

Tuesday 29 June 2010 - Estimates Committee B (Bartlett) - Part 2

[2.05 p.m.]

CHAIR - I have been forward looking here, Premier, and I think we are going to do this very nicely in a couple of hours this afternoon, hopefully.

2.3 Tasmanian government courier -

Mr WING - This time last year, Premier, we asked if you would help reinstate mobile phones for the couriers in Launceston. You did and we thank you for that.

Mr BARTLETT - You should probably thank somebody in my department.

Mr WING - I have no further questions because the system seems to be working very well.

CHAIR - I expect one of those mobile phones came from the Premier's department.

Laughter.

Mr DEAN - Premier, what is the courier staffing level in Hobart? I understand that there has been one recently made redundant, with a vehicle also being withdrawn. If my facts are right, my question is: have the services that were being performed by these couriers in the south been reduced in accordance with the loss of that one position and the vehicle?

Mr REEVE - There was one redundancy in the courier service in the south. The remaining couriers were consulted about that before the decision was made to make the position redundant and they agreed that by restructuring the vehicle run from three to two, they could accommodate that without any interruption to the level of services provided. That was done late last year and in fact they have been running quite smoothly.

Mr WING - I think it has improved.

Laughter.

Mr WING - We are getting the mail earlier here.

CHAIR - I do not think there is any more in that area so we will move on.

2.4 Corporate support to ministerial and parliamentary offices and the Office of the Governor -

Mr FINCH - Premier, the increase in this area has been explained. It is for consolidation of support of information technology services. You have talked quite a bit about the improvement to the systems through the Government and through our operations but can you just hone in on this one and tell me what has happened in this area?

Mr BARTLETT - Specifically, ministerial offices have previously been supported by their departments in terms of IT but what that has led to is a fragmentation of information across ministerial networks. I guess you have a choice to make here because you can either be integrated

with your department or you can be integrated across ministerial offices. With the \$8.87 million going into integrating departments together we are doing a more rapid project worth \$418 000 so that DPAC will now support all of the ministerial offices on one system. I think calendaring, e-mail, scheduling, to-do lists, work plans and all of those things integrated across ministerial offices that they have not been before.

Mr FINCH - Up until now they have all been using different systems or different operations?

Mr BARTLETT - There are something like 12 different e-mail systems in the Government at the moment. The projected \$8.87 million will consolidate all of those into one and this project will consolidate all the ministerial services of IT into one.

Output group 3

Electronic services for government agencies and the community

CHAIR - Welcome, Rebekah.

Ms BURTON - I am Rebekah Burton and I am Deputy Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Mrs TAYLOR - I do not know which of the sub output groups this question best relates to. It is probably across it. There has been a general movement within the State Government to standardise on financial software for accounting systems and HR software for human capital management. This is basically so as to be efficient and allow systems in different agencies to talk to each other and I guess it is partly what you have been talking about. It seems that there is no such pressure to have standardisation of the geographic information system - that is, the GIS.

Nearly every Tasmanian Government department is collecting digital geographic information but there are no directives that I am aware of to have a standard across the Government. I would like to see the State Government provide leadership and develop standards for use by State Government and all councils and the private sector in Tasmania with appropriate consultation. If it was done, I think we would save money and improve knowledge and avoid duplication. My question is, will you move to develop a set of information standards for use in all government agencies for GIS data and involve local government in that action?

Mr BARTLETT - The short answer is, yes. In fact, there was talk of investing that through this budget and we made a strategic decision not to because, as I said earlier, we want to walk before we can run here and make sure that we have some of the platform issues dealt with, but we have a pretty significant spatial information or GIS sort of data project that Rebekah will talk a bit more about, that we intend to fund in subsequent budgets.

The one example that I use is that when we were making policy decisions about where to place child and family centres, the GIS, or spatial information provided layers of data about levels of disadvantage, access to other services, community, et cetera. You can build up data and the decision becomes very clear as to where you should put these things if you want to have the maximum impact. That is the sort of operation we are looking at and Rebekah might like to expand a bit more on that.

Ms BURTON - Thanks, Premier. In fact, I showed the Premier the Glenorchy document that you would have seen.

Mrs TAYLOR - Yes, indeed, and we have found that we have developed that over the last three years or so and it is very successful. But we would like it to be integrated with everybody else. I am not saying that ours was necessarily the best.

Ms BURTON - In terms of the way ahead, it is a shame that Mat Healey, whom you met this morning, is not here because he is actually looking after the proposed project.

CHAIR - I think he is taking a call from Ms Forrest.

Laughter.

Ms BURTON - I will speak on his behalf. Effectively we have recognised the very issue that you raised, that we have some fantastic sunk investment in land information within government and it has been fragmented and hopefully the Premier will get a question about IT transformation.

It is exactly the same issue with that. There has been fragmentation across government and there is some capability in emergency management and capability in infrastructure and some capability in DPIPWE and this project proposes to do that as well as talking about standards to help improve the capability across government and involve local government. So, instead of no-one knowing where to go, there is a capability that we will use the list for those of you who are aware of that fantastic resource of land information and other information and build on that and provide services for climate change adaptation and a whole range of things.

I know that the Premier is a great supporter of spatial data and this has been kicking around for a while. I am glad that you have raised it because it puts in front of the Premier even more forcefully that this is the issue that we really need to look at next. We are proposing to put together a business case cooperating across all government agencies, security and emergency management, agriculture, primary industry, infrastructure. We aim to get a very robust business case which we can then put into the budget process for next year. Hopefully next year when I see you, we will be discussing exactly this.

Mrs TAYLOR - Fantastic. Thank you.

Mr FINCH - Premier, tell us about IT transformation.

Mr BARTLETT - I am going to pass the question to the Deputy Secretary.

Laughter.

Mr BARTLETT - I will give a bit of overview. As I have said before, the longer term aim in this term of government is to build a more and more flexible service online to Tasmanians. But before we do that we need to get our own house in order in terms of the platforms and the systems and the standards that we are using across government. Up until now, I have got to say that this has been a 15-year desire of mine, since I was 19 to build better standards, more centralisation across standards in Government and we have now got the opportunity to do it.

[2.15 p.m.]

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In this budget we are investing \$8.87 million to start that process; it is a down payment on that process. The first two key components of that will be the consolidation of all e-mail services - there are 12 different e-mail services across government at the moment - centrally provided into one with particularly the most important bit of that - identity management. That is, the Government will be able to identify a user and give you, from one source, access to all the systems you need in government. That will expand out to citizen identification, if you like, in that, just as you log into your bank account and do your banking details on the web, in the future you would be able to interact with Government. That is for your fishing licence, your driver's licence and what have you. That is where we are headed. These platforms that this investment will make will underpin that in the future. It will not deliver that in this Budget but it will deliver the foundation or the town planning and architecture, if you like, to build those sorts of systems on top. So of that \$8.87 million, about \$7 million will go into the identity management and e-mail services across government. It will also make savings in other agencies but with the capability increase and restructure of TMD, which is a division within DPAC that will run this, to support the delivery of this \$1.7 million going into building the capability of, essentially, the people in that branch to deliver this.

Ms BURTON - The Premier has covered most of the areas. TMD is the division of the department that I look after and not wanting you to think that the money is invested just for these two projects, there really is a whole suite of things. I already mentioned HR and finance, and there are issues around data storage. Many of you may not realise that within five years the Bulgarian tractor company phones that you all have hopefully in your offices will be gone. Spectrum is not being supported - the grey phones; if you have the large grey phones. Maybe Parliament does not have them. Twenty-two thousand public servants have these very bulky grey phones. They are almost wind-up ones but not. That system of voice communication will no longer be supported and we are looking at a voice strategy for government. That will mean horses for courses. Some will be VOIP phones, some will be mobile devices. There are a whole lot of areas where identity management and consolidation hopefully will deliver greater efficiency but also productivity because that is the issue now. People who work out and about - child protection officers, foresters, you name it - have different requirements. Instead of a one size fits all we are hoping to extract more benefit for the community out of government employees by providing people with the right technology instead of just, 'Here, have the phone on your desk', which does not help a policeman or a nurse but it may well be good for a policy officer. The investment in TMD will be to support projects along the lines of the e-mail consolidation and the identity management project, and we probably do not know what some of them will be yet.

