

Tuesday 7 June 2016 - Estimates Committee B (Hodgman)

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Tuesday 7 June 2016

MEMBERS

Mrs Armitage
Mr Dean
Mr Finch
Ms Rattray (Chair)
Mr Valentine
Mr Willie

IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Will Hodgman MP, Premier, Minister for Tourism, Hospitality and Events, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Greg Johannes, Secretary
Rebekah Burton, Deputy Secretary
Tim Bullard, Deputy Secretary - Policy
Scott Marston, Deputy Secretary - Corporate and Governance
Frank Ogle, Director - State Service Management Office
Kate Kent, Director - Communities, Sport and Recreation
Kathy Baker, Director - Service Tasmania
Melissa Gray, Director - Policy
Wendy Spencer, Director
Robyn Webb, Chief Parliamentary Counsel
Simon Roberts, Director - Office of Security and Emergency Management
Paul Austen, Director - Tasmanian Institute of Sport
Kim Enkelaar, Manager - Government Services
Louise Mills, Deputy Director - State Service Management Office
Alex Schouten, Manager - Office of Aboriginal Affairs
Helen Langenburg, Manager - Development - CSR
David Strong, Acting Chief Operating Officer

Events and Hospitality - Department of State Growth

Kim Evans, Secretary

Amanda Russell, Deputy Secretary, Business Services

Jacqui Allen, Deputy Secretary, Cultural and Tourism Development

Adam Sproule, Director Events Tasmania

Tourism

John Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Tasmania

Mark Jones, Director Operations and Planning, Tourism Tasmania

Guy Taylor, Executive Director Marketing

Legislative Council

David Pearce, Clerk

Sue McLeod, Deputy Clerk

Peter Hancox, Manager, Parliamentary Computer and Electronic Services

Legislature-General

Jason Hendy, Manager, Finance

Peter Hancox, Manager, Parliamentary Computer and Electronic Services

Ministerial Office

Brad Stansfield, Chief of Staff, Premier's Office

Vince Taskunas, Deputy Chief of Staff, Premier's Office

Sandy Wittison, Senior Adviser, Premier's Office

Angela Williamson, Adviser, Premier's Office

Jennifer Fry, Senior Adviser, Premier's Office

The committee met at 9 a.m.

CHAIR (Ms Rattray) - Welcome, everyone. We have the newest member of the parliament, the member for Elwick, Mr Josh Willie, with us.

Mr HODGMAN - What a way to start your parliamentary career, at budget Estimates.

CHAIR - He certainly did not waste any time being a significant contributor yesterday and I am sure that will continue.

Premier, would you like to provide a brief overview for the committee? You indicated you would like to say something about the devastating situation we are experiencing.

Mr HODGMAN - I thought I would open proceedings today with an overview of where we are currently with the extreme weather conditions that are affecting a large part of the

state. Tasmania has experienced significant flooding as a result of these extreme conditions. It is the worst flooding in at least 40 years, with record rainfalls and record river heights in some locations. Tragically there are three people currently missing and police hold grave fears for all of them - a man at Ouse, a woman from Latrobe, and a man at Evandale. The thoughts and prayers of all members of this parliament and staff are with their families and friends. More than 200 properties, homes and businesses have been inundated, including 50 properties at Newstead, 20 dwellings and 15 businesses flooded in Latrobe, seven in Wynyard and five in Ouse. A number of other properties have been inundated in outlying rural areas. Since Sunday the SES has responded to in excess of 350 requests for assistance and is now conducting a more detailed impact assessment today, after which we will know more. We will then be in a position to inform the public more.

The Insurance Council of Australia has declared the event a catastrophe and has established a task force across the industry to coordinate a large number of claims. There are widespread road closures and a number of schools are also closed. The TT-Line and the Port of Devonport are also impacted from several submerged vessels in the Mersey River which pose a risk of damage to all vessels. As a result, this is preventing the *Spirit of Tasmania* and other freight vessels from entering or leaving the port. The Port of Devonport is closed to all commercial traffic while these hazards are fully assessed and the TT-Line has suspended operations from Devonport due to treacherous conditions and is supporting all affected passengers.

For individuals and families who have lost homes and belongings, funding of up to \$750 per family - \$200 per adult and \$100 per child - in emergency assistance will be immediately available. It will be available by contacting Service Tasmania on 1300 135 513. This immediate funding support is for essential food, clothing, transport, shelter and personal items. For those who might have trouble getting to a Service Tasmania outlet or meeting any payments to the government as a result of floods, consideration will be given and the contact team is briefed and ready to go on that same telephone number.

I spoke with the Prime Minister yesterday and he extends the federal government's full support for Tasmania and sends their best wishes for all those affected. We are examining other support measures. We will have a crew on the ground supporting farmers with stock management. It has been a terrible impact for our farming community and we are doing a rapid impact assessment where possible.

I remind all Tasmanians in what are life-threatening situations for them to call 000. For those who require non-urgent flood-related assistance, they can call the SES on 132500. The situation is clearly still unfolding and there are very dangerous circumstances in communities right across the state. We urge Tasmanians to be extremely cautious.

Regular updates will be provided by emergency services. I also take the opportunity on behalf of this state to thank our State Emergency Services and volunteers as they continue to work to support Tasmanians impacted by the events.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Premier. We certainly, as the Legislative Council Committee here this morning, support everything that you have said and congratulate the Government on those proactive initiatives. I hope that our communities are able to get over this as soon as possible with the help that they need, thank you.

I ask you to provide an opening statement.

Mr HODGMAN - I will take a few minutes to give you an overview with respect to the Department of Premier and Cabinet from a whole-of-government perspective report. The third budget that we have delivered is significant in that it returns the state to surplus this year. \$77.3 million surplus is three years ahead of schedule and is the first surplus in seven years.

It is important, we believe as a Government, that the broader community accept that it is essential that we have a budget in balance, with the capacity to withstand significant shocks. We are now going through what was clearly another unanticipated and extraordinary natural extreme weather event that will have significant impact on our state if you consider this in the context of extraordinary set of circumstances over the summer. The bushfires have so far cost the state \$31 million. The energy situation is ongoing with a budget impact of around \$100 million. The write-down of over half a billion dollars in our GST receipts. It is very important that we ensure there is a sustainable budget position to withstand these sorts of shocks.

We took action to get the budget back on a sustainable path in 2014-15. We factored into that budget structural savings of \$573 million in agency savings. As reported last year, these savings have largely been achieved with \$11.7 million remaining for this financial year and \$2 million remaining for the following year. It is true to say that the bulk of those savings have been achieved and the heavy lifting done. The savings left represent only 2.4 per cent of that original \$573 million original savings target. There is no need for any new structural savings to be incorporated into this budget. No need for job cuts.

In relation to the FTE in the public sector levels are now at 24 017 which is a total reduction since June 2014 of 531 FTEs. I want to again re-state that while our savings strategy in 2014 contemplated a reduction of savings equivalent to 1200 FTE positions, it is no longer necessary that we meet such a savings target or that it be required. There will certainly not be a further reduction of FTE's, the balance being 669. Those savings have been achieved as I have outlined.

For FTE reductions through Workforce Renewal Incentive Programs and targeted voluntary redundancies only 137 remain. A reduction of 531 FTEs since June 2014 is a net change in employment within the general government sector and reflects a range of factors.

The structural savings factored into each agencies budget in 2014-15 and carried forward, a take-up of Workforce Renewal Incentive Program payments the WRIPS, replacement of these positions over time, the uptake of targeted and negotiated voluntary redundancies, new positions associated with new funding for new initiatives. Most notably of our response to family violence or our redesign of the child protection system. We have had resourcing provided, changed funding with the Australian Government.

In relation to the TNBRs, a total of 76 have been paid between 1 July 2015 and 31 March 2016 at a total cost of \$4 817 625. A total of 219 WRIPs have been paid between 1 July 2015 and 31 March 2016 at a total cost of \$4 918 040 million. Between July 2014 and 2016 there has been a total of 1282 people exit the general government sector by way of WRIPs or TNBRs comprising 400 people by way of voluntary redundancy and 882 by way of WRIPs.

On the wages policy of the Government, there are no structural savings required to meet wage outcomes that are consistent with wages policy. The wages policy is clearly expressed in the budget papers as it was last year, as providing for total cost of salary increases, allowances and any other employment conditions for all industrial agreement to be no greater than 2 per cent. That is not uncommon with wage agreement or wage policy under former governments. The wages policy is fully funded in this Budget, to ensure wages growth of up to 2 per cent can be supported in full.

The timing of national partnership payments, which are yet to be renegotiated and contained within the Budget, does have an impact on the forward Estimated and on the underlying operating balance. Both revenue and expenditure only factor in known and confirmed national partnership agreements. There are a number that are currently under negotiation.

In relation to the Department of Premier and Cabinet output, so you are aware of a few changes since last year. In August last year we announced a \$25.6 million Safe Home, Safe Families, the family violence action plan commitment. To facilitate the management of the plan, the funds were appropriated to a new output within this agency, output 1.3. You will note also, through the outputs there will be some small reduction in each that represent the twenty-seventh pay in the 2015-16 financial year. This is no longer needed and will not be until the next time this occurs in 2026-27.

There is additional funding of \$11.8 million allocated to my department for 2016-17, reflecting a range of initiatives including community grants, engaging older Tasmanians, grassroots Australian Rules football, Office of the Parliamentary Counsel, the Aboriginal reset, state peak bodies funding, Tasmania's brand, Tasmanian Government Board Diversity Scholarship Program and the World Heritage bushfire research, Safe Home, Safe Families, the Tasmania Violence Action Plan, on-island support for refugees and the maintenance and building compliance for the Silverdome.

I hope that provides you with a bit of a snapshot of where we are at and look forward to taking questions.

CHAIR - It has, Premier. The \$11 million you just spoke of, is that a combination of the grants and subsidies, the Safe at Home, all those initiatives? Is that the whole lot rolled into one, they are separated in here?

Mr HODGMAN - That is right. I can provide you with a table of the funding allocations for each.

CHAIR - That would be very much appreciated. Also Premier's Discretionary Fund, is there an opportunity to get a copy of all the organisations that were successful? It is a very sought after source of funding?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. We have that available and we will table that.

CHAIR - Thank you.

Mr DEAN - How do you propose to get the message out for those who require that quick financial assistance for the flooding? The area all around where I live, Hart Street and

so on and Newstead is affected badly. How do we get the message out that they can access that?

Mr HODGMAN - The preliminary actions we have undertaken included a meeting yesterday with Emergency Services personnel. Is it a subcommittee of Cabinet, Greg?

Mr JOHANNES - It was not in that case but we will meet regularly with all the leaders of the emergency services.

Mr HODGMAN - An initial meeting to understand the initial impacts of what have occurred. There will be ongoing meeting and they commenced this morning, of all our emergency personnel. We will communicate later today and further publicise ways Tasmanians can inform themselves of circumstances in that area, as well as engaging local government authorities and other key groups. The secretary might add some additional information as to how we can best ensure the message is received, given the very difficult circumstances in those communities and people perhaps not being in as close communication as they would like.

Mr DEAN - There will be a number of those who don't get the regular updates. I want to make sure that they do because a lot of people in that area, which is not an affluent area.

Mr JOHANNES - The emergency services have been briefed this morning. There are media conferences on operational matters twice a day. The number for assistance will be publicised at evacuation centres and it will go out in future government media. The people on the ground who are providing services to those affected in the community will be aware of the assistance. Evacuation centres will be aware of the assistance and the assistance will be communicated to the media, which is happening at least twice a day.

Mr DEAN - I take it, while there is a limit set on the amount each person can get, there is no limit set on the total amount that will be available under that scheme.

Mr HODGMAN - This is initial emergency payments for people in the circumstances I have described and for the purposes I have outlined. We anticipate, needless to say, a significant contribution being required from governments into the future. That is a very much an initial targeted emergency relief package which has been initiated.

CHAIR - Are there any other questions in regard to the statement that the Premier read out before we get into the line items?

Mr DEAN - On line item 1.1 Strategic Policy and Advice, there is an increase here and in the Budget this year we have an extra \$650 000 to further developing and reviewing the Tasmanian brand. Premier, where are we at with that and what has been the total cost of this? What will the \$650 000 do to further the Tasmanian brand?

Mr HODGMAN - It is a new initiative that I have commenced through my department's lead and central agency, given our brand is something that is valued and owned by the whole community. It is something we all have an interest in. There has never been a better time for us to appraise our brand attributes, to take a temperature check on the value and the awareness of our brand, to look at new strategic ways to capitalise on that and to

communicate it to the world. It is important in increasing awareness about our state and what we have to offer and enhancing what I believe is now something that is rated very highly.

This is a new initiative needing to undertake some work internally and I will get the secretary to speak to this in a minute because it is a DPAC initiative. In the initial stages, we will consult with all agencies and relevant stakeholders, undertake an assessment and analysis as to the value of our brand, its attributes, whether there are any weak spots, and then look to ways within the budgeted allocation to promote the brand.

The objective here is to get us all singing on the same song sheet and as loudly as we can to promote and capitalise on our very strong brand. In terms of the process, I will ask the secretary to run through what it is expected to look like, over what time and who will be involved.

Mr JOHANNES – Thanks, Premier. Mr Dean, we are pulling together a group that comprises my department, Tourism Tasmania - both the Chief Executive and the Chair, the Brand Council - both the Chief Executive and the Chair, and an external representative from the Tasmanian Development Board to sit over the first stage where we will do a bit of an audit to see what the strengths and weaknesses are currently in Tasmania in our approach to brand. That will set us up to provide some advice to the Premier subsequently on how best to allow the funding to improve or enhance the brand. Everyone recognises that there are some great strengths in our approach now and we want to keep those. Where there are gaps and maybe we can do better, the point of this first stage of work which isn't funded out of this \$650 000. It is funded out of an existing allocation. We point to where the strengths and weaknesses are and where we need to invest more.

Mr HODGMAN - Can I add some further context or insight into that thinking? The advice I received from departmental heads and those key stakeholders was that it is extremely unlikely that we would need re-imagine or reinvent our brand. Our brand is very strong. This certainly is not contemplating the new government logo or any such thing. It goes to the intrinsic values of our brand, assessing it and capitalising on it.

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Dean, just to close off, we have draft terms of reference for that initial audit and we are working on those with the brand council as we speak. We would be hoping to commence that relatively soon and conclude that within the next couple of months.

Mr DEAN - You made the comment that the \$650 000 wasn't going to be used.

Mr JOHANNES - The funding for that first stage audit is existing funding.

Mr DEAN - It is already there? So the \$650 000 made available on this current Budget is to expand on that. Is that it?

Mr JOHANNES - The first stage is the audit and we expect the audit to come up with a number of recommendations about where we could do better, where we can do things differently and that will inform our approach to spending to \$650 000 next year.

Mr DEAN - That brings me to the next question of how do we know this is a successful brand, that we are getting value for money? Where is the evidence to support that?

Mr HODGMAN - Currently you mean?

Mr DEAN - Yes, currently.

Mr HODGMAN - That's a good question. That is why we are undertaking this situation analysis.

Mr DEAN - The brand now - when did we commence this process?

Mr HODGMAN - We commenced the initial work only over recent months. We have just commenced getting the process in place to undertake the audit assessment and that will report back as the Secretary said to me or through the Department and we will go from there.

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Dean, if you were to ask the Brand Council or Tourism Tasmania who at the moment are the two main champions of the Tasmanian branch, they do a lot of evaluation work each year on the value of the brand.

Mr DEAN - What is the cost of evaluating this and going through this .quality process we are going to go through?

Mr HODGMAN - \$100 000 already not provided for out of that \$650 000 that comes out of State Growth.

Mr DEAN - And staffing in this area?

Mr JOHANNES - The first stage will be provided from existing resources within the Department of Premier and Cabinet. We expect that the audit will be done by an external party who is an expert in the brand area and that will also mean that we will get someone in to take an independent look.

Mr DEAN - And the cost of that?

Mr JOHANNES - We have a budget of \$100 000.

Mr DEAN - \$100 000 to cover an audit process.

Mr HODGMAN - Out of the Department of State Growth it will be funded. Not out of the \$650 000.

Mr DEAN - Tasmanian?

Mr JOHANNES - I can't tell you, Mr Dean. It hasn't gone to process. You wouldn't possibly expect me to comment.

Mr DEAN - I would like you to say to me we will be looking for a Tasmanian person to take that role.

Mr JOHANNES - We will look for somebody with expertise in the area of brand and, ideally, they will be a Tasmanian.

Mr FINCH - When you say brand, I wondering what your perception of Tasmania's brand is at the moment? Is it behind the scenery, is it clean and green? What are we changing to? What are we leaving behind if we do leave something behind?

Mr HODGMAN - Hopefully not. I am always reticent to express the view suggesting that I have any expertise at all in these matters. It is one subject where we all consider ourselves to be expert but we want to engage people who can provide that situation analysis and to understand objectively what our brand attributes are, or if there are any areas of weakness. There is a lot of research data available through the Brand Council, and through Tourism Tasmania who have their own way of branding and marking the state but they agree as does the Brand Council that they are not the owners of our brand and there are other important sectors that have perhaps not been as closely involved in this discussion, those in primary industries. One of the most significant drivers of tourism visitation to our state now is the experience for people to come and have a beautiful meal and a nice glass of wine, cider, whisky or beer. That is driving about a third of visitors to our state to experience that alone. We need to engage primary industries, growth sectors in wine and whisky. We need to get them to understand the role they play and to bring those key partners together to undertake that assessment.

I believe, and the advice I have received at this early stage is certainly the Brand Council needs support. Our brand is very strong and a funding commitment of up to \$650 000 is based on estimates to ensure we have good practical application of initiatives and programs to turbocharge or ramp up our brand.

It will not require an overhaul; it is very strong anecdotally. What I hear interstate and overseas is that our brand is very strongly and highly rated. It would be remiss of us as a Government not to take the opportunity in this peak period of interest in our state to take this temperature check and to expend. This is our expectation, the bulk of that money which is a relatively inexpensive exercise, compared to what some governments have used in this area, in the past to catapult our brand even further to support our exporters and the primary sector and to look at those issues.

Mr FINCH - We have only got to think of New Zealand with their 100 per cent Pure which was as simple as simple, and everybody used it. Everybody went under that banner.

Mr HODGMAN - We have looked to them as an example of how they have done it well and they do use that brand a lot more collaboratively and collectively to maximise their impact.

Mr WILLIE - After the audit, wouldn't Brand Tasmania be best placed to administer funding. Why the duplication? They could work with stakeholders too.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, they are a central part to this, but our expectation is that funding, which could also be effectively disbursed or implemented through the Department of State Growth, perhaps the department of Primary Industries, are also key partners in this as well. We do not, at this point, want to lock ourselves into one set of initiatives that may come from the initial auditor assessment. It was a collective view that the Department of Premier and Cabinet being the central agency would be the best place to plan oversight and central management of making those determinations. Certainly with respect to Brand Tasmania Council, they are providing them with support to do their work and they are a very much a

discreet and central part of what we do with our brand. They acknowledge that they could better align with other key stakeholders like the tourism industry.

Mr WILLIE - There is no plan to wind up Brand Tasmania?

Mr HODGMAN - No, certainly not.

Mr JOHANNES - Through you, Premier. Both the executive officer and the chair of the Brand Council will actually be part of the steering committee that looks after the audit, so they will be intimately involved.

Mr HODGMAN - There is additional funding for the Brand Tasmania Council in the budget.

CHAIR - They were probably asking for additional. I am really encouraged by the fact that you thought \$600 000 was a very small amount. I will keep that in mind.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, \$150 000 to support the Brand Tasmania Council's initiative.

Mr DEAN - Premier, last year you made the statement and I am cutting part way through it -

The new department has engaged with the new Government's not insignificant policy agenda. This agenda improves election commitments and implementation of new policy directions which we believe are starting to deliver positive results, especially for our economy.

Is there anything you would like to add to that? What about the implementation of the new policy directions? Where has that gone?

Mr HODGMAN - For whole-of-government, or the department?

Mr DEAN - Well, that is the statement you made, I guess on the whole-of-department, was it, or this area? I do not know.

Mr HODGMAN - What was the context of the question?

Mr DEAN - I will keep it very brief. The Chair asked, as time is getting on, I would like you to make an opening statement. It came in the opening statement, so it was the whole-of-department.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, and the vehicle for the implementation of our policy agenda out of the election and beyond comes in the form of our agenda statement as it now is, Agenda 26, which outlines our policy initiatives, details, when they are to be delivered by, what timelines. This has been our practice in our first three years of governing. We report on the outcomes of each agenda statement and commitment. It contains policy initiatives that are across government, across agencies but the Department of Premier and Cabinet is responsible for monitoring the implementation of our policies. There are many contained in this, over 200.

Mr DEAN - And all of them are on time, progressing in accordance with the agenda, is that it?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. We can give you a report.

Mr DEAN - No breakdowns?

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Dean, we report quarterly to Cabinet, we collect advice from across government, from all agencies that have been allocated responsibility for each action. The Department of Premier and Cabinet has been allocated responsibility for a number of the actions. My recollection is the last time we reported there were two or three only that had been delayed, and they had been delayed as a result of external factors. They had only been delayed.

Mr DEAN - And the items that were delayed were?

Mr JOHANNES - I cannot remember off the top of my head, Mr Dean, but I am sure we could come back to you and provide some advice on that.

CHAIR - There are usually plenty of papers coming forward for help, Premier. It is one thing that is very good.

Mr HODGMAN - I can advise the committee in relation to our commitments for 2015-16. As at 30 May 2016, of the 69 actions due for delivery in the first quarter, 33 have been completed and 36 are on track for completion.

