

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Tuesday 29 June 2010 - Estimates Committee B (Bartlett) - Part 1

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Tuesday 29 June 2010

MEMBERS

Mr Dean
Mr Finch
Mr Gaffney
Mr Wing
Mrs Taylor
Ms Rattray (Chair)

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. David Bartlett MP, Premier; Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Rhys Edwards, Secretary

Rebekah Burton, Deputy Secretary

Greg Johannes, Deputy Secretary

Philip Foulston, Director, Executive Division

Jeff Reeve, Director, Corporate Services

Louise Mills, Deputy Director, Corporate Services

Peter Wright, Manager, Finance

Tim Bullard, Director Policy

John McCormick, Director, Policy

Mat Healey, Manager Office of Security and Emergency Management

Mellissa Gray, Director, Social Inclusion

Frank Ogle, Director Public Sector Management Office

Phillip Hoysted, Director Tasmanian Together Progress Board

Nick Evans, Director, Community Development

Piero Peroni, General Manager, TMD

Kathy Baker, Acting Director, Service Tasmania
Mitchell Knevett, Director, Office of the Government

Department of Economic Development

Mark Kelleher, Secretary, Department of Economic Development
Ros Harvey, Executive Director, Strategic Policy and Research
Craig Watson, Executive Director, Corporate Support

Legislative Council

Nigel Pratt, Deputy Clerk
Miss Jan Chipman, Finance Officer

Legislature-General

John Menadue, Manager, Finance

Government House

Anne Parker, Official Secretary
Andrea Bull, Budget and Research Officer

Ministerial Staff

Sean Terry, Senior Adviser
Ruth Davidson, Senior Adviser
Deb Goddard, A/Manager, Ministerial Services

The committee met at 9.30 a.m.

CHAIR (Ms Rattray) - Good morning everyone With respect, I remind the Premier that any additional information requested by the committee we would hope would be provided where possible during the day. It does help with end-of-day housekeeping.

Mr BARTLETT - We will do everything we can to deliver on that.

CHAIR - The tight turnaround often puts a bit of pressure on the committee secretary and we do not want to do that.

Mr BARTLETT - As able as she is.

CHAIR - We are not expecting that we might need additional time, Premier, but we will obviously negotiate that later in the day should we need to. Who knows what happens with these committees at times.

Mr BARTLETT - You might find my portfolio so fascinating that you may want to stay late into the night listening to me talk about it.

CHAIR - Science and innovation?

Mr BARTLETT - Well, you never know.

CHAIR - With all that money that is allocated?

Mr BARTLETT - That is right.

DIVISION 9

(Department of Premier and Cabinet)

CHAIR - We will start obviously with output group 1, House of Assembly Support Services, and in keeping with established practice, this committee will not examine the Estimates of the House of Assembly. This recognises fully the independence of one House from the other; that is, the principle of comity between the two Houses and the powers possessed by each.

1.2 Select committee support services -

Mr WING - Premier, this amount is considered to be quite inadequate and each year the costs are substantially more. Last year the Treasurer gave an undertaking when it was raised in our House that he would top up whatever was reasonably necessary for committees. I think it is fair to say that he probably did not give such a clear undertaking this year but the select committees are a very important part of the functioning of the Legislative Council and if it is necessary for a committee to travel even interstate that would almost absorb the whole of this amount. I think we would want to ask that in future a more appropriate figure based on the amounts funded in previous years should be allocated for this item.

Mr BARTLETT - -1.1 Legislative Council support services or committee support services?

CHAIR - Yes.

Mr WING - I am sorry, I thought you called on me to speak on the committees.

CHAIR - I did, Mr Wing, and I apologise.

Mr BARTLETT - That is fine, I can handle them both in one hit or whatever you would like.

CHAIR - We have started around the wrong way - a good start to the day.

Mr BARTLETT - In terms of committee support services, you are right, this is a fairly small amount of money and what you are saying is that that has been topped up by a request for additional funds in previous years?

Mr WING - Yes.

Mr BARTLETT - Do you know, although I can go and find this out, what the actual was for 2008-09, for example? Obviously, there will be a request for additional funds, I presume, for 2009-10?

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Mr WING - Yes, I think it would be helpful to have that information.

Mr BARTLETT - Just to get a picture of what the actuals are and I can then have an understanding of what I need to talk to the Treasurer about.

Miss CHIPMAN - I have not got it in here so I will have to provide that.

Mr BARTLETT - That is fine. If I can get that picture of understanding, are we talking \$16 000 updated to \$160 000 or to \$300 000 or to \$32 000? That is what I want to get a feel for - what the number is roughly. A RAF has been approved for this year for an extra \$100 000 in support of the committees and I certainly take on board that if each year there is a request for additional funds, it might as well be built into the baseline and subsequent budgets should have an appropriate amount recognising what the actuals have been from subsequent years. I undertake to that that on board and talk to the Treasurer in the lead up to the next budget. Obviously, that has not been done this financial year which we are in for another day or two a RAF has been approved. Next financial year and no doubt there will be a requirement for another RAF because the allocation is only \$16 000 and we would undertake to deliver on that but I think in the next budget what we should do is update the baseline funding so it is transparent as to what is being provided here.

Mr WING - Thank you very much. We appreciate your attitude on that.

Mr BARTLETT - I will ask Nigel to inform the committee.

Mr PRATT - I would just like to inform the committee that there have been some discussions between the two Presiding Officers and the Treasurer regarding budget allocations broadly for both the Legislative Council and for Legislature-General. There was a meeting on 7 June and some correspondence has been provided by the Presiding Officers to the Treasurer on 10 June and the Presiding Officers are awaiting a reply.

Mr WING - Mr Premier, thanks very much for your comments. I think we all appreciate what you have said and it is much more realistic than every year having an unrealistically low amount and having it topped up. It makes it difficult for the President and the Clerk to make a decision when a committee requests funds to travel. Last year on one committee, two members paid their own expenses to go to the mainland - one to Canberra and one to Sydney - to get valuable information. So, I thank you for your attitude.

Mr DEAN - Premier, when we look at actual expenditure here, we have scrimped and saved all through the process to try to keep it back as low as is possible. So, looking at actuals is not a true indicator of where these committees were and what they were doing to complete their task.

Mr BARTLETT - It sounds like the Presiding Officers are talking to the Treasurer and no doubt that sort of information will be provided by the Treasurer for what would be a reasonable budget bid.

Legislature-General

**Output group 1
Parliamentary Reporting Service**

1.1 Production and printing of parliamentary reports -

Mr GAFFNEY - I notice there is a modest increase in the budget for the next three or four years which seems appropriate for the work that Hansard does. Are there any plans to introduce new technology to assist the Parliamentary Reporting Service in producing the transcripts for both the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council?

Mr BARTLETT - I will ask the officers to respond to this; if there is information to share they will have it.

Mr PRATT - That question would have to be taken on notice. I understand that there has been some discussions between the Clerk and the head of Hansard. If the member is agreeable, then we will provide that information.

Mr GAFFNEY - That is fine. Another question is about the staff numbers of Hansard. Are there any issues in retaining staff - I know that they have specialised skills - and what training processes are in place to make sure that they retain or improve those skills?

CHAIR - Thank you.

Output group 2 Parliamentary Library service

CHAIR - There has been a slight increase in the budget; I do know that the carpet that had been long awaited has been laid. Future works required in the library area is something that members will be interested to know about.

Mr PRATT - I am not aware of any but I can take that on notice. I know that the carpet has been installed and the head of the library is taking the opportunity to rearrange the library. Members who have visited the library lately would have seen that it has been rearranged.

Mr WING - It looks 100 percent.

Mr PRATT - It looks much better. If I can take that on notice then I will provide that information.

CHAIR - With technology the way that it is the library services probably are not used as much by members because we are able to get all our library materials online but it still plays an integral role in that; are there any more technology developments that the library is looking at to assist members with their roles and functions?

Mr PRATT - I understand that we got five new computers as part of the replacement program for older computers in the library. Five of those will be added to replace older technology.

Mr WING - If my memory serves me correctly, the Premier took up the question raised at a previous budget Estimates and that is very much appreciated because it has really transformed the library.

Mr BARTLETT - I have not been in there since, I have to say.

CHAIR - It has and I believe that they have a very nice, large flat screen as well. Somehow one was ordered for my office and it was far too big. I said that the people of Scottsdale would have a fit if they come in and see a monitor of that size in my office. I donated it to the library or the Parliament has donated it to the library. Hopefully they found a good home for it. Are there any further questions in relation to library services? If not then we will move on to output group 3.

Output group 3 Parliamentary Printing and Systems

Mr FINCH - I just noticed with the parliamentary printing that in the forward Estimates printing is pretty static at \$427 000. Would you not expect it to rise year by year, a marginal rise, CPI rise?

[9.45 a.m.]

Mr PRATT - Mr Finch, it is always dependent upon the activities of both the Chambers and how much legislation is pushed through. There is a tendency to vary every year, but it is topped up every year by a request for additional funding if that budget is exceeded.

Mr FINCH - Okay, thanks. I suppose the amount of printing of parliamentary papers and notice papers is kept under review. Are we moving more to technology in that respect? Are we likely to have less of a call on printing?

Mr PRATT - In the Legislative Council, for example, there has been less of a call for printing. We print our own Notice Paper as opposed to the other House, that I understand still has its Notice Paper printed externally. The Notice Papers are available on the Intranet and on the Internet so members and the public can access that electronically, but there will always be a requirement for members to have hard copies within the Chamber, unless everyone has an iPad and the wireless technology is faultless.

Mr FINCH - Of course. Even though we are moving towards a paperless society we seem to be using more and more paper, don't we.

Mr BARTLETT - That is true. Paper consumption has gone up around the world in the last 20 years, not down.

Mr DEAN - Two or three years ago in support of the regional offices we were looking at making some computer services available to us in those regions for immediate and quick access to problems and difficulties. Is that now not proceeding, or is it considered that being serviced from Hobart is the way we will continue to go?

Mr PRATT - In 2007-08 there were two amounts provided. One was in relation to the improvement of the data lines to regional offices. We went from an ADSL service to a BDSL service, which improved access to data, the data bandwidth was improved. The other measure was to employ an additional computer systems officer within the IT unit who is a Legislative Council employee, and that employee has a focus on Legislative Council members. There is a small amount, I understand, in the IT budget to accommodate contractors to come in and resolve IT issues as they arise in regional offices, and that has been used, but there is some sensitivity that has to be applied when using contractors, especially when they have access to our network. The

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preference is for the Parliament's local IT service to resolve faults that are connected to our network.

Mr DEAN - I do not think it is just faults. It is also the training that is required within the regional offices as well, because changes are happening in the systems every day virtually, and it is a matter of trying to keep up with what is going on. In fact my staff officer is the one who does a lot of the computer training in that area.

CHAIR - Mr Dean, can I suggest your staff member does a lot of training in all areas.

Mr DEAN - She certainly does. You are right, spot on.

CHAIR - She is a wonderful PA. You are very fortunate.

Mr DEAN - She does not get a lot of financial support, she keeps reminding me.

CHAIR - Premier, with the new televised parliamentary sessions, do we know how many hits, if you like, we get? Is that something that should be recorded?

Mr BARTLETT - We should be able to find that out pretty easily. I do not have that information in front of me but I think it is a question worth putting on notice because it should be an easy data process.

CHAIR - I think it would be interesting to see how many people are interested in how the Parliament functions.

Mr BARTLETT - I did hear some early data and there were about 300 people global-wide logged on and watching the vast bulk of the public sector.

CHAIR - Would you be able to table how much it actually costs to specifically run the cameras each year? Is that something that is available?

Mr BARTLETT - It should be. It is \$200 000.

CHAIR - It would only be a fairly new contract. Is that a long-term contract?

Mr PRATT - I understand it is a two-year contract with a one-year option and both services commenced late in 2009. I will have to find out when they commenced.

CHAIR - I am not entirely sure whether members even realise it is on some of the time. It is something you certainly forget about and you just get on with your work. Any other questions in that area?

Mr FINCH - I have a question about archiving. Are we holding that information of sessions of parliament? Are we retaining those?

Mr PRATT - I believe we are and the searchability is the issue in the system.

Mr WING - The searchability of tying down specific dates and times within the recording.

CHAIR - Is that a problem?

Mr PRATT - That was a saving in the system. It was not built into the system when it commenced.

Mr FINCH - It might be something that we might need to consider in the future if people want to make reference back to some things that were said - or do you think *Hansard* is sufficient?

Mr BARTLETT - I would have thought that it should be reasonably easy technically to cross-reference *Hansard* timings with timings of any digital video storage. It might not be immediately available but it should not be too hard to create a service like that.

Mr FINCH - Yes, it might be something to consider for future operations.

Output 4 Joint Services

4.1 Buildings and operations management -

Mr WING - It is interesting to look at the projected announcement in the Budget for future years and very little variation in spite of the change in the value of the dollar that we could expect. Could you please tell us just what this covers - just maintenance, is it?

Mr MENADUE - It is the rent of 10 Murray Street, Henty House and any associated communications in those areas. It includes all the works and repairs which we have contracted and we have another budget for some minor works and other capital-type expenditure such as furniture. We have security services, light and power, waste removal, cleaning supplies, operations of the regional offices and that is about it.