CHAIR - Their applications are with the department, as we speak, about the modern technology. They are looking for grants, I would expect, aren't they?

Mr BARTLETT - Who is that?

CHAIR - The new advances - their applications are with the department, as we speak.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes.

CHAIR - Those young people working in their mother's spare bedroom developing what is going to be coming ahead.

Ms BURTON - Not even the ones that are so young either.

Mr FINCH - How much do you think we are going to get when we recycle these phones back to Bulgaria?

Laughter.

Ms BURTON - Don't they exchange corsets and brassieres?

Mr BARTLETT - That is it. I have lost control.

CHAIR - And I am in control, and I have lost control.

Laughter.

CHAIR - So obviously there will be a reduction in landlines, given that there will be so many more mobile services needed, and probably normal households are taking away some of their landline opportunities now and just having mobiles.

Ms BURTON - It is called convergence. The Premier knows his stuff well. Just to give you an example: in DPAC we probably have about 20 landlines, maybe a few more. So, Chair, with regard to your question, in Premier and Cabinet we have migrated to a VOIP system where you turn on your computer and you get the phone with it. Obviously you need to have redundancy and backup if there is a problem with an outage with your computer. But for us it has worked really well. Not every agency can do that but I think you are exactly right. There will be a significant reduction in landlines. Of the 22 000 landlines that we have now there will be a significantly smaller number. That means no monthly rental, reductions in costs, as long as the data costs are managed, and that is the other area that is going up in cost now.

CHAIR - Premier, you encouraged us to ask questions about the NBN rollout later on this morning, and I am hoping that this is the appropriate time.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, this would probably be the appropriate time.

CHAIR - Obviously it was a whole-of-government policy to take on the NBN rollout initiative. It has been suggested that it was government policy rather than an economic development focus to ensure the success of this project. Do you have a comment to make to that?

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, I will wind back the clock 10 years, and it is 10 years, when a number of us who are still hanging around here in different roles were talking about how we, after the disaggregation of Telstra and the deregulation of the telecommunications market, could have an economic impact on Tasmania through telecommunications. We recognised I think then - and this is literally 10 years ago - that while Telstra remained the monopoly provider in Tasmania we would never get the sort of competition and innovation and the sort of services and economic development that we wanted to see. Essentially anyone who came here to provide telecommunication services - you know, your local ISP that provides your Internet connection at home or whatever else services - ultimately when they needed to buy the wholesale, they could go to one place and that was Telstra, and Telstra said, 'This is the price, take it or leave it, that's that'. So we set about - and this was under David Crean as Treasurer at the time - starting to build optic fibre assets which essentially were seen as our competitive alternative to the Telstra offering, and over the course of 10 years we built TasGovNet, which is essentially constructed of optic fibres in the Basslink, optic fibres in the gas trenches, optic fibre assets that Aurora and Hydro already had,

some other interconnectors that went into the points of presence in various population centres. It was that asset then that in fact has delivered significant price drops for ISPs, because now when an Internet service provider comes to Tasmania they can go to Telstra and say, 'What price will you give me the wholesale network for?' and they can go to Aurora and say, 'What price will you give me it for?' We have seen in some instances certainly up to an 80 per cent decrease in prices to move data across Bass Strait simply because of that investment the Tasmanian Government has made over that 10-year period. When NBN came along we went, 'Fantastic'. We have an asset that we want to continue to build on, but we do not have the sort of money that you need to do it, so we were the only State Government that then applied through the NBN process. What we said was we have these great assets, we would be willing, in simplistic terms, to put these up if you were willing to come and provide the hundreds of millions of dollars required to finish the network, which is essentially what has now been committed to.

Now, is this project economic or financial? And they are slightly different things. It is a bit like asking the question is our road network economic or financial. Well, no, it does not give the Government a return on the investment as such. You invest a billion dollars in a road; in any other thing you would expect at least a 6 to 10 per cent return on the finances. The NBN may well provide that, but a road certainly does not unless you make it a toll road. It may not be financial, but is it economic? Of course it is economic because if you did not have roads you would not have an economy.

CHAIR - A bit like a CSO.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, that is right. That is a good example. My view though, now, is that Tasmania has this window of opportunity. We are rolling out the NBN very rapidly through TBNB Co, and I can tell you exactly where we are at. On 8 April last year, the then Prime Minister and I announced that Tasmania would be the first State to receive the NBN. We said that within five years of commencement the Tasmanian NBN rollout would provide five of the premise connections offering up to 200 000 homes, businesses and schools, so 200 000 premises in Tasmania. Since then we have built a new backbone fibre that has been laid from George Town through to Scottsdale and from Port Latta to Smithton. A fibre to the premises rollout has been completed to around 4 000 premises in the three first towns, that being Midway Point, Scottsdale and Smithton. That will be switched on next month.

A point of interconnection and network operation centre, the nerve centre for the Tasmanian network, has been opened at Cambridge. Australia's biggest ISPs or internet service providers have signed on as retail service providers and they are expected to announce pricing services for the first three towns which are expected to go live next month. Almost half of all these residents in those towns have signed up to take a fibre connection. This is in stark contrast to what some were saying, that it would be a 15 per cent uptake rate and all of those sorts of things. I am absolutely astounded that it is that high, but it is a good outcome.

Further detailed design work has already been begun on stage 2 which will include new backbone fibre along the east coast to Kingston to Westbury plus fibre to the premises footprints in seven additional towns - Sorell, Warrane, George Town, St Helens, Triabunna, Kingston Beach and South Hobart. Most importantly, the Commonwealth has established its commitment to an early large-scale build in Tasmania with basically the deposit of \$100 million into the funding for stage 3 which will cover 90 000 homes, schools, businesses and government premises in Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie. That is essentially where the rollout is going up to the minute

now. We are what could only be described as well and truly on target to meet that original five-year time line and I expect it will be delivered ahead of that.

CHAIR - Has the Government been doing anything to seek or secure anchor tenants to enable the sharing benefits and costs of what is going to obviously be an increased cost to consumers in the future if you do not have some figure players, if you like? Is that a fair assumption?

Mr BARTLETT - Government itself is an anchor tenant and we have our own telecommunications purchasing going out to market in the next two years so we would be looking obviously - and one of the reasons that spurred the initial work that I was talking about 10 years ago was that we always found that you would go to market with government telecommunications and the only people who could possibly respond to deliver it was Telstra so there was no competition, no sense that Telstra could deliver anything other than their price book price and that is essentially what we had to take. A lot of that stems from a desire for competition and all of this stems from those initial drivers, I suppose.

I think it goes to show that if you make strategic decisions at the right time - and I would argue that the strategic decisions that David Crean took to ensure that fibre was laid into gas trenches and across Bass Strait - it might not be immediately obvious why you are doing that at that point in time but in 10 years' time it all of a sudden becomes really obvious why you might have made those decisions.

CHAIR - I would suggest that he had good advice at that time.

Mr BARTLETT - I think probably someone else would have given him that advice other than me. The analogy I always use is this is as important to the next 50 years in Tasmania's economy as hydro-industrialisation was to the last 50 years. That may or may not be dead accurate, it is a metaphor, but I would always say this, that when we first started rolling out poles and wires for electricity, the take-up rate certainly was not 50 per cent so we are already in a place where people are starting to understand this, I think.

We are also investing \$1 million at the moment with the TFGA, the Tourism Council, the TCCI and the Small Business Council, effectively divided between those four bodies so that they can do some work to get their constituencies ready for this, to build capacity on farms or small business and in the tourism industry and to run some demonstration projects of what this might mean for the tourism industry or for the farming sector. All of those things are related, I suppose.

[2.30 p.m.]

CHAIR - Obviously the local government areas have been used widely in supporting getting people to understand what this will do for their own local households. Has that process worked well? I know that in Dorset, for instance, the council took a key role in coordinating and providing information to households who did not understand why they needed to connect.