An update on quarter 1 actions as at 3 June 2016: of the 69 actions for delivery in the first quarter, 36 are complete or ongoing, 33 are on track for completion, and four actions are potentially at risk of delay. On 3 June the Minister for Health announced the commencement of the Community Rapid Response Service in Launceston. Further input from agencies advised the completion of a full rollout of the Great Customer Experience Program to encourage hospitality workforce and development release of the first public competitive round of the Regional Revival Fund.

The four actions at risk of delay are: development at the Royal Hobart Hospital; commence improvement of works for police housing on the west coast; commence construction of stage 1 of the Living City project, including a new LINC Service Tasmania with a significant state contribution to that; and release of the international education project discussion paper and draft strategy to encourage more international students to study and stay in Tasmania.

A forecast for quarter 2 actions: of 60 deliverables, one is complete, that is capital works at New Town High School; 52 are on track, five are confirmed and two have not yet received a status update at this point due to the reallocation of agency responsibility or other uncertainty. Two have been delayed, including the government response to the parliamentary inquiry into the State Fire Commission, and commencement of training of frontline Department of Education and TasTAFE staff in family violence.

You can see it is a detailed and honest assessment of how we are progressing with our policy objectives that we outlined at the start of the year, contained within that document with those stated time frames and were accountable for their delivery or not? Not.

CHAIR - Any other members have any other questions regarding that particular line item?

Mr HODGMAN - I have received some further advice in relation to the Royal Hobart Hospital. That is not a delay in the development of the entire project; it is the moving of patients into the temporary facility.

CHAIR - The mould issue?

Mr DEAN - That is an accessible document to us?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, that will be available on release.

CHAIR - You will be able provide a copy to the committee for members information?

Mr HODGMAN - Certainly.

Mr DEAN - One further question. How many people are in this area of strategic policy and advice?

Mr HODGMAN - Sixteen.

Mr JOHANNES - Staffing is 16.91. About 17 staff. Then we allocate a proportion of our corporate staff. We reallocated just over two. In total it is over 19 but direct policy staff is about 17.

Mr DEAN - Thank you for that. I ask the overall question that relates to this department and all departments. We made a number of public servants redundant through this whole process. What sort of strategy have you in place to ensure that the creep situation does not occur again as applied previously, where new positions are made in different departments and the numbers increase again?

Mr HODGMAN - Each agency is expected to, and does, monitor their expenditures. That includes additional FTE positions being filled. Each of them is accountable for ensuring that it will only occur when it is justified, necessary, or goes to a government initiative that requires additional personnel support.

The Family Violence Action Plan has necessitated putting more staff on the ground to deal with that or into Child Protection. The suggestion that we are back-filling positions that were made redundant or were the result of targeted voluntary redundancies or the WRIP process, ignores the fact that the additional staff who are joining the public sector workforce are there to support those front line initiatives. It is a good thing that we have more child protection workers or more police or more people assisting with our family violence action plan.

Mr DEAN - That is the question. We made redundant a number of public servants.

CHAIR - One thousand two hundred.

Mr DEAN - One thousand two hundred, was it? Whatever it was.

Mr HODGMAN - No, it was 531.

CHAIR - One thousand two hundred FTEs.

Mr HODGMAN - No, that was the savings equivalent that we identified in our first Budget that could be required to get our Budget back into a sustainable position. For various reasons, not the reduction of FTEs but other savings measures across agencies, the growth in revenues.

Mr DEAN - How many did we see go?

Mr HODGMAN - Initial figures, 531. That is why I was making it very clear - FTE positions that is - that the 669 balance from 1200 is no longer required. We have met our savings targets. It is only around \$13 million to meet the savings target of \$573 million that we set in our first Budget to get the Budget back into surplus which we are now doing.

I can table, or run through, how each department has made that savings in FTE reduction.

Mr DEAN - Do we need it? If you provided it yesterday at the other committee.

Mr HODGMAN - Possibly, yes. It confirms the change in staffing numbers where that occurred across each agency.

CHAIR - Are you happy to have that tabled?

Mr DEAN - If it is tabled, that is sufficient.

Mr VALENTINE - Does that include the number of SES? Does it split SES versus non-SES?

Mr HODGMAN - No, but I am sure we can obtain that information for you. It is proposed by the secretary that I also table a table detailing incremental savings of the 2014-15 budget savings strategy. That details which agency will need to do what over the forward Estimates of 2016-17 and 2017-18, which totals \$13.7 million. It is a modest saving required.

Mr DEAN - Of those people we saw move on, how many of those positions have been refilled not within the departments they left but, for instance, in item 1.3 Safe Home Safe Families - how many staff do we have in there? Are they new positions? How many of the 531 have now been picked up again?

Mr HODGMAN - They are new positions supporting the Government's family violence action plan.

Mr DEAN - How many in there?

Mr HODGMAN - There are 19.

Mr DEAN - So there are 19 new positions in there. If we take the 531 that were made redundant that brings that back down to whatever it is.

Mr HODGMAN - No, the 531 is a net figure.

Mr DEAN - So that takes account of the increases?

Mr JOHANNES - We managed reduction in numbers in the public service in three ways. One was through redundancies and if somebody achieved a redundancy the position was abolished and taken out of the system. The second way the Premier talked about was WRIPs, which was a program to re-profile. Quite often it is used in areas such as Education to take more senior people out at the end of their careers earlier and replace them with more junior people. The third way is within the public service there are a number of people who leave every year. In a number of cases agencies didn't replace those people and we call that natural attrition. Through those three mechanisms we achieved the total number of reductions. As a result of the Government establishing new initiatives such as the family violence work, we created new positions and employed new people in those positions.

Mr DEAN - We have an extra number of teachers employed in the organisation, as we were told yesterday. I am trying to find out how many new positions we have created since those redundancies occurred and we abolished those positions. This is across the public service - police officers, teachers, the lot.

CHAIR - We are probably straying into an area we haven't got to yet.

Mr HODGMAN - I was just going to suggest this is perhaps a clearer snapshot of where we have arrived at. Between July 2014 and March this year there has been a total of 1282 people exit the general government sector by way of voluntary redundancies or the WRIP program I have outlined. I explained the costs attached to those. There are 400 who have gone by way of voluntary redundancy and 82 by way of a WRIP. As against that in the general government sector reduction, between mid-2014 and now, 531 FTE positions - that gives you that net figure. It was 24 602 - the total FTE number in June 2014 - and now it is 24 071 - that is the 531 figure.

1.3 Safe Home, Safe Families - Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan

Mrs ARMITAGE ó Premier, I would like to acknowledge the Safe Homes, Safe Families. It is a significant \$26 million initiative and I congratulate your Government on the important work it is doing in this area. Looking at the line item and the \$26 million - I note we have started with over \$8 million in the first and I appreciate that. It goes to 2020 and there is nothing listed in the forward Estimates for 2019-20. Can you tell me why there is no money there when it is a 2015 to 2020 initiative?

Mr HODGMAN - The allocations that we have made through the plan we announced and its implementation strategy go to direct and targeted initiatives. We can work through each of those in a moment. This is on top of what is somewhere near \$40 million in recurrent

Government expenditure that goes to supporting people at risk of family violence and other social services that are typically provided. Those budget allocations detail the funding of the specific and discreet initiatives contained within the family violence action plan.

Mrs ARMITAGE - All these that are here?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I was just saying why is there nothing in 2019-20 when the initiative goes to 2020?

Mr HODGMAN - Because by that time we will have reassessed the effectiveness of these initiatives and whether we need to do things differently. We have been very upfront in saying that a lot of this is new. It is innovative. I expect it to be very effective. Already we are seeing the results of the program being effective in identifying people who are at risk or allowing them to -

Mrs ARMITAGE - With respect, the initiative goes to 2020, not 2019. You are saying by the end of the current funding you will have identified whether it is working. The \$26 million - I noticed there is only \$22 million listed there - goes to the end of 2020. I would have thought that is when you were going to assess how it is working, not at the end of 2019.

Mr HODGMAN - Well, we are doing that now. We have already expended the balance of the funding commitment.

Mrs ARMITAGE - So the \$4 million that is not listed here, do we know where that is gone, because it was a \$26 million initiative?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. I can assure members that we constantly review the impact of the implementation of the plan, of its effectiveness. That is in no way, the budgeting of that significant additional contribution to family violence -

Mrs ARMITAGE - I appreciate that.

Mr HODGMAN - I just want to be clear. I would not want anyone to think that there would not be an ongoing commitment from future governments either. We are just accounting for how the programs that we have committed to in the plan, which we launched last year, will be expended over what time.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I understand that, but as I said, it does say the plan goes to 2020 and obviously it does not. In the forward Estimates it only goes to 2019. That is all. Apart from that, can you explain where the other \$4 million has gone?

Mr JOHANNES - This financial year we expect by the end of the financial year to spend about \$3.3 million. That is not the 44 simply because -

Mrs ARMITAGE - There is a little bit extra there over the 22 - I can appreciate that.

Mr JOHANNES - When you add the amount that we expect to spend this year, together with the forward Estimates, it gives you the \$26 million, which is fully funded across the

forward Estimates. There will be some variances from year to year in particular because a lot of the funding is for positions. Sometimes it takes more time than we would like to fill a position, so it takes time before you start spending the money.

To pick up what the Premier said we will be progressively evaluating initiatives. We will not wait until the end of the four years and then review them all. We will be providing advice to Government as we go. For example, one of the initiatives is to roll out Safe Choices in the south of the state before we progressively implement it in the north and in the north-west. We will evaluate the success of that initiative in the south to provide advice to Government on how we think it can best be rolled out in the north and the north-west. We have similar arrangements with the other programs because in a number of areas we are treading new ground. There is not a lot of evidence to draw on from other jurisdictions about some of these initiatives. In order to make sure that we continue to invest in the best way possible to support victims of family violence, to educate the community and hold perpetrators to account, we will progressively evaluate and keep advising Government about where we think changes can be made to best deal with the issue.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Can you tell me how many people you are planning that will be required in budgeting?

Mr JOHANNES - There are 19.

CHAIR - Supplementary, Mr Willie to the Premier, before we move on

Mrs ARMITAGE - I still have a couple more questions

CHAIR - Yes, I know but just on this exact point.

Mr WILLIE - Premier, yesterday you had a bit of trouble answering why the money was not there in 2019-20. You said, 'Appropriate funding to ensure that the good work continues'. Then you were asked, 'Your commitment does not run out? The money runs out in 2018-19 but your commitment does not run out?'. And you said, 'Certainly not, no'.

Given that commitment, why can we not have it in the forward Estimates? There would be people in that program who would like certainty. Nobody can question the intention or the value of the program. I am sure there would be people that would like a funding commitment from you in the forward Estimates. I know you say that it is an accounting measure for the current program but I am sure there are people that would like some certainty.

Mr HODGMAN - The budget papers, as we have discussed, state that the funding commitment is there and money is already being expended in getting the plan up and running as quickly as possible.

Mr WILLIE - Why no dollar figure?

Mr DEAN - He is having trouble again.

Mr HODGMAN - No, I am not. You reckon this is trouble.

Mr MARSTON - As has been pointed out the \$25.57 million has been funded over those four years. At this stage the Government has not allocated what it was going to spend in 2019. That is the answer at this stage because that is the allocation. I am not going to be presumptuous here.

Mrs ARMITAGE - It does not have any money left to spend.

Mr JOHANNES - The Budget reflected a four-year action plan with funding of just over \$25 million. Through the course of implementing this we will provide new advice to Government if it wishes to continue to invest additional amounts in family violence over and above what is already funded in a range of other agencies to deal with family violence. We will be providing that advice progressively.

Mrs ARMITAGE - So it will be continuing.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

CHAIR - It is just not a line item fit.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I suggest in the future if you are going to state that something goes for a certain period that there is some money allocated. It does not add up when you say 2015 to 2020 in your media releases and when you go to the tables you see there is nothing there in 2019-20.

CHAIR - I am sure it will not happen again.

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Valentine, with respect, it is not \$4 million short. We are spending money this financial year which we expect by the end of this financial year will be about \$3.3 million.

Mrs ARMITAGE - You are not short of the \$26 million; you just have not budgeted anything for the following year.

Mr HODGMAN - That is right. Any suggestion that the full \$26 million is not there? The Budget footnote explains where the \$3.6 million is.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I am not suggesting that. My argument was that there was nothing put in the 2019-20 forward Estimates when your media release said it was going to 2019-20.

Mr MARSTON - There is funding in 2015-16, which is the money Mr Valentine is saying is not there, which has been provided this year through supplementary appropriation. When you add that amount to these other three amounts in the Budget for 2016-17 and the forward Estimates, that adds up to the \$25.6 million.

Mrs ARMITAGE - We have had that answer. Just to clarify - there is no money in the forward Estimates for the 2019-20 Budget. Continuing on, let us hope there will be money coming to continue this good work.

Does the Budget also allow for more members to be added to the Safe Families coordination unit? I note in the 21 April ABC news article it said there were 10 members with possibly another member to come. How many members are there now?

Mr JOHANNES - I will introduce Wendy Spencer who has taken on responsibility within the Department of Premier and Cabinet for coordinating our work on family violence.

Mrs ARMITAGE - The Safe Families Coordination Unit?

Ms SPENCER - The Safe Families Coordination Unit is fully supported now with its complement; there is still one more to come from the police at the start of the new financial year. The forward budgets for the coordination unit do not include any additional staff beyond that.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Could you indicate what parts of the state the members of the State Families Coordination Unit are from?

Ms SPENCER - Part of the state?

Mrs ARMITAGE - How many are in the north, north-west and south? Are they all from the south?

Mr JOHANNES - The unit is based in the south.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Yes, but normally you would have members across the state that would form part of the unit.

Mr JOHANNES - Not necessarily because this is effectively a call centre across agencies and a data integration centre to make sure all the agencies are speaking with each other. When clients raise issues of family violence instead of agencies dealing with them one by one, we support them in a coordinated way. They will have contact with people throughout the state but the majority of the staff, unless they apply to come into the unit and happen to be based in Launceston or Burnie, they will come from the south.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Can you advise where each of the members come from? One is obviously from the police that we do not have yet, so where are the other members from?

Mr HODGMAN - There are five sworn Tasmania Police officers, two staff from the Department of Health and Human Services, two from the Department of Justice, and one from the Department of Education, and an additional Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management administrative position to commence, we expect, in July or the not too distant future. That is where the staff come from. The idea for this came from a model in South Australia and Rosie Batty pointed to this as a key initiative that we should implement.

Mrs ARMITAGE - These people are seconded from where they are to this unit? Is it a full-time capacity?

Ms SPENCER - The positions were opened and they applied for those positions. They are funded by the Safe Families Coordination Unit but they are still listed as staff of those relevant agencies because that is really important.

Mrs ARMITAGE - If this does not continue can they go back to their relevant agencies?

Ms SPENCER - They will still have substantial positions most likely from their relevant agencies.

Mrs ARMITAGE - And they will be operating out of an office? They will all be together in one space?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, which we have opened in Hobart, the whole point of this being that you get each agency that may come into contact with the victim of family violence in the same room to coordinate their triage in response to a case and to ensure that data collection is shared across agencies, that everyone is on the same page and literally, physically in the same building. In Rosie Batty's own experience, by having agencies separated physically and technically, technologically even, that does not help the authorities, government and support agencies to provide the quickest and most effective response to a victim of family violence or someone who may be a victim of family violence.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Was it five police officers?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, five sworn police officers.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Why would you need five police officers on this particular unit when you have one from Education and one from other disciplines. Why would you need five?

Mr JOHANNES - Because police disproportionately come into contact with members of the community that are victims of family violence.

Mrs ARMITAGE - How many other staff did we say that we had actually - we have an office so obviously there are -

Mr JOHANNES - We have an office and we have 10 staff with one more to come.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Ten in the unit, yes, but you have other staff obviously supporting that unit.

Mr JOHANNES - We do not have other staff within agencies supporting that unit. That is now part of the business of those agencies to make sure that they feed real-time information into this coordination unit to support the victims of family violence.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Wouldn't they have other staff, like people answering phones?

Mr JOHANNES - Agencies themselves, Ms Armitage, have many staff.

Mrs ARMITAGE - So it is not to be actually coming from this unit that you are not going to be funding extra staff coming in to set this up, apart from the members of the unit?

Mr HODGMAN - That is the table allocation.

Mrs ARMITAGE - That covers 19, is it?

Mr JOHANNES - The unit has 11, it will be drawing on agencies and their existing programs and information systems. In addition, another eight people have been employed elsewhere in the service to support victims of family violence in various departments.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I was thinking of the support staff for the actual unit. Sometimes it can get bigger than Ben Hur.

Mr HODGMAN - No, it is a discrete 11. It is an \$8 million unit in terms of its cost and the position outstanding is an administrative position. It is very self-sufficient. I have visited it and met the new staff there. They will be on the phone. They will be coordinating their responses and activities as it is intended.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Let's hope you find funding for the forward Estimates to 2019.

Mr VALENTINE - It sounds to me like it is largely a coordinating role. What I am interested in is basically how it might work. A lot of teachers come into contact with people that have been victims of violence in some way and they would normally ring the Child Protection Unit. How is this going to interact with Child Protection and how is that going to work? It is fair to say that police officers do but teachers certainly do, and to have only one from Education might be a little under-resourced in that particular sector.

Ms SPENCER - When I visited the South Australian MAPPS office that the Premier spoke about, I saw a case of where the members of the coordination unit sit around a table not unlike this and receive information on an incident that might have occurred overnight. They then go away and map that incident from reflecting into their own databases. Education would look to see if there were children involved, what the attendance was like at school, for example. They then reconvene later in the day and share all of that information, including a management strategy. It may be that it is referred back to the school psychologist to follow up with the student. It may be to Child Protection, it may be through the Safe at Home system that we have, like a coordinated management response. Schools very much have a role but it is all part of how that is mapped and what is seen as being the critical issues.

Mr VALENTINE - I suppose it is getting the logistics right. Obviously Child Protection would seem overloaded in the past. I guess this is a move to somehow fill a bit of a gap in some ways or create greater coordination. I am wondering if in Child Protection they have not had the time to fill out the records then this unit is not going to have any information to run with, if you know what I am trying to say. I am interested to know how that interaction happens. You are telling me it is coordination; you have to have the on ground information first to be able to coordinate it properly. Do you see the complex issue and problem that is going to exist here?

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Valentine, I absolutely understand what you are saying. The Government, as you know, is also making a substantial investment in child protection and children's services. One of the benefits of this system is that we will be able to reach into Justice, Police, Health and Human Services, Education - it will do a few things. One, it will make sure in future that we do not have four separate agencies going in and visiting the same individual on the same day, but equally it will make sure that there are multiple trigger points

into the system so, as Wendy says, a team can sit down and say, 'This is what we have heard from police, and this individual or this family might not be known to the child protection system but they are known to Education and they are known to Justice; that is giving us enough information that we need to go in there and engage.'

Mr VALENTINE - Let us hope it works because it is certainly needed.

CHAIR - Premier, I have a question in relation to the initial stage after a family violence incident has occurred. It has been suggested that in more and more rural and remote areas there are no safe houses. Children, and often the mother, are taken away from their own environment where they have some friends and some networks that might be useful. If you are from St Helens and you are put into Launceston without any support and no-one around you - does this area look at that issue as well? I know it crosses somewhat into accommodation but I would have thought it is part of this action plan for family violence. Can you give some indication of what has been progressed there?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. It is a very valid point and we have made additional commitments to support women's shelters, the Hobart Women's Shelter for example.

CHAIR - But they are in the city; I am talking about rural and remote areas.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, I understand that. We are providing more supportive housing options for families affected by violence. We have a rapid rehousing program that is progressively establishing a pool of 50 rental properties around the state to enable victims to move out of crisis accommodation into secure supported housing. The properties may also be available for perpetrators, so that victims of family violence can remain in their own homes, if it safe to do so. Needless to say, it is a complex scenario but sometimes that is a more appropriate course.

Five properties under the program have been approved and four households are now safely housed. Up to 20 homes will be provided by the end of this month.

CHAIR - That is going to spread around the state?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

CHAIR - I do not need to know the locations. I certainly want to know that there are more than just Devonport, Launceston and Hobart.

Mr HODGMAN - It was a \$2.4 million allocation under Safe Homes Safe Families budget expenditure. As at the 30 April this year, that was \$80 000.

Amendments to the Residential Tenancy Act have been made to enable participating community housing providers to lease appropriate private rentals to families impacted by family violence as well.

CHAIR - Thank you. That is very pleasing to hear.

Mr DEAN - Obviously this unit will be a day operation only - Monday to Friday, is that it?

Ms SPENCER - Yes, it is a five-day a week operation. However the referrals come in through the police and they operate their incidents 24/7.

When we visited South Australia it was a Monday morning, so there was a large amount of work to follow up from for Friday night, Saturday and Sunday. But it is done first thing on the Monday morning.

Mr DEAN - So each case dealt with involving family violence will come into this unit. Police are attending these matters around the state in any one night. They probably have 15 or 20 domestic assaults to attend. Currently it is only operating in the south, to see whether it will work, as I understand it.

Mr JOHANNES - There are two aspects - the coordination unit and another initiative called Safe Choices. We might provide some more information subsequent to your question on Safe Choices. So the coordination unit only operates in the south and it is only intended to. It is not offering direct services but the Safe Choices unit will be rolled out in the south in the first instance for 12 months. Then the government is committed to put it into the north-west and north after we evaluate it.

Mr DEAN - This has never been dealt with in isolation. The police never dealt with family violence in isolation previously. It is making it appear as though this matter of family violence was always dealt with in isolation, with each department doing their own thing. Yet there was always a crossover, with police working with other organisations.