Mr WING - It would seem that there are no increases in rent expected?

Mr MENADUE - They always funded. Because all our rent comes through Treasury sources, if there are any increases it is always adjusted by Treasury.

Mr WING - I thought this included rent?

Mr MENADUE - It does. We pay rent to Treasury and if it goes up, they always increase our budget.

Mr WING - But is it expected that there will not be any increases on the projected estimates here?

Mr MENADUE - I haven't been notified of any.

Mr WING - I see.

Mr MENADUE - It is usually about every two years.

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Mr WING - This goes for over a period of four financial years and there is very little variation.

Mr MENADUE - We only pay rent to Treasury, so they would know how much they are going to increase it by.

Mr PRATT - We can certainly obtain that; we can take that on notice and provide that information.

Mr MENADUE - It is always supplemented if it does.

Mr WING - It is not a matter of great concern. It is just interesting to see there is very little variation for the next four financial years.

Mrs TAYLOR - One would think there would be because isn't 10 Murray Street going?

Mr WING - Sometime.

Mr BARTLETT - That is the plan.

Mrs TAYLOR - We hope over the next four years.

Mr DEAN - Rents are coming down.

CHAIR - Does this not include the renovations? This line does not refer to the renovations that are taking place?

Mr MENADUE - That is always in the works budget.

CHAIR - So that is in another area?

Mr MENADUE - Yes, it was in last year's and the years before's works budgets.

Mr WING - What is the duration of the Henty House lease?

Mr MENADUE - I do not know. It is with the Crown, not the Parliament.

Mr BARTLETT - I can find out for you.

Mr WING - Thank you - just as a matter of interest.

CHAIR - Are there any buildings in there that we need to be doing any upgrade on? Obviously, if there is a lease then any maintenance or upgrades would be covered by the owner of the building, so there is no need for money allocated in that sort of scenario.

Mr PRATT - I have not seen the lease and do not know what is in it. However, the usual terms of the lease are that the landlord would have responsibility for the structure of the building.

Mr DEAN - What is the position in relation to the updates of the offices that we occupy in Henty House? Mr Wing asked the question on Henty House, so what is the position there with

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offices? We know that some of the offices are less than ordinary, so how is that covered? Is it a requirement of the owners of the building now in the agreement with the Government? What is the position?

Mr BARTLETT - I do not have the detail on that.

Mr PRATT - Are you speaking, Mr Dean, of refurbishment of the offices in Henty House?

Mr DEAN - Refurbishment, cleaning - that is what I am talking about,. Updating them; bringing them into this century.

Mr PRATT - As I have indicated, I have not seen that lease and the terms of that lease but the usual terms of a lease would place that responsibility on the tenant for refurbishing, repainting, recarpeting.

Mr DEAN - I ask the question because I am aware of a member who has done it all himself - another member in another House who has renovated his own office but I am not going to do that.

My next question is in relation to the new offices that we are going to occupy; that is, the offices which the regional members of the upper House are going to occupy. What is the position there as regards the additional fitting out that will be necessary with furnishings, fax machines and so on? What will happen there? And how long will we be there and what is going to happen?

Mr PRATT - It is associated with the Parliament Square development. The cost of the provision of those offices is with Treasury. The cost of fitting out any additional furniture to that which already exists in your current parliamentary office, which would be moved to those new offices, would be a cost against the budget for the Legislative Council.

[10.00 a.m.]

Mr DEAN - I do not know whether it comes into this area or not but it concerns buildings so I will ask the question anyway. What about access to fax machines and things like that; will that be accommodated up there in that area or do we have to go half a kilometre to pick up one thing?

Mr PRATT - Mr Dean and other honourable members will see the memorandum today which confirms that a fax machine and a printing device and photocopier, will be provided. So, all members' requirements will be met as usual.

Mr DEAN - Excellent, thank you very much.

CHAIR - I would suggest that some members are going to get very fit; I am not sure that it will be me. It is good to see the development happening.

4.2 Joint management services -

Mr FINCH - I have just made an observation that the increase comes in each year: \$6 000, \$5 000, \$5 000; so the joint management services do have enough expenditure to cover the Joint Management Services. Is the expenditure able to cover the work that needs to be done in Joint Management Services?

Mr PRATT - Those increases are the usual indexation that is applied to salaries.

Mr FINCH - Would there be, for instance, if they required more expenditure, is there a top-up situation or are we able to hold to that budget?

Mr PRATT - In normal circumstances the Legislature-General would be able to hold to that line. If additional expenditure is required then a request for additional funding would be submitted.

Mr FINCH - Thank you.

4.3 Services to members -

Mr GAFFNEY - Just to refresh members' memories, this output provides services not directly related to the Legislative Council or House of Assembly, certain committees and the Leader of the Opposition; things such as Public Works, Public Accounts, Subordinate Legislation, the two standing committees, including those on Community Development, and Environment, Resources and Development. A modest increase again this year, \$24 000; is nothing noteworthy and I really cannot think of a meaningful question to ask.

Laughter.

Mr GAFFNEY - However, I am learning. Are there any specific projects, issues or concerns that your staff would like to outline or highlight?

Mr BARTLETT - It is a pretty open question.

Mr PRATT - I am not aware of anything.

Mr GAFFNEY - Okay, you will let us know if there is.

Mr PRATT - I will.

Mr GAFFNEY - Thank you. I have nothing further.

4.4 Corporate services for parliamentary agencies -

Mrs TAYLOR - I won't repeat what the member next to me has just said. I did ask myself, what does 'Corporate services for parliamentary agencies' mean? I looked it up further on in the document and it says:

'This Output provides for administrative services to the Clerks of both Houses including responsibility for all human resources and financial administration.'

Then I thought, that is huge so I am no further enlightened really by what this statement says because it is \$112 000 and it continues to be \$112 000, so it would be really interesting to know what this actually does. Administrative services, including responsibility for all human resources and financial administration, sounds like a lot of wages but it is obviously not.

Mr BARTLETT - It looks to me as though it is a range of things like fringe benefits tax, workers compensation allocation, payroll tax.

Mr PRATT - If I could add to that, I have the breakdown here. There is parking, which, as the Premier said, is a GST liability that we need to account for.

Mrs TAYLOR - It is a kind of a hold-all for things you cannot find another bucket for.

Mr PRATT - That is right. There is workers compensation insurance for both of the Houses. There are some payments associated with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Mrs TAYLOR - Why does this figure not increase? Workers compensation for instance, I would imagine, would increase year by year as one of those items.

Mr PRATT - They have a pretty good record.

Mrs TAYLOR - It may have a good record, that is fine. I take it that you are satisfied with this amount?

Mr PRATT - Yes, it has always been adequate.

CHAIR - I am just looking up the table but I cannot see anyone putting their hand up to offer up a question. I will thank those at the table with you, Premier, and thank you for your time this morning. That completes our output groups 1 to 4 in that particular area.

Office of the Governor

Output group 1 The office of the Governor

1.1 Support for the Governor -

CHAIR - Good morning and welcome.

Ms PARKER - Thank you.

CHAIR - Premier, would you like to make any brief statement?

Mr BARTLETT - No, I would like to invite the officers from Government House to introduce themselves for the benefit of *Hansard*.

Ms PARKER - My name is Anne Parker and I am the Official Secretary at Government House.

Ms BALL - My name is Andrea Bull and I am the Budget and Research Officer.

Mr BARTLETT - I will speak for a couple of moments just before we get into questions, Madam Chair, and that is to put on the record the extraordinary and fantastic support that we have

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had from Government House in terms of the significant number of visits and interactions we have had over these recent months and certainly over the last financial year.

CHAIR - You almost wore about the bitumen.

Mr BARTLETT - That is right. The staff at Government House, I think, do a fantastic job and have always been both very accommodating and very professional in the way they have enabled the office of Premier to deal with the office of Governor and that has been vital in what has been a very complex set of interactions between the two offices over recent months, and so I just want to put on the record my thanks and congratulations through the Official Secretary to all of the staff at Government House.

CHAIR - I fully support and I know the committee and the Legislative Council in general support that as well. We are always made very welcome when we go out to Government House and have the opportunity to speak with His Excellency. I will now open it up to Mr Dean to ask the first question.

Mr DEAN - What is the total staffing of Government House, Premier?

Mr BARTLETT - I will refer all questions through to the Official Secretary from hereon in.

Ms PARKER - There are 24 full-time staff.

Mr DEAN - Would that be gardeners right across to chefs?

Ms PARKER - Yes, gardeners, house staff, catering, and the Governor's senior staff.

Mr DEAN - It is the whole staffing of Government House.

Ms PARKER - Yes, and when we have big events we bring in quite a large casual work force that we call on for stewarding at receptions and such things.

Mr DEAN - Has that staffing level altered in the past, say, two to three years or is it a static staff?

Ms PARKER - It is fairly static.

Mr DEAN - I notice that there is an increase of about \$185 000 in the overall budget. What is that for? Is that to keep abreast of CPI and all those issues?

Ms PARKER - It is to keep abreast of maintenance. The House obviously needs ongoing maintenance, and the extra funding is in the main for maintenance, and of course we had to absorb a 3.5 per cent increase in staff salaries this year, and another 5 per cent in this financial year to come.

Mr DEAN - My next question was going to be the maintenance program for Government House. It is a large building. Obviously a lot of the work that is to be done is technical. How is that done? The biggest part of the \$185 000 will be expended this year on maintenance, is that what we are saying?

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Ms PARKER - There is a cyclical maintenance program that we follow, and of course it is a bit like maintaining the Sydney Harbour Bridge with painting and things, and remedial stonework probably will be our biggest ongoing expense. We have upgraded security because when we went to fix a component of the security system it was obsolete, so the whole system in that particular area needed replacement. We have had a boom gate installed because there was an entry to Government House that had no surveillance or no way to stop people coming in at night, which did happen once or twice. They have been our biggest expenses, with upgrading heating upstairs - that type of thing. Maintenance on the building is ongoing and there are certain areas which do need upgrading.

Mr DEAN - Are there any more open days occurring at Government House? This was a big thing with the previous Governor. Is it happening now?

Ms PARKER - We held no open day this year as a cost-saving measure - that saved us \$11 000 - and the next open day will be in November. We did have two open days in the previous financial year. Numbers were dwindling, so it was a very opportune time just to have a break and then start again.

Mr DEAN - So the cost of an open day is about \$11 000?

Ms PARKER - Yes. That is for hiring portable lavatories, marquee, having extra staffing for the day, and advertising. It is quite an expensive process.

Mr DEAN - My next question comes to security. Are the police involved in any way now with the security at Government House?

Ms PARKER - Only in the same way that they are involved with any other citizen really. If they are called they will come, and we have an excellent relationship with the police. They are very mindful of the need to attend immediately on the rare occasion we have had to ask them to come, so we are very pleased. In the last few months new recruits who have just come out through the academy and working in the area have come up to Government House to get an idea of the layout of the estate, because it is quite complex.

Mr DEAN - Have there been any security breaches in the last financial year at Government House?

Ms PARKER - No serious security breaches.

CHAIR - A lot of important people travelling at odd hours, I would expect.

Mr DEAN - Absolutely.

CHAIR - I just note under major initiatives reviewing asset management, and you spoke about the maintenance and the ongoing maintenance challenges that Government House would have. Have that review and asset management plan been completed?

Ms PARKER - We have an asset management plan in place that ran to 2010. My advice is to continue with the cyclical maintenance that has been recommended in that plan for the next few years before looking at it again. That is what I intend to do. There was maintenance that had

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fallen behind at one time. That is all up to date and we are now into the cyclical maintenance, which is just maintaining the building as it is.

CHAIR - What about replacement of significant assets? I can think of maybe the carpet, for instance. That would be a significant replacement. Is that covered? Is there something left over that you can put away and say that will be in five years' time?

Ms PARKER - That is something that we are not able to do under the Treasurer's instructions. It would be very nice if you had \$5 000 you could put away every year and build it up, because I expect it would cost \$100 000 to fully replace the carpet in Government House, but we cannot save up. It does not fit in with the arrangements we are required to work under.

[10.15 a.m.]

CHAIR - That is an interesting arrangement, isn't it. It is almost like a bigger household than normal where if we have something left over at the end of the year - I accept that there has not been much left over in the last couple of years anyway - you would be able to gather up just those lots of \$5 000 and put towards an asset. But you would go with a RAF?

Ms PARKER - You would have to I think for at least some of that, for an expenditure of that size.

Mrs TAYLOR - Or you would ask for a budget allocation the following financial year. One would presume you would know ahead.

Ms PARKER - Yes, for something like that you could foresee.

CHAIR - But then there could be unforeseen incidences as well - a burst water pipe, for instance.

Ms PARKER - We could probably cope with that sort of thing within our present funding. Last year we did ask for a RAF to replace the under-floor heating, which was something we had no capacity to pay and we couldn't possibly put it off. The system worked quite well for us then. There was no question that we did not require that money.

CHAIR - If there are no other questions we thank you for your time and please pass on our best wishes to His Excellency and his wife.

Ms PARKER - Thank you very much I will do that.

Mr BARTLETT - Thank you very much.

CHAIR - Premier, we are indeed very fortunate to have our Governor.

Mr BARTLETT - Indeed.

DIVISION 1

(Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts)

Output group 1

Economic development

CHAIR - Premier, we want to go to innovations, I'm sorry.