Mr BARTLETT - As I say, the 50 per cent take-up rate is a great indicator, if you think about it. That is higher than the rate of household Internet connection in Tasmania as it stands. That is a pretty good indicator; it is not the end of the process but it is a good start.

Mr GAFFNEY - Yes, I have just a comment on that. It really helped when the staff vote presented a general meeting of LGAT and also at the conference where there are a lot more

elected members around the table. I think that was a really positive move and there was good feedback there.

Premier, you need to get ready for a couple of supplementary questions for this one from my colleagues, I would think, regarding development of Service Tasmania.

CHAIR - We will move to 3.2.

3.2 Management and ongoing development of Service Tasmania -

Mr GAFFNEY - I appreciate that you have already answered some of the questions in the overview. I have three questions. Do you want them one at a time or together?

Mr BARTLETT - Fire away, I am sure that Rebekah can handle them. Can I introduce Kathy Baker, who is the Manager of Service Tasmania's Business Unit. I am sure that she can answer all the questions with great detail and aplomb.

CHAIR - Welcome, Kathy.

Ms BAKER - Thank you.

Mr GAFFNEY - There is an increase of \$851 000 this year and there are also shifts in the funding in the forward Estimates - increasing by \$808 000 in 2011-12, decreasing by \$183 000 in 2012-13, and then decreasing again by \$495 000 in 2013-14. Firstly, what are the reasons for these changes? Secondly, given that there is a significant increase of \$851 000 in the level of funding allocated in the 2010-11 budget in comparison to the 2009-10 budget, where is the extra funding being allocated? Will there be any tangible impact on the reduction of queuing times in Service Tasmania? What evaluation processes will be in place to ascertain success or otherwise of that extra funding? Thirdly, what is the number of payment services that are provided?

Mrs TAYLOR - How about giving the girl a chance to answer.

Mr GAFFNEY - They did say all three. The number of payment services that are provided either over the phone or the Internet has increased by a few extra services a year - what is the master plan in regards to the availability of flexible payment options, and what is the general perception of the Tasmanian public of flexible payment options, and would this have an impact on queuing times in Service Tasmania?

Mr BARTLETT - You said three, that is 30!

Laughter.

Mr FINCH - Take it on notice.

Ms BURTON - Perhaps if we take your first question first and I will hand over to Kathy who ably answered questions in the other place.

CHAIR - Are these the same questions that were asked yesterday?

Ms BURTON - No, no, we always get a much better going over in this place.

Mr BARTLETT - High-quality questions.

Ms BURTON - There is a higher degree of interest. I will hand to Kathy to answer the budget question first.

Ms BAKER - I may need to come back to you on some of the others.

Ms BURTON - We workshop them.

Ms BAKER - Unfortunately it is the case that the forward years' allocation figures as they appear in the budget papers do not reflect the actual expenses that were anticipated by Service Tasmania in the future years. It is our position that Service Tasmania is a front-line service and is not going to be subjected to a reduction in funding in the coming years. We are working internally to resolve those numbers as they currently appear in the budget papers.

Ms BURTON - There is a mistake in the last two output -

CHAIR - The 11 and the -

Ms BURTON - There should not be a decrease, there is not a decrease and we are attempting to determine the accounting issue that has arisen that has affected 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Mr BARTLETT - I am sure in your Estimates with the Treasurer he would love to take that up.

CHAIR - Will we be expected to vote against the Budget in that respect?

Ms BURTON - No, we will have it resolved before then. What you can expect to see is a slight increase in those outputs.

Ms BAKER - Yes. On the contrary, we have actually received additional permanent funding for the Service Tasmania shops. That amount is \$425 000 per annum and that is recurrent funding. That is going to enable us to restore the staffing levels in the shop network to where they were prior to vacancy control freezes that we had in place within Service Tasmania.

Ms BURTON - The budget management strategy has had a significant impact and given the Premier's commitment to front-line services delivery, we were successful in obtaining that extra funding. That was after the budget management strategy's \$425 000 allowed us to restore service levels.

Ms BAKER - So there is no planned reduction for Service Tasmania in the future.

Mr GAFFNEY - Yes.

Ms BAKER - The second question was around the extra \$850 000. The majority of that funding is for the Service Tasmania shops, made up in part of the \$425 000 for the increase in funding which we have just mentioned, but in addition to that is indexation for State Service

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wages grants for staff employed by the shop networks, and that is the majority of that increase in funding.

Mr DEAN - I am not sure if you remember, but I did ask whether that means all current shops will be maintained?

Ms BAKER - Correct.

Mr DEAN - There are no additional ones?

Ms BAKER - There are no additional shops.

Mr DEAN - None in the northern suburbs or Launceston?

Ms BAKER - Not Launceston, no.

Ms BURTON - There is no funding for an additional Service Tasmania shop but, Mr Dean, we have taken to heart the many times this has been raised in this place, and we have in fact instituted some strategies in Launceston which we hope have addressed some of the concerns. Kathy, could you please go through these?

Ms BAKER - Yes, we have ceased the motor traders work which was being performed in the back office area of the Launceston shop, which has meant that those people that were working in the back office environment are now available to serve on the front counter, so there are additional staff to serve the public.

Mr FINCH - What do the motor traders do?

Ms BAKER - They have been shifted. They now have an online facility to be able to process the dealers' work themselves, so they are self-servicing online. We have created a new relief client service officer position in the northern region, which has reduced the need once again for the Launceston shop to provide relief staff out to the outlying locations, and we have also amended the hours for the staff that work at the Longford shop so that there is greater flexibility in the Longford staff and they can then provide staff to other locations, including Launceston in busy periods.

CHAIR - Has the Longford service been diminished then in any way?

Ms BAKER - No, because we are only really pulling people out of Longford when Longford is performing at a quiet time. They are not coming out of Longford during Longford's peak periods.

Mr DEAN - Chair, can I say it has worked because the queues are not as long as they used to be -

Mr BARTLETT - I am very pleased to hear that.

Mr DEAN - and we have not received complaints from customers now for a good 12 to 18 months. So it has worked, and well done.

Mr WING - I agree.

Ms BURTON - And just pre-empting, we probably need to get you to repeat the third, fourth and fifth questions.

Mr GAFFNEY - They are all about flexible payment options and how that would be received, and whether that would help the situation.

Ms BURTON - Just to step back a bit, as the Premier did - I feel like Methuselah looking back at these issues - Service Tasmania has been around for 10 years, and when we first started Service Tasmania I would have to say that some people - not me - anticipated that the shops would be shut at the end of 10 years. That is someone we know, Premier, who thought that would happen. We have been working on basically a channel shift strategy that whole time, so what we want to do is move transactions from the shops to the phone or the Internet. So far we have not been successful, and if we had a performance indicator, we probably should be getting a fail mark, because it has not happened, but there are good reasons that has not happened. As you would know, many people out in the community want that face-to-face contact. One of the reasons Service Tasmania has been so successful in the 27 shops is that the community like to see the shop, they like to go in, have a chat and get serviced in that way. And in fact we have tried on occasion to force change, and you would probably know that Glenorchy is a very busy shop. Launceston is busy, but so is Glenorchy.

Mrs TAYLOR - I was going to say, can I start now nagging you about the queues, but I haven't done that.

Ms BURTON - We did try to institute a change in Glenorchy because people in Glenorchy want to pay at the counter in cash, and we set up a little booth where people could pay on the phone. It just did not work.

Ms BAKER - Queue angels as well, that were escorting customers to the phone and touchscreens -

Ms BURTON - But the issue is, we have only been able to increase the proportion of transactions paid by phone and Internet to 40 per cent of the total, so of the almost 2 million transactions, only 40 per cent are paid electronically. We do have a long-term strategy moving towards that channel shift, but I think realistically it is a slow process. Although many of the announcements around telecommunications and around electronic systems will improve that, it has been a pretty slow process so far.

The Service Tasmania board is committed to that channel shift but we do not want to do it in a way that disenfranchises those members of the community who are not comfortable with ATMs, let alone accessing payment transactions over the home computer. If I could just put one more plug in that, there are some shops that as the transaction shift occurs would be under-utilised and that is we are looking at the notion of hubs and co-location with child and family centres.