I am just questioning how we will get the benefit from this current unit that is set up. There are three important areas they are looking at including 'changing attitudes and behaviours that lead to family violence'. I would like to know what is being done for that to occur because that hones in on the perpetrators. How and what is this unit going to do in that regard and what is the educational side of it? The reason I ask that is that the police continually tell us now that it is only through additional education that we are getting the additional reporting of family violence. The family violence numbers are going up, but I would question that because for the last 15 years, police have been telling us that. When I was in the job, we were trying to say that that was the reason. It is time we accepted the fact that family violence is not dropping off in the state.

[10.10 a.m.]

Mr HODGMAN - No, certainly not. Without wanting to at all appear critical of any agency or any contact point, it is true to say that they are not always perfect. The Rosie Batty example is a national one that has helped develop a more coordinated approach. It is not to say that there won't be direct and available support and resources on hand in local communities, most often through the police service. This is about coordinating the response to a family violence incident and also collaboration between agencies, information sharing and gathering. There is a range of activities that go to providing a more coordinated government response to this issue.

The other element of this is providing direct contact support and a contact point for victims. On the matters you raise, educating young Australians is critical, and teaching them about respectful relationships. The program we are now rolling out into all Tasmanian government schools from kindergarten to year 12, the Respectful Relationships Education

Program, is to build healthy, respectful, equal relationships and address those cultural attitudes and behaviours that can typically lead to family violence. We have 62 000 students currently enrolled in Tasmanian schools and this is designed to get into the hearts and minds of our young Tasmanians. There is \$355 000 allocated under the action plan. It is being developed by the Department of Education with Respectful Relationship education programs, which is a nationally adopted program. It is to be delivered into all Tasmanian schools by 2017.

We are also contributing to the national advertising campaign. Members may have seen it on television already. It is a \$30 million national campaign that goes to addressing attitudes and cultural behaviours that are negative towards women, and which contribute to family violence. There is a \$322 877 commitment by the state, which is our share of the national campaign. This is a joint initiative that has been fuelled by our discussions at COAG and through the national campaign and taskforce, which Rosie Batty was on. That is up and running and the national campaign Stop It at the Start, launched on 20 April will run right through to 2018. There will be campaign materials and deliverables on television, print advertising resources and other tools, public relation campaigns, a campaign website - www.respect.gov.au - community education and engagement initiatives.

It is to help address what is very much, sadly, culturally entrenched. You are right; the statistics suggest that the rate of family violence is increasing. Certainly, the rate of reporting and the willingness of victims to report have increased, as we expected they would through greater public awareness and the advertising campaigns that I have been talking about. We always anticipated increased demand.

Mr DEAN - It sounds good. There is a lot of rhetoric around this whole thing, so my question comes from that. Will this unit also be responsible for putting forward suggestions about how we should make changes in this area - for instance, possibly making domestic violence a crime and attaching more importance to it? Under the area of strengthening our legal response, will they be putting forward suggestions of trialling electronic monitoring, for instance? Maybe we need to do all of these other things in that area as well? Will they be responsible for bringing forward actual issues?

The very important question I need to ask is: how will we know whether this unit has had any success at all? What measurement systems will we have in place to measure the success or otherwise of this unit, rather than just talk?

Mr HODGMAN - There is a lot more than just talk. There is \$26 million committed and being expended, and a lot of seriously practical things we are implementing to deal with this. We will review and we will be nimble in our responses and we will see what is happening in other jurisdictions. We will do what we can, looking at legislative changes here, to improve the effectiveness of our response, to ensure that perpetrators are held to account for their behaviour, and for improving the safety of victims.

The family violence amendment bill 2015 passed by the parliament in October last year with one such legislative improvement that we have made, and that strengthens and clarifies the operation of the Family Violence Act of 2004, as you would be aware, where we make a ban on the publication of any materials that might identify an affected child in family violence proceedings, extending the time in which a prosecution under the act may be brought for economic abuse or emotional abuse. That is an important addition to our

legislative regime, which appreciates that financial or economic abuse is also a form of family violence.

Mr DEAN - That is what we have done. What are we going to do?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, and there were other very significant additions to our legislative framework. We are considering further legislative amendments to strengthen our response. Implementation of this act has been done through the Department of Justice but that involves looking at what happens in other jurisdictions to see what we can implement here. Wendy or Greg, do you have anything to add on that?

Ms SPENCER - Just to say that whilst the Safe Families Coordination Unit will continue to provide information and advice on how we can amend our response and build on our response, we also have a research institute, ANROWS, which the state government contributes to. That is Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety. We have a sentencing advisory council, we have coroners' reports, we have a range of mechanisms by which we can continue to adjust and monitor our response. That goes to the point around having a flexible approach to family violence. The Safe Families Coordination Unit is one form of advice that the government will use to inform its approach going forward.

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Dean, I might add to that. When the Premier stated that we would develop a new family violence action plan, we put together the five relevant heads of agency and we met weekly during development of the plan in support of a Cabinet subcommittee that the Premier established. That Cabinet subcommittee is continuing to meet and those heads of agency are continuing to meet regularly, not only to oversee implementation of the plan, but also to consider what additional actions we might recommend that the Government take in this area.

We will continue to evaluate. New opportunities have come up in relation to the Commonwealth government funding. We have been trying to pursue those as part of continuing to learn and provide advice to Government on where we think more investment or different legislative amendments might be made to strengthen the response. One of the key inputs will be from the people on the tools, on the ground, both within agencies and in the coordination unit because they are really at the coal face. Part of making sure we provide good advice to Government is hearing from the people delivering the services and taking the calls.

Mr DEAN - Premier, when this unit deals with a case, they come out on a Monday morning, they pick one of the 20 or 30 cases, they will look at this case, have discussions around the table. They will bring all the groups of people in and they will talk around it. What does this unit do from there? Do they say, this is what we now need to do in this case, and they give that advice through all of the organisations and the departments involved. If that is not followed up and done correctly, what happens? What responsibility comes back onto this unit? What path do they have to play in that? Where do the responsibilities lie for the further actioning of matters?

Ms SPENCER - That work would be allocated to a particular department for responsibility. If it went to Justice for, let us say, a criminal response of some description, that comes up on the database as an allocated. Each week it is updated. Has it been done, completed? What is the status? If it is not completed, it comes into an amber traffic light,

then to a red traffic light. It is ultimately the secretary of that department's responsibility. One of the unique aspects of the coordination unit is the use of a common database and information session to do the mapping, and then records the progress as it is handed out.

Mr DEAN - The measurement will be that we will see less domestic violence committed in this state? Is that the position, Premier? Will the measurement be success of the unit?

Mr HODGMAN - You would hope that over time. It is the whole intention of the action plan to see a reduction in the incidence of family violence. It is true to say while it appears that the rate of family violence incidents is increasing, or at least being more reported, the initial test of this unit is to ensure we provide the best response to those circumstances as they come to the attention of government, so we do not have victims like Rosie Batty falling through the cracks and being in contact with multiple agencies but none of them getting together to effect a proper and appropriate response.

Mr VALENTINE - With respect, the more individuals who have their hands on a case, if that case ends up being progressed through to a court, you have the sort of protocols in place so that you have a very good control over the paper path involved with this. It is a great initiative but it can also be very complex and very involved.

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Valentine, you are absolutely right. That is one of the reasons to establish the unit so that all of the information surrounding a case is coordinated in the one place drawing on multiple agencies. If it does end up in the court system, there is a very solid audit trail of documentation and information behind it.

Mr VALENTINE - Who would be handling it in the court?

Mr JOHANNES - It would not be the unit.

Mr HODGMAN - Police prosecutors, and there are three additional dedicated police prosecutors, one in each region, that are funded by the plan to ensure there is consistent, specialised prosecution of these cases in the courts.

These additional prosecutors are enhancing the support available for clients affected by family violence, including in regional areas. That is part of the family violence action plan. It provides more targeted, specialised, prosecutorial assistance for those who are the victims but also to deal adequately with the perpetrators when they come into contact with the criminal justice system.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you.

CHAIR - I am going to give everyone a bit of an incentive. If we can get through the next output group 2, we can go to morning tea.

Output Group 2

Government Processes and Services

Mr VALENTINE - The reduction of \$255 000. What is that a result of, in this line item? I notice the out years are pretty static but I am interested in that component.

Mr STRONG - Mr Valentine, there are a couple of aspects to that. There is a decrease in \$31 000 for the UTAS scholarship, which is one of the budget savings identified for 2014. An offset for the twenty-seventh pay, which you will hear as a comment later in this discussion and there was some initial funding which expires in that year. I want to say that does not mean that funding for corporate support staff stopped. It was an additional claim that was provided previously.

Mr VALENTINE - The level of FTEs in this sub-output, if you can provide that.

Mr STRONG - Certainly. As at 31 March, direct staffing was 20.64 FTEs and the overhead staffing was 3.23.

Mr VALENTINE - What was the 3.23?

Mr STRONG - Overhead staffing, corporate support staff.

Mr VALENTINE - I notice that last year it was 21.73 but apparently there were some unfilled vacancies.

Mr STRONG - Yes. Some movements. Direct staffing last year was 20.29, so the direct staffing has hardly moved.

Mr VALENTINE - FTEs in the communications and marketing unit.

Mr HODGMAN - As at 31 March DPAC had 5.8 FTEs for communications staff and were all situated within the newly-restructured Communications and Protocol Unit. This compares to 5.9 FTEs at the same time in the former communications and marketing unit. Currently the staff composition is as follows: an acting manager, 1 FTE; an acting assistance manager, 1 FTE; communications consultants, 1.8 FTEs; and multimedia specialists, 2 FTEs. The substantive manager and assistant manager are both on paid maternity leave at the time.

Mr MARSTON - At this point it is topical to note the entirety of this unit is swapped over into the Public Information Unit because of the floods. Their work ceases and they coordinate all the messaging - and you mentioned social media. It is a very important way for us to get messages out about where to keep people away from floodwaters, where evacuation centres are, and so on. We also draw on other agencies. We have a network and we have activated the unit and other people and agencies also come in to assist. As a public service we don't operate 24 hours a day as the emergency services do, but we provide a service nearly 24 hours a day to coordinate that through the Tas Alert site.

Mr VALENTINE - So the SES control unit is separate to this and this gets information from the SES unit and then disseminates it to the public?

Mr MARSTON - And from the Department of Health with, say, sewage in floodwaters and things like that, and the Education department around school closures. We end up the central source of truth with regard to communications and we then put that out. We also make sure all the messaging is lined up and consistent using same language and things like that.

Mr VALENTINE - With the SES control, they obviously have a website as well. The information is only coming from your unit, not through their website?

Mr MARSTON - No, we have multiple channels. Tasmania Police has its own as well but we are the one site that has everything. People can go to Tas Alert and receive all the different sources of information. When it comes to general messaging about what is going on, updates and so on - the updates have road closures, school closures, a health alert - and that comes from the Public Information Unit at times like this.

Mr VALENTINE - Presumably it works in with TasNetworks for outages and things like that?

Mr MARSTON - Sure.

Mr VALENTINE - My question was going to be how was the Tas Alert system performing, but I think it is performing right now. Has it had any operational problems? They are probably working flat out to get all the information together now, but in the past has there been many operational problems with it?

Mr MARSTON - The recent fire event was a good stress test for Tas Alert because it went for so long. We have had a good look at the technology and how it is going. It has proven to be particularly robust because it gets hit a lot at times such as this. The resourcing and public service is at its best at times such as this. Everybody chips in; we have people coming in to update all round the clock. We are looking at further automation. One of the things that is not automated is social media. Twitter feeds and so on update automatically but not our own automatic Twitter and Facebook messaging. We are looking at doing that further and make some upgrades. In general terms, it is very well used. In the debrief of the recent fires it was highlighted it didn't have any operational issues.

Mr VALENTINE - Do radio stations simply access the site and find out information, or is there a person who specifically rings various radio stations, probably the ABC, to update them. A lot of people out there won't be able to access the site because they don't have power. Radio is very important.

Mr MARSTON - When the Public Information Unit is activated, as it was in the fires and as it is now, there are protocols. It is not just ABC, there are a lot of local stations; even tourist radio stations and things grab a feed and that information goes out in a coordinated fashion.

Mr VALENTINE - So that is all controlled?

Mr MARSTON - It is.

CHAIR - How are we going?

Mr VALENTINE - I have a couple of extra questions. The Public Sector Management Program is part of this. How are the Queensland people delivering on this and do we know how much in total departments in our State Service pay for their courses?

Mr VALENTINE - How many SESs in the department?

Mr MARSTON - We have undertaken to table that as part of the overview.

Mr VALENTINE - That is a State Service one, isn't it.

Mr MARSTON - We have the whole-of-government ready to table at lunchtime which will include the department.

Mr VALENTINE - The other one was the Premier's Discretionary Fund but you have requested a copy of that.

CHAIR - That is on its way.

Mr WILLIE - I understand the department's Protocol Office is under this line item and it is responsible for managing official visits. Is that correct?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr WILLIE - Can you confirm that the Protocol Office was involved in organising Julie Bishop's recent visit to Tasmania just prior to the federal election being called?

Mr HODGMAN - You are referring to the visit of ambassadors and other dignitaries?

Mr JOHANNES - Given it involved 84 heads of mission.

Mr HODGMAN - The Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and an 80 strong contingent of the Canberra Diplomatic Corps visited Tasmania from 28 to 30 April 2016. I joined them at an event at Frogmore Creek Vineyard on Friday 29 April 2016 which was part of a statewide visit. It is something that occurs relatively frequently for our diplomatic corps to visit parts of Australia outside Canberra, which is a good thing. It gave us a tremendous opportunity to showcase what Tasmania has to offer, our produce, the high quality of what we offer by way of tourism experience and for them to visit and meet with Tasmanian businesses and have site visits. They visited the Antarctic Division.

Mr WILLIE - I have a couple more questions. If the Premier could table the itinerary and then if I could put a question through the Chair.

Mr HODGMAN - I don't have the itinerary with me but we can find that.

Mr WILLIE - Some further questions. Did it include any party political engagements, meetings or fundraisers?

Mr HODGMAN - I am not in a position to -

Mr MARSTON - With regard to the actual arrangements, I am not aware of that. Our participation was relatively minor in the scheme of things. It was all organised through DPAC because the Prime Minister has a team of people who organise this. We took a lead role in the event the Premier discussed and that was a big success. We did some general organising. We were kept informed of where they were but as far as the actual arrangements,

buses, accommodation, the trip around the state and so on, we didn't do that. We did take a lead role in that particular event at Frogmore Creek.

Mr WILLIE - My last question is how much public money was expended on the visit?

Mr HODGMAN - The approximate cost of the visit was \$21 000 for the state. Insofar as cost incurred by other agencies or bodies I am not sure. As I say it involved a whole range of other such visits. The only event I was involved with was the luncheon forum, at which I spoke, as did minister Bishop, attended by around 30 Tasmanian businesspeople and industry leaders. They were able to display their produce. There was a very effective presentation from a number of Tasmanian businesses, which was very well received and attended. It came around an itinerary that included visits to MONA, Incat and Liferaft Systems, a visit to the Australian Antarctic Division, a reception at Government House, a northern business presentation at Cataract Gorge, a visit to the Australian Maritime College, and another function.-

CHAIR - Thanks, Premier, considering I did not get an invite to any of them I think we will move right on. If there are no other questions in this line item I will move on to 2.2 Principal and Subordinate Legislation.

2.2 Principal and Subordinate Legislation -

CHAIR - Obviously there is an increase in this line item and a note tells me that it is to employ two extra positions in the Office of Parliamentary Counsel. I feel sure that that will be very much appreciated by OPC Office. Can you give me a very brief overview or rundown on that?

Mr HODGMAN - You are right.

CHAIR - There is two staff, \$200 000?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

CHAIR - Pretty easy to work out their salary then, so we do not have to worry about looking at that later. In regard to the printing of the *Gazette*, I believe that I recall that that might be a legislative requirement for the printing of it, but in this day and age of technology is it still relevant? Can we just have some idea of if we need to change the legislation and we need to put OPC to work so we no longer have to print the *Gazette*?

Mr JOHANNES - I will just introduce to the table, through you, Premier, Robyn Webb, our new Chief Parliamentary Counsel.

CHAIR - Welcome, Robyn. You have done a fantastic job, probably really happy about the expert staffing.

Ms WEBB - Yes, currently it is a statutory requirement for various instruments to be published in the *Gazette*. Publication of the *Gazette* entails the written published document.

CHAIR - Premier, would there be the will from the Government to change that legislation, because it seems to me that nobody looks at the *Gazette* in the paper format anymore.

Mr HODGMAN - If that is indeed the case.

Ms WEBB - We would have to examine the implications of it and to consider the matter having regard to what has been the case in other jurisdictions to make sure that we avoid any difficulty.

CHAIR - Check with Western Australia, they do things quite out of the box. They do. They just do their own thing over there. I quite like their style.

Mr FINCH - Along with their Premier.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a good point and one that we will continue to monitor and assess experience elsewhere.

CHAIR - I am pretty sure the question has been asked previously, so if we could get an undertaking, Premier, that somebody has a look at it and get back to the Legislative Council that would be very much appreciated. You could even write a letter to the Chair of the Subordinate Legislation Committee.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

CHAIR - Then everybody will know about it.

Mr MARSTON - Through our Contracts and Procurement Unit and working the OPC, as we refer to them, we have reduced the printing costs significantly. We do not print anywhere near as many as we once did. I do not think there is anything that we do not also have available online. The information is much more accessible and we have reduced those printing costs.

Mr VALENTINE - Just an observation I made last year and wondered whether it could be considered and that is if we could be provided with marked up bills, because it is Mr Ed that is dealing with you know.

CHAIR - David was ready and waiting. Quick as a piece of paper delivered.

Mr VALENTINE - He obviously read the last year's *Hansard*.

Mr HODGMAN - I am advised the Office of Parliamentary Counsel is currently managing a significant upgrade to an act. One of those upgrades to an act has been completed and the department will be discussing with the Chief Parliamentary Counsel the option of providing marked up copies, whether it is feasible and whether there would be additional costs.

Ms WEBB - The only thing I would like add is you might be very interested in seeing your parliamentary amendments included in mark-ups. That will not be possible except by a very manual process because of the way we generate those amendments. I am not sure if

your concern is primarily limited to bills and their effect on amending legislation or if you are also interested in having parliamentary amendments.

Mr VALENTINE - It is more particularly the amendments because that is when you need to be going back to the original act and seeing what affect it has in the act. I would have thought the officers doing the amendments would be working off a mark-up in the first instance, and then put into the system to generate the amendment bill wouldn't they?

Ms WEBB - That is correct although sometimes when we are producing those there are glitches so what we would be reproducing, what we see in the document we are working on is not the legislation as it will appear after we amend it. Part of what we are doing in the enact up grade is to remove those glitches so we can provide that mark-up.

Mr VALENTINE - That is music to the ears of a lot of people. I look forward to, hopefully, receiving one or two. It has happened in the past and I know it is probably something that says all care and no responsibility almost because the actual amendment as it is currently written is important for the record.

CHAIR - Thank you. We really appreciate that advice and we will look forward to hearing how we go with the Gazette. So thank you very much and the marked up copies.

2.3 Tasmanian government courier -

CHAIR - I invite Mr Willie to lead the questioning. Thank you.

Mr WILLIE - Premier, as a newcomer to the Parliament can you please give a quick overview of the Government courier service? With the increasing use of technology is there any concern of future job cuts?

Mr HODGMAN - The courier service is important. It provides transportation of all mail and small parcels between government and departmental offices. Sorting of incoming and outgoing mail, liaison with Australia Post and other third party mailing houses. Management of external couriers who provide transport between Hobart, Launceston, the north-west coast regions, Devonport, Ulverstone and Burnie. The five couriers are located in Hobart and in Launceston there are two. Certainly there is no intention of reducing staffing levels or to alter the scope of services.

Mr DEAN - They do a great job.

Mr HODGMAN - They do. They are very efficient. They are also a critical communication link for government departments, are very responsive and a constant presence. I am sure people would have noticed them in our workplaces. The department also relies on casual relief to provide assistance when our permanent staff are on planned or unplanned leave. The focus of this service centres on the Hobart and Launceston central business districts and other major government centres located in surrounding areas.

The mail distribution and collections on the north-west are located, as I say, there and also at Service Tasmania shop fronts in Devonport, Ulverstone and Burnie. There is certainly no intention of any alteration to staffing arrangements. Whilst technologies and I guess not a

dissimilar conversation to what we have just had, do alter business practice. The demand for our courier service remains sufficiently high to sustain what is a reasonable workforce.

CHAIR - Thank you very much. I am going to do what I said I was going to do and finish this. There are more people to consider than just us at the table, Premier. We are going to suspend. We will be back at 10.55 a.m. We have a 10 minute break and there is tea and coffee along the hallway. Thank you very much for this morning.

The committee suspended from 10.45 a.m. to 10.58 a.m.

CHAIR - Welcome back and let us continue. I will take everyone to 2.4, corporate support for ministerial and Parliamentary offices and the office of the Governor. I would like to invite Mr Finch to lead off the questions.

Mr FINCH - Mr Premier, a steady rise here over the forward Estimates, as you would expect with steadily increasing costs. What does corporate support, ministerial and parliamentary offices involve? Does it include things like advisers? Just give me a breakdown of what that line item actually represents.