Mr BARTLETT - Can I just make some opening comments and that perhaps will provide some clarity around where a question might go in this particular portfolio.

Ms HARVEY - I'm Ros Harvey, Executive Director for Strategy and Innovation in the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Arts.

Mr KELLEHER - I'm Mark Kelleher, Secretary of that department.

CHAIR - A department with no money.

Mr BARTLETT - They have plenty of money. I will give an overview. This is a new portfolio. We made an election commitment to create this portfolio and have done so upon being sworn in. I have taken on this portfolio with the single most important goal of lifting Tasmania's productivity levels in our economy through an investment in innovation, science and research and technology. This is not just information technology or ICT as you might think of it but also in technologies in manufacturing, renewable energy and a whole range of other sectors as well.

The sole goal of this portfolio is to improve our productivity in our economy through an investment in those things. Therefore the Department of Economic Development who are represented here by the two officers who have introduced themselves, effectively has at least two ministers - three, four, five, six if you count everything else. Lara Giddings is the Minister for Economic Development and has carriage of this department when it comes to their human resources and other corporate service types of issues and questions around those sorts of things would be best asked in her portfolio or in her Estimates. But I have carriage of a number of the actual outputs in this group and I am happy to range over any other areas that are related to innovation, science and technology such as the NBN. But, and I make this clear at the outset, actual telecommunications policy and therefore the roll out of the NBN and where that is at - those sorts of things actually they reside in the Department of Premier and Cabinet. So the questions on the rollout of the NBN would be best left to there. But questions about the exploitation of the NBN, opportunities, new industries, and how it might affect existing industries, are absolutely part of this portfolio. So there is a distinction there that one member downstairs seemed to be very confused about yesterday.

Regarding the outputs, then, in the economic development output group 1, under 1.2, strictly speaking, that is the Deputy Premier's output. But there is a range of issues in there such as the new contract up at Site I in Devonport where 200 or 300 jobs will be created in a high-tech service centre. Things like that would come under there and, therefore, I am very happy to go there. 1.3 as an output is innovation support and is clearly therefore related to this portfolio and I am directly responsible for it. 1.5, Antarctic industry development, also comes under this portfolio. 1.7, again, strictly speaking, is the Minister for Economic Development's output. There is a range of issues in there such as innovation strategy and industry councils that I have significant carriage over as well.

Further to that, this portfolio is about improving our productivity and our economy through innovation, science and research and through various technologies. So while DED is represented here, this portfolio does range over a whole number of other departments and I am working with other departments on a number of things. For example, in education there are obviously

opportunities in innovation, particularly in technology, science and research. In health there are opportunities for innovation, particularly through the use of technology. In primary industry certainly, when it comes to creating wealth out of our water asset, that is absolutely part of our innovation strategy as well. So I am happy to be very free-ranging and I am happy to go through those output groups that I have outlined.

CHAIR - I am happy to kick off, then, in that area.

1.3 Innovation support -

CHAIR - Have there been any organisations that you have assisted with or involved in science and technology in this output area?

Mr BARTLETT - There are many, of them but I will mention some recent outlines. The Tasmanian and Australian Governments together created a \$20 million north and north-western innovation fund. Some \$18 million of that has now been rolled out in grants to companies assisting in investing in innovation. Some examples of that are Tamar Valley Dairy; Tyco on the West Tamar who do innovative renewable energy - small-scale renewable energy projects. One of their projects of note at the moment is creating energy out of the sewerage outflows from Sydney Harbour, for example. So they have actually designed, done the specifications, and built a mini-hydro scheme that effectively works on the power of the sewage outflow into Sydney Harbour or Sydney Heads and creates 2 megawatts of power to feed back into either the Sydney grid or into Sydney Water's own power usage. We have invested in Penguin Composites which is a firm that develops innovative recreational vehicles - caravans that you slide onto the back of your cars and trucks but designed and manufactured by them. The money has gone into plant and equipment to enable them to reduce costs and deliver more innovative design and so on in their product.

There is a whole range of different funding mechanisms that would be available to these sorts of companies. There is a market access partnership program where \$18 million over the last year or two has been committed to some projects; I know I can find it here somewhere. There are 32 projects in 32 different firms that are largely IT companies to develop market access and new products for commercialisation.

There is a whole range of projects and products - sorry, I should say programs - that are investing in really interesting innovation-based Tasmanian companies but also we have an innovation strategy that we are implementing already and will be fully released in the coming weeks. We commissioned Professor Jonathan West from the Australian Innovation Research Centre 18 months or so ago to develop an innovation strategy effectively. I am happy to talk about what is in that and the Government's response to that I will be releasing in the next couple of weeks. But contained within this budget is investment of upwards of \$11 million or \$12 million to invest in that innovation strategy in projects like Wealth from Water; \$4.85 million in projects like connected classroom demonstrations; in home health; IT trials; smart grid technology which is effectively using the NBN to overlay on our electricity grid to deliver better energy outcomes for Tasmania. All of these things come under the banner of innovation, science and technology.

CHAIR - Given what you have just outlined, is the budget ample?

Mr BARTLETT - I am really proud of this because -

CHAIR - You can speak with the Treasurer, if you like.

Mr BARTLETT - Is he behind me?

CHAIR - No, but we can arrange a meeting.

Mr BARTLETT - He might be watching on the camera. In all things like this we have to walk before we can run but I am very comfortable with the amount of money I have talked about through the market access and partnership program, the \$20 million that we collaborated with the Federal Government on in the north and north-west innovation project, the \$4.85 million which is specifically in this budget for NBN exploitation; and the \$8.87 million going into revamping or underpinning of IT systems across government that will be better able to deliver online services to Tasmanians effectively.

I know we will get to Service Tasmania later today and the queues in Launceston, but I want to see Tasmanians who have an iPhone be able to click a button and get their fishing licence over their iPhone or over their mobile phone or on the internet and so on. So we are going to be looking to expanding online services massively and that will not always be for everybody. But for people like me, it is certainly how I want to do business with the Government; it is just the same way as I do business with my bank or anywhere else.

Mr WING - Like keeping away from them.

Mr BARTLETT - Preferably.

Mr WING - With your technology.

Mr BARTLETT - That is right. We have \$8.87 million in this budget to do that as well. There is a lot in this budget to implement. Ros, who has carriage of this in the department, is very very busy and we are keeping her that way.

I have appointed, within my office, a new senior adviser in this area as well, post the election. He is not here today because he is off on leave. He is a former IT entrepreneur who has built and effectively sold two highly successful international IT companies and so brings with him a wealth of experience about how we deliver growth in innovation-based sectors - again, not just IT. This is part of it but it is innovation, science and technology that will underpin productivity growth.

CHAIR - How much of the \$13.6 million that was allocated in this line item last year has been spent?

[10.30 a.m.]

Mr BARTLETT - Much of that money in this line item includes left-over funding from the Intelligent Island program that has been committed. I understand those programs have now been fully committed and any moneys left in the line items effectively that relate to those are simply waiting for companies or others to tick particular boxes before the money goes out the door. That \$40 million essentially ended getting spent in three ways. Firstly, to an interlink incubator which has -

CHAIR - Nothing to do with chooks?

Mr BARTLETT - Nothing to do with chooks, but you can think of it in the same way. It takes fledgling IT companies, gives them the support and services, the capital, the knowledge that they need to grow and they have had significant success from an original government investment of \$7 million or 8 million over the course of some six years. They have had multinational success including at least one company, for example, that I know. They would have invested half a million dollars in services and capital. It has recently been sold for over \$20 million to a US company but still retains the jobs, returning significant investment back in that creates this virtuous cycle of investment in IT companies. That was about \$7 million of the \$40 million there. Another \$18 million went to the Market Access and Partnership Program. There have been 32 projects of which 22 have been completed, 10 projects will conclude by 31 December this year, another \$15 million went to the ICT research centre in Tasmania, and the CSIRO matched the funding. I would encourage Legislative Councillors if you have an opportunity, and I am happy to create the opportunity for you, to visit that centre. I have recently visited it and it is doing some extraordinary work.

I think a lot of what we want to achieve with this new portfolio is exemplified in just two of the projects that I can talk about that they are doing there. They are developing the IT systems that will run smart meters, smart grid technology, which is effectively how we can better utilise renewable energy. We can cut costs in homes by having smart metering, working out when to switch your fridge on and off effectively, when to take power out of your car battery and put it into the grid and when to charge up your car battery and all of those things with some smarts built into it. Across a place with 200 000 premises like Tasmania we are able to, over time, massively reduce our energy usage cost to households. They are developing that sort of technology.

They are also developing technology, for example, in the north-east where from all of the water sensors out there - some owned by CSIRO, some by the Bureau of Meteorology, some by farmers themselves - they are taking data and creating systems that allow us to manage irrigation schemes with real granularity and measure water usage, so maximising the creation of wealth out of the water resource that we have available.

I would really encourage you to have a look at it. It is about developing new products and technologies and innovation that will underpin productivity in the Tasmanian economy, but not just in IT for IT's sake, it is using that technology to enhance our traditionally strong industries like agriculture, renewable energy and so on.

CHAIR - Will it move the irrigation pipes on a Sunday morning?

Mr BARTLETT - If you went down there and asked them to develop that, you never know.

CHAIR - It sounds amazing. What is the process for applying for these grants?

Mr BARTLETT - It varies because of the different programs and different applications under this MAP project - the Market Access and Partnership program. There was an expert panel established to look at each business case and to make decisions based on a range of specific criteria. Other support can be provided through the Tasmanian Development Board and applications for that style of support go to the board probably on a monthly basis in various capacities. We will be looking through the funding that we have in this Budget, and I just take two examples. There is \$1 million for what we call connected classroom demonstration and \$1 million for in-home health trials. We believe our \$1 million can be leveraged up maybe tenfold in

terms of attracting international, national and local investment, whether that is in kind or in cash, by saying to the market that we are a really interesting place in the world at the moment because of the national broadband network; saying we have this \$1 million and we want to demonstrate the very best in technology and connected classrooms, by going out to the market and saying we have \$1 million; what will you bring to demonstrate your products, your services and your innovation here? This is partly why I am visiting the US next month, to go to those companies which we believe will co-invest with us in those things. I am also visiting the US Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, and we will be looking to establish a project between US and Tasmanian classrooms using high-speed telecommunications and perhaps some technology that is either donated or delivered in kind or in cash from multinational companies to work with local companies to deliver these sorts of demonstrations. We think our \$1 million will probably have the potential to get upwards of \$9 million or \$10 million investment in Tasmanian classrooms.

CHAIR - Premier, I can see how passionate you are about this area but I am mindful that you probably want to go home tonight as well.

Mr BARTLETT - I am happy to talk all night.

CHAIR - I know, and I am sure that it is interesting to some.

Mr WING - To all.

CHAIR - Yes, it is amazing. Have there been any failures so far?

Mr BARTLETT - Yes.

CHAIR - A percentage or number of those 32?

Mr BARTLETT - This is what I can absolutely guarantee; there will be failures when you invest in innovation and if there are not failures then you are not taking enough risk. That is part of the problem within innovation, of course. Banks might not take a risk on it because with a lot of these young firms, the only assets they have are their minds. I have a firm coming to see me, for example, that is doing incredible things in iPhone application development. They are selling their latest application which sold for something like \$100 000 - this is, by the way, two kids basically working in their mother's spare bedroom. Their latest application sold \$100 000 worth in the first three weeks of it being on the Internet and they basically created it in their bedroom. They are not a bankable prospect for any bank in any way, shape or form and they might not be for a government either but with very small amounts of seed funding in early stage innovation, what you get is almost a Darwinian experience; the best will filter through and survive and others will fail. That is the nature of innovation and new ideas.

We have some challenges with one of the IT companies we have invested in over recent years, ETech Group, that essentially has gone belly up. We or the department will be entering into legal proceedings about how we might recover some of the Government's investment there but obviously there are others waiting in the wings for their investments to be repaid as well.

CHAIR - And you will get in line.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, but that is a fact of life when you are investing in or creating innovation.

CHAIR - This will be my final question. Given that there is an opportunity to make significant money for these companies, is there some obligation or can you write into their funding an obligation to return something to the State of Tasmania? Obviously, I know they will return in product.

Mr BARTLETT - We have done that in the past and I certainly would not rule it out for the future, that grants can become repayable grants once revenues reach a particular level.

CHAIR - I am thinking of Bill Gates and Microsoft. They would probably be in the position to if we had somebody like that in the State.

Mr BARTLETT - Absolutely. Again, I take this one company that I know of that has been through what I would call our innovations system, if you like, where they originally worked with the Department of Economic Development some eight or 10 years ago: two young fellows in their mother's garage type stuff created out of that partnership and some very small seed funding and some access to market funding from the Government and then some investment from the incubator that the Government had invested in two companies that have been effectively sold - and that is not a bad thing because what that does is take tens of millions of dollars that comes back into the Tasmanian economy - and the staff of these companies, while they might not be owned here in Tasmania, are still working here. So they have probably created - I do not know - 150 jobs in those two firms plus bringing that money back in that then gets invested, because of the nature of innovators, in new innovation and they create new things that go on. Some will fail and some will succeed.

CHAIR - Are there any questions, members?

Mr WING - Do these questions come under Economic Development?