Ms BURTON - In the Learning and Information Network Centres. Both at Queenstown and Georgetown the Service Tasmania shop in those locations will be relocating to be part of those community hubs and that will see our staff providing a range of services, not only on behalf of the Community Knowledge Networks but also on behalf of the Child and Family Centres.

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Technology is going to underpin that because we will need to be able to run things like booking services across the whole facility.

Mr FINCH - Is Beaconsfield going to be included in that?

Ms BAKER - No, the Beaconsfield Service Tasmania shop is staying in its current location.

Mr BARTLETT - But we are building a child and family centre at Beaconsfield.

Mr FINCH - Yes, it would be a good transfer.

Mr BARTLETT - The Child and Family Centre is on the school property there whereas the Service Tasmania shop is on the main drag.

CHAIR - Can I take it that most Service Tasmania shops that are co-located in local government council buildings will be staying because they would have a high volume of traffic already?

Ms BAKER - The only one that is possibly subject to relocation is the one at Dorset and that would be going into the Learning and Information Network Centre that is planned for that town.

CHAIR - You still have not found a location yet?

Mr BARTLETT - For Scottsdale, we are waiting for that.

CHAIR - I have a good location if you want to see me afterwards.

Laughter.

Mr FINCH - The rent is good. I reckon she will see to that.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Kathy, for coming to share that knowledge and handling all those questions from the member for Mersey.

3.3 Management of TASINET and Networking Tasmania -

Mr FINCH - Premier, householders are finding new ways to cut their communication costs such as Skype over the Internet instead of the normal telephone services. Will the rollout of the fibre-optic cable see a cut to TASINET costs?

Mr BARTLETT - I will hand over to Rebekah in a minute but I will say just this: I am confident that the rollout of the fibre-optic network will improve the level of bandwidth you get per dollar. Whether or not that reduces costs over time is a different question because, if you had asked that question 20 years ago when you reduced your telecommunications costs, you might have said yes, but since then telecommunications costs have gone through the roof because you are using much more of it.

Rebekah has already talked about VOIP - which stands for voice over Internet protocol and is effectively, like Skype, using the Internet to do voice and conferencing and we are certainly doing that - and she has probably outlined some of those sorts of things. Whether it reduces the overall

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cost to government, who knows? What I can guarantee, though, is that we will be getting more of it for the same cost.

Mr WING - Better value for money.

Mr BARTLETT - That is a better way of putting it, yes.

Ms BURTON - Just picking up on Mr Finch's question, I mentioned before that we have these 22 000 phones that need to be migrated to something else because these are going to be the support for the land lines. What you have identified, I guess, is the project: we have to determine what is the best way for government to get the most efficient use of its voice services, but now with convergence, data and voice come together - Skype is the classic example. That is your data service that provides a voice service, so in the future there will be a shift in the usage by public servants - which is effectively what Tasmania needs - and in the cost of phone and data, computers and phones.

[2.45 p.m.]

There will be shifts but just to reinforce the Premier's point, we have a data service contract with Telstra and the proportion of use that is expended on Internet, while the cost has gone down, the actual Internet access increases all the time. When I talk to my staff and they say that they have had to negotiate a bigger bandwidth. So that is really the answer: as soon as it becomes cheaper, people want more.

Mr FINCH - Because this is a big item in the Budget as we run to \$21 million and nearly \$22 million, I am wondering, Premier, whether we can get some detail of the mobile phones, and the 22 000 landlines you have mentioned - just a breakdown of that \$22 million so that for future reference we can see what changes might take place.

Mr BARTLETT - We might have to take it on notice.

Mr FINCH - That is fine. If we can get some clarity in respect of just the usage, the number of mobile phones?

Ms BURTON - Ten thousand mobile phones is the number and that has tripled probably in the last three or four years so that is just an indicator but we are happy to provide you with some further information, Mr Finch. I do not think there is any comparative data but we could give something that provides the 22 000 landlines by department and we could also give the number of mobile phones, the cost of mobile phone usage and also the data contract - data services, when you get on your computer and go on the Internet. The total cost of the data service for the Government is about \$13 million. We talk in big numbers here but it is now the bread and butter of everyone's daily life - if you take away e-mail, you cannot identify yourself on the computer system really and in most workplaces you cannot be productive.

Mr FINCH - Unless you have a notebook like the member for Launceston.

Mr WING - I left it in the drawer.

Laughter.

Mr FINCH - I think as we move into the future with these sort of line items in our budget Estimates it will be good for us to see just the changes that are being brought about by the NBN and the developments that are taking place. I am assuming that Networking Tasmania is your landlines -

Ms BURTON - It is basically data and voice for the Tasmanian Government. Once again, about 12 years ago we got all agencies to cooperate and we went out for one contract and we called it Networking Tasmania, so that is effectively the name of the Tasmanian government contract, which at the moment is with Telstra, Aurora and a small wireless company called BBW, and a panel contract, and that is what Networking Tasmania is, so it is the power of the Tasmanian Government contract's telecommunications.

Mr DEAN - On the conferencing facilities that we use on our phones, do we have a contract on that or is that a set thing or an hourly rate? How does that operate?

Ms BURTON - They are all so different.

Mr DEAN - Is it a cheaper system? We are told and people say that travelling is cheaper.

Ms BURTON - Just relating it to the system that we currently have in Premier and Cabinet, effectively it is like using your computer, you can videoconference just like when you make a phone call - it is effectively Skype - though it is not costless as Skype is; there is a cost. So it really depends on your telecommunications contract, who it is with and what equipment or application you are using. There is another mode of teleconferencing which, as a consequence of a COAG agreement, we have recently had installed in the Department of Premier and Cabinet for COAG-related teleconferencing and that is most definitely not costless.

Mr BARTLETT - I think we are paying \$300 000 in capital costs and \$59 000 a year for the usage.

Mr DEAN - You would know the system that we use from our offices, the old grey phone with a conference connection through it.

Ms BURTON - A telephone rather than -

Mr DEAN - Yes, just a telephone. I wanted details on the one you have covered and just on the ordinary telephone conference call as well. Is there a contract with that?

Ms BURTON - That would be just part of the Telstra contract so there would be a cost, presumably reasonably low. We have good contractual arrangements but for just phone contact it certainly would not be cheaper to travel, I would have thought.

Mr DEAN - Some of our phone connections are probably three, four hours and this is why - a full five hours in fact some of them.

Ms BURTON - But within Tasmania and within government?

Mr DEAN - Within Tasmania and probably from Launceston to here or the north-west coast.

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Ms BURTON - Certainly calls effectively are free if you are within government. That is part of the arrangement. Obviously to go out to the world it costs.

Mr DEAN - No, it is within government.

Ms BURTON - Telstra do a very good deal. It has to win-win for both parties but if you ring someone within government there is no charge but then there is the rental charge for the line.

Mr DEAN - That is provided you use a tie line, isn't it? You must use that to get the free call.

Ms BURTON - Yes, as long as you stay within the government net.

CHAIR - When you talk of government do you mean the Parliament as well?

Mr BARTLETT - Parliament and all agencies basically

Ms BURTON - Yes.

Mrs TAYLOR - Regarding the NBN, what percentage of Tasmanian households will not be able to be connected?

Mr BARTLETT - We reckon it is about 10 per cent, maybe 15 tops that are not included in that 200 000. The solution for them is wireless or satellite or what have you and that is part of the broader NBN rollout by the Federal Government.

CHAIR - Because of remoteness?

Mr BARTLETT - Yes. Largely it is just not cost effective.

CHAIR - My Gladstone people cannot expect to get -

Mr BARTLETT - Well, some people came from Tomahawk to see me at a community cabinet meeting saying, 'When do we get optic fibre?' And I looked on the map and thought, 'Well, maybe not'.

Mrs TAYLOR - Collinsvale is 10 minutes off the main highway and you will not drive it, one presumes.

Mr BARTLETT - I do not know about Collinsvale.