Mr HODGMAN - It is HR services, including payroll processing, recruitment and exit services, employee relations, industrial advice and performance management, financial services including processing, payment of receipts, budget management and financial recording, properties and procurement services including accommodation management, tender management, ordering and procurement, information services including records management services, information and communications technology support, provision of new information services and technologies and executive reporting including annual reporting and governance management. Ministerial and parliamentary offices include ministerial offices, Premier's office, media, the opposition offices, electorate offices for all parliamentary members of the House of Assembly.

Mr FINCH - And it only takes \$1.7 million to do that, wow. It seems a busy little item there. Have we had that before as a line item?

CHAIR - It just did not get a guernsey last year.

Mr HODGMAN - You are right, it is a very busy and important set of services provided.

Mr STRONG - Essentially ministry or parliamentary service do not have a corporate branch that manage these particular aspects. DPAC provides these services along side the corporate support we provide to DPAC. It is back-end services - the HR services et cetera. It is purely having resources to support ministry on parliamentary support in that aspect. It has nothing to do with advisers or anything like that. It is purely corporate support.

Mr MARSTON - The drivers we use, things like finances - the number of invoices we process - and we divide up the costs across everything that we do. We are exactly the same. They are treated as a client just as every other output.

CHAIR - Do they do lease arrangements for those offices as well?

Mr MARSTON - Yes.

CHAIR - They do everything.

Mr MARSTON - Yes.

Output group 3
Electronic services

3.2 Management and Ongoing Development of Service Tasmania

Mr HODGMAN - I welcome Kathy Baker to the stage, the director of Service Tasmania.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Can you tell me how many shops do we currently have? Has it increased or is it still the same number?

Ms BAKER - The status quo is at 27.

Mrs ARMITAGE - The largest at the moment with the largest volume?

Ms BAKER - In terms of volume our busiest centre is Launceston. In the period from 1 July to 31 May they completed 211 223 transactions and the second busiest is Hobart. For that same period, 1 July to 31 May, they completed 178 616 transactions.

Mrs ARMITAGE - With Service Tasmania Launceston being so busy, and previously there was an office up in the northern suburbs to try and split the area somewhat, is there a possibility that you might be opening another branch?

Mr DEAN - In Mowbray.

Mrs ARMITAGE - That is right, quite seriously, in the northern suburbs which is a huge user and it is a disadvantaged area. With people having to try to get down to Service Tasmania, is there a possibility that there might be even a small satellite office open?

Ms BAKER - It is not our intention to open any more service centres. We don't have any new funding available to open a mini-service centre. The general shift is from customers to use online and telephone transactions as a method to deal with Government. Our emphasis is in developing more telephone and internet services as opposed to more face-to-face service delivery outlets.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Do you have any numbers of comparisons with the in-person visits as opposed to the online and by phone?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, a break down of contacts.

Mrs ARMITAGE - If you could provide the break down of the in-person visits, the comparisons, how it is changing and the online and by telephone.

Ms BAKER - In terms of the period 31 March 2015 to 31 March 2016 1 563 942 transactions have been carried out across the network in Tasmania with \$173 million in Government revenue collected. In terms of the contact centre, as far as inbound calls to Government, there has been 277 573 inbound calls. On top of that we have a range of telephone and internet bill payment services. This is where customers are self-served to complete their transaction with Government. In that same period, 31 March 2015 to 31 March 2016 there has been 319 735 electronic payments completed, either over the phone or online. In terms of our online request for information - customers coming to the Service Tasmania portal and requesting information, accessing a form - there have been 2 337 735 requests for information in that same period, 31 March 2015 to 31 March 2016.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Do we have a comparison with the previous year?

Ms BAKER - I don't have that with me today.

Mrs ARMITAGE - If I can take that on notice to see how it is comparing and how it is tracking.

Ms BAKER - Yes, certainly.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Staffwise, across the state, are you able to give me FTE levels for each of the three regions? Has it changed, or gone up or down?

Ms BAKER - I can read out what I have here today and we can table it as a breakdown. In the northern region, there is 25.20 FTE and that equates to a total of 40 staff working across the region. In the north-west region, it is 30.15 FTE and that equates to 52 staff working across the region. In the southern region, there is a total of 47.36 FTE and that equates to 65 people working across the region.

Mrs ARMITAGE - You have more staff but they are doing fewer hours? It must be because last year, in the north, it was 25.81 for 37 staff and in the north-west it was 31.45 for 48 staff. Now you have 30.15 for 52. In the south it was 45.81 for 66 staff and now you have 65. We have more staff.

Ms BAKER - This is a point in time as at 31 March so there could be leave variations, with people on long-term absences or on maternity leave. There will be some minor fluctuations.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I understand that. For the north and north-west we have fewer FTE but more staff. I am assuming more people are doing fewer hours, so you have more part-time staff.

Ms BAKER - There are variations in their working hours. We have a very flexible workforce in Service Tasmania. A large number of people work flexible part-time hours and they are scheduled to cover our peak period. They schedule and there are variations here depending on where our peak businesses are.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Another question is to do with stress leave and the fact that maybe you have so many staff because you have to have people covering when people are sick and

stressed. You have large numbers of people coming in and I would imagine people can get irate when they are standing for a long time, waiting to be served. The other northern members, because we are domiciled in Henty House and walk through it, constantly see large numbers of people all the way out into the foyer. I notice you have seats there now for people to sit on, which is an improvement. Do you know how many staff taking sick leave are taking stress leave?

Ms BAKER - On 1 July 2015, staff transferred from the previous department, the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment to the Department of Premier and Cabinet. We have a different reporting regime in the Department of Premier and Cabinet. When people put in a request for sick leave, it is not flagged as stress leave. I can tell you the total number of leave days we have had taken across the organisations. There are a number of indications of workplace stress. One of those is sick leave. A number of those are to do with our workplace incidents. Perhaps I could read through some of the information.

Mrs ARMITAGE - That would be good, thank you.

Ms BAKER - From 1 July 2015 to 31 March 2016, there have been a total of 13 workplace incidents within Service Tasmania. Of those, four of those have been as a result of direct threats from the public - either abusive, agitated or hostile customers.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Were they in some of your major centres?

Ms BAKER - Within our service centres. I do not have the breakdown of which sites these are.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I was wondering whether they were the busier ones.

Ms BAKER - I do not have the breakdown here. With physical injuries in terms of staff having slips, trips, falls, strains or cuts, there have been eight incidents. We have had one incident of anxiety as a result of staff member witnessing a nasty vehicle crash on their way to and from a Service Tasmania location. That is a total of 13 workplace events across the organisation.

In terms of sick leave, there have been 1,383 days of sick and carer's leave taken since 1 July 2015 and that averages out at 7.63 days of sick and carer's leave per employee. In terms of averaging that out across a workforce of in excess of 180 people, it is an average of 7.63 sick or carer's days per FTE.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Which is considerable.

Mr HODGMAN - It is less than our whole department, interestingly.

Mr JOHANNES - There is provision under workplace arrangements where a full-time employee gets 20 days of personal leave a year, and that includes sick leave. They are taking less than half.

Ms BAKER - With a predominantly female, part-time workforce where people are caring for young children as members of their family, there are going to be instances where

young children get sick and their carer needs to provide care for them away from the workplace.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Do you have workers compensation separately to the other instances that you mentioned?

Mr HODGMAN - There are no new workers compensation claims this financial year, or from 1 July 2015 to 31 March. There is one outstanding -

Mrs ARMITAGE - Was it stress related?

Ms BAKER - No, it is a physical injury.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Another thing that was mentioned to me, and I am assuming you are going to tell me you don't have the funding, but in terms of reducing queues I have been told that in the larger centres, probably the north and the south, on occasion there has been the ability to have a staff member directing and checking what people have - whether they have their documents. It speeds up the queues and moves them along. Is there any money in the budget to have somebody, even part-time, being able to direct and move the queues along?

Ms BAKER - We call that role a concierge role, and that is where we have a member of our existing establishment working at our larger centres to meet and greet our customers, to make sure their documents are ready so they are not going through the pain of -

Mrs ARMITAGE - To speed it all up.

Ms BAKER - Yes - to line up and get to the point of being served and then realising they don't have an essential piece of evidence of identity document to complete the transaction. We use those, and our larger sites is where they have the most relevance.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Does Launceston, being a larger site, have one? I have never seen one.

Ms BAKER - They have had people on the other side of the counter from time to time, so that does happen. There are a number of improvements we are looking to make in terms of Launceston. One of the things we are investing in is a queue management system. That will have the ability for a customer to come in, indicate at a kiosk what they are there for, either take a seat and wait for their turn to be served or go away if there is going to be a time delay - input their mobile phone number and get an SMS message to indicate when it is time for them to come back.

Some other improvements on the horizon at Henty House, which the Department of Treasury and Finance are leading, is a redevelopment of Henty House. One of the significant constraints we have in the current Launceston location is the physical amenity of that site. The Department of Treasury and Finance is leading a negotiation with the building owner around a redevelopment of Henty House. There is something on the horizon for Launceston.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Could we explore that a little further. My understanding is that the redevelopment of Henty House is to change the entrance to the other side.

Ms BAKER - We haven't got to that level of detail yet.

Mrs ARMITAGE - That's interesting.

Ms BAKER - It has been mooted that there may be possibility to have an alternative entrance and use some of the forecourt but we haven't done any detailed plans at this point.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I am wondering what the benefit of that is. You are not changing the footprint of Service Tasmania, you are purely changing that people, instead of standing in the foyer when you first walk into the middle of Henty House, they would be standing out in the forecourt outside so it may not look as bad for people walking into the centre. I am wondering what other developments you are planning to do to the actual floor itself.

Ms BAKER - It is more than just changing the entrance. We would be looking at modifying the counter area. Launceston is the only site where we have dual counters, so having one seamless counter for customers putting in more opportunities for customers when they come on site to self-service. If they want to use a public access terminal we could have staff assist them to start their journey of being able to self-service with government. That is the type of infrastructure we are looking for.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Do we have self-service there now?

Ms BAKER - We do.

Mrs ARMITAGE - How many do you have?

Ms BAKER - We have two terminals but they are tucked away. They are isolated from the area where staff can actually provide support for customers to start what would be a long-term change in customer behaviour to interact on a self-service basis.

CHAIR - I can see there are lot more questions in this area.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I have one other but Mr Finch would you like to do that one?

Mr FINCH - Yes. I received a phone call, probably one of the most colourful phone calls I have ever received, concerned about the operation of Service Tas. It was about having to wait on the phone for a long period of time. I went down the same route of phoning to see what happened. Of course you have the link with people saying, 'If you don't want to wait on the line, leave your number and we'll call you back'. I had to wait 30 minutes but at least it meant I could get on with business, do other things, while waiting for the call to come in. The chap was most irate, probably too irate to listen to the instructions he was being given.

Ms BAKER - That new functionality came online on 1 July last year for the ability for customers to reserve their place in the queue and go off and do other business. It has been really embraced by our customers, with about more than 34 000 customers electing to have a call-back option. Most of those calls are on average returned in about 14 minutes. 30

minutes is probably an extreme case. We are getting back to most people within 14 minutes of them originally calling, and we are getting really good feedback from our customers.

Our contact centre has undergone a lot of change in the last 12 months. We have brought in a lot of new streams of business into the contact centre, so providing customers with one number to call and providing a much more complex service than we used to. Historically Service Tasmania used to run a switchboard service, so you rang and said, 'Can I speak to transport?' and we switched you straight through. We are now actually resolving those calls at the first point of answer, which means our call times are taking longer than they used to, but we are providing an enhanced level of service to customers so that they are dealing with the one person and getting a resolution to their inquiry. If we cannot answer them straight away, we have got the ability for them to reserve their place in the queue.

Mr FINCH - His main complaint was that he ran a business and he could not afford the time to be sitting waiting on the phone, which I completely understood. I thought that is not fair on somebody trying to run a business having to wait. I will say also I got a couple of calls in respect of trying to run me down to say, 'Call back. Where are you? We are trying to help you.' I was very impressed.

Mr DEAN - Just on the staffing, the Hobart office - what is in the Hobart office again?

Ms BAKER - In Hobart we have a head count of 13 and an FTE of 10.57.

Mr DEAN - 13 head count in Hobart?

Ms BAKER - Yes.

Mr DEAN - In Launceston?

Ms BAKER - In Launceston we have a head count of 20 and an FTE of 11.56.

Mr DEAN - My question is, what sort of security is there for your staff? You have gone through the number of incidents that have occurred and the abuse and so on. What sort of security is provided in these Service Tasmania offices for staff?

Ms BAKER - We have a range of security. It starts when a new member of staff starts with Service Tasmania. We have a six-week induction period where they are trained in dealing with obviously how to access systems, but how to manage customer behaviour within a service centre, and how to deal with the infrastructure that we provide. We have CCTV in all of our service centres which is monitoring customer activity and also staff activity. We have security access on our doors and we have duress alarms in the event of a major event within a service centre.

Mr DEAN - They are protected in that regard, which is good. I have another question. Absenteeism: has that improved? What was the figure last year?

Ms BAKER - I have not actually got the previous financial year's information with me in terms of sick and carer's leave because the bulk of our staff at that stage were employed by another department. I do not have that information readily available to compare the current year to previous years.

Mr DEAN - My question coming from that is what absenteeism management structures do you have in place to I guess address that issue?

Ms BAKER - We are obviously subject to the State Service Act. Each individual client service officer has a line manager, so they are required to report into their line manager if they are not coming to work. Then there is follow-up activity that happens with each of our employees around the nature of their illness? First and foremost, depending on the response to that, is whether or not we offer employee assistance programs. If people have got a long-term issue that they are dealing with, there is a range of support that can be provided by the department, including the employee assistance program.

The standard process is you call in and have a conversation with your manager. We ascertain then what the nature of your absence is, work out whether it is just, 'I have got a sick child today and I need to stay home with them,' then there is no further action. They put in their leave request. If there is a long-term systemic issue, there is guidance and direction provided by the manager and also assistance provided as part of the employee assistance program.

Mr DEAN - You have good staff in Launceston, right? I think their staff is very good.

Ms BAKER - We have got good staff across the organization.

Mr DEAN - You probably do, but Launceston is very good. The domestic violence situation - because of the whole of Government department position in relation to providing support and relief to people within the service, have you had any domestic violence leave occur during this time?

Ms BAKER - Not that I have tracked through this, because we don't track it as a different type of leave. It would be classified under 'sick and carers leave'. The Department of Premier and Cabinet is going through a White Ribbon workplace accreditation program and that will require all our staff to participate in training around violence against women in the workplace as well.

Mr DEAN - Is it envisaged you will be monitoring the domestic violence leave? Yesterday Education was able to tell us the number of personnel taking domestic violence leave within that department.

Mr HODGMAN - In as much as we can. The secretary will be able to speak a little as to our expectations in this area. The commitment is to offer 10 days dedicated leave for circumstances involving family violence but I would imagine the experience is that not often would circumstances of that nature be communicated to a supervisor or manager.

Mr JOHANNES - Our experience, and certainly the experience of organisations such as Telstra, is people are reluctant to roll up to their manager and say, 'I've been a victim of domestic and family violence. Can I please have leave?' We make it as easy as possible for people to get access to that leave. Under the personal leave provisions they do not have to say it was domestic violence. In the case of Education, it is a bit different because Education needs to formally roster on teachers when other teachers are not going to be available in the workplace. They have a slightly different arrangement. We don't expect to be able to give

you comprehensive statistics, to point to trends in the public sector because we know a lot more than 30 people, which I think is the number from last year, are affected by family violence but that is the number of people last year in the public service who said, 'I would like leave for family violence reasons'.

Mr DEAN - While I appreciate your approach to it, how can you monitor it if you don't have some idea of why the leave is? Why have the 10 days, just have it open if you are not able to monitor it. How do you monitor it?

Mr JOHANNES - We will encourage victims of family violence to do the White Ribbon accreditation program and through the new leave provisions to identify that that is the reason they are taking leave. As an employer I do not want to be in a position where I am saying, particularly to women in my workplace, 'Unless you're prepared to give me a doctor's certificate, I am not prepared to give you leave for family violence reasons'. That would be counterproductive.

Mr DEAN - I am not saying that, but I would have thought that if you could monitor to understand where it is going - and it is 10 days leave in this area. I wonder why you say 10 days because some employees would be subjected to family violence on a number of occasions through a year, unfortunately and sadly.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a figure that has been arrived at. Other employee representatives would propose a much larger figure but we have put an offer in. It is only an offer at this stage to the unions as part of our ongoing negotiations to incorporate 10 days. It happens in other jurisdictions. I guess we are just acknowledging not everyone will publicly identify but over time I think more will.

Mr JOHANNES - Of the 30 people who took family violence leave last year, the average amount of time taken was 10 hours. There was one person who took extended leave and under the arrangement the Premier has proposed, heads of agency will have the capacity to grant more than 10 days leave to an affected individual. We will do our best to encourage people to identify and monitor but I don't want to falsely promise we are going to know every case of leave being taken for domestic and family violence reasons in the organisation.

Mr DEAN - Would the Premier have some further information on that?

Mr HODGMAN - It really goes to the matters we have already canvassed. Additional support networks for our public sector management to work with our workforce to have support arrangements in place, to raise awareness through notable campaigns such as White Ribbon accreditation which will be implemented by all agencies in due course. DPAC is taking a lead role on that. We will be in a position to better monitor, not only the incidents of family violence related leave for state servants. But also how we are addressing the underlying issues as well.

CHAIR - Thank you very much. Thank you very much Kathy, I appreciate your time at the table.

Output group 4
State Service Management 4.1.

Mr VALENTINE - I am aware of the increased stressors that have been placed on public servants as a result of staff reductions and other cost saving measures.

Given the 2015-16 funding level and the fact that cuts have more particularly been across 2014-15 and 2015-16. One could expect, there are a number of appeals due to job specification mis-matches, possible claims of harassment or bullying, due to the capping of staffing levels. All sorts of frustrations that might be exhibited in that area.

I am just wondering how many appeals there have been, for those particular areas, make the comparisons between 2013-14 and 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Mr HODGMAN - We will see if that information can be sourced. In relation to an awareness of the incidents of bullying or related conduct in the state service. I think it is important to reference the People Matters Survey, that is produced each year, and independently conducted through the Victorian Public Service Commission. I am sure that it is an independent and robust method of assessing the incidents of bullying or harassment in the public service, so we can get a clear understanding.

I know that there have been some public reports and unions who have made claims about the rates of bullying and harassment in the workplace. Which do not actually correlate with the People Matters Survey, which is carried out each year. I do not know how many people were surveyed by the union movement, in respect to this.

Certainly there is a significant number of state servants in fact, over 30 per cent of the public service, participated in the survey. Which is statistically significant. Certainly that survey does not support any claims, including by the unions, about a rise in bullying.

The latest report survey, in fact found that 77 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the notion that bullying is not tolerated in my organisation and 84 per cent of respondents agreed, with the proposition that people in my workplace, or workgroup treat each other with respect.

In addition the number of formal grievances lodged, related to bullying and harassment is significantly reduced.

There were 34 out of 98 grievances in 2013-14, to three out of 116 grievances reported in 2014-15. So it is not understate the importance of continuing to be very important in this area and to continue to work as our agencies do, certainly as DPAC does, amongst management and staff to reduce the incidents of bullying and harassment, but the data is encouraging. We are committed to ongoing work to ensure the environment in which our State Service servants serve and the workplace is free from discrimination and bullying. Each year the State Service management office provides support to agencies to understand, and action result from the survey. There are a number of great examples of agencies, like TasTAFE for example, doing more to develop the new anti-bullying, anti-harassment policy in procedure and training for managers. An e-learning module is now available for them -

Mr VALENTINE - Could we get a copy of the results of the survey, Premier.

Mr PEARCE - It's made publicly available, Mr Valentine.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, we could do that.

Mr VALENTINE - I have seen a survey before when I was in the State Service myself at some point, but it would be interesting to have that provided.

Mr HODGMAN - Sure. The latest version will also include questions that go to how we can improve grievance management, policies or procedures we might adopt to better support the resolution of employment grievances. There will be additional questions asked in the new 2016 survey that was conducted between 10 and 30 May this year. The results should be out in August. There will be a new one available very soon.

Mr VALENTINE - Going to the issue of appeals and the like, can we get the level of appeals over the last three years up to 2015-16?

Mr OGLE - There are a number of avenues of review, as you may be aware. One avenue is through the Industrial Relations Act which tend to be more the union type disputes. Then we have reviews under the State Service Act. One review, obviously, is selections. The other review is what we call section 51B reviews which amount to any other action. We monitor the trends but we do not keep account of the numbers because that is what the Industrial Commission report annually on. The president has got a report that will be into the Parliament on numbers. There have been no trends I have witnessed around bullying and harassment.

Mr VALENTINE - I am specifically looking at - sorry, bullying and harassment is certainly one aspect I am interested in - but I am interested in the appeals regarding job specification mismatches and other appeals like that; not necessarily union related, if I can put it that way, but individuals actually appealing to have a classification reassessed.

Mr OGLE - We do not tend to get those any more through section 51B. There might be the odd one or two. They tend to be taken up by the union in terms of what they would describe as work value.

Mr VALENTINE - So the CPSU?

Mr OGLE - CPSU. I think our largest number of reviews comes from the Nursing Federation. It is a bit difficult to give you a number because we might have one dispute with the Nursing Federation might be 16 different value reviews.

Mr VALENTINE - I am trying to get a handle on how that might be varying over time. If you are telling me you do not have the figures you can point to directly I will be satisfied with that.

Mr JOHANNES - In support of Mr Ogle, I would say, Mr Valentine, I meet every three weeks with heads of agency and have done for the past two years. As a matter of course we talk about workplace relations. Heads of agency have not identified to me a particular trend that sees more and more individuals or unions on behalf of individuals raising concerns about job classification or process outcome. I know it is anecdotal but it sort of supports Frank's observation.

