGILVIE - It is improving the record keeping and our ability to share information appropriately within constraints of privacy.

Ms ARMITAGE - No-one wants two MRIs or CTs if you do not need to.

Ms OGILVIE - No, of course not. It is in the Health portfolio, unless Justin has something. It is squarely in the Health portfolio but people are alive to the issue and there is work being done.

Mr VALENTINE - Probably part of the \$150 million is it?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes.

Ms ARMITAGE - It has been around for a long time. A legacy process.

Ms HOWLETT - How does this year's budget support Tasmanian businesses to participate in the growing space economy?

Ms OGILVIE - My favorite topic, the reason I love it, is because it gets kids excited and I want them to study maths and engineering so it is a really good thing to close out on. This Government knows that investing in forward-looking research and development and entrepreneurship can generate new industries and create boundless new opportunities. Space is one of those.

Our Government recognises the incredible opportunity offered to our innovative Tasmanian businesses by the space industry, which is expected to grow to \$12 billion and create 20 000 jobs across the nation by Australia 2030. By keeping our eyes on that horizon we can see the opportunity our growing space sector presents to the state through future economic growth, attraction of STEM skills, workforce development, investment in infrastructure and the incredible opportunities offered through collaboration between research, innovation and the entrepreneurship of industry.

We have already seen the benefits from the Team Tasmania MOU, between the Tasmanian Government, UTAS and Hensoldt. Hensoldt's Hobart's facilities will be a leading centre for Australia's space domain awareness capability, and is expected to stimulate local innovation and create new opportunities for both defence and civil applications.

The facility currently employs 10 FTEs with plans to double this by the end of the year. A key focus of ours in the space domain awareness area is to encourage local technology companies and entrepreneurs to develop opportunities for their tech in space, and it sounds like it is a little bit out there but there is a lot happening already.

We know that many businesses, and many sectors particularly across tech and research and development across the university, CSIRO, IMAS, sensor technology and satellite

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telecommunications can be applied to this new domain. We know our tech and advanced manufacturing sectors are global leaders and we want them to have access to greater diversity of markets.

The first round of our space technology seed grant program closed on 31 May. I am informed that eight applications to the grant program have been received and I am really hoping they are of a very high quality; I do not know what they are yet.

Since signing an MOU with the Australian Space Agency in 2019, our industry and capabilities have continued to grow, from space domain awareness through to space medicine. I note the hyperbaric and hypobaric chamber we have at the Royal Hobart Hospital, which is the only one in the Southern Hemisphere. It's an amazing piece of equipment. I look forward to learning of the successful applicants of the space technology seed fund and the innovative projects that will take Tasmania's space industry to new heights and get the kids excited about studying maths.

CHAIR - Minister, there has been a partnership with the Department of Education in the past transitioning regional school sites from limited bandwidth wireless NBN to highspeed optical fibre connections. Nine schools received those upgrades last year. Can I have a list of the schools that received it in this financial year?

Ms OGILVIE - It is a good question, I might need some assistance with the list.

Mr THURLEY - I think I would defer there to Mark.

Mr BOWLES - The list would actually be included in what you are actually asking for before, it is in the Regional Connectivity Funding program, it actually spells out the schools, the actual schools that were receiving the uplift.

Ms OGILVIE - You are quite right, and we can provide the list but we might do it at the same time, if that is okay.

CHAIR - Also, there was reference in last year's Estimates to KPIs. Where are we with KPIs?

Ms OGILVIE - Specifically in relation to -

CHAIR - It comes from a recommendation from PESRAC for improving digital inclusion in the state, and it recommends the KPIs to help drive faster progress on improving our digital inclusion measures.

Ms OGILVIE - Right. Was that PESRAC's recommendation 33? Sorry to ask.

CHAIR - No, that's all right. I don't have the number; that's why you are the minister.

Ms OGILVIE - I think it is 33. Let us take it from here. I will ask Justin, I think he has some information for you.

CHAIR - We were told last year that the KPIs were being developed.

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Mr THURLEY - Thank you for that question. Yes, I recall the question from last year. Basically, the Government has acknowledged, looking at the KPIs and what we might do in response to that question and the objective that we have been set through PESRAC. We looked at what KPIs we could put in place and we acknowledge the credibility of the Australian Digital Inclusion Index, which is evidence-based research that has been done on digital inclusion. We look across the core dimensions of affordability, ability and access. It just so happens that they align well to the objectives that we have for the digital community in our digital future. We'd already aligned a lot of our action plans that you see today with those elements. Now, over time, from a KPI perspective and overall, we have improved Tasmania's performance position in that digital inclusion index 15.6 points since 2014.

There has been a continuous improvement in that area. We believe that looking at that index and benchmarking ourselves against that index is the best way to prove our KPIs. When we look at a breakdown from the 2021 information that was published last year, we looked across all indexes where we were below the national average and we should be probably seeking to get on the national average. We were also able to look at where some of our pain points are, in terms of affordability, access and ability. With affordability we are closer to the mark at the national average, very close indeed. We still lag behind in access and ability and that is where a lot of our programs have been targeted to improve that KPI. The next release of those data will be interesting for us, to see how we have potentially gone forward or backward. We will be looking to use that as our KPIs against for digital inclusion.

CHAIR - Are those KPIs referenced somewhere?