Mrs TAYLOR - You reckon?

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, you have a few up there. How many houses up there?

Mrs TAYLOR - Three hundred.

CHAIR - You have the member for Elwick, so that is a start.

Mrs TAYLOR - I do not think mine will get it. I am a little out of town.

3.4 Information systems management -

Mr DEAN - I think, Premier, you have pretty well covered this in your briefing this morning. Is there anything further to add to there? Have we covered it?

Mr BARTLETT - I think we have probably covered it. Essentially why this budget goes up significantly for the next two years is the addition of \$8.7 million prior to transformation and the building of the those platforms. I do not know. Rebekah might be able to add something to it. But essentially I think we have probably covered it.

Mr DEAN - I am happy with the briefing.

Output group 4 State Service management

4.1 State Service employment and management -

Mr BARTLETT - I will ask Frank to give his name, rank and serial number.

CHAIR - Welcome to the table, Frank.

Mr OGLE - Thank you very much.

CHAIR - I am happy to lead off here then. I notice that there is an increase of about \$500 000 on this line item. Can you give us an explanation of the requirement for that increase?

Mr BARTLETT - I mentioned in my introduction programs that end up in this line item. The first is Tasmania's partnership in the Australian and New Zealand School of Government consortium which is essentially a skills consortium for senior public servants. It gives us access to a whole range of development opportunities for our senior people. The other one is the implementation of a graduate program for people with disabilities to be administered by the public sector management office, giving people with disabilities opportunities to work within the public sector.

CHAIR - Premier, are these both new programs?

Mr BARTLETT - They are both new programs.

CHAIR - So there is no benchmark at this point in time for them?

Mr BARTLETT - No, not for those two.

CHAIR - Do you see that these will be ongoing programs or are they pilot programs?

Mr BARTLETT - Both of them, I think, are ones that will prove valuable to the Government and I suspect that they will be invested in for years to come. Essentially ANZSOG, which is the Australia and New Zealand School of Government, offers a range of senior executive development programs and fellowships, including the Executive Fellows Program and the Executive Master of Public Administration program. By being a partner in the consortium

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Tasmanian public sector senior executives are provided with the opportunities to enhance their public administration policy and management skills. The graduate program for people with disabilities, which I am sure everyone would support, has an annual allocation of \$59 000, as an election commitment from us, to implement a graduate program for people with disabilities. The focus will be on using these funds to develop a program that is sustainable, promotes employment in the Tasmanian State sector and ensures that opportunities occur.

CHAIR - How will the relevant persons be able to access, in particular those two, programs? How will this initiative be put out to the public or to the people who are eligible?

Mr OGLE - It is a matter of circulation of the different programs across agencies. The heads of each of those agencies will identify and recommend people who fit the criteria, basically around executive leadership. Members proposed a selection assessment committee chaired by the secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and it is our intention to put two heads of agencies on that committee to select people across government. It is an objective process to identify talent and put them through very high-quality leadership development - through the Executive Masters, that is a two-year program, the Executive Fellows is a three-week program, Towards Strategic Leadership is two five-day programs which are very credible programs in executive leadership.

CHAIR - Are these qualifications recognised across the nation?

Mr OGLE - They are not in the sense of a degree qualification but in the sense that ANZSOC is very highly regarded and every State contributes to ANZSOC programs. They have a very high credibility in terms of their content. The sort of speakers and lecturers at those programs are world-renowned leaders. ANZSOG is headed by university professors and that sort of person. It is a pretty high-powered sort of program.

CHAIR - In relation to the graduate program for people with disabilities, are those people already within the system or are we looking at new people?

Mr BARTLETT - They are new people to come into the system.

CHAIR - How do they get that information? Do they just apply for a job and are identified?

Mr OGLE - To be honest, we have not worked out how we are going to best utilise -

Mr BARTLETT - This money is to develop the program.

CHAIR - Okay, so that will be worked with the \$59 000 that will be used to develop the program.

Mr OGLE - We will be working with the stakeholders who work with those people to best work out how to both encourage agencies to attract those people and also to work with those different organisations who are quite frankly better-equipped to know how to go about this sort of process than we are.

Mr BARTLETT - I understand that Mat Healey, who is our famine, pestilence and plague man, is already doing the Master of Public Administration through ANZSOG.

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CHAIR - The very busy Mat Healey.

Mr BARTLETT - He has two young children as well, I don't know how he does it.

Mr FINCH - Could I ask for some detail, please, Premier? Is the \$59 000 per annum the total amount in the program or is that what goes to the person who takes on this?

Mr BARTLETT - No, no, it is not. That money is for program development and administration as is my understanding, not for salaries of people who would be employed under the program. We are hoping to employ many people under the program.

Mr FINCH - What is the separation of the allocation here in respect of the budget of \$3 million, is half of that going into that program?

Mr BARTLETT - No, \$59 000 only. People who are employed under this program might be employed in the Department of Health or Department of Education or the Department of Premier and Cabinet, who will pay their salaries.

Mr FINCH - Already?

Mr BARTLETT - No, we will recruit them, and their salaries would be paid by those departments.

Mr FINCH - Right, okay. Thanks very much.

Mr DEAN - I just want to raise the question that has been raised previously about the smoking cessation programs that might be in place within the public service. Do we have any, and if we do, are they working?

Mr OGLE - I think it is fair to say, you might remember, that under some awards and some instructions four or five years ago, there were directions about non-smoking offices, so that is complied with. We recently, as part of our health and wellbeing program, did surveys and got replies from some 7 000 State servants and I think, compared with the national benchmark, and compared with the community benchmark we are doing all right in terms of smoking of our employees, but it is still an issue. Interestingly enough, the Department of Health have now applied for a grant from our health and wellbeing program to develop a program for their hospitals in terms of quitting smoking. Issues around hospitals are not so much the smoking in the actual work place but people who step outside to smoke, so this about addressing the issue about getting people to quit and, as I have said, the Department of Health have asked for a grant from our health and wellbeing budget to, if you like, pilot a program and if that is successful under our evaluation, we will push that through any agencies that want to take it up.

Mr DEAN - Right. My next question is about the people who are continually taking their smokos, and there is a current complaint being managed that involves a person within Health - you would be aware of the one though I do not want to identify that person too far - who has the keys into an area that contains drugs, and when they are away from that office on their smokos, which according to the complainant is quite a regular thing, there is no access to that area, and that is causing problems within the system. So how do we get around this? Obviously that is a workplace problem, and they need to sort it out, but I was just wondering what -

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Mr OGLE - I must admit I do not have any ready answers to that, other than that the manager should manage that situation.

Mr DEAN - I will have a talk to you later about that.

Mr OGLE - If you like to give me some details I can take it up with Health, and I am sure they would address it.

Mr DEAN - The other question is, how many staff did we lose or were relieved in the public service as a result of the Budget of last year, right across the whole area?

Mr BARTLETT - I can only speak for the Department of Premier and Cabinet in this, and the rest of the information would be contained in the Estimates of other ministers. Other departments have taken different approaches. We have lost 28 staff in the Department of Premier and Cabinet through that process. Other agencies will have other numbers, the key here is also the net number because, as you will recall, that is the gross number where we were looking for savings from all agencies, and that occurred. I will give Parks as an example, where some 20 staff departed, but in the end as revenues improved we put that money back into 30 new park rangers. In Police, 30 new police officers are another example. And so the net change in overall staff numbers across the public sector will not be great, but the change in terms of reduction in the front-line versus non-front-line staff, the ratios there will have changed.

Mr DEAN - It is the right change.

Mr BARTLETT - Yes, and in Education, for example, over the four years that I was minister, and particularly in the last one, we reduced out-of-school costs by some 32 per cent, taking the out-of-school cost per student in Tasmania from the second highest in the nation - \$932 per student - to about \$630 per student, the second lowest in the nation. Those are the sort of changes, but it does not mean we have fewer people in the department overall because now all of that money that was saved has gone in through the school gate and no doubt schools are employing more people. which they should be.