Mr HODGMAN - The practical reality is as Mr Ogle has said, a number of individuals may pursue grievance resolution through an external agency like the ombudsman or the Industrial Commission or Equal Opportunity Tasmania.

Mr VALENTINE - It is difficult to get totally accurate figures. I can understand that. I am interested in sick leave levels. Can you give me that across the State Service for the 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 years? What I would ask is for a broad understanding of how that might be travelling. I would not mind if it is possible to have a table provided at a later stage.

Mr HODGMAN - Can we take that on notice

Mr VALENTINE - Take it on notice, by all means. I know they do not give reasons why they are having sick leave these days. For instance, if it is a worker's compensation claim as to why they are not at work, that might state a reason being stress or whatever. I would be interested in the bulk figures on those for those three years.

Mr JOHANNES - We can put that together for the committee. It will take some time because we do not hold that centrally. We need to go to the individual agencies.

CHAIR - Are you saying it will not be available by the time we report?

Mr JOHANNES - It will have to go the agencies. It really depends on the quality of information they can give us, Chair.

CHAIR - We want to make a note of it, otherwise we will be holding open line items that we will not be getting information for and it looks tardy in the Parliament.

Mr OGLE - I would also ask that be defined. An absence can mean a number things. Absences are under personal leave which could be for carer's leave or it could be for sick leave. It could be for a number of reasons.

Mr VALENTINE - You cannot differentiate sick leave from carer's leave?

Mr OGLE - It is under personal leave. It is under the one heading. There may be people, agencies, who may keep that, but to the Chair's position, it would take us some time to get that.

Mr VALENTINE - It is something that we ought to be aware of. I realise it is not a light task but we do need to have some understanding as to how the state services actually being affected by cuts. That is the only way I can think we might be able to have an understanding of that, apart from the appeals situation I was talking about earlier.

It is fair and reasonable question to ask. If you can provide it, it would be worthwhile information.

Mr JOHANNES - We will go to agencies over the last three financial years asking for trends in personal leave, disaggregate it where we can, recognising all the caveats around changes in agency structures and the like. I will say that we have not noted an overall increase in what might be referred to as absenteeism over the last three years. Actually we

benchmark quite well on days off work and cost per days off work compared to other public sectors and the private sector.

CHAIR - Does that answer your question?

Mr VALENTINE - I guess it does. I do not want to cause unnecessary work.

CHAIR - You may be able to follow that up through questioning as a notice of motion.

Mr VALENTINE - No, some other way. I am thinking of a particular project may be. Do not worry about it at this point.

CHAIR - We have got another question, supplementary to that right on that point.

Mr DEAN - I take the point that has just been mentioned about absenteeism not probably having increased, you were saying. What I will do is refer you to the report of the Auditor-General; the one that was done last year and produced in June, where from memory, there was an indication of an increase in absenteeism in the state service here.

I need to get that and have another look at it. I made comment on that within the Parliament only a few weeks ago when I moved a motion to have a look at the paper of the Auditor-General. I stand to be corrected, but I am sure that is the case. Across Australia it had dropped but here in this state, it had increased.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. The report you refer to from the Auditor-General released July 2015 found a number of areas for improvement. Overall, some positive elements; cost of absenteeism not unusually high and less than the Australian average, as you say, under three percent of wages; the average number of days per annum, absenteeism is less compared with results from other jurisdictions including public services and equivalent departments.

Audit importantly did not find any concrete evidence to support the notion of a perception of entitlement culture in the state service. The cost of absenteeism also needs to be balanced against the cost of having well workers in the workplace and the general growth in the public service wage means that a day of sick leave is more expensive than it was five years ago. That is some context.

Mr DEAN - Could we get the figures on sick leave for this year and sick leave for the previous two years.? They are the ones that we are getting.

Mr VALENTINE - We are not getting them at this point. This is the question. For the amount of work involved, is it going to be anything meaningful is the question I asked.

Mr JOHANNES - We can get you statistics on the amount of personal leave taken in the public sector over each of the last three financial years. In a number of cases this is not disaggregated between sick leave and carers leave.

In terms of that observation, it is true to say that the Auditor-General found that the dollar cost of absenteeism is growing. That is largely due to the fact, as the Premier said, that people are paid more now than they were five years ago but the rate of absenteeism is not growing.

Mr HODGMAN - To conclude on the report, so you are comfortable that that work has been done in response to the Auditor General's Report. 39 recommendations are contained within it and of those, 30 have either been addressed or are in the process of being addressed. Four have been identified as part of planned future initiatives and five identified for no further action. One of the recommendations was related to better data capture, management, monitoring and reporting, which we hope might go to address some of the issues we have discussed and raised by Mr Valentine.

Mr WILLIE - My question is on the WRIPs. The very definition of a workplace renewal incentive payment is that the positions are renewed. I preface this question by saying your Treasurer has deflected this question in his committee and said it is a matter for DPAC. Can you confirm that all of the 882 people who took WRIPs will be replaced and if new positions have been created, and they haven't been replaced, how many are there?

Mr JOHANNES - Through you, Premier, let me talk a little bit about this. The first thing is the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the State Service Management Office is not responsible for policing WRIPs. WRIPs are administered by individual agencies. Individual agencies would be able to give you precise numbers on how they have managed ons and offs. The purpose of a WRIP is to re-profile a position. That doesn't necessarily mean that the re-profiling occurs the next day, so the fact there might be a month or two or three between somebody going out on a WRIP and the position being then re-scoped in terms of the requirements of the area and somebody coming on isn't an indication that it will be refilled. Frank is just reminding me that under the new guidelines that were issued on managing positions in the state service, agencies have-

Mr OGLE - Six months in which to fill vacancies.

Mr WILLIE - Ok, but as a head of agency you should be able to able to collate that.

Mr JOHANNES - For my agency I can. Within our agency between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015 we have five workplace renewal incentive program payments and we will have to go back and check through David how many of those positions have subsequently been refilled. My expectation is that all of the duties that those individuals undertook are now being undertaken by different positions within the Department. I will get back to you on that.

Mr WILLIE - I am also interested in the other agencies too, so you are saying six months. Are they going to be made available in six months, Premier?

Mr HODGMAN - We will assume they will be available.

Mr OGLE - Mr Johannes just indicated that the WRIPs programs are managed by agencies themselves so we don't collate details of vacancies for agencies. Establishment control and staffing control is a matter for agencies. We keep figures on the number of WRIPs, number of redundancies, but we don't monitor filling of those vacancies. We establish the rules and as a result of investigation that was undertaken by my office, we identified issues about needing clarification around WRIPs and one of the recommendations as Mr Johannes said, we have indicated in our managing positions in the state service that there is now a clear requirement for agencies to fill those vacancies within six months.

Mr JOHANNES - And each agency, Mr Willie, would be able to tell what their position is.

Mr WILLIE - Can I have an undertaking from the Premier that after that six month period has lapsed, you make that information available across agencies?

Mr HODGMAN - Each agency is able to provide an assessment of their workplace movements within their agency and you are able to ask them through the usual processes including through these Estimates hearings.

Mr WILLIE - This is a matter of transparency and public interest.

Mr HODGMAN - We are not restraining you from asking the questions. It is just that the Department of Premier and Cabinet does not have this information. It is the agencies who are responsible for managing their workforce, including through WRIPs or TNDRs. As we have discussed, it is not the case not being transparent, it is just that DPAC does not have that information.

Mr WILLIE - The Treasurer has deflected to you and you are deflecting to the agencies.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, go and ask the Health minister or the Education minister what is happening in their agencies. They are the ones who are responsible for their workforces not the Treasurer or the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

CHAIR - Do we have another question?

Mr WILLIE - Yes, I have plenty.

CHAIR - We do not have time for plenty. We have your best next two questions otherwise we will still be here at 7 o'clock this evening.

Mr WILLIE - Let's go to costs. Premier, the Treasurer's press release states that in relation to TNBRs a total of 76 have been paid between 1 July 2015 and 31 March 2016 at a total cost of \$4 817 625. In relation to RIPS a total of 210 payments have been paid between 1 July 2015 and 31 March 2016 at a total cost of \$4 918 040. What is the total cost of all 400 voluntary redundancies and 882 RIPS?

CHAIR - Has somebody got a calculator?

Mr HODGMAN - We might take that on notice.

CHAIR - Are you happy with that, honourable member, taking that on notice?

Mr WILLIE - I can take that on notice, it has a significant impact on the Budget and it is important that we get figure.

CHAIR - It will be by lunchtime tomorrow. Thank you.

Mr VALENTINE - My next question is along the lines of aggregating information. You were doing a business case on better integrating human resource systems

across the service. If we had an integrated HR system we might be able to pull up some of the totals that we have been talking about from various things. How is that going and is there any light at the end of the tunnel.

CHAIR - We need the sharpest response that we can.

Mr VALENTINE - I think there are 12 databases involved.

Mr JOHANNES - This is the Empower?? system?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, integration of HR systems.

Mr HODGMAN - Our integration and automation program has been developed in response to a review of agency HR information systems with the objective of reducing the number of manual payment processes to reduce overheads to significantly improve reporting to government agencies. Preliminary planning and analysis work occurred this financial year. Subject to finalising agency sourced funding arrangements the full redevelopment program is anticipated to run from July this year to March 2018 with an expected funding of just under \$1.3 million.

Mr VALENTINE - Sorry, to clarify you saying it will achieve a system? You will get a State Service wide -

Mr JOHANNES - The objective is a much more consistent set of HR systems across the Service that can speak to each other and generate just the sort of reporting you were talking about, Mr Valentine.

Mr VALENTINE - By 18 March.

Mr JOHANNES - That is the objective.

Mr VALENTINE - I wish you well with that objective.

CHAIR - If you need any assistance just ask the honourable member for Hobart.

Mr VALENTINE - Does the employment process pay any attention to the employment of people over the age of 50? A lot of people who are over the age of 50 find it difficult to gain employment and I am interested to know whether the Government has a focus on that aspect as well, not just getting younger and younger people in through the front door?

Mr JOHANNES - Absolutely, Mr Valentine, you would appreciate that the average age of a public servant is now 45. Over the next 10 years about 25 per cent of the State Service will be eligible for retirement so very actively managing the interests and attractiveness of the public service in the eyes of older Tasmanians is just as important for us as focusing on the needs and aspirations of younger Tasmanians. I know that a strong interest of yours in recent years has been how we capture corporate knowledge and retain it, so this year for the first time we have created a register, so former senior officers who leave the public service can register their interest to provide services on an ongoing basis. We have already made use of that several times to get access to former public servants to make sure we can continue to use their public knowledge and information.

Mr VALENTINE - That is encouraging.

CHAIR - I am not sure if it will work for former Legislative Council members any time in the future. Mr Willie, thank you; the final question in this area.

Mr WILLIE - Back to the WRIPs. 823 people have taken WRIPs. If their positions have not been replaced, were some of those people entitled to full redundancies?

Mr HODGMAN - We will need to take advice as to -

Mr STRONG - Through you, Premier, I can tell you that nobody who got a WRIP in the Department of Premier and Cabinet was entitled to a redundancy. I have no reason to believe, following the audit that Mr Ogle did, that that is the case in other agencies. Mr Ogle did an audit at the request of the Premier on WRIPs and DNDRs in the state service.

Mr HODGMAN - And you would be aware that, following allegations with COMS conduct or impropriety or in relation to the payment of WRIPs, an audit was commenced by the SSMO, completed a compliance and evaluation assessment into not only the WRIPs, but also the TNDRs. I tabled a report in Parliament as to that and found no evidence of misconduct or impropriety. I am certainly satisfied that there has been no deliberate or inappropriate use of the TNDR or WRIP processes. Agencies have advised that they have corrected and ensured their processes are adjusted appropriately. As a result of the compliance audit, we have released changes to the managing positions in the state service guidelines which came into effect in April of this year as well.

CHAIR - Moving on now to 5.1; security and emergency. We have five minutes of the remaining line items each, so we are going to keep it very short and very sharp.

Mr HODGMAN - We have Simon Roberts, director of the office of security and emergency management.

Mr DEAN - Security issues, Premier, I guess you would say are probably as serious now as they have ever been - an area we have to be very careful with and manage properly in all of the circumstances. There is a small cut here in this area only. I am not quite sure why we would have a cut in an area that I would have thought requires a lot of work and a lot of attention at all times. I wonder why that is the case?

Mr HODGMAN - 27 pays I am advised.

Mr DEAN - That would indicate that the number of staff in this area is very low.

Mr STRONG - The staff is being maintained.

Mr DEAN - How many staff do you have in this area?

Mr JOHANNES - 7.5 FTEs, Mr Dean: 6.8 of those are direct. and there is an overhead allocation of 0.7.

Mr DEAN - What are some of the emerging security issues for the state currently, Premier? Have there been any this year that we have had to address that have needed attention? I know we have addressed a few here in Parliament House. I know we have some changes occurring in the front entrance coming up as well but are there any emerging issues that we have had to address as a state?

Mr HODGMAN - I cannot state the reasons why the Parliamentary upgrades are occurring other than to say that I am not aware of any direct threats to the Parliament or indeed to the people who work within it. It is part of the appropriate upgrading of security arrangements of Parliament and indeed the Government offices as well as part of the ongoing high level threat risk across the country. I do not know Mr Roberts if you are able to add anything in particular in relation to Mr Dean's question.

Mr ROBERTS - As the Premier said it is for emerging issues. There is a lot of legislative work going on in this area nationally, of course, in the area of security.

Mr DEAN - You have said in the preamble of that we have agreed standards in this area. Are they with the national -

Mr ROBERTS - Yes, we participate in the Australian New Zealand Counter Terrorism Committee who set them. There is a nation wide capability that sets minimum standards. The capability for security. As for focus issues in the last year COAG agreed to a counter terrorism strategy a few months ago. The focus of that was very much in the prevention space. We are moving much more into this countering violent extremism focus in the security area identifying people who might be on that track to becoming radicalised to extreme to violence intervening before they reach that stage. That is very much how the focus has changed over the last few months.

Mr HODGMAN - Nationally we are a probable threat level so that applies to us as well. That means basically our intelligence agencies believe there are individuals or groups who have developed the intent and or capability to conduct a terrorist attack in Australia. We should never think for a minute Tasmania is immune from such a thing occurring here.

In response to that and, as we have said, following our December COAG meeting it was agreed jurisdictions would prioritise work to implement a nationally consistent legislation on pre-charged detention laws. That is consistent with the recommendations with the ANZ Counter-terrorism committee. New South Wales is leading that work.

Mr DEAN - A benchmark, I think, was set for 2015-16 year of 82 per cent. So I am wondering whether we have met that. What we have set for this year, even the coming year, we have a target of 90 per cent. So what is yet to be done to get to that target for what this meeting set?

Mr JOHANNES - What that relates to, Mr Dean, is the quality of advice that comes out of the office of security and emergency management and to the extent it meets the standards of key decision-makers higher up the line in Premier and Cabinet. What happens is two or three times a year myself and one or two others evaluate the product that comes up. We effectively give it a rank out of 15 according to three different criteria. What we are saying is across the board in DPAC we want 90 per cent of the correspondence, the briefs and advice

that comes out of areas like the office of security and emergency management and other areas to meet a very high standard.

Mr DEAN - So that is where the measurement cuts in?

Mr JOHANNES - That is where the measurement cuts in.

Mr DEAN - Last year we were told Red Cross had between \$350 000 and \$400 000 in the Red Cross Appeal relative to the Dunalley fires which is referred to. We were told we were going to put in place long-term projects, we would be identifying long-term projects where this money was going to be utilised which was going to be done in January this year. Are they and other of any value into the future?

Mr HODGMAN - As at 21 April this year Red Cross has advised the balance of the appeal account is \$371 766. It is expected an estimated \$65 000 will be released from the retained \$350 000 before the end of the current financial year to cover the approved variation to the Dunalley Parks and Pathway project. Also to allow for improvement for the Imlay Street, Fulham Road and Dunalley Canal public facilities.

CHAIR - The remaining \$350 000?

Mr ROBERTS - That will bring it down to \$300 000 round about. The priorities for the expenditure of that money is not decided by us. It is decided by the local level community committee. STAARC - the Sorell Tasman Affected Area Recovery Committee - is responsible for nominating projects. We are looking to work through the last of that money with them.

CHAIR - So that could sit there for up to four or five years?

Mr ROBERTS - No, they have assured us they can identify appropriate projects for that money in the next six months.

Mr DEAN - It must be projects that benefit the people of Dunalley in that area?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. That committee - and the chair is Sorell mayor, Kerry Vincent - will evaluate any new funding proposals that come forward. They will submit them to the distribution committee for consideration and make an assessment based on those criteria to provide the best possible outcome for the community. I have no advice as to any other funding proposals that are currently in the system, but no doubt they will continue to come forward.

Output group 6 Community Sport and Recreation

CHAIR - Premier, can you give the committee a very brief update on the policy advice coming out of this significantly funded area, and also the ongoing community developments? This includes community grants so there could well be a list available, or is that more a discretionary fund? So there is another list, can we have that one tabled as well? There are two projects referred to in the notes: Engaging Older Tasmanians and On Island Support for Refugees.

Mr HODGMAN - There is \$3 million in grant funding provided to community organisations to improve the quality of life of Tasmanians and build on community capacity through nine grant programs. We will table a list of grant programs administered by Community Development. Specific purpose grants are also administered and will be administered in the 2016-17 year with grants to four peak community organisations, as well as to 10 organisations for other community benefit initiatives. I can provide the committee with the details of those. There is additional funding of \$231 000 per annum to COTA committed as part of the 2016-17 Budget, which includes \$106 000 to fund the 2017 Seniors Week and \$125 000 for a one-year extension to the existing four-year funding agreement with COTA, and that is to develop a range of resources that can benefit older people and support their active participation in the community. This is additional to the \$91 532 of core funding provided to COTA.

Mr WILLIE - Premier, the community development increases by \$1.278 million in 2016-17 and it includes engaging other Tasmanians and on the island support for refugees. I know these were time limited election commitments. Can you report on the programs?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. In relation to refugees and asylum seekers, the state receives between 400 and 500 refugees annually. We have committed \$1.2 million over four years to establish our Safe Haven Hub and it is anticipated that this will be fully operational by the 30 June and to provide a range of specified services for refugees and Safe Haven Enterprise visa holders. That will provide a contact point, a hub for education support, the employment pathway services, the interpreter support, cultural competency training for employers where needed and it will establish strong links with employers so as to provide employment opportunities or avenue pathways for new refugees. The Hub will also work closely with industry councils and employers, job active and training providers to fill labour's shortages particularly in growth areas of the economy.

It is expected that The Hub will be opened shortly and under our population growth strategy as well under the Minister for State Growth we are also providing \$100 000 over two years to extend settlement services provided to overseas migrants and to assist families into housing and employment as well. A \$1 million on-island support for refugees which we have committed to has been rolled over into the 2016-17 financial year. As we wait the arrival of additional immigrants as refugees or asylum seekers, the expenditure of these funds will be determined by assessment of the specific priority settlements needs of these families.

Tasmania is well ready, I believe, to warmly welcome additional arrivals as we have committed to. We are getting our infrastructure and support networks in place to ensure that these people are best able to integrate into our community and back that with additional funding.

Mr WILLIE - My supplementary question to that is, can you give an update on the Syrian refugee commitment that you made and how that is going?

Mr HODGMAN - As I say we have committed those things to support the intake of Syrian and Iraqi refugees and asylum seekers and we are awaiting their arrival. We have received news from the federal government as to progress on that front with recent advice from the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection the honourable Peter Dutton and

also the Minister for Social Services, Christian Porter, in relation to the processing of the 1200 additional places for people who are fleeing persecution and crisis in Syria and Iraq.

The Australian Government is continuing the work with the United Nations High Commission for refugees and other international partners and community groups to progress applications. The length of time that is being taken is for comprehensive health, character and security visa checks and it depends on individual circumstances. It is not possible to accurately predict or in great detail provide exact flows or time frames the visa grants given the difficult security arrangements and environment in the Middle East. I have been advised that over 8 000 have been interviewed by Australian officials and they are awaiting the outcomes of relevant checks.

In 2015-16 through the Humanitarian Program Australia wide just over 1000 people from Syria and Iraq have been resettled in Tasmania, relatively few arrivals Australia wide from the additional 1200 humanitarian case load at this point in time. Planning for the arrival of Syrians or Iraqis into Australia is in the initial phase. It is anticipated that the 12 000 will be referred over the next 12 to 18 months.

Mr WILLIE - We are awaiting their arrival. There has not been any refugees resettled under your (inaudible) yet in Tasmania? We are still waiting.

Mr HODGMAN - No. Our commitment was to receive an additional intake, to provide the infrastructure and the funding commitment, which we do. It is a matter for the Federal Government, clearly to process that.

It is taking a reasonable period of time. I have expressed publicly, I would prefer it to be sooner rather than later but the processes in place that go to undertaking those health and security checks are important as well. It is a matter completely in the hands of the Federal Government Authorities.

Mr FINCH - On the subject of this line item, veterans affairs. I will ask about the Hobart pedestrian bridge in a moment. What I would first like to come to is the suicides. We hear talk about veterans who come back from recent conflicts; 200 suicides.

I am wondering within this area, do we have any ongoing oversight of our returned people who come back to Tasmania.? Are they nurtured? We have heard the stories in the past of people coming back from Vietnam and the Second World War. Coming from war conflict, fighting on the city street with no care and concern about their welfare.