CHAIR - The Premier has offered to answer under these three lines because he has carriage of them.

Mr WING - Are we dealing with that now?

Mr BARTLETT - Yes.

Mr WING - Good. I am sorry, I was away for a while.

Mr BARTLETT - I will repeat myself. We are talking about 1.3 and 1.5.

Mr WING - No, Sue has explained. I was just apologising. I was getting some information for the committee. I am pleased to see so much allocated for investment attraction and industry development. I am just wondering if consideration has been given to trying to attract companies to relocate from the bigger cities in Australia here, where the cost of infrastructure is less and the rental is less, even with office accommodation. I tried to persuade Dr Crean to be interested in that. His attitude was: let us get the economy right and then investment will flow.

Mr BARTLETT - You are absolutely right but I might refer the question to the secretary of the department who, I am sure, can give us a general overview of DED and how they operate in investment attraction areas.

Mr KELLEHER - The main theme we had was a specific company-based investment attraction activity, I suppose, where we are identifying opportunities in our natural resources, for example. That is more targeted whereas industrial sites facilitate processes with major international companies. Perhaps the sense of your question was more to the positioning of Tasmania as an attractive place to come to and live and work.

Mr WING - Yes.

Mr KELLEHER - That is very much a part of a project Tasmania element of our agency's activities, promoting Tasmania as a place that has all those attributes you were talking about -

Mr WING - And the quality of life.

Mr KELLEHER - with the quality of life, the liveability of the place, the one constraint preventing people from taking advantage of that has been the tyranny of distance. So the biggest contribution that will see that last constraint removed is the establishment of the broadband rollout. Then people who can work anywhere in the world will have no reason not to choose, in fact every reason to choose, Tasmania because of those particular elements. So the broadband rollout will provide that communications connection for people who are doing business anywhere in the world, to do it from Tasmania and the reasons they will come here are all those elements - quality of life, lack of traffic congestion, clean air and of course our growing arts and cultural developments that are very much in the innovative area. That is really becoming one of our key attributes and all of these things are linked to both the attraction of tourists and why the tourism industry has been so highly performing over these last few years, and translating that into a skilled work force choosing to relocate to Tasmania.

Mr WING - That is very good to hear. Will we therefore be pursuing what I term a resettlement program for industry and also a residential program to encourage people to move here in a positive way?

[10.45 a.m.]

Mr KELLEHER - Yes, the branding activity which is reflected in tourism particularly is a great way to do that because people come here to experience things and go back home and now with technology put their experiences on Facebook and so on and suddenly 500 people are hearing their story, so that is a great way to start.

Mr WING - And some of them decide to come and live here, and that is what we really want, too.

Mr KELLEHER - That is attracting individuals to come here to have a skilled work force and creative people here. The specific company ones are perhaps more targeted through our economic development strategy of identifying particular sustainable, competitive advantages Tasmania has, such as water and mineral resources and those sort of areas and that is actually undertaken more on a sector basis of target.

Mr WING - Yes, thank you. Another matter that I thought of raising, but I doubt if it comes under this, is promoting our clean, green image and selling more of our fresh produce but I think that comes under -

CHAIR - It is industry research.

Mr BARTLETT - Certainly part of the innovation strategy is around our paddock-to-plate strategy and so you will see things in this Budget like \$400 000 or so for the Savour Tasmania festival, which genuinely in the right places is giving free media for Tasmania in the highest-end food circles around the globe. We are investing \$3 million in gas going to Simplot to ensure that our vegetable processing industry remains competitive. We are investing through the north and north-west innovation fund in companies like Harvest Moon that are taking fresh vegetable produce to the mainland. I think all of those, while other ministers might have responsibility for them, are about innovation, about better downstream processing, better presentation for market and better branding of Tasmania's natural attributes and qualities that we have.

Mr WING - I am very pleased on that subject because part of the funding given to the north-west coast that Harvest Moon has shared was used by TIAR and with cooperation and help from the Department of Economic Development a Thai businessman was brought here for a week and he was interested in buying many of the fresh produce and Tasmanian vegetables through to seafood, et cetera, and there was a photograph on the front page of the *Examiner*. The gentleman who organised it was David Wells of TIAR and he is most concerned about the prospect of the clean, green image being harmed by the methyl bromide fumigation of timber and if this gentleman and others happen to hear of this; he has had concern expressed by vegetable growers in the Burnie area about the possibility of the fumes getting there.

I take the opportunity to raise that on the basis that he feels that our clean, green image could be tarnished to potential purchasers of our fresh vegetable product - and I know this is happening. I do not raise this to be controversial at all but just to indicate the concern and to ask what the Government's view would be about that.

Mr BARTLETT - My understanding of that particular quarantine exercise is that it is done under a permit from the Australian Government. We may well be surprised at what we are importing into Australia and what we do to it on the way in in terms of quarantine and we may well be surprised about what we do to products on the way out but they are matters for the Australian Government in terms of quarantine requirements.

Mr WING - Debarking and the bark being processed for other purposes would avoid that; that seems to be an alternative that farmers in the area would favour.

Mr DEAN - Or cleaning it out on the open sea.

Mr BARTLETT - I do not have any further information on that and you may well be right that that is an alternative or it may well not be.

Mr WING - I just raise that for consideration.

Mr BARTLETT - Ultimately, if we are selling stuff internationally, the requirement to debug it, as it were, whatever stuff it is - logs or apples - is most likely a requirement of the market we are selling it into.

Mrs TAYLOR - It is really exciting to hear you talk about all those projects. In terms of NBN, it is not just a matter, as you say, of increasing speed in doing business, it is also diversifying into other way of using the technology. So are we going to be the silicon valley?

Mr BARTLETT - No, and I would never use that term although I am visiting Silicon Valley next month because our opportunity here is very different to the opportunity of, say, Hong Kong or Korea which obviously has a real manufacturing opportunity. It is different again to Silicon Valley which has a real access to capital and proximity to market opportunity. Ours is a very different opportunity and we have got to find out what that is but I am happy to describe what I think some of the opportunities are.

Let me just highlight a few opportunities we should go and explore. Google recently released a white paper about their future plans for the 10 years. They want to build 23 one-billion dollar server farms - effectively, data centres. Their whole job or their whole business model is about collecting and aggregating up data and selling it to people basically either through advertising or through what have you - say Google Earth, Google Maps, Google whatever.

What are the three things they look for when they are going to place these \$23 billion data centres around the world? Well, interestingly, they look for obviously lower cost of doing business. They look for low turnover of staff and those sorts of things. They look for highly skilled staff. They look for places that have very high speed telecommunications and the ability to buy that cheaply. They look for different time zones because they want to stretch their operations out with redundancy around the world and, interestingly enough, very high on their list, if not top, is they look for renewable energy because every time you do a Google search you release 1.5 grams of carbon into the atmosphere and they want to be seen as 'clean and green'. Actually, siting their data centre next to a renewable energy source is the best way of doing business. So that is an opportunity.

Another really interesting gentleman I have been talking to is Evan Thornley who made half a billion dollars during the dot-com boom selling a company called LookSmart. He then went into the Victorian Parliament and was a Labor member of the Victorian Parliament for a while. He has left that now and he is the CEO of a company called Better Place. Better Place is a really interesting company and I think we are going to continue some conversations with him.

Essentially, the picture, if you like, for this company is that one of the major problems with renewable energy is that there is no way to store it. That is, when the wind is blowing you either use the energy or you do not use the energy and if the wind is not blowing you might need the energy and it is not there. His proposition is that if you had 10 000, say, electric cars plugged in into people's homes - let us take Tasmania as an example - around the State, they have all got massive batteries. The problem with renewable energy is that with 10 000 cars plugged into the grid, you have got effectively a very big distributed battery. So when the wind blows, you charge all the car batteries up and it is cheap because people have got smart meters working out the favourable wind direction for charging their batteries.

When peak prices happen in Melbourne because it is a 38-degree day, they can switch on their air conditioners and the smart grid will work this out. But say the wind is not blowing, it will actually suck energy out of those 10 000 Tasmanian car batteries and sell it across Basslink.

Just think of that simple equation - Tasmanians buying energy when the wind is blowing cheap, then charging their car batteries and selling it when the wind is not blowing but when energy is highly expensive.

CHAIR - It blows a lot at Musselroe too.

Mr BARTLETT - That is right. We are working on that, aren't we? You have a whole new way of thinking about how you manage energy, how you conserve energy, how you sell energy and buy energy and it is smart grid technology that can do that, together with massively distributed batteries. So there are just two opportunities, but I think there are a multitude of them. Our real challenge, I think, is actually sorting the wheat from the chaff and finding out what is a realistic opportunity and what is not.

Mrs TAYLOR - So that is going to need significant investment from the Government because it is not cheap to do that.

Mr BARTLETT - Well, in Better Place, interestingly enough, his model for this company is that you buy a car - and particularly fleets of cars are a good way of thinking about this - you buy a car and you pay x amount for the car and for the petrol to run it. He reckons as petrol prices go up the differential between the two will enable him to effectively - I don't think he is going to give you the car for free, but just as mobile phones have moved to a place where you get the mobile phone for free because they know they are going to make money out of you using your mobile phone, that is the model that he is heading to with cars. He wants to give you an electric car for free because he knows the differential between the price you pay in petrol and the price you generate . is where the profit might come from.

Mrs TAYLOR - I wasn't thinking of significant investment downstream. I am thinking of significant investment we need to do now, because with NBN, while we are ahead at this stage, I imagine there is a very small window of opportunity for us here. Unless we see a change of government and NBN gets cut off, this is really a good opportunity for us and we need to. do a lot of work now.

Mr BARTLETT - I think you are right; there is a window of opportunity and it is closing over the next five to 10 years. We need to get ahead of the game.

Mrs TAYLOR - Google is not going to sit around for 10 years waiting to decide about where its \$1 billion growth will be.

Mr BARTLETT - Well, that is a 10-year plan, actually. What we need to do, I think, concerns both perception and reality. Hence, the \$5 million or \$4.85 million we have in this Budget to start exploiting some of these opportunities is about creating reality, but it is also about creating a perception to national and international companies too: 'There are some really interesting things happening down there. We had better get on a plane and go and have a look'.

Mrs TAYLOR - I notice that in your 1.2, you have actually got only \$1 million for renewable energy loan fund.

Mr BARTLETT - It is a \$30 million fund and the \$1 million effectively represents the interest that we will pay on behalf of companies who are able to draw down on the \$30 million.

Mrs TAYLOR - Because it is, you know, not only just for us here and now and for the innovation you are talking about, but in terms of the effect of climate change in the future. There is no reason we cannot be leaders in renewable energy because, as the member has just said, we do have wind, for one thing.

Mr BARTLETT - We already are. So that is actually a \$30 million fund. The line item effectively funds the low interest loans.

Mrs TAYLOR - Okay, because you have \$1 million for Vodaphone but only \$1 million for renewable energy, which seems little unbalanced.

1.5 Antarctic industry development -

Mrs TAYLOR - We are obviously a gateway, if not the best gateway, to the Antarctic both in terms of sea and air. I do not believe that we as a State are spending nearly enough time, energy and resources on taking advantage of that. We have companies like Caterpillar, for instance, who are building tractors for the Chinese here in greater Hobart. In fact, the other day the Premier said that Moonah was the best suburb in Hobart, and then he corrected himself because I was there and said, 'Ah, Glenorchy'. But let us talk about greater Hobart, okay? Moonah is the best suburb of greater Hobart. But Caterpillar at Berriedale is selling tractors and vehicles and stuff to the Chinese, to all sorts of nations, in Antarctica, and they are being made here. We do not have a program in our schools, for instance, or in our colleges that specifically encourages skills learning for all the things that are being done in Antarctica in terms of science, in terms of industry, in terms of whatever. It seems to me our port is not probably at the standard at the moment where more Antarctic vessels could come here. We have an opportunity that we can maybe not take from New Zealand, but certainly the Chinese are expanding fast in Antarctica, as you know, and a number of other nations, and they are looking for places where they can have support bases.

CHAIR - We need a question.

[11.00 a.m.]

Mrs TAYLOR - The question is why are we not spending more money than \$1.1 million?

Mr BARTLETT - I guess the simple answer to your question is this. The reason I have taken Antarctic issues into this portfolio is to give it a real focus over the coming four years. I think we have done some really remarkably good things with our Antarctic relationship but I absolutely agree with you; there is much more we can be doing.

The port infrastructure is certainly one thing that we are looking at. The sense that Hobart is a global Antarctic gateway is one thing that we are looking at. For example, the department has worked hard to win a global international Antarctic tourism conference for here for 2011. In 2012, the 35th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting will be held in Tasmania as well. Next year is the centenary of the Mawson expedition. In the coming two years we have some really incredible opportunities to showcase that to the world and that is what we intend doing.

I agree that the \$1.5 million, while it is a reasonable budget, probably needs growth. I actually see growth over that but the growth in that budget has to come with a really clear, strategic plan about what we want to do. The other reason this is in the portfolio is because of the science base of the Southern Ocean and the Antarctic where we have CSIRO. We will be creating a new institute of marine and antarctic science and I will be talking more about that in the coming weeks as well. I see that the actual attraction of the science and research capacity here is equally as important as the logistics and so on, and that is part of what we will be doing also.