Mr OGLE - If I might add another consideration - in a department like Health they get Commonwealth funding and you will see a net increase in Health of the order of 300. Just to give you an indication, that has gone to nearly 70 at allied health professionals, a few extra radiation therapists - they are hard go come by. Another 140 nurses, another 100 medical practitioners so it has sort of been a redirection so Commonwealth funding is fairly tight in directing it to the service delivery end.

Mr DEAN - Can we cover the area then in the State Service of accrued leave, long service leave and so on across the organisation? Where are we with that? Are we on top of that program that was to reduce that to bring it all back into an acceptable level or is heaps of money involved in that process still owing?

Mr OGLE - The answer is yes and no, I suppose. The answer is yes, there is still -

Mr BARTLETT - Good answer, I think, Frank.

Mr DEAN - I thought it was a very good political answer that.

Mr BARTLETT - He has done well.

Mr OGLE - The answer is I have not got the answers for every department. Yes, there is still a liability issue. As part of our people directions we have recently gone into partnership with Tourism Australia to put forward I think it is called No Leave, No Life.

Mr BARTLETT - I know that feeling.

Laughter.

Mr OGLE - That has been a program put together by Tourism Australia to promote and stimulate the tourism industry in Australia but it has also been focused on giving people the tools to plan their leave, to look at when they are off who is going to do their job, giving tools to their managers in terms of management but also getting people to really get in their heads that they should take four weeks' annual leave every year. We are finding that that is having a positive impact. I do not have the details because we only introduced that this year.

Mr DEAN - Could we get that information and also to cover sick leave? It was an issue at one stage, and also can we cover workers compensation? The other question was about bullying in the workplace as far as the State Service is concerned. Where are we with that? Are there any cases of that? Are we on top of that now? Are we moving in the right direction?

Mr OGLE - We do not keep statistics on bullying. As part of our training consortium we run regular programs around management and one of those is a Stop Bullying program that is targeted at managers. Some years ago there was an instruction from the then Secretary of the Department of Premier of Cabinet that said 'thou shalt go' and it has been a rolling out program. In terms of the number of cases you would have to ask every agency.

Mr DEAN - Wouldn't it be good to know exactly how many cases of bullying there are within the public service in the State from one central position rather than having to separately go to each department to find out just what is going on? Wouldn't that be helpful? Couldn't that be done?

CHAIR - It might be a question for the Premier.

Mr DEAN - Well, I am asking it of the Premier. I am looking at the Premier.

Mr BARTLETT - I don't want to contradict Frank but I am not sure how to define it in a way. People take stress leave, people will also take some sort of action through a grievance process against others in the workplace. I don't know how you capture which of those is bullying and which is not and so on but I am certain we would be able to have aggregated up the number of grievance procedures, the number that were settled in different ways, the number of stress leave days. Those sorts of things would be aggregated up. Whether you could attribute those to particular causes or otherwise and justify that, just because someone says they are being bullied does not necessarily mean they are, or whatever the case may be.

Mr OGLE - In addition, the State Service Commissioner does employer and employee surveys in which the State Service Commissioner does target those sorts of things if he or she sees fit. Occasionally those sorts of things will be his focus. That comes out in that sort of survey from an employer, mainly focused on whether you are doing the training and developing the

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people. If it is an employee-related survey it is whether you have been discriminated against or feel that bullying has occurred. It is an issue.

Mr DEAN - Could some of those figures be provided?

Mr OGLE - I am not sure I can get them quickly.

Mr DEAN - No. As you are able to and if it is available.

Mrs TAYLOR - Wouldn't those complaints about bullying be made to the commissioner? Could you not at least find out how many complaints about bullying were made to the commissioner?

Mr OGLE - Not necessarily to the commissioner.

Mr BARTLETT - That would be a higher-level process, wouldn't it?

Mr OGLE - Our focus would be for those sorts of complaints to be handled at the lowest level they can be resolved. We have grievance procedures that are in awards. We have grievance procedures as part of our ministerial directions. But our focus would be trying to get those things resolved then. Quite frankly, by the time they reach someone like the State Service Commissioner they are into the code of conduct and fairly serious issues. We do leave it to agencies to manage those sorts of practices.

Mrs TAYLOR - If I could just go back to 4.1, which we did get into.

CHAIR - That is where we are. We have not moved on to 4.2.

Mrs TAYLOR - We did get into bullying.

CHAIR - By cross-reference but, no, we are still on 4.1.

Mrs TAYLOR - Again, this has been raised already, but just for confirmation for me, because I am a bit staggered by it, I think last year government identified that there were going to be 800 fewer officers needed to meet the salary financial package's targets last year.

Mr BARTLETT - No, that is not strictly true.

Mrs TAYLOR - That is not correct?

Mr BARTLETT - No. What we said at the time was that 800 was never a target. It was an indicative number that, if revenues did not improve that is where we would be headed over the forward Estimates effectively, over the course of a couple of years at least. You can see from DPAC's point of view - and I can speak for DPAC - 28 staff. We have gone from 322 to 294 FTEs effectively. But, as revenues improved we would no longer require the vacancy control measures. We ceased the voluntary separation measures and so on. I suspect all agencies have had a similar sort of result. It will not add up to 800, there is no doubt about it. While it might add up to a few hundred, when you take the net loss, because as revenues improved we invested in new park rangers, new police officers et cetera, the net of that will not be anywhere near that.

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Mrs TAYLOR - So you would not like to take a stab at what the net actually is at this point, compared with last year?

Mr BARTLETT - No, I do not know that off the top of my head.

CHAIR - You would have to gather all the Estimates and put all the numbers together, one would expect.

Mrs TAYLOR - There is a number, I guess, of State public servants.

Mr BARTLETT - It changes on a daily basis though. If you think about it, it is 25 000 State public servants. When someone starts tomorrow or finished today, it affects the overall number as well. That is why agencies would have the most accurate and up-to-date information.

CHAIR - I recall, Premier, last year that the biscuits were taken out of the tea room. Have they been returned?

Laughter.

CHAIR - It's a significant question.

Mr BARTLETT - I am just asking my staff. I am so disconnected I have not even been into the tea room to check that the biscuits are back. We do have a new office manager and she is far more generous than the last one. I think there is a move on to get the biscuits back.

4.2 Support for the State Service Commissioner -

[3.15 p.m.]

CHAIR - I am leaving this to you, Premier.

Mr BARTLETT - He is a statutory officer and therefore reports direct to Parliament and it's not Phil Hoysted the last time I looked.

Laughter.

Mr BARTLETT - The Budget has not substantially changed.

CHAIR - How many reviews of employment decisions has the commissioner conducted or are presently under way?

Mr BARTLETT - We will have to take these questions on notice so feel free to read them out. I am not sure about the appropriateness of me answering questions on behalf of an officer - I am sure the DPP would not want me answering questions on his behalf but I am not sure about the office of the State Service Commissioner.

CHAIR - Premier, in the future it may be a fact that we do not have this line item.

Mr BARTLETT - It is a budget output and it is estimates of dollars that you are interrogating. I am very happy to get the information for you but we will have to take them on notice.

CHAIR - Would it be in the future appropriate that the State Service Commissioner came?

Mr BARTLETT - I would be very happy for him to come.

CHAIR - That might be something that can be looked at in the future. I will leave these questions with you. How many code of conduct investigations have been completed or are ongoing? How many reviews of employment practices have taken place? Have there been any investigations or reviews of notable significance? The number of staff?

Mr BARTLETT - All of these, I understood, were recorded in his annual report to Parliament.

Mr WING - The answer is read the report.

CHAIR - I was waiting for that but I knew the Premier would not suggest that.

Mr BARTLETT - I would never suggest that to you, Madam Chair.

CHAIR - What - not while we are still going?

Laughter.

Mr BARTLETT - There are 4.9 staff, I can tell you that much basically.

**Output group 5
Tasmania Together Progress Board**

CHAIR - We welcome Phillip Hoysted.

Mr HOYSTED - It is a pleasure to be here, I hope.

Laughter.

CHAIR - Welcome, Phil, again. It does not seem any time since you were here last year.

Mr HOYSTED - Time flies when you're having fun, especially when you get older, I know.