Within this line item, is there any allocation? Does the Veterans Advisory Council take a hand in this? Is there an oversight of those veterans who come back from areas of conflict to make sure that they come back into a good space?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes certainly through the advisory council there is a mechanism for discussion of those matters through our connections with the RSL, as the peak body for supporting Tasmanian Veterans and ex serving personnel. Through the Australian governments, Department of Veterans Affairs and indeed through our whole of government, aiding suicide strategy, which we launched this year, will provide greater support.

We will need to talk to the minister about how that is being implemented. We do need to provide the greatest support networks for our returning service men and women in an ongoing way, and of course do what we can to reduce the incidents of suicide but also to provide greater support into our communities.

Mr FINCH - I can be assured that that is an active part of the process of the department, in respect of this line item here that there is work going on to support those soldiers who return to Tasmania from the conflicts that are now taking place and have taken place recently. I can be assured that they are nurtured and supported back into the Tasmanian community.

Mr HODGMAN - Those sorts of programs are principally administered through the Federal Government, through the Australian Department of Veterans Affairs, those support networks. Of course it is a subject of great interest to us.

As state government, and as I say we have our own programs through the Department of Health and Human Services under which returning servicemen and women may come into contact with. The target of the sorts of services that you describe are principally delivered through the Australian governments and Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr FINCH - Something is not happening, somewhere along the line. We have people coming back and there are 200 suicides over recent years of our veterans. Obviously something is amiss there in respect of the support that they do not receive.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes it is a difficult subject and I note your observation and find it entirely reasonable. Of course we will work closely with the Federal Government agencies to ensure that what we do aligns well with our programs and initiatives and also identify areas where we just need to do more. Where we must do more to support them.

Mr FINCH - Can I get some understanding of the grant deed that works with the RSL Tasmanian Branch? What does that entail? What quantum of money is there in the grant deed?

Mr HODGMAN - I will give you an overview of our funding commitment to the RSL which has increased.

CHAIR - Some firm details would be even better than an overview.

Mr HODGMAN - \$200 000 per year from the Tasmanian Government to assist with the delivery of its core services. We all know how important they are and what a great job they do. The current level of funding does implement our election commitment to increase funding to the RSL from \$100 000 to \$200 000 from 2014-15 to 2016-17. The RSL has achieved significant progress with activities over the grant deed period including conducting state branch workshops to assist sub-branches in managing their operations.

Key performance indicators in the grant deed between the RSL and the Department of Premier and Cabinet include maintenance of the RSLs membership database, corporate planning targets, administrative support, financial assistance and training for sub-branches, development of an effective online presence including the use of social media and development and implementation of a marketing strategy as well.

I have a note here in this brief that formal support for veterans and ex-servicemen and women including for the post-traumatic stress disorder is provided by the Australian Government. I undertake to communicate to my federal colleagues to ensure we keep that issue very much as a priority issue for governments to address.

CHAIR - Have we lost any RSL branches over the last 12 months?

Mr HODGMAN - No but I might stand corrected but their sustainability is a very critical part. The key performance indicators in the grant deed go very much to ensuring they are self sustaining and they are attracting new members including younger people in our community.

Mr VALENTINE - Often moving to a community type profile.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, that's right. They are very active in that space, in school communities and in regional Tasmania as well as metropolitan.

Mr FINCH - The Hobart pedestrian bridge. It is mentioned in this line item. I would like to have an understanding of the numbers you have here as well, minister. The rise and fall of the funding in this area. It is put down in the notes here -

The increase in Veteran Affairs 2016-17 primarily reflects funding for the Hobart pedestrian bridge.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a project of national significance. It is one of the centenary of ANZAC projects the state is receiving from the Australian Government's ANZAC centenary public fund made up of donations from Australian business organisations and companies, the public sector, for projects of state and national significance during the centenary of ANZAC period which continues. The flame of remembrance has been completed and that was dedicated on ANZAC Day last year.

The last stage of the soldier's memorial avenue has commenced. Consultations have been undertaken and contracts have been finalised with that project due for completion in June 2017. The pedestrian footbridge, a significant financial commitment in its early planning stages. Conceptual drawings will be available in August 2016. Community consultation will commence at that time. It is expected the project will be completed and the bridge opened on Remembrance Day 2018. I have a list of centenary of ANZAC grants program recipients as well, which are smaller grants to schools, RSLs and other organisations in support of the centenary of ANZAC activities.

Mr DEAN - To me this is a very important area. I will probably have a bit of a conflict of interest in asking the question, but I am going to ask it. Currently veterans are battling with the Office of Veteran's Affairs to have their disabilities properly recognised and so on. There has been a lot in the press of late about it and you probably would have been aware of that. My question coming from that is - and this could be I guess connected to the suicide rate. I think there has been comment made on that as well, as to whether the state has had any discussion or involvement with the Office of Veteran's Affairs in support of its returned veterans within this state. Is there any involvement there at all; any discussion at all in that regard?

Ms KENT - We have an ongoing relationship with the Department of Veteran's Affairs. As the Premier said, they are still the federal agency that is responsible for ex-serving members. We certainly work closely with them. We have some forums throughout the year and just regular officer dialogue around particular issues. As the Premier also mentioned, the Veteran's Advisory Council, when they want to take up issues, there are members of the DVA that we liaise with around that, and some members of the DVA come to some of those meetings. There is certainly an officer level involvement.

Earlier this year the federal minister was intending to have a round table discussion. It ended up being cancelled at short notice, but one of the items that was potentially on the agenda for that meeting was around the law and other issues to do with returning veterans. There is certainly an opportunity to continue to have those discussions and to raise the concerns that have been raised here today.

Mr DEAN - That is good to know that has occurred. My other question, if I can, is - you have already mentioned the RSLs and a lot of them are struggling. Georgetown went under sadly, and that has rehoused itself in the Memorial Hall location at Georgetown with a lot of support from local government. My position here is, what sort of state support is given to the RSL clubs around the state? I know they can access and make application for funding and so on. What is happening? There are a number of other RSLs struggling as well. Whether they will survive or not is not known. It provides a great service to the returned servicemen and other members of those clubs as well. Is the state giving them appropriate recognition and support for the longevity -

Mr HODGMAN - Certainly we are very conscious of the challenges that RSL clubs and sub-branches are under and indeed the additional demands on the RSL itself, which is why we have increased core funding, as I have outlined, which is why RSL clubs are the recipients of grant funding as the table just tabled. We will confirm - we also, for example, provided an additional \$20 000 to the RSL a couple of years ago to pilot an employment program to assist repatriating veterans into gaining employment on a full-time basis.

We have got the Teddy Sheean memorial grants program as well, which is obviously a tribute to one of our war heroes. That supports ex-service organizations and clubs to find minor capital works, up to \$10 000 through a competitive application process. Funding of \$100 000 that I alluded to previously, was allocated in 2015-16 to two grant rounds and to date one grant round has been completed and funds dispersed. For a second grant round in 2015-16, we are advised that in May 9 2016 and a further \$100 000 has been allocated for the grants program for the 2016-17 financial year. I imagine Ms Kent -

Mr DEAN - If I can just ask my last question. The state's position now in relation to supporting people to attend the Western Front during ANZAC Day, what is the position there? Are we continuing with that program? How many provisions are you making available? Is it annually or -

Mr HODGMAN - An unfortunate hiccup. I can talk to you about that now.

CHAIR - And I need the briefest response.

Mr HODGMAN - A really successful and important part of the calendar for those who participate. It is high school students, teachers, RSL representatives, parliamentary representatives typically and other assistants, but this year's tour was sadly postponed due to the recent terrorist attacks in Brussels and given our obligations to ensure safety for all of the tour participants a decision was made to postpone the tour and we are looking at alternative travel dates for later this year. Obviously a disappointing development but needless to say after communicating it to the tour group members and their families we are working through those issues with them with a view to holding the tour later this year.

Mr DEAN - You will do that rather than double up say for Anzac Day next year.

Mr HODGMAN - That is right. The students who were to go,

CHAIR - To go this year will go at the end of the year.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, and of course it is a matter for them. It is a highly disruptive and unfortunate,

CHAIR - But it is continuing.

Mr HODGMAN - It does cost us as well but we would rather continue it but we need to take very careful note of security arrangements and conditions.

CHAIR - Premier, we are going to leave this output group. If members have got any questions relating to capital investment they can ask it at another time. I will now move to Legislative Council support services and I think there may be some changes at the table this time around.

Legislative Council

CHAIR - Welcome to the table the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk. For the information of *Hansard* we have David Pearce, the Clerk of the Council, and the Deputy Clerk, Sue McLeod.

Mr VALENTINE - It is an old perennial question that our members ask and that is whether or not we are going to see any upgrade to the Chamber? Our Chamber is often shall I say focused on in terms of they are in those wonderfully luxurious leather couches and they are neither leather nor are they luxurious. They are terrible to sit in. Probably an occupational health and safety issue. They are velvet, yes, but they are not comfortable and of course nowhere to put papers of any significance. I am wondering if we might have an update on where that might be at?

Mr PEARCE - Mr Valentine, I can say that we have a submission at Treasury as we speak on that. This dates back to 2011 when we had a scoping exercise done on the Chamber refurbishment identifying all the issues that members are pretty much well aware of on a day to day basis in terms of ergonomic seating, lighting, acoustics and of course our parliamentary officers who have to work in those conditions as well. It is fairly important. We waited until the Assembly Chamber was refurbished and opened in the early part of 2009. Our scoping exercise was 2011 and here we are now in 2016 with a submission in place with Treasury and we are waiting to see where that goes. We are very

hopeful. We were very patient and we had to wait of course for the overall state finances to improve to a degree where we could legitimately put forward such a proposition as members would appreciate.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank for that. I am sure there would be plenty of people who would be saying, what you are not going to touch that wonderful Chamber, but I can tell you it is an issue. Premier. Maybe you might advocate on our behalf with the Treasurer.

Mr HODGMAN - It will go through the process as Mr Pearce has outlined and no doubt will be assessed on its merits

Mr VALENTINE - I am interested to know how many information systems we have employed in the Legislative Council and is there any opportunity for further implementations of systems in that area you might consider are needed and need funding for?

Mr PEARCE - There is no funding in this Budget for any change to the file management system that we currently have. It operates across the agency and that extends to members' use and access to their committee papers and files. It seems to be working quite well. It is fairly cost effective. Members like it. It is fairly simple and easy to utilise so right now we have deemed it unnecessary to move in any other direction or alternative file management process.

Mr VALENTINE - Is there any room for considering further sharing of office functions with the other place if I can put it that way, in terms of back office functions more so than front of office?

Mr PEARCE - That is also something that has been addressed over time and discussed on a regular basis, almost annually. It is fair across both Houses that we recognise the constitutional separation of both Houses and the independence and separateness of both Houses and that goes not only to the allocation resources and staffing resources, but also the tasks that those resources undertake. At this stage we have fallen on the side of observing that comity between the two Houses and we don't see any need to move away from that and we believe the efficiencies to be gained would not be sufficient to warrant such a departure.

Mr VALENTINE - Lastly, how does our present level of support service the staff compare with the Legislative Council say 10 years ago? Do we have any understanding of how that has moved?

Mr PEARCE - We could find figures for you but in an overall sense, members now are probably better equipped than they have ever been to undertake their range of duties. Previous governments have been very supportive in terms of allocating resources for not only staff support, 15 elected members, but also to aide them in establishing electorate offices and supporting the operations of those electorate offices. That has been a huge plus for all our members.

CHAIR - A debt of gratitude to Paul Lennon.

Mr PEARCE - They have worked extremely well in terms of access of the public to members; an increase in the profile of the work that members of the Upper House do.

Mr VALENTINE - Last question - access through that Legislative Council door - is it not a possibility into the future being something in the order of about four metres away from my car and having to walk something like 100 metres to get to it?

Mr PEARCE - I am probably guided by the experts in the field, police and others of course and we are spending an amount of money on the refurbishment of the assembly foyer in terms of security so I don't see the LC door being open at any time in the future.

Mr VALENTINE - I thought the comity of both Houses being separate, we might be able to come to some arrangement.

Mr DEAN - We are inconvenienced far more than you are.

Mr VALENTINE - I am sure you are.

Mr DEAN - There has been some undertaking through the Premier, \$12 000 here for the committees of the Legislative Council to work with and there is an increasing load coming onto the committee structures we have in place and I have never really experienced as many committees to be operating now in the time I have been in this place

We should not be restricted in our work by the money that is available for us to be able to do that. Is there some undertaking that if the \$12 000 runs out, which could run out in a very short time, would there be more money made available in this area for the committees to be able to do the work they need to do?

Did you follow that? \$12 000 is made available as I understand in this area. \$12 000 only for committee support.

Mr PEARCE - Mr Dean, that amount does not cover salary costs. They are contained within support services. It covers travelling for committee staff, advertisements, printing, those sorts of things directly associated with community activity.

In the past, when that has been exceeded, as all agencies would do, we would submit a request for additional funds through the appropriate channels, through Treasury, and that has always been supported. There has never been a problem in that in curtailing the operation of committees to the extent that the funding would do.

Mr DEAN - There was a previous arrangement with an ex-treasurer, that if this funding was exceeded that he would ensure there were further funds made available to support the committee structure in the travel and movement arrangements and so on.

Mr PEARCE - There certainly has been support by way of supporting and approving requests for additional funds at the appropriate time.

Mr FINCH - Is \$12 000 always exceeded?

Mr PEARCE - Occasionally, it would have been exceeded over the period. Generally we live within it. It does only cover advertisements and some staff travel. It is very much dependent on committee activity. It is demand driven. If committees choose to travel and take staff and there are costs, and it does -

CHAIR - Any other questions in this area. If not, I will thank our Legislative Council representatives and it is a useful thing for us to be open and transparent about the roles and functions of our House as well. We appreciate the clerk and the deputy clerk for being here and for your patience.

Mr DEAN - There is \$307 000 provided here in this area. My only question is what payments does that cover?

Mr PEARCE - Mr Dean, that covers a reallocation of a some reserve by law funding on the basis of advice received by the Solicitor-General. It covers payment of leases for members vehicles and reimbursement of members mobile telephones, which are deemed not be part of salary and allowances in accordance with the Salaries, Superannuation and Allowances Act 2012.

On advice, Treasury has taken that amount away from the reserve by law allocation and placed it outside of that and other agencies are in a similar situation. That covers members leases on vehicles and reimbursement of mobile telephone payments, 90 percent in accordance with the new determination.

Mr DEAN - Thank you for that.

Legislature General

Output Group 1

Parliamentary Reporting Service

Mrs ARMITAGE - A question regarding the production and printing of Parliamentary reports. It is a lot of money we have got here. A million dollars or just over, every year. Has any consideration been given to not doing the amount of printing that we are doing and having more on line so that people can print up if they want to or reading off line? It is an amazing amount of money for reports that people may read, then they put it on a bookshelf, or put it in the round bin on the ground and that is throwing money away. At least if you go online, you can read it, you can print out the page or two or if you want the whole report, you can print it out and it would have to be a lot less cost. Can you advise?

Mr HENDY - Looking at it on a historical basis, I understand there is nearly \$500 000 allocated through the forward Estimates and that is for the printing side of things. A lot of that goes into printing bills, binding, community papers and letterheads. There is a very wide scope as to what is captured in there.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Sorry. Going back, that is 1.1. There is more money allocated down further in parliamentary printing an printing systems. There is \$500 000 down further. I am looking 1.1 production and printing of parliamentary reports.

Mr HENDY - Are you talking about *Hansard*. In 1.1 that is exactly what that is.

Mrs ARMITAGE - That is all the *Hansard* is it?

Mr HENDY - Yes. There are no actual printing costs.

Mrs ARMITAGE - With *Hansard*, realistically, does it have to be in paper form?

Mr DEAN - Yes, it does.

Mrs ARMITAGE - You feel it does?

Mr DEAN - Yes, I do.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Is it under reports as well, apart from *Hansard*? Is it the other report we get?

Mr HENDY - That line item does not include the printing costs involved.

Mrs ARMITAGE - This is purely staff is it?

Mr HENDY - Also the production of *Hansard*. There are some smaller amounts in there, leases on our photocopiers and those things but the majority of the output we have in paper is included under output 3.1.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Output group 3 is more the actual cost of the stationery?

Mr HENDY - Yes.

Mrs ARMITAGE - *Hansard* do a fabulous job. There is no criticism of them. I was thinking, anything to make it easier for them rather than more difficult. I would have thought perhaps online might be an easy way because you can make corrections and send it back. I will discuss the other part down further. As for the staff, I have no issue with the amount of staff.

Output group 2

2.1 Parliamentary Library Service -

Mr DEAN - We have a wonderful library service and I want to make that clear. The service is courteous and they could not do a much better job, in my view. They are excellent in what they do for us. Are there any plans at all for changes in that area? Are there structural changes? Is it operating well in its current form?

Mr HENDY - We are constantly monitoring how we do our business and how we perform services to Parliament itself. There is no formal plan in place to change anything they are currently doing at the moment.

Mr DEAN - The staff numbers in this area, how many are there? I often wonder how they keep up with the work they are required to do.

Mr HENDY - In the Library itself, we have an FTE of 5.8 and then we have an FTE of five for our research that is under that output group of 2.1.

Output Group 3

3.1 Parliamentary printing -

Mrs ARMITAGE - This is the one I should have been addressing previously. We are looking at \$500 000. It more refers to the Legislative Council than it does to the lower House because bills that come through to us that have not been through the lower House, we receive many paper copies. The building bill was a prime example. How many copies of that building bill, with 386 pages or thereabouts, did we receive before we received the final one which was stamped because it had been through the lower House. I wonder whether the first copies we get could be online and perhaps the final copy we get, when it has been through the lower House and I wonder how much saving there might be in printing and paper to try to cut down the amount of waste and cost to the Parliament?

Mr PEARCE - If I could make an initial comment, Ms Armitage. The first print of every bill that is introduced into the Parliament is available online for all and sundry to see. That is accessible through the bills database, so it is there and loaded by our IT people. Whilst we have that, there has been a call for 'first print' bills. Members like to have a hard copy, one or more copies, to distribute to seek feedback from, to mark up, to deal with in the House.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Which we could print ourselves if it's available online. For those who want a hard copy of the first print, they could print it themselves. It would save considerable cost over the course of the year.

Mr PEARCE - That has been suggested but has been met with some resistance by members over the journey because that is an impost.

Mrs ARMITAGE - The Building Bill was the prime example. A bill of that size coming constantly - I accept it is good to have a hard copy but if I want a hard copy I can print it up rather than the printing service having to provide all these hard copies. I do not know how many bills you bin and I thought there could be considerable savings.

3.2 Parliamentary Systems

Mr VALENTINE - This runs to the previous question in a way, although this is not about printing; it is about parliamentary systems. We did a scan of other jurisdictions to see whether there are better ways of being able to handle documents in an electronic format, from the perspective of the way documents are edited and how they can be edited on devices such as iPads. One of the frustrations I have in dealing with this is marking up a document using this device as opposed to a tablet. That is Microsoft based and seems to have more facility. Have we ever looked at other jurisdictions to see whether there are products that might make life a bit easier when looking at and inserting comment and editing rather than through a PDF editor? It might be there and I am simply not aware of it.

Mr HANCOX - Everything costs a reasonable amount of money, Mr Valentine, and our back-end systems which provide an EDRMS solution where you can have a document that multiple members can look at it is quite an expensive solution. At the present time we just do not have the budget for it. We are moving forward with a different solution to the iPad with the file browser to something Mr Willie has. It is a tablet-based device that gives full laptop

abilities no matter where you are and that provides those sorts of solutions. Back-end management is done through the committee secretaries and the documents are available for members and can be marked up.

Mr VALENTINE - I think the file browser is brilliant and I don't have a problem with it, it is just that problem of being able to mark up bills and things.

Mr HANCOX - That has been a criticism of the file browser since we implemented it some time ago. This next generation is the simplest and cheapest solution to that problem.

Mr VALENTINE - As to the Launceston officers and the facilities they have, I have been up there occasionally and they don't seem to have a wireless system up there I can tap into. I don't believe they do and you might correct me if I am wrong. The capacity for them to do video conferencing for committees that Hansard can pick up. Is there any move to improve that situation?

Mr HANCOX - There has been a provision in Henty House committee room for a videoconference for some time. Members don't use it, but it is available. There is a link to committee room 2 video conferencing solution. TIPYT provide a video conference solution that all members can video conference from their iPad, from their desktop computer, from their laptop with a camera if they have one and we provide video conference rooms, so -

Mr VALENTINE - Can you do that from an iPad?

Mr HANCOX - Yes, you can. The Labor Party hold their meetings that way. That is a TIPYT based service available statewide. It is available anywhere really.

Mr VALENTINE - It sounds like we need to be brought up to speed a bit more on that.

Mr HANCOX - There were circulations when that was developed and put out.

Mr VALENTINE - I appreciate that might be the case.

Mr HANCOX - We are looking at whole of government wi-fi in certain areas, especially around the committee rooms so that ministerial advisers and other staff can actually access portfolio networks. If we proceed down that path then our members will also have the ability to access their documents via wireless, and that will include Henty House.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Can I go back to that issue and comment on the wi-fi? We can stand out at Civic Square and get wi-fi because the local council provides it, but once we go into Henty House we can't. As for the video conferencing in the committee room you might remember, Mr Hancox, that we have been told previously when we have wanted to do it that no, we can't do it because *Hansard* cannot pick it up clearly. I am sure other members will remember the same. It would be a great saving many times that instead of going down we do use the other services we have and the TIPYT with that little camera on our computer is great if you are just doing normal committee work. When you are with witnesses it is a little bit more difficult and we have been told no, *Hansard* cannot pick it up and we cannot actually use it and that something was missing with the video conferencing. Are you telling me now that the video conferencing in our committee room is capable of *Hansard* using it clearly and properly and we would be able to sue that for a lot of the other committee work?