Mrs TAYLOR - Thank you. I encourage you to apply your innovation science and whatever ministry to this as well. There is a real opportunity for Tasmania.

CHAIR - On that note, I am going to encourage everyone to have a cup of tea.

The committee suspended from 11.02 a.m. to 11.16 a.m.

Ministerial and Parliamentary Support

Output group 1

Support for members of parliament

1.1 Support for ministers CHAIR - Welcome back, Premier. I hope everyone is feeling refreshed after that nice cuppa. A little bit of networking in the hallway never goes astray.

Mr BARTLETT - Can I introduce Deb Goddard who is the Acting Manager, Ministerial Services and Rhys Edwards, the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

CHAIR - Premier, we will invite you to do a brief overview now of this particular department, if you have one, of some key points.

Mr BARTLETT - I am happy to go through some facts and figures. These are the two outputs that support both ministers and other members of parliament. As at 26 May - and I will talk about my own office first - there were 21.9 FTEs however this will reduce to 20.3 FTEs on 2 July. The previous year's FTE figure was 22.3 when we had a reduction of two staff in the Premier's office. Overall staff across ministerial offices have been reduced by 11.6 FTEs and this includes the staff allocation to the two Green members of Cabinet. The figure does not include a position which is still to be filled but we are in no hurry to fill some of those vacancies so this will remain as a reduction of between five and 10 staff overall.

This time around we had a fully advertised, open and transparent process with a selection panel. Effectively all advisers and heads of office had to apply for jobs within Ministerial Services and that has resulted in a fairly significant turnover, certainly with heads of office for ministerial offices - I think five or six new heads of office and therefore five or six are departing. Across Ministerial Services during the global financial crisis we endeavoured to reduce costs. There has been a reduction, for example, in travel costs during the past 12 months of some \$391 000. In the 2008-09 financial year we expended \$949 000 on travel and in the 2009-10 financial year just \$558 000. Also, there has also been a reduction in the Government Communications Office from 14 staff to 12.6 staff, a reduction of 1.4 FTEs. During the last financial year we reduced the number of mobile phones in use in ministerial offices by 24 and reduced our mobile telecommunications bill, which of course includes hand-held mobiles but also data cards in laptops, from 142 000 in 2008-09 to 110 000 in 2009-10, a \$32 000 decrease in mobile phone expenditure. This year we have significantly increased the State Liberal Opposition's staffing allocation by 80 per cent from \$804 000 to \$1.4 million - some \$800 000 increase. Those are roughly the highlights.

CHAIR - Do you want to give an explanation on the 80 per cent increase?

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Mr BARTLETT - I think it is reasonable and justified. It is effectively what the Liberal Opposition have asked for. They now have three new members in the lower House, taking their number of members from seven to 10. Recognising that they required more resources to do their job, they requested those resources and that was granted to them.

Mr DEAN - The Premier has covered several of my questions, and that is good. It saves me having to ask them.

CHAIR - You might be able to drill down on them.

Mr DEAN - One was the savings that were required in last Budget so you covered that well, I think, with reductions in staff and equipment et cetera. There is a \$1.2 million-plus increase in the Budget here. I know that it basically covers the restructuring of support services. What has happened there? What are the restructurings that are occurring that will eat up the biggest part of that extra money?

Mr BARTLETT - I can account for the bulk of that with the \$800 000 increase to the Liberal Opposition.

Mr DEAN - Right, that is out of that as well.

Mr BARTLETT - I can also indicate that there have been State Service wage rises effectively so that the vast bulk of the remaining money would be in staff wage rises. In effect, we have fewer people being paid more.

Mr DEAN - As a result of the current set-up of the Government and the accord, or whatever you would like to call it, what office changes are occurring or what expenditure on changes in offices? And will there be changes in the Assembly as was raised here a while back?

Mr BARTLETT - I would oppose changes to the House of Assembly configuration myself so I suspect they will not go ahead because I think it is a significant expense. Frankly, who knows what make-up the next Parliament will have? And are we going to change it every time we have a change in the make-up of Parliament? I do not think that is a reasonable thing to do.

Mr DEAN - I think we would all support your position on it.

Mr BARTLETT - For the Greens' ministerial offices we have spent a total of \$11 607; \$8 622 of that was minor works. I do not know exactly what the minor works were for that; you probably could get a new door or you might not. Not much anyway.

CHAIR - An expensive door then.

Mr DEAN - Are they reinforced doors?

Laughter.

Mr BARTLETT - A reconfiguration of the offices. It used to be my office on the top floor of the Marine Board Building when I was Minister for Education. Now there are two members of Cabinet in there sharing staff and what have you so I presume modifications were required for

that arrangement and new furniture purchases for Green ministerial offices of \$2 985. Other than that there is nothing significant to report.

Mrs TAYLOR - Are they timber?

Laughter.

Mr BARTLETT - Are they catching carbon?

CHAIR - Order.

Mr DEAN - This are covers and it refers to 'most staffing'. What other staffing is there involved that area does not cover? If you look at the output group, the output provides certain allowances, most staffing, travel and office facilities.

Mr BARTLETT - It would be Legislative Council staffing.

Mr EDWARDS - It doesn't, so they are the other bits that are not.

Mr BARTLETT - Legislative Council funds some staff out of the Legislative Council budget. It could be considered as largely support for members of Parliament but I am not covering it in this budget.

CHAIR - Are there any other questions in relation to 1.1?

Mr WING - I am wondering there is an allocation in here for the cost of transferring a ministerial office from Hobart to Launceston?

Mr BARTLETT - No.

Mr WING - Will there be sufficient funds for that?

Mr BARTLETT - I am certain that, for example, Minister Michelle O'Byrne will be doing a reasonable amount - I cannot judge whether it is 50-50 or 60-40 - of her work out of her Launceston office but there is no intention and no provision in this budget to move the ministerial office holus-bolus to Launceston.

Mr WING - I was a bit worried that that may have been the case.

Mr BARTLETT - I can confirm that it is.

Mr WING - I hope that it may be in the future

Mrs TAYLOR - I understand why there has to be extra money in the budget for three new Liberal members. Does that mean there is a commensurate drop in the amount for the Labor members because you have lost three?

Mr BARTLETT - There is a drop because we allocate funding to our Labor members based on money for their office and staff. Parliamentary secretaries get an extra staffing allocation. So yes, it is true to say that if we had three more members it would be costing more than it is now.

Mr WING - We have got the converse.

Mrs TAYLOR - Yes, I did put the converse but thank you for your answer.

Mr DEAN - Has there been a decrease in staffing as a result of the changes in the Government?

Mr BARTLETT - Yes. As I said, effectively 11.6 fewer staff across our offices.

1.2 Support for other members of parliament -

CHAIR - Premier, with the budget allocation forward Estimates up to 2013-14, I do not believe that there is enough for the increase in members of Parliament to 35. Is that something that would be reassessed after the event, if it happens?

Mr BARTLETT - It is not included in these forward Estimates. Treasury have a database of the contingencies, probabilities and what have you and it would be listed there but it would not be listed in the forward Estimates yet because it is an event that has not happened.

CHAIR - May I explore that a little further, then. Would Treasury put together a briefing paper for the Cabinet to say how much it is going to cost to expand the number of MPs?

[11.30 a.m.]

Mr BARTLETT - Let me make it clear; there has been a little bit of misreporting about this but Cabinet has not arrived at or even considered a position on this. I have made a personal position known and that is that I believe Tasmanians effectively voted for an increase in the size of Parliament because two of the parties who were running on that platform won 15 out of 25 seats. I am firmly of the belief that while no doubt the Labor Party and the Liberal Party will continue to run for majority government, I think it is highly unlikely there will be a majority government elected in Tasmania for at least the next two elections, particularly if we go to 35 seats. Therefore, we need to consider all of those things and we need to consider that, frankly, there are not enough backbenchers in the Labor Party at the moment to fill committee positions and other bits and pieces that a working parliament needs to do. So I think that it is highly likely that the change will happen.

All that Cabinet has decided so far is to ask me to convene a meeting with the President of the Legislative Council and two other party leaders in the Lower House to have an initial conversation about the way forward. I have a personal view about what I think what that way forward should be but Cabinet has not made a decision on that.

CHAIR - When do you expect that this will come to the Parliament?

Mr BARTLETT - It would depend largely on the meeting that I think is now scheduled in my diary for next week or the week after - I think next week - with those people I have mentioned. If we are all in furious agreement it could happen pretty quickly. If we are not and there is a difference of views about whether this should proceed, then it may take more time.

CHAIR - Would you consider taking that particular instance of increasing the number of MPs to the people as a referendum?

Mr BARTLETT - In a perfect world I think that it is something you would consider but the cost of a referendum is probably upwards of \$2 million and I do not think there is a real appetite for that. I am not even sure it would get up as a referendum question, to be honest. 'Who wants more politicians? Vote yes'.

Laughter.

CHAIR - Yet, you have indicated that you believe that the Tasmanian Parliament voted for an increase in the Parliament indirectly.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, indirectly. We have a representative democracy, of course, and what they voted for was 15 out of 25 representatives who were running on a platform of 35 seats.

Mr WING - That was the referendum?

Mr BARTLETT - Essentially, yes. You could make that assumption and assume saving the expense of a \$2 million referendum.

DIVISION 10

(Department of Premier and Cabinet)

CHAIR - Premier, at our pre-committee meeting this morning, there was an issue raised with the committee about your major initiatives statements and where those particular issues fitted in with this so we are going to take the opportunity, if that is all right with you, to deal with those first before we start into the output groups. Do you have any issue with that?

Mr BARTLETT - No problem with that. With your indulgence, I would like to provide the committee with a bit of an overview and it might save us some energy and effort in terms of the outputs that I am dealing with, what Tim might deal with and other bits and pieces along the way.

CHAIR - Okay, we will have our pens out ready to mark.

Mr BARTLETT - Okay; is that out of 10?

Laughter.

CHAIR - To mark the areas.

Mr BARTLETT - There have been a number of changes in different things in the Budget so I have been given a structure of the DPAC budget so if I can outline those first of all that probably saves us some confusion along the way.

There are a number of changes to the DPAC budget in 2010-11 in terms of portfolio responsibilities. Output 1.2, climate change, is now the responsibility of the Minister for Climate Change, Nick McKim, and he will deal with questions on the budget of that output.

Output 6, community development, is also the responsibility of Nick McKim as the Minister for Community Development, though members would be aware that he has officially authorised the Secretary to Cabinet to undertake functions on his behalf in relation to the Disability Bureau,

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Multicultural Tasmania, Seniors Bureau, Women Tasmania; Cassy O'Connor will take questions on those areas.

As in previous years, output group 7, development of local government, remains the responsibility of the Minister for Local Government and those Estimates will be dealt with by Minister Green. In relation to DPAC, I will be dealing with outputs 1.1, 1.3 and output groups 2, 3, 4 and 5.

CHAIR - Premier, that is exactly what we have.

Mr BARTLETT - Beautiful. We are all on the same page then.

CHAIR - I think we could well be going ahead well on this.

Mr BARTLETT - Excellent. Let me just go through some of the new funding that is available under each of those and provide some clarity there. In next year's Budget \$1.1 million is going to be provided to support the implementation of our social inclusion strategy.

First of all, - and this is giving you an indication of why budget numbers have changed significantly in different areas - of this, \$1 million has been allocated to the Tasmanian Food Security fund to support investment that builds on existing food and nutrition programs in schools; strengthens individual, family and community capacity to prepare nutritious meals; undertake other activities; and improve access to and consumption of nutritious food. I am happy to talk more about that.

We have also allocated a further \$75 000 to develop a cost-of-living strategy, which will examine the impact of increases in the average cost of basic goods and services and the growing gap for many groups between disposable income and the resources people need to live healthy, happy and productive lives.

We have also included in this budget annual funding of \$130 000 which has been provided to ensure the ongoing availability of the Concessions Guide, which is a quality production that I know many members all use in their electorate offices and with their constituents.

In output group 2 there is a one-off payment of \$418 000; a manual allocation of \$227 000 has been provided to consolidate and support the delivery of IT services to ministers and their staff within the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

If I can just explain: previously, ministers were supported in their IT roles by their own departments. This has led to a fragmentation of diaries and different sorts of systems across ministerial offices.

CHAIR - Somebody failed to turn up where they should have been.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, that might be it. We have decided that DPAC will now consolidate all of that into one system, so that ministerial offices across the board will be supported from one place.

We are also providing \$300 000 extra to the Office of Parliamentary Counsel. This is critical in terms of the functioning of any government in the drafting of legislation. We expect this

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funding will allow us to recruit and retain another senior drafter - given the complexity of this task, this is a long-term, challenging goal.

In this budget we are providing \$120 000 for government show exhibit at the excellent show exhibitions at Burnie, Hobart and Launceston. That is essentially money that was cut from the department during the global financial crisis. This provides access to various aspects of government services to the community in all walks of life. We have put this into the DPAC budget simply because we wanted to provide some transparency and openness about these.

Under 'Contributions of Grants' and grants there has been additional funding of \$1.5 million. Essentially this is election commitments -

Mr WING - Is it not \$1.6 million?