Mr BARTLETT - I hope that is not a reflection on the Chair, Mr Hoysted.

Laughter.

CHAIR - I am just pleased to be here, Phil, so I do not mind being a year older at all. Can I invite Mr Gaffney to lead off on the questioning.

Mr GAFFNEY - Thanks, Madam Chair, and one question at a time.

Laughter.

Mr GAFFNEY - Premier, perhaps you could provide a brief overview of the importance of the Tasmania Together strategy and the benefits to the Tasmanian community as \$1.1 million is a

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significant amount with an increase this year of \$250 000 but \$180 000 has been explained for the 10-year review.

Mr BARTLETT - There is a range of benefits from the Tasmania Together approach. For a start, it provides a comprehensive and reliable reporting system basically of measures that the community and government together can work on and can see the impacts of public policy and community action in a wide range of various social, environmental, economic sort of style indicators. It is a quality information resource for decision makers, so that resource around whatever indicators might be relevant, like teenage pregnancy - do we have an indicator on that?

Mr HOYSTED - No.

Mr BARTLETT - Okay, I will get a better one. Literacy or whatever the case may be, can inform Government decision-making. It can also inform decision-making by non-government organisations like the Tasmanian Community Fund and I know it has used data to inform decisions they make about where they should send grant rounds. It has recognition at a national and international level as a model in participatory democracy. How we sustain that over a 20-year period is a challenge and I will talk about that more in a moment. It has identified, monitored and helped profile a number of public policy issues, such as reducing crime and, indeed, the use of 1080. It has developed a range of reporting methods to -

Mr WING - To reduce crime?

Mr BARTLETT - I beg your pardon?

Mr WING - To reduce crime; 1080.

Laughter.

Mr BARTLETT - Are you saying that there are some before our courts and that the administration of 1080 might be the solution to the -

Mr WING - No, I didn't notice any pause.

Mr BARTLETT - Right. It has developed a range of reporting mechanisms and methods to inform Parliament and the community on progress, so that is about openness and transparency and accountability, and has nearly 30 business and community partners contributing to TT goals and benchmarks. This year, obviously, one of the initiatives is to provide \$180 000 to the statutory review or the review required under the legislation, and it is an opportunity, I think, for members of parliament and for the community widely to participate in that to, 10 years in, make some decisions about what Tasmania Together should hold for the community over the next 10 years.

Mr GAFFNEY - Thank you. Just on that, how is the \$180 000 figure for the 10-year review arrived at, what will the dollars be spent on and at what time should we and community expect a report back from the review? What is the projected time frame for that report to come back to the wider community or the Parliament?

Mr BARTLETT - I will hand over to Mr Hoysted.

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Mr HOYSTED - The public consultations are between September and November this year, perhaps into December. It will then take a couple of months to analyse all that information, put together the feedback document and I would expect it would go back out to the community around March/April next year. The board then sits down and works out what changes it needs to make to the document in terms of the goals and the benchmarks and the board's recommendations will come back to Parliament in the spring session next year.

Mr GAFFNEY - Okay, and when you were working out that that will cost \$180 000, is that because of the consultation or is it you have the extra staff on for that or is it done internally with the staff you have? And, by the way, how many staff do you have currently?

Mr HOYSTED - We have 5.8 and we will have some extra staff for the tender review if it is necessary.

CHAIR - Will you second them from elsewhere or will you hire new people?

Mr HOYSTED - Hopefully internally, within the department, and second from other agencies but we should have three staff working on the team once it gets underway, but effectively everybody within the secretariat will be working on the 10-year review. We're a small team. It is the board's major priority for this year. It only happens once every five years, so we have to get it right. I think most of the team will be working on the 10-year review. And, in answer to your question about the \$180 000, the indicative budget is we will spend roughly \$5 000 on developing design work around the review, \$7 500 on consultancies to keep us advised of that design in terms of placement of ads, dealing with media and those sort of things. We have \$20 000 allocated for promotional materials and about \$45 000 for media promotions for TV advertising, newspapers and radio. As far as technology is concerned, we use as much social media as we possibly can - Facebook, the telephone, the website and Wiki if possible. We have set aside \$20 000 for that. With regard to regional community forums, one of the thrusts this last time with the five-year review was that we had a bus going around to -

CHAIR - I was going to ask you about the bus.

Mr HOYSTED - We do not have the bus this time. The bus no longer exists. We are having 20 forums around the State in 10 different areas. We will also be having special focus forums. I have had recent conversations with the Tasmanian Association of Community Housing, Council for the Aged, TasCOSS, a range of organisations to organise specific forums for those particular sections of the community, particularly the ones that are hard to target. We set aside \$2 500 for travel, engagement activities - that is special event forums I just mentioned - and presentations and billboards, \$20 000. We will be developing a questionnaire that will go to every Tasmanian household, \$15 000. The feedback report you mentioned, Mr Gaffney, will cost us about \$15 000 to get back out next year. Basically we are going to use every possible consultation mechanism we can to at least give as many people as possible in the community an opportunity to have their say.

Mr GAFFNEY - And the other \$30 000 was for travel and all that sort of stuff?

Mr HOYSTED - From my addition that all adds up to \$180 000. For travel we have only set aside \$2 500.

Mr GAFFNEY - The numbers of board members you have, and the associated costs with the board members?

Mr HOYSTED - There are nine board members, and the total cost of the board is about \$150 000. There are seven community representatives. It has to have a regional balance and a gender balance, and there is a representative appointed under the State Service Act, the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, and there is an appointee from the university, who is Associate Professor Roberta Julian.

CHAIR - Seven and a half thousand for consultants to identify areas - given that you have already undertaken a review in the past, wouldn't you already have that information?

Mr HOYSTED - No, a lot of their work is about developing TV ads. They have expert teams that do TV ads for us, to do the TV ad placements, come up with concepts around how we actually promote and design the work for the brochures, posters, anything else we put out. We do not have that expertise. I suspect last time we also hired some consultants to do it as well.

Mr DEAN - I am just interested in the comments that you make about working out the changes to be made to goals and benchmarks. What criteria are needed to change a benchmark? Most people who will talk about this now would say that when Tasmania Together was first set up, goals were set that within 20 years we would achieve. A good example here is smoking. The goal for smoking in 2016 was going to be reduced, I think, to 16 per cent smoking in Tasmania. Currently smoking is 24.7 per cent I think. We can see increases obviously in some of these benchmarks and decreases in other areas where we are not meeting them, so at the end of the 20 years we will meet them all. I wonder how we are going with it.

Mr HOYSTED - The whole idea of having the reviews, the first five-year and now the 10-year reviews, is that obviously public attitudes and views change over time and we need to make sure the document is flexible enough to reflect those changes in community values and perceptions. I think in terms of the criteria the board might use for making recommendations to Parliament is that it is an issue of major concern to the community. New issues bubble up each time, and so if that issue is a priority to the community, if there is a data set that we can actually develop into a benchmark, then the board will be making recommendations to change those benchmarks. A lot of the benchmarks in recent documents have actually been retained because a lot of community views do not change a great deal over time in terms of health and education, and smoking is probably a good example. A number of the benchmarks in the original document are still there and will still be there right to the year 2020. I would probably disagree in the sense that I do not think all the targets will necessarily be met by 2020. They are aspirational targets. Hopefully as many of them will be achieved as possible, but I would not expect all of them would be achieved.

[3.30 p.m.]

Mr DEAN - Smoking is a very good one in actual fact, because the attitude of people around the world is changing, not only in this State, so we cannot really have a target set for 20 years. Tasmania Together has a target set. It has set 2016 as 16 per cent, so one would really see that reducing even more. Is that what we are talking about, what the community, the public expect?

Mr HOYSTED - That is right. We want to reduce the amount of smoking because there is a flow-on effect on a whole range of other areas and benchmarks as well. But yes, it is an aspirational target to reduce it to as low as possible.

CHAIR - I want to ask, in relation to the performance table 10.12, how is the level of community awareness measured? It is registered at 52 per cent actual for 2008-09 but where do we find the 52 per cent?