Mr THURLEY - The Australian Digital Inclusion Index is a publicly available document that puts the benchmarks for all the states in it. Everyone can access that.

CHAIR - I have to admit it is not my bedtime reading.

Mr THURLEY - I can understand that.

Ms OGILVIE - Chair, may I let you know that I have received some information on the SGS economic report on defence industry you were asking about before; you wanted the costing, how much that costs.

CHAIR - How much it cost?

Ms OGILVIE - \$55 876.

CHAIR - Any other questions on this specific line item? If not, we will go to the Capital Investment Program.

Capital Investment Program

CHAIR - Can we have an update on what the Capital Investment Program is aimed at? Thank you, minister.

Ms OGILVIE - I just want to confirm that.

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CHAIR - There is a line item.

Ms OGILVIE - I will just confirm that -

Mr VALENTINE - Page 261.

CHAIR - It has a figure in this year's Budget of \$4 123 000. No, sorry, Capital Investment is \$1 588 000, apologies. Capital Investment Program, page 261

Ms OGILVIE - I might just ask the secretary to provide some guidance.

CHAIR - Can we have an outline on what that is going to be used for? Thank you.

Mr VALENTINE - Page 257, the Capital Investment Program. Cybersecurity.

CHAIR - Oh, it's all for cybersecurity?

Ms OGILVIE - Cyber is important.

CHAIR - You found some money you didn't know you had? It's \$1.588 million. Mr Willie has already asked some questions in regard to the decrease, moving forward.

Mr THURLEY - The uplift program - the four-year program we referred to before - is a part of the funding that is provided a few years back and we're two years into this program. There is a capital investment and an ongoing investment program against opex. That represents a number of the projects that we're working on in cyber.

CHAIR - That you can't talk about?

Mr THURLEY - I'm happy to provide some high-level overview information if that will help. Some of the main programs that we're dealing with are: building internet response capacity and capability by integrating it with some of the national arrangements that we have and also rehearsing cybersecurity incident response internally so that we get good at responding to cybersecurity incidents.

We're supporting Tasmanians who have been affected by identity theft and introducing services to support that through IDCARE, who provide the services that help remediate people that have been victims of identity theft.

Really important for us at the moment is increasing cybersecurity awareness across government, to ensure staff understand they have a role in reducing cybersecurity risks as well; we're also implementing cybersecurity-specific training that enables staff to recognise cybersecurity threats and to build up their technical capabilities.

We're also upskilling cybersecurity professionals across government with the latest tools and techniques.

Also, there are initiatives to reduce the impact of malicious actors attempting to impose problems on government.

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CHAIR - As we know, technology changes at a rapid rate, so is part of this funding to keep up with those changes in technology?

Mr THURLEY - Partly, some of it will be by default, by the way it's designed; it's about building capability, not necessary implementing particular sets of technologies. In building those capabilities, you would start to have people understand what they need to do to improve and continually innovate in that space. Innovation is a big part of what we're trying to do, particularly in the awareness and also the capacity-building with professionals. We're continuously updating with the new tools and techniques to map all the threats that are occurring and that is increasing.

CHAIR - Any further questions in regard to this?

I have a statement to read from this morning's session before we close. This is further to this morning's hearing, in your capacity as the Minister for Racing. It is a response to a question from the member for Hobart about the greyhound racing recommendations. There was a request that the responses be tabled and incorporated into *Hansard*. The Clerks are diligent and following advice.

I would like to clarify there is no power or mechanism under the standing orders that govern Estimates committees, part 21, to incorporate a paper into *Hansard*. The standing order provides that any additional information may be provided by a minister in writing, so essentially, written information such as a paper or answers to questions on notice may be received and will be tabled with the Estimates committee report to be presented and tabled. Under standing order 228, such written information will therefore be a matter of public record.

We will write and ask you for that in writing and you will provide it back in writing and it will be all kosher.

Ms OGILVIE - We follow the process, no problem.

Mr VALENTINE - There was one that the minister was about to table prior to lunch, and it didn't have detail on it - I am trying to remember what it was - but you were going to come back with that too. Mr Bowles might remember what it was.

Ms OGILVIE - Was it about small business?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, it was the granularity of the -

Ms OGILVIE - Of the rounds and what the criteria were.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, that's right.

CHAIR - We will again write and ask you for that.

Ms OGILVIE - Just to clarify so I know what I am going to get or what I am going to try to provide you, four rounds of grant funding with the criteria?

Mr VALENTINE - The turnover criteria in particular were what I was querying, and the various levels.

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CHAIR - Again, the responses to the Joint Select Committee on Greyhound Racing in Tasmania.

Mr VALENTINE - It was a joint house committee.

Ms OGILVIE - It was and it was good. I read it.

CHAIR - They are very rare, minister, those Joint House Select Committee inquiries. I have been on two of them.

Ms OGILVIE - I wanted to show my deepest respect and read your work.

CHAIR - Minister, thank you very much for your attendance today and your contribution to our scrutiny process. We do our best to cover each line item in the various output groups. I particularly thank the members of our committee, and everybody who supported you during the day - from Racing through to Heritage, Small Business, and now this one, Science and Technology, and your team for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries.

Ms OGILVIE - I'd like to thank them too. It is quite a spread of portfolios.

CHAIR - Thank you, Liam, we shall adjourn for today and recommence again tomorrow.

The Committee adjourned at 3.47 p.m.