Mr HANCOX - That is my assumption. The video conferencing that you have the microphones in the room record as it is here. *Hansard*, I do not know, Helen might be able to answer that. Can you transcribe from that level?

Ms ALLMICH - We have never done it or not since I have been here.

Mrs ARMITAGE - We need to trial it obviously because it would be a saving for people having to travel.

Mr HANCOX - When it was implemented some time ago it was certainly trialled and it was proven successful when we trialled it, but as I said members have never used it.

Mrs ARMITAGE - We have never used it because we have been told it was not adequate for what was needed.

CHAIR - It looks like we need to investigate that a bit further.

Mr VALENTINE - Skype certainly works well in committees I have to tell you. Does the Parliamentary Printing group incorporate all publishing media or is it just for paper?

Mr HENDY - The Parliamentary Printing 3.1?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes.

Mr HENDY - That is all paper based.

Mr VALENTINE - That is all paper based, so where is the cost if there is any cost for electronic publishing? There must be some cost even though it would be small?

Mr HENDY - It is all captured under 3.2 under Parliamentary Systems.

CHAIR - Any other questions on 3.2 Parliamentary Systems? If not we will go to 4.1 Building and Operations Management. Thank you, Mr Hancox.

Output Group 4

4.1 Building and Operations Management -

Mr DEAN - This covers off on the cleaning of all of our buildings and so on. My question comes from the new building when, and I am not quite sure when the new building will be available to us, some indication may be in there perhaps, but I do not know if we have that. What will change when that occurs? Will we be responsible for the maintenance and the cleaning of the offices that we move into in the new building when that occurs? Will there be changes in that regard?

Mr HENDY - If I may. It will be the status quo. At the moment we are looking at moving in potentially at the beginning of the next calendar year.

Mr DEAN - 2017?

Mr HENDY - Yes. From a cleaning point of view at this stage we will be taking that under our own steam, so we will be using our current utility officers to clean the Parliamentary levels.

Mr DEAN - I will go back to the previous one now. Will that mean the security - and maybe you cannot answer that and maybe the right person has gone - would we still be responsible for the security that will prevail for the offices that we occupy in the new structure?

Mr HENDY - The finer details of that still have to be worked out. If we are having any general access into the two levels that Parliament operate, access will be by the front door. You will be coming through the reception of Parliament House. The security processes will take place there. People coming through the building are sent to the committee rooms. For instance there will also be access from the car park in the basement. It will be similar swipe passes, secure elevators. There will also be access from the Salamanca street as well. When you come in you have to swipe your card to get access to an elevator, and your swipe card will only give you access to the particular levels that you are authorised to go to.

CHAIR - Moving on to 4.2. We have about six minutes to get through three line items. We can do it. Joint management services, 4.2: is there anything there, Mr Dean?

Mr DEAN - Simply on the funding there, that there is an increase here of that. There is that, once again, in relation to 27 pays. We have covered up on all of that. That was the only area I had there.

CHAIR - 4.3, service to members.

Mr DEAN - What Parliamentary committees are serviced by this area and what is the requirement to the leader of the opposition and the staff numbers in that area?

Mr HENDY - That is public works committee and public accounts committee.

Mr DEAN - That is the joint house. What is the requirement for the leader of the opposition there? Are they covering that as well?

Mr HENDY - I am not sure.

Mr DEAN - If we go to 4.3. At the bottom of that it says, The outlook in rise for services not directly related to the Legislative Council or House of Assembly for a certain Parliamentary committee, and the leader of the opposition. What is that about?

Mr HENDY - There is a small allocation in there for minor equipment and some communications, telephones and that sort of thing.

Mr DEAN - To the leader.

Mr HENDY - I would have to take that one on notice to know exactly what is involved because I do not have the detail.

CHAIR - Mr Dean, you are doing a terrific job here, 4.4, corporate services to Parliamentary agencies.

Mr DEAN - I am doing a great job there so far, I do not have anything.

CHAIR - Then can we move to 1.1, support for the Governor.

Mr DEAN - I just have the one question there.

CHAIR - Thank you very much. You will receive some advice about that question. We appreciate that response. Thank you very much to everyone who has waited patiently. In relation to this particular line item, Premier, there is an increase of \$210 000 per annum for additional funding for salaries and wages to support the additional costs of the transition to the Tasmanian State Service Award salary structure, and \$200 000 for essential estate maintenance. Can we have some further explanation around that?

Mr JOHANNES -Through you, Premier. David Owen, who is the private secretary to the Governor is not here. He would be able to answer those questions. We might take those on notice and direct them to him. There is, I understand, increased provision for maintenance on Government House at the request of Government House as you would appreciate it is a very old sandstone building and there is a significance maintenance requirement associated with it. In terms of the staffing I am not in a position to answer that but I can get the answer.

CHAIR - There was \$210 000, so I need to know how many people, how many FTEs that involves. A break-up of that, it is a significant amount of additional funding.

Mr HODGMAN - I have been provided with some briefing papers which may assist in addressing the questions you ask. I am not sure why it is Mr Owen is not here.

Mr JOHANNES - I spoke with Mr Owen and he had understood from talking to the committee secretary he was not required until later this afternoon.

Mr HODGMAN - If I may read what I have it may answer your queries. In relation to salaries the condition of the service of all staff are set out in the Governor of Tasmania's staff enterprise agreement. A new agreement was approved by staff in February 2012 and commenced on 11 March 2012 for a period of three years, after having been ratified by the Tasmanian Industrial Commission.

The agreement is in the final stages of being converted to an award with assistance and advice from the State Service management office. The award provides for salary increases in accordance with the state wage agreement, staff salaries other than casual staff and security staff have been restructured according to the bands, ranges and levels of the Tasmania State Service Award General Stream.

CHAIR - Can I still be provided with the numbers that quantum relates to please?

Mr HODGMAN - I can tell you from this as at 31 May2016 it is 20.42 FTEs. As at 31 May 2015 it was 19.27 FTEs. No change to part time and casual employees which stays at 17. Net increase part time and casual employees is zero, full time employees 1.

The second part, the maintenance stream. I can talk to that as well. Since the spending of \$2 million on an extensive upgrading of Government House and its outbuildings in the early 1990s the estate has been maintained in very good condition. Like all heritage buildings and sites it needs regular maintenance and upgrading. The Government is sensitive to these needs and provides an appropriate level of funding to ensure the buildings and grounds are maintained to a very high standard.

In addition, as notified elsewhere in this document, it has planned to raise modest funds through the estate to assist in heritage maintenance. This has not been done before. The current maintenance and conservation program is based on Government House's strategic asset management plan and maintenance plan and a catch up and cyclic maintenance plan of 2003-10.

On the basis of this plan it is being followed for the immediate future. The strategic asset management plan was initially produced in December 1994, a three volume Government House fabric and interior design document was produced in January 1992. They are valuable and detailed records of the building's interior developments and alterations and ongoing restoration and maintenance, stonework, painting and work on rising damp takes place as funds permit.

CHAIR - Thank you. Obviously it is a work in progress. Mr Dean, final question.

Mr DEAN - It was a question in relation to the decrease in the salary for Her Excellency, the Governor. It is a significant drop. I read the footnote. Does any of that relate to the fact that as I understand Her Excellency indicated that she would be retaining a position with the University of Tasmania? I would suspect it is a paid position. Is this reflective of any position retained with the University of Tasmania? What is the full explanation of the table decrease?

Mr HODGMAN - I am reticent to test my memory but my recollection is, on the appointment of Her Excellency, she agreed to continue her set responsibilities at the University of Tasmania at no cost. I stand corrected but that is certainly my recollection.

In relation to the salary, it is in accordance with section 7.1 of the Supreme Court Act 1887 the auditor is required to annually determine the salary of the Chief Justice of Tasmania and the Governor of Tasmania Act 1982 provides that the Governor's salary is set at 90 per cent increase of the salary of the Chief Justice, the Governor's salary will be set at \$485 434 as at 1 July 2016. For 2015-16 the Governor's salary was \$432 728.

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Dean, could it be that that is a 27th pay issue?

Mr HODGMAN - I suspect it might be. Certainly Her Excellency's salary is not declined.

Mr DEAN - I am trying to understand this. It says, and we are looking at page 47 of the Budget Papers, reserved by law, salary, Her Excellency, the Governor of Tasmania Act 1982, the year 2015-16 it was \$611 000 and for this current Budget year, 2016-17, it is \$542 000. I am wondering what that includes?

CHAIR - That doesn't equal the figures that were provided.

Mr DEAN - No, it doesn't.

Mr JOHANNES - I am sure there will be an explanation from Government House but we will have to take it on notice.

Mr DEAN - I will take it on notice, thank you.

CHAIR - I thank very much the Premier and his staff for their indulgence in going over our time and I declare that we suspend and see you back here at 2 p.m. to commence tourism, Premier.

The committee suspended from 1.07 p.m. to 2.01 p.m.

CHAIR - Welcome back, Premier.

Output Group 6 Community, Sport and Recreation

Mr DEAN - Premier, my first question here is in relation to the \$500 000 annually that is going to be made available for grass roots football. There has been a lot happen in this area over a long time. Where are we right at this very moment? I had a briefing and I appreciate that only two or three weeks ago from an adviser within your office. I appreciate that very much. It was great. Where are we this now and what directions are we taking?

Mr HODGMAN - There has certainly also been a significant change domestically with respect to the administration of AFL football through its peak body the AFL and AFLTasmania recently which includes notably the appointment of a new CEO, Mr Robert Auld, that I had the opportunity to meet for the first time last Friday night and have not yet had an opportunity to sit down and discuss with him what his intentions are. We have renewed our funding commitment to AFL as you have described; \$500 000 per year over four years to support grass roots Australian rules football. As part of my discussions with the AFL over a number of months it is our hope and intention that funding not only from Government but also from the AFL increased funding to Tasmania can be well allocated to support Tasmanian grass roots football as well as elite level.

Mr DEAN - The reason I ask, Premier, that program has now been in place since 2013-14, I think - two or three years ago - and previously there was a lot of evidence to show that it failed to deliver what it was meant to provide to the people of Tasmania. That report that was done by the Public Accounts Committee and the fairly strong findings found in that. That is where all of this comes from and there is a group now of leading business people in Tasmania and involved in Australian Rules Football who want to see the right process in place in this area.

Mr HODGMAN - Our officials have started what you could describe as a new round of discussions with the AFL as to the deed of agreement we have. Certainly it is our expectation, as I have said, to work with the AFL and its state organisation with Robert Auld. They have recently appointed a new general manager for the state league, Carl

Saunders. Jackson Hills has been appointed general manager of the Tasmanian Football Council and they are both due to start or may have all started on Friday last as well.

I suspect the Garlick review which was undertaken last year following the agreement we struck with the AFL to further progress development of opportunities with the AFL in this state supporting junior elite level football participation, increasing pathways for women, indigenous and multicultural participants in AFL Tasmania. As well as their internal restructuring of the administration of AFL football in Tasmania which does include a commitment for additional funding are all really significant steps forward. I understand and I am not sure Helen are you the person to ask on this, but I understand you or the department has also been in discussions. Given Mr Auld only started his work last Friday it is not to say they are at early stages because we have advanced but it has been important to allow Mr Auld the opportunity as the new general manager of AFL Football in Tasmania to be part of those discussions too.

Mr DEAN - Premier, when you look at the report of the Public Accounts Committee and you look at the evidence there was certainly a lot of concern with the department responsible within the state - Community Sport and Recreation - as to their handling of this matter as well. I think some of those staff have moved on but there was concern it was not being managed properly in that area as well.

Ms KENT - Helen and I met with Mr Auld on Friday as well along with Beth Lang from the AFL. The other two general managers commence next week after the long weekend. We made a commitment to meet soon after they are in place as well. We brought to the attention of Mr Auld the Public Accounts Committee report so he will be aware of the issues that were raised in that report.

Clearly over the last five years of the funding agreement there have been a range of KPIs they were required to meet and, as the Premier said, there is an emphasis on the new agreement to where the Government wants the emphasis to be in terms of the grass roots deliverable. He will be taking those into account next week.

Mr DEAN - When will it be in a position, Premier, with this agreement? When will it be signed off?

Ms KENT - We have not set confirmed dates in place but clearly it needs to be in place as soon into the new financial year as possible. He has made a commitment to make this high priority for the first one or two months he is in the job.

Mr DEAN - Will there be consultation, Premier, with a number of the business people in this state who have a huge interest in this matter? There is the group in Launceston, there are six involved in that team who have lived and played football all their lives and lived with it, the administrative side of it as well. Will they be included in putting this agreement together that we will see at the end of this whole process?

Mr HODGMAN - It is a grant and there are important parameters to set around, not only our expectations, but also the transferral of public funds to any organisation including to the AFL to ensure we are getting the right outcomes. We certainly note the findings of the committee's report. We note the findings of the Garlick review and some of the recommendations contained within it. The AFL intends to publicly issue a statement of

findings with respect to that work. Parts of it were internal, commercial matters. Our expectations are very clear in terms of increasing participation. Boys, girls, men, women of all ages, going to the sorts of KPIs that were previously in place. I think it would be fair to characterise them as being fundamentally adhered to over the life of the former deed. Would that be fair?

I understand there is a lot of community concern, so far as them discharging their obligations. My government and I do not believe the former governments were dissatisfied with their performance on that front.

We will be able to within a relatively short period of time, establish a new arrangement to take us forward with an emphasis on those key areas that I agreed to with the AFL and that are outlined in our MOU that will allow, no doubt, input from all key stakeholders; football community, as well as departmental officials, who are there to make sure that there is accountability for how the funding is appropriated.

Mr DEAN - If I can just add one, Chair, the Garlick Report. I take it that the Garlick Report would have been made available to Sport and Recreation. Obviously they are putting together this agreement or this arrangement. I thought they would have had a copy of that report. If that is so, was that report provided to Sport and Recreation in confidence? If not, then is there any reason why we cannot see that report?

Mr HODGMAN - It is provided to me in confidence; it is a document owned by the AFL. It is their property; it is intellectual property and it does involve internal matters concerning their operations. True to say, as any football following person or anyone would rightly conclude that they have made some structural changes since. The process behind the review was completed, and that was an extensive period of consultation by Simon Garlick and his small team.

There has been a restructuring at AFL Tas, additional positions, new people, feet just about under the desk now.

To answer your question it is not my report to publish, and I gave an undertaking to the AFL that I would not do that. It is true to say, to characterise it more of a directions statement for, not only the future of AFL Tasmania but also for the progress of some key areas of interest: academy, establishment of the academies and participation of women in football; the notion of whether or not we can, should, whatever, have a team of our own and how realistic a proposition that might be, and what steps would need to take place, between now and then, all the while the government exercising its discretion to extend the Hawthorn arrangement and for the TT Line recently to announce they are extending and enhancing the arrangement with North Melbourne Football Club. It is not pertinent to this per se, certainly not to this grant deed. They are all material factors, I support, and indication that football is certainly heading in the right direction. M

My understanding, and I said publicly and I have said to the AFL, I would have thought it be in their interest, and the interest of the Tasmanian football community for them to release as much as possible of that review and that report. I understand they have given an undertaking to release its key findings, in so far as they can, as soon as possible.

Ms KENT - That is the same indication that we had from Simon Lethlean that they would be looking at doing a summary report or something like that.

Mr DEAN - I will be writing to them on behalf of the group of people just to try and get some access to it as well.

CHAIR - I think Mr Finch would like some clarification on a point that has already been made before we head down the table.

Mr FINCH - Just on the \$500 000 Premier. Is that the \$500 000 that was the circumstances around the PAC, carrying out their investigation? Is it just a new reinvigoration of that \$500 000? Starting afresh?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, and it is going to be a new grant deed with different parameters to the one that was in place before.

Mr HODGMAN - The old one is expiring at the end of the financial year.

Mr FINCH - Sorry, expires when?

Mr HODGMAN - The current one expires at the end of the financial year so we are resetting the relationship with the AFL and AFL Football in Tasmania as well. It will have a different shape to the last one.

CHAIR - These people at the table won't know because they haven't seen it.

Ms KENT - We start the new grant deed as the Premier said. We have the previous one but we have emphasised to the AFL that the focus for this one needs to be on issues the Premier has outlined.

Mr HODGMAN - That was part of our agreement last year. We had an MoU of sorts. A statement of intent to the areas that we collectively will work to get it on, bearing in mind that the AFL and AFL Tasmania, a subsidiary of it, have different priorities and AFL Tasmania has a responsibility to the local football community for participation in the support and administration of it in Tasmania. It is true to say as well that our priorities well and truly align and it will take a slightly, if not dramatically different style, but our commitment, as with any grant deed, is to ensure that we get maximum return on our investment and there is accountability for the public expenditure. Some issues that have been quite fairly and appropriately been raised by key stakeholders in the community are also acknowledged in the process. It is a message I have sent to the AFL but also it has also been well understood by the officials who are working on this new deed.

Mr WILLIE - I was interviewed for the Garlick Report as president of the Old Scholars Football Association, so I can't believe you didn't ask me questions but I thought that I would disclose it.

Mr VALENTINE - It has been put to me that the new funding for Aussie Rules is about a ratio of 10:3 against all other state peak sporting bodies. I would be interested to know the facts on that. We are talking about new funding. The observation is with the participation rates on all of those other sports; netball (huge participation rate), tennis, squash, hockey,

swimming, and probably less physical injuries as a result of that, better preventative health outcomes. Why wouldn't we be paying more attention to those sports and promoting those as well rather than Aussie Rules, or predominantly Aussie Rules?

Mr HODGMAN - I can give you an overview or table or both of allocations through individual agreements to sport and recreation organisations across the state. To let the committee know that Cricket Tasmania, our cricket administration body, receives the same amounts. Football Federation of Tasmania receives \$250 000, Netball Tasmania \$250 000, Soccer \$250 000, Surf Life Saving Tasmania \$250 000 (that is also an increase), Sports Carnival Association receives \$1500, Tasmanian Olympic Council receives \$30 000 plus \$5000 to the Pierre de Coubertin Awards, Tasmania Water Safety Council receives \$30 000, Northern High School Sports Association receives \$10 000, The Tasmanian Axemen's Association receives \$10 000, and the Derwent Sailing Squadron receives \$3000. There are also allocations in our budget to Burnie City Council to develop the Burnie Aquatic Centre, \$250 000; the Burnie Tennis Club receives \$250 000 to fund the redevelopment of the Burnie tennis courts; Hockey Tasmania receives \$300 000 to replace the turf at both Hobart and Launceston, St Leonards, hockey grounds, which has happened in Launceston and is a work in progress here Surf Live Saving also receives \$100 000 for volunteer marine rescue and another \$50 000 to support water safety programs for local government. Motor cycling receives \$40 000 and physical disability sports, \$38 000.

CHAIR - Athletics, Premier?

Mr HODGMAN - Athletics Tasmania received state grants program funding of \$35 000 for 2015-16.

Mr VALENTINE - I realise you have quite a significant list of things you give grants to but the quantum of the grants compared to what is going to football. The point being made is that the preventative health outcomes and the health of the community - less injuries and the like for a lot of those sports - would it not be better to be investing in that than just football?

Mr HODGMAN - We are, and the gap is closing. We are closing the gap with netball, soccer, surf life saving et cetera.

Mr VALENTINE - If I can get that tabled that would be good and I can look at it at my leisure.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, I will table that.

CHAIR - Is there another piece of information there you would like to share with the committee?

Mr HODGMAN - That was just the overall funding for Sport and Recreation which I wanted to point out the decrease in funding is as a result of the end of funding for a number of election commitments, which total close to \$3 million which have been contained in previous budgets and also the end of one-off funding for the Silverdome's operation deficit. There were provided in the 2015-16 Budget - \$556 000 - but you will note in this budget there is ongoing support for the Silverdome.

Mr VALENTINE - What organisations or bodies representing the grassroots Australian Rules football you are communicating with and consulting with over the application for funds and the objectives to be achieved?

Mr HODGMAN - There are a number of them and I can start working my through the various peak football organisations, as well as the various leagues. They are the people we are talking about when you think about -

Mr VALENTINE - Just a list would be fine at some point.

Mr HODGMAN - Sure, I can give you a list of all state football administrative organisations and leagues that are grassroots football in Tasmania.

CHAIR - If there isn't anyone on that list the committee can identify, we can put forward that particular association and they will be included as well to be eligible for some part of that \$500 000?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. Members would appreciate there are a lot of people who are very passionate about football. We have to start, as a government, with peak organisations and representative bodies and utilise the fruits of an extensive process of consultation, including the Garlick Review, which whilst it is the AFL's report, it goes to matters that concern them but it is of value to us as well. It is a valuable resource.

Mr VALENTINE - So if I can get a list and maybe the formal consultation that has been had with those bodies, it would be appreciated.

Mr HODGMAN - Sure.

Ms LANGENBURG - In relation to the state grants program and funding to the state's sporting organisations, which in this respect for the funding for grassroots football AFL Tasmania is, our principal consultation is with the state sporting organisation itself. We respect the autonomy in the right of that organisation to reflect and communicate its members' needs, responsibilities and requirements. Not all football clubs and leagues are necessarily affiliated but I am just putting it as an example. In a sporting sense, not all sporting clubs or leagues are in fact affiliated with the state bodies. I sound note of caution in relation to that. There are scattered in some parts of the state, unaffiliated bodies that quite rightly offer community sport in their communities, but they are not affiliated with the state bodies, and consequently do not have access to national or state programs and do not necessarily then have access to the resources of the state body.