Mr HOYSTED - That information comes from an EMRS survey that we have in February every year that measures the level of public awareness of Tasmania Together. I am pleased to say it has been going up by 3 per cent or 4 per cent every year over the last three or four years.

CHAIR - You would be extra pleased with 5 per cent?

Mr HOYSTED - In fact that is our target for next year. I put it up to 5 per cent because I thought with the 10-year review being conducted the profile of the board would go up a bit more, so it is at a slightly higher target of 60 per cent.

CHAIR - It was 47 per cent in 2007-08 and then 52 per cent for 2008-09 - 5 per cent already.

Mr HOYSTED - I think for this year the actual is not there but it is 56 so we have met our target for this year. As I said, we are looking at a 60 per cent target for this year.

CHAIR - I note that the number of partnerships between the progress board and the nine government NGOs has not increased at all. Is there any particular reason?

Mr HOYSTED - There are probably a range of issues but mostly the focus we have had in the partnerships program in the last couple of years is renewing the partnerships following the first five-year review because the document changed significantly so we had to change our partnership agreement so we focused on that. Probably it is a staff resourcing issue as much as anything else.

At one stage we had 25 organisations that were interested in becoming partners and there is not a shortage of organisations that want to be partners with us. It is just a question of priority and having the staff resources to actually negotiate and develop those agreements but hopefully that figure will pick up.

CHAIR - So you are expecting an extra three partnership agreements do you think because of the review? Is that really why you think there might be a bit more of heightened interest?

Mr OGLE - I would hope that once the review is out of the way we will probably have a greater increase in our number of partnerships. I have only suggested an increase of three there because the priority this year is the 10-year review.

We will not have much time and staff to focus on developing partnership agreements but hopefully following the review, as with a number of benchmarks, we will be able to get back to our core business which is developing our partnerships and developing our benchmarks.

CHAIR - So can I suggest that given that we have been a year before a review but they have still not increased, wouldn't it have been expected that at least one partnership would have developed in a year?

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Mr HOYSTED - You would hope so, yes. Organisations come and go, so some organisations that we have had partnerships with do not exist anymore. We have been negotiating new partnership agreements throughout that year but the total number does not change greatly.

CHAIR - It has changed; in that 27 identified there are some new partnerships?

Mr HOYSTED - Yes.

CHAIR - I take your point.

Mr GAFFNEY - A 20-year study is quite an in-depth reflection of how it was changing. What about things that have come on in the last three or four years that may not have been around in 2000 that were not really heightened back then, whether it be cyber bullying or some other social issue? If something comes up through the conversations you have with community members, is there an opportunity at the 10-year review to actually put that out there as it was not part of the original thing? We cannot compare it to benchmarks five years ago or 10 years ago but this is obviously an issue that has come to the fore now. I can see that once we get to 2020 we are going to have to have another stepping stone to strive for. What happens with the new initiatives or the new concerns that are highlighted through the conversations? Are they brought to the fore or how do you plan to handle those sort of things?

Mr HOYSTED - I would see that as one of the main functions of carrying out the 10-year review, to identify essentially what has changed since the last five-year review; what community views and priorities have changed since the last review and how we need to reflect that in the new document when we make our recommendations to Parliament. There will be new issues as there were in the first five-year review. When it comes to the 10-year review, the board will no doubt make recommendations to Parliament to change both the goals and the benchmarks to reflect those changes in the community values.

Mr WING - I would be interested to know to what extent any of the findings of the board have influenced any government policy so far.

Mr BARTLETT - I would say, in depth the data that is collected by the board affects government policy on a daily basis, in terms of the indicators and the benchmarks. We gave two examples of that: the reduction of crime, and 1080. I know in education the benchmarks and the data is used extensively.

Mr WING - Good.

Mr DEAN - I will use the example that I have been using all along in relation to smoking: where the board identifies some issues and they could be with smoking, does the board or do you go back to the responsible department and negotiate a position with them, or do you report directly to the Parliament or to the Government, how do you go about it?

Mr HOYSTED - There is a fairly thorough process with new benchmarks. Once the board has identified the need we go to relevant sources to develop a data source with a benchmark, the board then frames a benchmark, it then goes out for public consultation - broadly, to State agencies and to interest groups and anybody else that is interested. It goes on the net, it is sent out to those interest groups for comment. The comments are then collated, it goes back to the benchmarking committee for a report, then that committee makes recommendations to the board.

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Then the board would the make recommendations to Parliament. So there is a fairly extensive opportunity for public consultation through the development of the new benchmark.

Mr DEAN - Having gone through that whole process - again, with smoking as an example - you might make a recommendation to Parliament that further strategies are necessary to meet the benchmarks as they are set and/or changing community aspirations identify that those sort of things need to happen. That is how it would be done in effect.

Mr HOYSTED - The board simply reports progress on the benchmark, it does not get involved in what strategies are required to deal with those particular issues. It basically leaves it up to Government and the non-government sector to decide what they will do to progress that particular benchmark.

Mr DEAN - Right, okay. Would a local government benchmark then go back to the Government to be looked at to see what should happen and would they discuss it with the local government organisation?

Mr HOYSTED - They may very well, whatever strategy -

Mr DEAN - I am interested in how that does happen, whether the Premier has something to add to that.

Mr BARTLETT - I can speak for agencies that I have been minister of. This is at a higher level of what I see Tasmania Together as, is a set of community aspirations that we all want to achieve, not just government. I think that is perhaps one of the issues with the perception of Tasmania Together, that it is seen as what the Government should be doing. Actually, the whole concept behind this is about community aspirations and the recognition that not all the solutions are for governments to provide and not all the solutions should come from government.

I mentioned teenage pregnancy and I always use this as the example because, when the Oregon Shines crowd came out here with Connie Revell 12 years ago talking about the model on which Tasmania Together is based, she used the example of teenage pregnancy. We all agree that we want to reduce teenage pregnancy. While the Catholics have a very different view of how to reduce teenage pregnancy from that of the Family Planning Association, you can all agree on the goal but you might have different contributions to make to reach that goal.

I think one of the things that I would like to see in the future is, as Phil has outlined, the reinvigoration of the Community Partnerships aspect because it is clear that while, again, teenage pregnancy is a good example to use as we do not have an indicator for that - it is a clear goal that the whole Tasmanian community, I believe, could agree on that this is a good thing to reduce. The solutions are not necessarily in government at all. This Government might have a contribution to make to those solutions but the solutions are actually elsewhere. The reinvigoration of those community partnerships and the understanding that Tasmania Together is not about a set of measures that government are solely responsible for responding to is I think really the key here.

Mr HOYSTED - It is a constant issue for the board in a sense that we need to say that this is a community plan, it is not a government plan.

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CHAIR - Premier, on behalf of the committee, I would like to thank you and your team for your contributions and efforts today. We know that everyone does a lot of work to put together the information that is provided and we sincerely hope that it is useful.

Mr BARTLETT - Given that this is my last day at Estimates for this year, I put on the *Hansard* my thanks for the efforts of my people in the Department of Premier and Cabinet who are still here and also the people at the Department of Economic Development who supported me as well. I do not need to start naming people but I want to particularly acknowledge Louise Mills who has not been at the table and has done an enormous amount of work particularly on the particular design of the briefings that I like to see. I also thank all the team, those who have been at the table and behind as well, and my own staff members who have been here for the last two days. Madam Chair, I thank you and the committee for a productive day.

CHAIR - Thank you. Phil has already left the table but thank you, Phil. I will make note that I did not have to use my trusty little friend once at all and I did not have to share my stress ball at all today. I did use it a couple of times yesterday, I can assure you.

Premier, I invite you to Madam President's rooms if there are any further discussions on any of these areas that you might like to share.

Mr BARTLETT - I thank you very much but I have a prior engagement, otherwise I would have loved to join you.

CHAIR - We know how much you like innovation, science and technology so we were happy to listen to some more.

Mr BARTLETT - Thank you very much.

CHAIR - Thank you, and we look forward to doing it again next year.

The committee adjourned at 3.43 p.m.