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, sorry, \$1.592 million, or \$1.6 million. Essentially, these are election commitments. Many of them belong in Sport and Recreation or in the Office of Multicultural Affairs or in other places. But we have grouped them all here so that it is clear and transparent that this was a list of Labor election promises that we are essentially delivering on. I would like to go through those and they are: \$30 000 for automated light controls at Aurora Stadium for netball; \$80 000 for the Channel Football Club; \$15 000 for the Cygnet Tennis Club; \$22 000 for the Eastern Suburbs Rugby Club; \$150 000 for the George Town Community Bowls Club; \$50 000 for the Hobblers Bridge netball business case; \$200 000 for the Korean Church and community; \$100 000 for the Living Boat Trust; \$130 000 to support Men's Sheds across the State; \$500 000 for the Rosny Bowls Club; \$10 000 for the support of SANDS Australia - I do not know what that stands for -

CHAIR - The sudden infant death, neos.

Mr BARTLETT - Thank you. There is \$100 000 for a Smithton Christian Fellowship Community Drop-in Centre, in fact a youth drop-in centre; \$90 000 for the South Hobart Soccer Club; \$45 000 for the Southern Midlands History Project; \$50 000 for Unions Tasmania's funding; and \$20 000 for a Westbury pool feasibility study. I am happy to talk about those but they are there for everyone to see.

In output group 3 I mentioned earlier there is a significant investment of \$8.87 million over three years provided for IT transformation across the Government, leading to or developing a platform for better online service delivery for Tasmanians from Government.

Output group 4 contains an extra \$800 000 commencing in 2010-11 provided over four years to fund Tasmania's partnership with the Australia and New Zealand School of Government consortium, which is essentially a training consortium to develop skills in senior public servants and that essentially gives us access to those sorts of courses; and \$59 000 for two years has been committed to convene a graduate program for people with disabilities.

In output group 5 we provided a one-off funding of \$180 000 for the 10-year review of Tasmania Together and that is a statutory requirement review under the Tasmania Together legislation. As were all agencies, DPAC was subject to substantial cost savings from 2009-10 and the department has been able to implement a range of strategies to manage its recurrent operational expenditure. These measures include a reduction in senior management positions - six SES positions were abolished last year. Careful vacancy management and the use of the

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Voluntary Separation Scheme has delivered a reduction of five FTE positions across the department. There was a cut in the number of vehicles, and thus to vehicle fleet costs: a reduction of six vehicles. A reduction in communication expenditure, particularly mobile phone costs, was achieved by a reduction of 11 mobile phones with a cost saving of about \$25 000. There was a general cap to electricity costs of around \$40 000 in the department as well.

Before I finish I will just highlight some of the achievements that DPAC have made over the year. The department, in conjunction with David Adams, has developed a Social Inclusion Strategy and provided a response to that and we have started launching a number of initiatives out of that strategy, including \$1.04 million for Volunteering Tasmania; \$1 million for the Cars for Communities program. The department supported my participation in three COAG meetings, and this should not be understated because there is an enormous amount of work that goes into bringing together the advice and the preparation for a COAG meeting. The department also created a new program providing work experience for humanitarian entrants. The Protection of Agricultural Land policy was reviewed and the State Coastal policy was further progressed. Through a whole-of-government collaboration we achieved integrated service delivery through child and family centres in the Queenstown and George Town hubs. Legislation has been passed to create Tasmania's new Integrity Commission, which the department had a large part to play in.

The lobbying code of conduct and a register of lobbyists were released and developed by the department. The Tasmanian Wedges Project report that was based around climate change and our economy was released in February this year and Service Tasmania has introduced new services, including the bill payment services for onstream water accounts and participation in voucher exchange service for the Inland Fisheries Service. With that I am in your hands.

[11.45 a.m.]

CHAIR - You have done very well. I will open it up to Mr Dean as I know he has a question in relation to contribution grants.

Mr DEAN - Premier, this question is in relation to the funds that you have at your discretion to allocate and provide funds to members of parliament. Is that a fund that is available to all 40 parliamentarians?

Mr BARTLETT - I'm always very happy for members of parliament to write to me where they see a need in their community. They are assessed and administered under the Treasurer's Instruction within my office but also administered within the department. I am very happy for all members of parliament, no matter where from, to make submissions under that.

Mr DEAN - So it is a matter of making a submission to you outlining the circumstances and everything about it, providing a full submission on it?

Mr BARTLETT - Essentially. Can I indicate though that the level of these sorts of grants is usually not big bickies, it is the smaller one and two thousand dollar type grants. Can I indicate that the ones that I listed earlier were election commitments from Labor that we were delivering. But it is certainly not unprecedented that we have supported other members of parliament.

Mr DEAN - It did not come of the fund you referred to, did it, the one that you undertake?

Mr BARTLETT - While we could have allocated this money that I have listed here anywhere - we could have put Channel Football Club in Sport & Recreation - it is a presentation

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exercise more than anything. We decided that we would present them in this way so we knew exactly what we had committed during the election campaign in this regard and have the opportunity to scrutinise that in one place.

Mr DEAN - From that fund that you have control over then can I be provided with the amounts funded out of that over the last three-year period and to whom and what for?

Mr BARTLETT - You would have to take that on notice.

Mr DEAN - If you don't mind, thank you.

CHAIR - The member for Apsley will be on that list twice.

Mr BARTLETT - There you go.

Mr DEAN - The member for Windermere will not be because I was not even aware of the fund.

Mrs TAYLOR - Is this the Premier's sundry grants, basically?

CHAIR - A discretionary fund, I believe.

Mr BARTLETT - The Premier's sundry grants program.

Mrs TAYLOR - So that is not this contribution and grants, or is it within that?

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, it's within that.

Mr DEAN - Is that the only access that members of parliament have to another funding source for those types of things for community organisations?

Mr BARTLETT - No, not at all. In Sport and Rec we have rounds of grants all the time. In the Tasmanian Community Fund there are rounds of grants all the time. Under the department of Health through the gaming fund I think there are community grants available. There is the Cars for Communities program that I talked about earlier. We have just released information on the Tasmanian Food Security round of grants - a half million dollars there.

I would say the Premier's sundry grants is a very small part of grants that are available from Government for community organisations and it usually does not quite fit somewhere else; has a need, does not fit elsewhere, is a community need and is small. Often with those small grants it would take more effort and cost for a community organisation to apply to one of these funds than the actual money they might get from it.

CHAIR - But it is a lot of lamingtons if you are trying to raise \$1 000.

Mr BARTLETT - That is right. I recall signing off a couple of sundry grants for the member for Apsley. I cannot recall for what now.

CHAIR - One was for the Scottsdale High School to purchase a coffee machine so their students could learn to make good coffee ready for Launceston when they get to the school and

the other one was for St Marys to put towards their park; they have a little park and they wanted some shelter and it was \$1 000 towards a new shelter.

Mr DEAN - So that is an application and submission that is done and forwarded directly to your office.

Mr BARTLETT - That is correct, they address it to me.

Mrs TAYLOR - I would be happy if you could table not three years' worth but one year's worth just to give us an indication as to where it is spent and what sort of projects for which you might be able to apply. I do have a specific question which I am told is probably under Community Development Support but as we are not seeing Cassy O'Connor then perhaps you would take that on board, Premier. There was a pre-election commitment for \$20 000 for a multicultural festival in your favourite suburb from March next year - sorry I will stop doing that.

Mr BARTLETT - We will be delivering on that, I am sure.

Mrs TAYLOR - It is just that I cannot see where it is in the Budget and I have been asked to ask you. One of your colleagues told me.

Mr BARTLETT - I would have to check on that but I can guarantee you we will be delivering on it.

Mrs TAYLOR - Good. Thank you. It is in the base funding for multicultural affairs.

CHAIR - Before we leave that particular item and get onto the line items, can you just give me an estimated balance of that fund once all your prior commitments are taken out?

Mr BARTLETT - It is a bit like the funds that we talked about in the Legislative Council today, I guess, in terms of being an 'as needs', 'when and where' basis basically.

CHAIR - We will move on to output group 1.

Output group 1 Support for executive decision making

1.1 Strategic policy and advice -

Mr BARTLETT - I should say in answer to that that you can see the forward Estimate for it is \$60 000. The 1.592 of course is an extraordinary amount but it is essentially business and election commitments put through that line item, effectively.

Mr GAFFNEY - I will preface this section acknowledging the excellent advice given to the Premier and Cabinet by staff. Given the decrease in their own strategic policy and advice of \$907 000 from last year's Budget noted as being due to the expiration of the fixed-term funding for the national broadband network and there are major shifts in the funding in the forward Estimates decreasing by \$178 000 in 2011-12, another \$492 000 in 2012-13 and then increasing by \$95 000, I have two questions. One, would you like to explain to the members the reasons for these changes and fluctuations in the forward Estimates? Secondly - this is a bit cheeky but nicely so, and your knowing staff will appreciate what I mean by this question - due to the future funding

decreases, will there be any significant associated decrease in the quality of advice and quality of strategies delivered? I suppose what I am asking is, because of the decrease in funding, how is that going to impact and what are the ramifications for this group over the next three or four years?

Mr BARTLETT - You've correctly identify it reflects the expiration of fixed-term funding relating to the establishment of a national broadband network. DPAC has been responsible for dealing with the Commonwealth in the development, the establishment of the MOU that has delivered the NBN arrangements that we have. That was a monumental task and that money comes off the Budget because that decreases down. The rest of the decrease in the annual appropriation effectively reflects the impact of the Government's budget management strategies. That is, we are asking agencies to do more with less. DPAC are doing their bit. Those budget management strategies of course came out of the global financial crisis last year. Revenues are improving, there is no doubt about that. Essentially what you see here is a reflection of that. I do not know whether Jeff wants to add anything specific to that about that variation?

Mr REEVE - Not really. In a general sense, what is happening with the forward Estimates is the application of the budget management strategies. What we are seeing there is the impact in that output in that 2013-14 year. The budget management strategies are not applied, so it is going back up again in indexation and so forth.

1.3 Social inclusion -

Mrs TAYLOR - I noticed an advertisement in the last week or so for the food program. I would like to know about that.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, sure. This is a fantastic program that was identified out of the social inclusion strategy. Mel Gray, the Director of the Social Inclusion Unit is about to join me at the table.

CHAIR - Welcome, Mel.

Mr BARTLETT - Essentially, we have established, out of the original Social Inclusion strategy, a Food Security Council chaired by David Adams himself and we allocated \$1 million to the food security fund. The Council has two key roles, effectively of developing a food security strategy and secondly making recommendations about how we use the fund. You saw the first recommendation of that. The Council has people like David Adams, Roscoe Taylor, Director of Public Health, as chair and deputy chair, on it.

The \$500 000 will be available in stage one. Basically an invitation for organisations to put forward proposals to administer this funding was advertised in the regional newspapers. It will build on existing food and nutrition programs. Again, Moonah Primary School, which you all know well, has an outstanding kitchen garden program going on there. To build on that, to enable growth and sustainability in it, I want to relate it to some other programs coming out of Social Inclusion, say the Ravenswood Neighbourhood House, which would be able to, in this, get some money under the food security operation to, say, create a community garden. There is some money which they already have I believe out of the Cars for Communities Program, the Community Transport Trust, to ferry some of these goods or what have you around the neighbourhood and some money out of the no interest loans program announced yesterday, into which we are putting \$2 million out of the soon to be finalised community enterprise loan scheme

which could make that whole thing sustainable. So the community garden grows the vegies, volunteers and the ute that they get from community cars, delivers the vegies, perhaps they create a revenue stream through doing that to enhance it.

So it is all about building up communities through a series of these programs so that they can connect up together. I used the example yesterday - Mel looked horrified when I did -

CHAIR - She is looking horrified again.

Mr BARTLETT - One of the examples I have seen of this in the US is Hunters for the Hungry. This coalition, interestingly enough, includes a particular denominational church, the National Rifle Association and local hunters who often go out to shoot deer and leave the venison to rot or bury it. Through distribution networks that they have created, this food is now butchered and provided for disadvantaged people. There are coalitions like that which I believe will form - well, maybe not quite like that one - but I think it is quite appropriate in Tasmania.

Ms GRAY - I mentioned it to the commissioner and he was not horrified at all.

Mr BARTLETT - Oh, good. Well, I think it is quite appropriate in Tasmania because there is a lot of game that is left on the side of the road - well, not left on the side of the road but buried in Tasmania.

The reason I am using this example is that I think it is an extraordinary coalition that comes together to provide a product that is otherwise going to waste, in that case for people in disadvantage. That is exactly what these grants are about.

Mrs TAYLOR - Just following up from that though, it is fantastic and I have no argument with the program or the funding for it at all, however, there are already numerous little efforts around the State, as you say. There are community gardens being built in lots of places, often with either local government funding or national or Federal funding or whatever and there already a lot of programs in schools. As you know, some are Education department and some are not; some are local. I am a bit concerned that they need to be coordinated. Is that part of the role?

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, the Food Security Council has an overall statewide role to -

Mrs TAYLOR - Bring those people in.

Mr BARTLETT - Well, to bring those people in but also to understand what is out there and what can be built on. Mel might want to talk a bit more about that process and also about the process for grants and so on; there are some information sessions coming up.

[12.00 p.m.]

Ms GRAY - Yes, it was advertised in the three regional newspapers. There is an information session on 8 July and Professor Adams will be at that information session. The Food Security Council and its support is a good example of joined-up government as well, because we have a joint secretary between the Social Inclusion Unit and the Community Nutrition Unit in the Department of Health and Human Services. At that information session Professor Adams will explain about the Council's idea of, rather than a small grants program, working towards strategic coalitions and partnerships with organisations working together and engaging the private sector as well to make existing initiatives more sustainable and connected, and working to scales and

scope. in Tasmania. They are some of the themes that were raised by Professor Adams in the Social Inclusion Strategy. So that will take place on 8 July; the RSVPs at the moment are being taken by the Social Inclusion Unit. We expect the information session is actually being videolinked to the north and the north-west as well so that it is in three locations statewide.

Mr BARTLETT - I would encourage members of parliament to get out to their community groups and promote that as well.

Mrs TAYLOR - Thank you, because I am thinking that an advertisement in the paper is not what those small community groups will see. So do you have a list of or are you searching out those groups that already are doing things?

Ms GRAY - We have sent an e-mail alerting our stakeholder list, which is quite extensive, of the fact that the information session is available, and I know that Professor Adams and the neighbourhood houses and the various organisations like Anglicare and Centacare and Colony 47 are promoting it through their networks as well.

Mr FINCH - Premier, I am interested in that name, the Food Security Council. It sounds like a division of AQIS. What does the name represent when you talk about the Food Security Council?

Mr BARTLETT - In my language I would describe it as this, that Tasmania is a place of abundance. We should be able to feed everybody in Tasmania but there are people still going hungry, particularly those in disadvantaged communities. They are not only going hungry necessarily but going without the right nutritional levels, particularly in their earliest years. So it is about providing security of access to nutritional foods.

Mr FINCH - I am just interested in the word 'security' being used in there. I could not get a reflection of what you are trying to achieve or what it represents with the use of those words.

Mr BARTLETT - I take that on board. I am not sure it is the right word either necessarily, but it is the word. It came out of the Social Inclusion Commissioner's report.

Mr DEAN - It is a good initiative.

Mrs TAYLOR - I am sorry, I just forgot to ask. You mentioned the significant amount of money this year, which is terrific, but is this going to be recurrent funding, or are you hoping that they will become sustainable because I think -

Mr BARTLETT - We do want to create sustainable food distribution systems. We do want to build on both volunteer services and so on, but all of this at the moment is in its infancy, but if you look at the Cars for Communities project in terms of sustainability - again I told this story yesterday - the Goodwood Community House together with Chigwell and West Moonah, I think, got in together and got a brand new \$35 000 bus. Now their sustainability model is that they are using it for adult literacy programs; they use it for a lot of things between the three houses but their sustainability model is that they have that bus available for hire on the weekends by community groups and the money that comes back in from, say, the African community who take it down to Nubeena on a Sunday or what-have-you, actually pays for the petrol for the community houses to use it for their purposes. A very sustainable model. The only thing missing is the capital cost and that is what we are providing, and we intend to continue providing that capital

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cost for as long as I am here, anyway, and ditto with the security. It will be on a needs basis. Because we do not have the data on this -I will talk about the cars again - we topped up that budget, which was originally half a million dollars. We had some 47 or so applications received in round 1 when we had half a million dollars. So the first 11 cars or buses or whatever were delivered. Then we provided some extra money for six extras, so we have delivered 18 out of the first 47 applications. There is clearly still a massive need there, so we are going to continue to keep funding it.

The various sustainability models are really interesting. If you look at the Fingal Valley, one that went to the Fingal Valley Neighbourhood House, I think there is a service station in Avoca or something or other that does all the maintenance work on the bus for them and is committed to doing that for the life of the bus so they are getting that for free. There are other volunteers that use it. They are ferrying people to everything from hospital appointments to court appointments in Launceston when they need to go.

CHAIR - To social events, which is really important.

Mr BARTLETT - That is right. The school at Avoca and Fingal, well those kids probably have never been out of the valley in many occasions and certainly not for excursions into Launceston and what have you so the school will have access to it, any house will have access to it, the bowls club might have access to it. It is all of those sorts of things.

Mrs TAYLOR - It is a fantastic program but as you say sustainability is the issue.

Mr BARTLETT - That is right. Mel might like to comment on this because they are the two stories I know well and I know the Derwent Valley one well with the Salvation Army. They are all coming up with ways to make these things sustainable, it appears, in different ways. Some of them might charge 20 cents or 50 cents or something like that, who knows?

Mrs TAYLOR - That is in terms of maintenance rather than replacement?

Mr BARTLETT - That is right. That is what I am saying. Through our social inclusion consultation that Mel led around the state, transport was absolutely the top of the list in terms of a social exclusion factor and really what these organisations were telling us was that we can do innovative things with volunteer spirit and with sustainability models but we do not have \$35 000 to buy the bus in the first place. So really all we are providing is the capital and the solutions are coming from the community.

CHAIR - The Dorset Rover in Scottsdale actually has 14 volunteers on its books to drive the bus.

Mr BARTLETT - There you go.

CHAIR - There is not a day when I do not see it driving around, so they are very very much appreciated. I know that is not a question, Premier, it is a statement. I invite my members not to make statements and I do it myself.

Mr BARTLETT - The reason this Estimates session is so useful is that we can talk about this stuff. These are great programs and I encourage all members to get out to their organisations they have linkages with to promote them. Mel's group does a lot of good work helping

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community organisations write their own applications. It is not a complex application process at all. We have really worked on making it as non-arduous as possible and Mel's group supports people through the process as well.

Mr DEAN - Just on that, with the vehicle provided, it is up to those committees or the groups involved in these gardens and what have you - do they have report back to the Government, back to you annually or periodically on what is happening?

Mr BARTLETT - What they are doing with it? Again, a non-arduous sort of reporting mechanism and they are all very different vehicles. There have been utes, Honda Accords, buses.

Mr DEAN - I do not know whether you mentioned it in your opening, Premier. What is the staffing level of the Social Inclusion Unit?

Mr BARTLETT - I can tell you that exactly - I think it is eight, is it? 7.4.

Mr DEAN - That is 7.4 FTEs. Do we have any in the north-west and the north of the State?

Mr BARTLETT - The unit itself is effectively a policy unit but we are investing in social inclusion liaison officers and also, for example, child and family centre coordinators in this budget will receive \$3 million and their work is social inclusion. They will be spread out all over the State. The policy unit is Mel's unit. Effectively, it is the policy, grants and programs rollout unit.

Ultimately, the delivery of social inclusion will be through social inclusion community liaison officers - we will be employing 11 of those. Some will work in the new child and family centres and we have \$3 million in the budget for child and family centre coordinators as well. These are the people who are really genuinely the outreach. They are out there delivering these programs, out there knocking on doors and getting young families into the child and family centres.

There is LINCNS, of course, the Learning and Information Network Centres - they also have people working in them.

Mr DEAN - When is it hoped that that will be finalised, that those people will be in situ and operating? Obviously we ought to know about that because it will be a close contact for us as members.

Ms GRAY - They are actually working now with the local enabling groups which is a really interesting government structure that sits underneath the children and family centres. It comprises members from the local community, parents and the local council. So the social inclusion liaison officers at the moment support the work of the local enabling group. They are in communities in Beaconsfield, Burnie, Chigwell, Clarence Plains, East Devonport, George Town, New Norfolk, Queenstown, St Helens and Ravenswood. There is also a Huon Valley social inclusion community liaison officer working with the Commonwealth-funded Geeveston child and family centre project and the names of those liaison officers are actually on the Child and Family Centre website.

CHAIR - If that is all the questions there, we will move on to output group 2.

**Output group 2
Government processes and services**

2.1 Management of executive government processes -

CHAIR - We welcome back Mr Edwards and the management of Executive Government. For this particular line item I will ask Mrs Taylor to initiate the question.

Mrs TAYLOR - I have a number of questions and first of all - and members I am looking at table 2.6 on pages 10 and 11 which gives more detail than the one in 2.1 - I notice that this sub-output group covers both protocol and natural disasters. In relation to protocol issues, my first question is: could you outline the 15 groups that were managed as official visits as shown in that table?

Mr BARTLETT - The State has hosted nine visits this year so far. In 2007-08 and 2008-09 we do not have any information of the actual visits. For 2009, we have a target of 15 and I can tell you this year's and I can probably table later the previous two years but this year the State has hosted nine of the likely 15. Mr Antun Babic, Consul General of Croatia; His Excellency Ernesto De Leon, Ambassador of the Philippines; His Excellency Mr Jalil Abbas Jilani, High Commissioner of Pakistan; His Excellency Mr Primo Alui Joelianto, Ambassador of Indonesia and his entourage; His Excellency Mr Carlos Sanchez De Boado Y De La Valgoma, Ambassador of Spain; Her Excellency Mrs Sujatha Singh, High Commissioner of India; His Excellency Mr Jeffrey Bleich, the new Ambassador of the United States; His Excellency Dr Michael Witter, Ambassador of Germany; His Excellency Mr Michel Filhol, Ambassador of France. In addition to these official visits, assistance was given in organising several unofficial visits to the State. For example, I know the Secretary of Education in the US Arne Duncan made an unofficial visit and our protocol office would have done a fair amount of work -

CHAIR - Do you think you could table because I believe *Hansard* will never be able to -

Mr BARTLETT - My pronunciation was not good enough?

CHAIR - No, I compliment you on your pronunciation but I am conscious that they will not be able to manage the spelling of all those names.

Mr BARTLETT - That is fair.

Mrs TAYLOR - You are expecting more this year obviously - you have 15 in there.

Mr BARTLETT - It is again a little unpredictable. I know from speaking with the protocol office that ambassadors might give three days' or three years' or three months' notice in terms of when they might arrive on our doorstep and that is the challenge of the protocol office. But I am sure, as you would be aware, they do an outstanding job.

Mrs TAYLOR - Thank you. President Obama is not on that list?

Mr BARTLETT - No, not yet. We are working on it.

[12.15 p.m.]

Mrs TAYLOR - It appears from the newspapers that there has never been a Tasmanian Public Service medal awarded as part of the Australian honours. Maybe that is not true. But I understand that that is done following advice from the relevant State or Territory. My question to you is: do you nominate people for this award in the same way as it is done for the police medal and emergency services medal? If so, I am sure there are public servants who ought to be recognised in this way.

Mr FOULSTON - There is a public service medal available in Tasmania. It is fair to say that has not been well utilised in many of the previous years but we have reactivated it a bit in the last couple of years. There is actually a committee that can receive nominations and consider those and then we provide advice to the Commonwealth. So I think we wrote out, either early this year or late last year, to various people saying that this was back up and running and that nominations could be accepted. Writing to the Premier is a good way to get a nomination up and running.

Mrs TAYLOR - We have had and do have outstanding public servants who deserve to be recognised in this.

Mr BARTLETT - I would support that pitch from Philip.

CHAIR - Can you self-nominate?

Laughter.

Mr FOULSTON - Self-nominations, yes, but they do not go far.

Mrs TAYLOR - There is of course quite a process to go through before they are actually awarded it. It takes something like two years in most cases, I think.

CHAIR - That's plenty of time.

Mrs TAYLOR - My last question is in relation to dealing with potential disasters: I understand there is advice from the Mineral Resources Tasmania through DPAC that there is a significant risk of some rock fall disasters in Tasmania.

Mr BARTLETT - Bring up the pandemic man - the official in charge of disease, pestilence, famine, plague.

Laughter.

CHAIR - And the name, thank you?

Mr HEALEY - Mat Healey, Manager of the Office of Security and Emergency Management.

Mrs TAYLOR - Can you please advise on the current state of preparedness for the identified risks?

Mr HEALEY - For rockfalls?

Mrs TAYLOR - In particular, yes.

Mr HEALEY - There are probably two areas of activity in terms of rockfalls. One is that Minerals Resources Tasmania have done quite a bit of mapping around the State of general landslide risks. I know that they have recently been running workshops in the north-west to try to advise the council on what some of those risks are and how they could possibly manage them. We are also supporting them with some work on how they can start to embed those maps into some of the local planning arrangements so that councils are empowered with the tools to manage them as well as the understanding of those risks. There are some other risks, or potential risks, that were identified with slides of rocks and debris from Mount Wellington associated with very significant rainfall events. The Government has been working with the Glenorchy City Council, the Hobart City Council and Kingborough Council on working out how best to deal with those. I think it is fair to say that those sorts of debris-flow risks are a component of very significant flooding risks, on which there is some ongoing work being done with those councils. But the State Emergency Service or the Department of Police and Emergency Management have been taking on that sort of -

Mrs TAYLOR - So what is our state of preparedness?

Mr HEALEY - It is one of the risks that we factor in. I suspect there are probably some more significant hazards within the State that we manage. I think there is still a lot of work to be done on those two, particularly for Glenorchy and Hobart and for some of the residents who live in the upper reaches of some of those rivulets. That is some of our ongoing work. Is it the most urgent we are doing in terms of bushfires and floods? Perhaps not, but it is still an important piece of work that we need to keep an eye on.

Mrs TAYLOR - The risk is fairly low, I understand.

Mr HEALEY - The frequency is fairly low.

Mrs TAYLOR - Yes, the frequency.

Mr HEALEY - So the overall risk is one that cannot be ignored but it is not one that requires a big red button to be pressed and run out tomorrow to suddenly build dams on the mountain. But it is certainly one that needs to be taken seriously.

Mrs TAYLOR - I think 1872 was the last time it happened.

Laughter.

Mrs TAYLOR - And it was very significant.

Mr HEALEY - It was very significant.

Mrs TAYLOR - But we built a lot of houses and shopping centres, either way, in the meantime.

Mr HEALEY - That is right. So there was quite a lengthy consultancy that looked at some of those risks, particularly in Glenorchy, and the water boards and others are engaged in that issue as I have indicated.

CHAIR - Does your department look at erosion issues as well?

Mr HEALEY - Do you mean coastal erosion issues or general erosion?

CHAIR - Mainly coastal erosion.

Mr HEALEY - We are doing a lot of work with the Office of Climate Change at the moment on how to manage issues of coastal erosion and coastal inundation and those sorts of risk, particularly in the context of climate change.

CHAIR - Do you do any work with Crown Land?

Mr HEALEY - We have not done any work with Crown Land in the past.

CHAIR - I will give you my colleague's number to ring there because there is an opportunity.

Laughter.

Mr BARTLETT - Come to Estimates to pick up more work.

Mr HEALEY - People get surprised quite often, when talking about the Office of Security and Emergency Management, why are we doing so much work in the issue of climate change. But the issue of coastal hazards and how they will change over the next 50 to 70 years is an issue that we need to look at for the State, and we are doing a lot of work with councils and with the Office of Climate Change.

Mr DEAN - I am not too sure where this question is but the pandemic man might be able to answer this. The question comes from the Launceston City Council: 'Some local government bodies involved in the flu clinic operations last year have clearly articulated this model is not sustainable and requires too high a level of commitment from council staff. This puts in jeopardy the council's capacity to respond to community recovery needs being the primary function of local government in any incident of this nature'. Would we be likely to see changes in the way these clinics are set up? Say, for instance, there was another flu pandemic this year, how will it be structured this year? Will it be changed or will local government be relied on again to do this? It is clearly above their capacity to do so and carry out their other functions.

Mr HEALEY - Firstly, a lot of the details are probably with the Director of Public Health and they are currently running a review, but certainly in general terms I can reflect on the fact that a lot of the arrangements for the last pandemic were put in place for a very severe pandemic that had much more significant consequences for the community. I suspect that implementing those sort of measures in that sort of environment would have been easier but certainly the reallocation of resources from some other areas would have assisted. The pandemic that we saw certainly demonstrated to us that we need a much more flexible model that allows us to implement appropriate arrangements having regard to the nature of the disease. So we certainly learnt a lot. We have listened to the views of councils and the impost that it places on them to set up those sort of models - and indeed on the medical professionals who have to support those. You will see from here a much more flexible model that looks at those figures, hospitals, GPs and dedicated clinics such as those that were contemplated in the last pandemic.

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Mr WING - In Launceston we have had a major flood more recently than Glenorchy, and that was in 1929.

Laughter.

CHAIR - Can anybody top that?

Mr WING - In the 77 years prior to that we had three major floods and in the 81 years since we have not had any, so we are living on borrowed time. I want to ask whether, in your position, you consider that the buildup of silt in the upper reaches of the Tamar River would aggravate the effects of any major flood of 1929 proportions that might occur. As there would be less room in the river to accommodate the flood waters, do you consider that that would make any major flood and its consequence more serious and wide-ranging?

Mr HEALEY - It is quite a specific question and unfortunately I do not have the detailed knowledge of the model of water flow through the Esk and into the Tamar to support a detailed answer to that. I suppose all I can add is that certainly the structure of the river bed and the arrangements for silting should be considered as part of the broader approach to flooding in Launceston. Whether it adds significantly to the risk of flooding, I cannot answer that question.

Mr WING - Have you had the opportunity to view the upper reaches of the Tamar at low tide?

Mr HEALEY - I have not personally, no.

Mr WING - It will illuminate you if have that opportunity.

Mr WING - While I am saying this, I must pay tribute to the Premier for his personal role in providing the funding for the flood levees, and we hope that the Commonwealth will match that. And then, having dealt with that one, we hope there will be some attention to the silt.

Mr BARTLETT - I received your letter, Mr Wing, and I can inform you that we will be holding a cabinet meeting in Launceston within the next two to three months, and that will be an opportunity for us to talk further about that.

Mr WING - Excellent, thank you very much. That is really welcome.

2.2 Principal and subordinate legislation -

CHAIR - Premier, you have indicated that there is \$300 000 additional in the Budget to support the OPC office. How many FTEs does that bring to that very integral part of the parliamentary process?

Mr BARTLETT - It allows us to pump funding, if you like. It takes years to train a parliamentary drafter. The head of the Office of Parliamentary Counsel in Cabinet's briefing essentially said that if you get a new drafter in it will take five years before they are at a space where they can do a bill, or a complex bill, all by themselves. I think we recruited an extra person to the OPC last year, and this allows us to keep that person on while people return from long service leave and maternity leave.

CHAIR - Can we have the total numbers while we are here?

Mr BARTLETT - It is essentially 14.3 FTEs in this year. That is down from 15.1 last year, but essentially that is a maternity leave event, I understand, and this will allow us, I think, to smooth out that curve and to start training some new Parliamentary Counsel.

CHAIR - Obviously it is a very specialised field. Would there be any liaison with the university in relation to the sort of expertise you need? Has that been followed through in any way?

Mr EDWARDS - Not that I am aware of, but the training required is on the job, so it is almost like an apprenticeship. You need to come in under the wings of an experienced drafter and learn the craft, and so it is not really amenable to a tuition-type model at a university, and the university themselves would not have any people experienced in drafting. So you need a basic law graduate and then you need to shape them into becoming a drafter.

CHAIR - Is there any opportunity, though, to provide some sort of pathway for a university law graduate who has an interest?

Mr EDWARDS - They usually recruit graduates or people with some early experience in law firms, so we have a number of young drafters and, as the Premier said, it takes that four or five-year extended apprenticeship before you are able to do complex drafting tasks. That is the model, and so one of the things we need to keep an eye on in OPC is, as some of our senior drafters are ageing and over the next five to 10 years thinking about retirement, making sure that we are bringing people through that have the skills to be able to take over at the complex end of the drafting.

CHAIR - Is there some sort of figure for the retention rate for -

Mr BARTLETT - I do not think there would be much turnover in the OPC, would there?

Mr FOULSTON - We lost one this year, but we gained one. We gained a senior drafter, which is most unusual, because we do not really offer the salaries that are attractive to drafters in other States so we were lucky to get one person.

CHAIR - So we have offered a lifestyle instead of a big salary package.

Talking about the pressures on the OPC, with the recent and sudden decision to ban dry sow stalls, will this place additional extra pressure on the OPC?

Mr BARTLETT - I would have thought that is a very simple legislative change, if at all. It might be a regulatory change.

CHAIR - It is a regulatory change so therefore it is going to be -

Mr BARTLETT - Insignificant compared with the drafting of the new mental health act, for example, or a new child protection act or a new Aboriginal heritage act. Very simple.

[12.30 p.m.]

Mr WING - Will there be an Aboriginal Heritage Act draft available soon?

Mr BARTLETT - I believe so.

CHAIR - It has been in the making for my six years here.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes. The Minister, Nick McKim, has Heritage now.

CHAIR - I think it has had six ministers as well, Premier.

Mr BARTLETT - No, sorry, it is David O'Byrne.

CHAIR - I am glad you get confused.

Mr WING - So, there was a report done by former head of Parks and Recreation, Scott Gadd. He is no longer with the Government. Is that available publicly?

Mr BARTLETT - I am not sure, to be honest. I would not want to mislead the committee but I do not have any information available. I am happy to get it for you or I'm happy to refer you to David O'Byrne. I know it is high on his agenda because it has been handballed around for a long while. It is very high on his agenda; he has talked about it at Cabinet but I am not up to date.

Mr WING - I will take it up with him because we are meeting with him on Thursday.

CHAIR - Premier, that brings me to a very significant bill and that is the drafting of the euthanasia bill. It is my understanding that it is a private member's bill so do all MPs have the same access and support to Parliamentary Counsel if they were looking to bring in such a private member's bill?

Mr BARTLETT - I have not spoken to the Attorney-General about whether she intends to use the OPC for the drafting of this bill. The Attorney-General has access to a range of resources and certainly in the past, former Attorneys-General have used those resources in the development of important legislation that has been brought in by a private member. All I could really say to this is I have not discussed it in detail with the Deputy Premier, the Attorney-General, so I do not know whether she plans on using OPC resources. However, the resources available to the Attorney-General are exactly that; the resources available to her and she will use them in ways she sees fit and no doubt, people have different views about whether that is fit or not but I support her in the use of her resources as she sees fit and no doubt she will make the argument for or against that as she goes forward.

CHAIR - And the same access for other members of parliament?

Mr BARTLETT - In Tasmania, members have not had free access, basically, to the -

CHAIR - There is a protest outside, Premier, but it obviously would not be to us.

Mr BARTLETT - What do they want? Is it cleaners? We fixed them the other day.

CHAIR - They obviously haven't been memoed about it.

Mr BARTLETT - No.

Mr DEAN - Looks like trouble. I think we should send the Premier downstairs.

Laughter.

Mr BARTLETT - I was distracted for a second there. Essentially, even if we said members would have access to the Office of Parliamentary Counsel, what you would find is that the prioritisation of government bills would be such that your work would never get done anyway because there is such a bottleneck in there, effectively.

CHAIR - That has been proven in the past.

Mr BARTLETT - We did discuss, yesterday, whether a resource could be made available to the Parliament for drafting for members. That might be something we have a look at but, again, it is about getting the right resource of someone who has the skills, knowledge and ability to do this. It is not as simple as just handing over \$100 000 to go and buy yourselves a resource. I am not sure that that is the easy answer.

Mr WING - I had one done late last year; a very small electoral one which you did not see because it did not get past our House.

Laughter.

Mr WING - But I appreciated the cooperation of the Parliamentary Counsel on that.

CHAIR - I know other members of parliament have taken their own initiative but have had little success so I was wondering if it might be something that you could put on your agenda to look at.

Mr BARTLETT - It is definitely on that and particularly, as I said yesterday, we talked a bit about whether a resource could be provided to the Parliament itself rather than through the department or what have you. I will have a look at it.

CHAIR - Given your strong support for technology, when will we see the *Government Gazette* online?

Mr FOULSTON - The *Government Gazette* is the subject of a three-year contract that we have at the moment with whatever the Printing Authority which became Print Applied Technology and that three-year contract was negotiated by Treasury before it was transferred to our department. That contract is coming up for renewal in December and we will go to tender again for the printing of the *Gazette* and one of the issues that we will seek to explore with tenderers is the printing of the *Gazette* online.

CHAIR - There is no opportunity to be able to have it -

Mr FOULSTON - There is no opportunity at the moment and what you will have to appreciate is that the charging for the *Gazette* is obviously a revenue stream for the people who do the printing so they are just not going to accept it automatically but we are certainly going to ask in our tender process for that to be an issue that is considered and quoted upon.

CHAIR - Is there any way of members of parliament being able to support the department, Premier, in their attempt to get it put it online? Can we supply some sort of input?

Mr FOULSTON - I think we know that this is what you want because it has been raised here for the last three years. We have taken it on board but we are locked into this contract at the moment with Print Applied Technology so now that contract is coming up for renewal we have taken that on board but certainly if you want to write and make your support again then that would be fine.

CHAIR - Members, any other questions in this particular area of principal and subordinate legislation?

Mrs TAYLOR - This might be more a suggestion than a question really. Is it likely to be a better indication of output of the Office of Parliamentary Counsel if the number of bills and regulations drafted were included in these figures? Not so much as a target but as indication of the enormous output of work that is done by the OPC. They do an enormous amount of work and even getting that performance indication, for instance, would be useful. The only thing we have under that is the number of hits per year on the Tasmanian Legislation website.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, that is a reasonable comment.

Mr EDWARDS - We do not have that information.

Mrs TAYLOR - As I say, not so much as a target but the fact of recognition of the work actually done and, secondly, it says '12 million hits'. Well, it says 'actual'. Really 12 million hits per year on the Tasmanian Legislation website is an extraordinary number, don't you think?

Mr BARTLETT - It would not surprise me because every lawyer in town and every lawyer across Tasmania would be using it, and public servants.

Mrs TAYLOR - And we see that the target is not going up so are we just expecting that to continue as more people come online and with NBN and broadband?

Mr EDWARDS - We have had a look at our performance information and, to be fair, some of it is actually activity. So does it make sense to have a target about the right level of access playing the website?

Mrs TAYLOR - No.

Mr EDWARDS - No, that is really reporting to you that this is the sort of answer it gets and, unfortunately, when we get these tables they are labelled targets but for us it is more just reporting of what we think. We do not have a target of, say, 15 million, because we are not sure that 15 million is better or worse. It is not one of those sorts of performance bits of information.

Mrs TAYLOR - I think it is an extraordinary figure and obviously a useful website or otherwise people would not be on there..

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Premier. I would suggest that we take a lunch break and we shall resume at two o'clock.

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Mr BARTLETT - I will look forward to seeing you then.

CHAIR - Yes. Thank you very much for the morning.

The committee suspended from 12.39 p.m. to 2.05 p.m.