CHAIR - We are talking grass roots here. That is what grass roots is, community football.

Ms LANGENBURG - In a football sense I think you would find that most of the clubs and leagues are in fact affiliated through to AFL Tasmania. But from a community sport and recreation perspective, the body that is funded has the right and responsibility to consult with its own members. The Australian Football League, AFL In Tasmania, is doing that now through the mechanism of the Tasmanian Football Council.

The Tasmanian Football Council is made up of two representatives of each of the three major leagues in the state, the northwest, the north and the south, and has an independent member as well. Through the arm of the Tasmanian Football Council, there is the opportunity for the regional and local leagues and associations and even clubs, to have input into their grass roots needs and how they are met by AFL Tasmania.

CHAIR - From what you are saying, it is not really about grass roots football, it is more about the three regional larger bodies you are funding. Is that what you are saying?

Members interjecting.

Ms LANGENBURG - The funding is definitely focused on -

CHAIR - They have got to go through those bodies to be able to access any funding for grass roots football.

Mr DEAN - No.

Ms LANGENBURG - In terms of the funding for grass roots football, the intent is when do you give individual payments to individual clubs or associations to achieve ends, or when you actually concentrate it in a collective sense, because the state body has the responsibility for the development and delivery of things like coaching programs; the development and delivery of umpire accreditation; the development and delivery of participation initiatives and the like. The funding to a state body, similarly - I think we had this discussion last year in relation to the Sports Carnivals Association of Tasmania -

CHAIR - They were getting the money, but they were not actually doing those things that they were supposed to do at a grass roots level. It is okay to do them in Launceston, but they were not getting out into any of the more regional and rural areas.

Mr DEAN - They were not even doing it in Launceston. They were doing it for the elite clubs, and it was only the elite state clubs that were really doing any good out of it.

Ms LANGENBURG - As the Premier advised earlier and as Kate Kent advised earlier, we have certainly had open discussions with AFL Tasmania and with the senior members from AFL in relation to them being able to meet the needs of community football here in Tasmania, and not only to meet them, but also to be seen to meet them and to build better relationships with their existing members and with their stakeholders. I think that came through clearly in the report. It has come through, the consistent message that there is a need to engage from an AFL Tasmania perspective much better with their grass roots football community and those representatives as well.

CHAIR - I guess there will be examples of that that we will be able to talk about next year, because there certainly is not any examples that we can talk about this year in relation to that.

Ms LANGENBURG - Reassuringly, Robert Auld, who has been appointed at the CEO of AFL Tasmania, comes from a grass roots football background himself, and has an understanding of the needs of grass roots football, not necessarily in Tasmania - although we are reassured by the fact that he is open to consult and communicate with members of the

sport here, and has put in place a very skilled and able team of managers to support him in that process.

Mr VALENTINE - With respect to those - if I can just finish the focus of the consultations with those bodies, do other sporting bodies get the same opportunity to be consulted when it comes to the grants that are being handed out, or are you only dealing with the peak body of say, I do not know, athletics or whatever it might be?

Ms LANGENBURG - Certainly from a community sport and recreation perspective, our major dealings are with the state sporting organizations. Those state sporting organizations are affiliated with the national sporting organizations. It is a fairly hierarchical structure for sport. It is true Australia-wide. The advantage that clubs have, or the leverage that state bodies have for clubs to join and be members of the state bodies is so that they have access to those services and those programs.

Mr VALENTINE - Something like squash, for instance, is there a peak squash organization in the state as opposed to a number of individual clubs which do not have a big organization? I do not know.

Ms LANGENBURG - Our terminology would be 'state sporting organization' rather than a peak body, but certainly for most of the sports there is a state sporting organisation, which is why our state grants program that we administer is only for state sporting organisations.

There are only a very few number of fairly small participant sports that do not have an operating state sporting organisation.

Mr VALENTINE - If I can get the list, as I said before, that would be great, thank you.

Mr HODGMAN - In the case of football, for example, you could not expect a government to want to involve itself in the management of every league and/or club. If you thought you would get every club in one league on the same page you would be seriously kidding yourself, let alone everyone in the broader community.

We have to manage our affairs and the disbursement of public funding through peak organisations or state sporting organisations.

Mr VALENTINE - It is an opportunity to be heard really. It was what I was pointing at.

CHAIR - For my purpose, you are talking about grass roots. The peak bodies are not necessarily representing grass roots as such. That is the issue that I have.

Mr VALENTINE - Collectively, but not individually.

CHAIR - Collectively, but certainly with no focus on grass roots which is real country football.

Mr HODGMAN - It is certainly not our government's view, nor has it been any previous government's view that we should run those leagues either.

Mr FINCH - An observation that I would like to make to the Premier. Years ago the AFL decreed that the head office of AFL Tasmania should be in the north of the state at Aurora Stadium. That was never put in place. I would have thought that if we are dealing with a grass roots type of operation, most of the grass roots would probably be along the north-west coast, along the north-east of Tasmania, through northern Tasmania.

It would be a more appropriate place to have, if you are dealing with somebody who is going to deal with grass roots football, that the operation should be located in that central location of the state. Do you agree, Premier?

Mr HODGMAN - Basically we do not fund their operations, so we cannot tell them where to base it necessarily.

Ms LANGENBURG - Through you Premier, it is certainly my understanding that the General Manager of the Tasmanian Football Council who has recently been appointed, will be spending at least a proportion of his time operating out of Aurora Stadium in Launceston as well as spending some time in Hobart. He will physically be in the north of the state.

Mr HODGMAN - The General Manager of AFL Tasmania?

Ms LANGENBURG - The General Manager of the Tasmanian Football Council.

Mr HODGMAN - I am pretty sure that Jackson Hills might be basing himself in Launceston, being a Launceston boy. It is a point well made. If they are going to do their job, to run football in Tasmania, it is not our job. If they are going to do it well and do it properly, they need to get out and to consult and engage with our leagues and clubs right across the state.

CHAIR - We will be watching intently.

Mr VALENTINE - I am wondering Premier whether we are making any representations to the Australian Institute of Sport with respect to rowing being centralised in Canberra now and the program has been pulled out of Tasmania. That is a most disappointing outcome if that happens. I do not know that the final decision has been made.

Given our history, and the tremendous representation we have always seemed to have had at Olympic level, I believe this year there is only one rower that is going to Rio. Is there nothing that can be done to try to persuade them to give us a chance here.

Mr HODGMAN - Sure. I agree with the notion that it is less than desirable. I will ask the Director of the Tasmanian Institute of Sport, Mr Paul Austen to provide some further background and context in relation to this. Tasmania has a very proud, rich, rowing heritage and a very strong and proven track record of not only elite level participation but also high levels of participation amongst women, men, boys and girls in the state.

We want to ensure that we preserve as much as a presence for national rowing programs to come out of our state which is very well placed, having excellent facilities across the state for that purpose. Paul, you might add some context in relation to this matter as well.

Mr AUSTEN - In relation to the rowing program, we put a submission into Rowing Australia. It is not actually a decision of the Australian Institute of Sport. They provide the funding to row in Australia to operate their own programs. The bottom line of it is that we will still be operating a program in Tasmania regardless of the outcome of their discussions. Looking at where they will place their two national training centres is the change that we are going through as far as how rowing has particularly developed their athletes over the last four years.

They are going to set up two national training centres, one for males in Canberra and one is for females in a location yet to be determined. We have put in a submission of interest to be considered for that. My understanding is that there were about 15 submissions that Rowing Australia are currently considering so the outcome of that is yet to be determined.

Outside of that we will operate what is called a Pathways Program but within that Pathways Program we will be looking after all the athletes that are not invited to the national training centre in the first instance as well as all the athletes through the pathway from up to and under 23. It is a resetting of the way the program works. It is not a disadvantage to Tasmanian rowers anymore than it will be to any other rower from any other jurisdiction in that sense. It is the right of Rowing Australia to determine how they want to operate a high performance program.

Mr VALENTINE - I hear that Premier and I understand what board - I think it is a board - decision is being made here. I guess the problem is that you are then expecting, not you, in the scheme of things people are expected to travel to Canberra to train and it takes them totally out of their environment here. It takes them out of their networks, the other things they do in life and it is very disruptive to them. I am conscious of that and I am worried that at the end of the day this will be a disincentive for people from taking up the sport. That is the worry I have.

CHAIR - Does the Premier hear the honourable member's concerns is the question?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, its perspective as to the likely impact it will have on participation but needless to say given the submission that has been lodged to host the women's training centre we are very keen to make sure Tasmania's in the mix.

Mr AUSTIN - The issue of relocation is the outcome is likely to be a longer period. For a lot of our athletes, particularly our female rowers, they have always had to relocate to train at other bases so it is important not to lose sight of that. As part of selection to the Australian team the only people that have not had to relocate have been the lightweight rowers in Tasmania so everybody else has had to go. It really becomes a matter of another three to four year relocation as opposed to a two year relocation. It may have an impact on some of the athletes in relation where they are in university studies but it is a minimal impact because they fully understand that that is part of what they need to do to row for their country.

Mr VALENTINE - You have made the submission so I suppose we have to wait and see how that goes. Thank you Premier.

Mr WILLIE - Are there any jurisdiction supports for disadvantaged families to cover the cost of club registrations? It is a policy supported by conservative governments in other jurisdictions. Have you received any information regarding the effectiveness of these

programs and what action are you taking towards facilitating inclusion for people who are priced out of team sports?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes I am certainly aware of programs of this type existing in other jurisdictions and it has been raised at the one and only Sports Minister's meeting that I attended and I look forward to another one of those. There was a discussion on these programs and how effective they are. Each jurisdiction has different ones, some not as well advanced or as substantially funded as others. It is an issue of some interest to me and I have asked my department to look at such a proposal and as to how it might be best implemented here in Tasmania as well. As to the effectiveness of these programs I do not believe I have anything to hand on it now but some work is being done internally by the department which Ms Kent might be able to elaborate on as to how our analysis is done and the potential applicability of a program of this type here in Tasmania.

Ms KENT - We have certainly looked at it from other jurisdictions. There are a couple of jurisdictions where it has been in place now for a couple of years so we have been able to analyse some of the evidence out of that, particularly Western Australia and Queensland. A couple of my colleagues did some work on this. I think there are a few different models how it can work so the difference is about whether you focus on entire age cohorts for example. One of the models that works best is focus on an age group where participation tends to decline which is probably late primary early teens. Other models say you focus on how much you can make it effective because as we know sporting participation can vary greatly across sports and how much you need to do to make it important to be there. We are still doing that analysis and we are following closely our colleagues in other jurisdictions to see what works well and we will provide some advice to the Premier in due course around which models are most effective for the investment. I think most of them that we have looked at are rather expensive so they are not something that you can just apply with a small amount of funding and also to be effective you need to have them continue over a long period of time. It is a big investment and one would need to do some good analysis on that and also what other things might work to increase participation as well. We have other programs within the division that also focus on targeted groups such as people with disabilities, aboriginal children and others. We are also conscious that there are particular kind of groups who want this participation as well and how we can support those.

Mr HODGMAN - We are certainly not averse to such a notion that work is underway. There are different models. We have obviously in place certain programs funded, grant based and also through various other organisations such as the Premier's physical activity council and other important groups. Paraquid is another one. We talk to you about increasing participation for those in our community with a disability or with access and equity issues but more broadly we are not averse to a notion of implementing a program similar at least in concept to that which exists interstate. There are obviously budget considerations in determining a model that would best work here.

Mr WILLIE - So a work in progress.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr WILLIE - I have got one more question, Chair. Premier, last year the Government planned to extend Tasmania's affiliation with School Sport Australia by one year only but I understand the agreement was centred on three years. Can you confirm that?

Mr HODGMAN - That is the Department of Education.

Mr WILLIE - Take it on notice?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. How about we get some advice for Mr Willie on that. We will take it on notice.

Mr WILLIE - No, no. Can you confirm that it was extended for three years rather than the one?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, it comes out of DOE.

Mr DEAN - I am not sure where ??? to North Melbourne. Is that here or in Sport and Recreation?

CHAIR - You can touch it now but there is no chocolate because the announcement has been made as I promised last week. A chocolate for the person who could get the announcement. You can have a shot at the minister right now if you want.

Mr DEAN - I do. I have read what is in the paper in relation to this sponsorship deal, Premier, and I guess like probably 99.9 per cent of the rest of Tasmania I was disappointed in that position. I understand the reasons why TT-Line do not want to disclose but we are playing with people's money. It is the people's money. It is state money. TT-Line is owned by the people. I cannot understand and fathom out why they are not entitled to know what their money is being expended on, to what extent and for what period of time. I just fail to see that. When you say commercial in confidence and I think the member for Western Tiers probably did a good job on this yesterday as well.

CHAIR - But he didn't get an answer.

Mr DEAN - No, he didn't get the answer he wanted. Where is it commercial in confidence when there is only one organisation in this state who is interested in sponsoring North Melbourne. The Hobart City Council withdrew from it and nobody else has shown any interest in it whatsoever. I would like you to tell the people of Tasmania the real reasons as to why this deal will not be disclosed because there are already rumour mongering and assuming it was much more than what Hawthorn's deal is. They are already saying that. Should we not be trying to satisfy that to some degree to give them some comfort that it is no more than the Hawthorn deal, similar to it or whatever, at least something to go on?

Mr HODGMAN - The TT-Line's board that is bound by corporations law and director's fiduciary responsibilities are not playing around with anyone's money and they have made a decision, as a board, to enter into what is a commercial arrangement and commercial imperatives extend way beyond our beautiful island state. They include competitors interstate -

Mr DEAN - There are no competitors.

Mr HODGMAN - Why do you say that?

Mr DEAN - Who else was there wanting to fund and sponsor North Melbourne play football here?

Mr HODGMAN - Their arrangement extends to a corporate marketing arrangement. It is intellectual property. It is a discreet commercial agreement between a state owned company with its own responsibilities and obligations under the corporations law. They have made as a board, a determination as to the value of this agreement and have said, as happens with other agreements, that should not be disclosed. There are currently or have been in place, deals between Hydro subsidiary, Momentum Energy, who have aligned themselves with the mighty Geelong Football Club, the Adelaide Crows and the St George Illawarra Rugby Club. The details of that arrangement, albeit under the former Government, were not disclosed either. The naming rights sponsorship of Aurora Energy over the Aurora Stadium is not disclosed by them either.

I understand it is matter of some public interest and in so far as the Government is concerned or able to, as we are, with the community service obligation which amounts to just under \$900 000, as part of the deal and that is because of the withdrawal of Hobart City Council in a different funding arrangement. We have disclosed that because it is a community service obligation, as we do with others. I believe it can well and truly be justified on the basis of what will be extraordinary community benefits that will include into other parts of the state. It is not a Hobart based thing and North Melbourne have committed to doing some significant things: establishing academies for women and the next generation academy which goes to indigenous and multicultural participants; establishing an elite academy for young boys and girls establishing their huddle which has been a very successful part of their business interstate; to enhance social inclusion and to address causes of disengagement.

North Melbourne are very well placed to provide benefit into our state and they have committed to extend it into regional Tasmania including in the north and to Devonport and/or Ulverstone, I believe.

Mr DEAN - Extending it into Launceston, considering at the present time with a huddle program.

Mr HODGMAN - I understand people's concerns.

Mr DEAN - Where is it different to the Hawthorn deal? All the details are known with the Hawthorn deal. Quantum is known. Why couldn't we at least know the money without knowing the marketing strategy? Why can't we be told, yes, the deal is \$20 million for the next four years, without being told anything else?

Mr HODGMAN - That is the deal that was struck between the state and the Hawthorn Football Club. This is an arrangement between the TT-Line that are a state owned company with their own corporate responsibilities and obligations. It is a matter for them as to whether they disclose that. They will be available to be scrutinised at their Estimates hearing later in the year.

Mr DEAN - Would you support the vision of perhaps they ought to make available the amount of money that has been provided over the period of time of which this agreement is in place, without identifying the marketing strategy behind it?

Mr HODGMAN - Again, they are commercial imperatives for the board of the TT Line of which I am not a member.

Mr DEAN - You are Premier of the state and you have good control over state funds, where they will go and how they will be spent and what will happen.

Mr HODGMAN - I am not in power to interfere with a corporation, including state owned ones.

CHAIR - It is always a reminder that it is a state owned company.

Mr FINCH - We as a committee of Parliament need to investigate how our GBEs are being run. I have a sense we will get the same answer as we got the fob off from you, Mr Premier. In respect of, no, we will be able to ask at the GBEs. I think we will get the same there. Oh, no, we are not going to tell you because it is commercial in confidence. We say, well, hang on. We are supposed to be investigating GBEs on behalf of the taxpayers of Tasmania yet we will not be able to get at that figure.

How do we know there are not other figures that we cannot get at with a GBE? This is what concerns me in respect around transparency in the way, particularly this GBE, is being run in respect of this particular deal. It does concern me. I hear what you say about commercial imperatives and that sort of thing. It worries me the quantum of the amount cannot be open and transparent to the taxpayers of Tasmania.

Mr HODGMAN - I understand the concerns of the committee. It would be very unwise for me or anyone in my position to entertain speculation or rumour that may surround issues like this or indeed to breach or seem to breach what are obligations and responsibilities of directors of listed corporations.

Mr DEAN - Are you disappointed with the direction they have taken?

Mr HODGMAN - I have no reason to be anything other than very pleased at the arrangement they have struck with the North Melbourne Football Club.

Mr DEAN - That was not the question I asked. The question I asked was are you disappointed they have not released some of the detail involved in the deal with North Melbourne?

Mr HODGMAN - The matter is for them. I understand people in the community are disappointed they are not privy to that information. The TT Lines' board of directors have obligations and responsibilities they adhere to. They publicly report through their corporate statements and annual report and are subjected to scrutiny through parliamentary committees each year as well.

CHAIR - Last question, minister. Do you know what the quantum is?

Mr HODGMAN - I am not in a position to say. It is a corporate matter of the TT Line board and executive. I am aware of the \$894 000 community service obligation which I believe we are required to publish including by tabling in the Parliament.

Mr DEAN - As Premier you would know what it was obviously.

Mr FINCH - We are not concerned about the way TT Line is being run. We are full of admiration for the board and the way they are operating.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I have a question about the Next Generation Academy that was mentioned to do with North Melbourne. Will the academy be set up in the north-west coast and Launceston as well? Is it a state-wide academy?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, that is the expectation as I understand it. The elite programs for Tasmania will encompass the Next Generation Academy, the Female Academy and the broader AFL Academy which is junior elite, state-wide.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I was wondering if any physical infrastructure will be required outside of Hobart to support the academy?

Mr HODGMAN - Most likely. Those matters will be worked through between the AFL and North Melbourne with our oversight. It is their commitment to the state.

Mrs ARMITAGE - And the same with staff?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. My understanding from my discussions with the AFL and AFL clubs it is as much if not more about people on the ground in the communities rather than built infrastructure and training facilities. It is about outreach into areas identifying talent, working in the local clubs.

Mrs ARMITAGE - It is a bit like what Hawthorn are doing now, is it, going out into the areas?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, but this is a little more targeted. Theirs is more of a participation program, that element of it. Incidentally, Hawthorn have also expressed an interest in a potential future women's academy as well at some stage down the track, but that is all dependent on licences granted by the AFL.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Premier, won't it be fun if North Melbourne continue to do well and become premiers, whether the AFL will want us to keep North Melbourne. They might be happy for us to keep Hawthorn, the way it is going with them not doing so well on the ladder.

Mr HODGMAN - I think, regardless, Tasmania being aligned with the reigning premiers and the top of the table team at the moment is -

Mrs ARMITAGE - It could make it difficult though, Premier, for the AFL if North Melbourne do very well and become premiers. They are not really going to want us to have the premiers again, particularly seeing they thought they were giving us a team that was down the ladder a little bit.

Mr DEAN - You could have a conflict of interest here, Premier.

CHAIR - Thank you. We will wrap that up. Minister, can I indicate that we will move to your portfolio as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Minister, can you give us a brief overview on what is happening in this particular department relating to the office and its roles and functions.

Mr HODGMAN - I want to first take the opportunity to acknowledge the traditional owners of the island, the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, pay respects to their elders and acknowledge those who have passed before us, acknowledge that the Tasmanian Aboriginal community are custodians of this land. I also acknowledge past injustices and present day inequalities.

I want to update the House on the progress of five key areas of priority and progress towards what the government believes will be significant improvements in the lives of Aboriginal Tasmanians. They include a changed approach to determining who is eligible for Aboriginal programs and services offered by the Tasmanian Government. Perhaps the most significant element of our agenda to reset our Government's relationship with Aboriginal Tasmanians, and that is by recognising and declaring eligibility for government programs, or access to them, and to the participation in cultural activities and pursuits for a large number of Tasmanian Aboriginals who are currently excluded under a government policy which I have said was no doubt well intentioned at the time that has become divisive and exclusive for many Tasmanian people, Aboriginal people.

We are also enhancing the Tasmanian school curriculum with a focus on Tasmanian Aboriginal history and culture into our schools and are progressing through consultation with the Aboriginal community with that important reform as well, which will, for the first time as I am aware, at least formally across all schools ensure that there is a content of Aboriginal history and culture being taught to all Tasmanian school students.

We are also exploring opportunities for joint land management and land return, including the opportunities for increased economic activity, you might say, in tourism operations in areas that are of significance to the Aboriginal community, and indeed the broader community, and have committed in our budget to providing practical steps to advance the connection between Aboriginal Tasmanian people and their land with additional ranges committed to in the budget. We have an ongoing and longstanding commitment to play our role in closing the gap in outcomes for Tasmanian Aboriginals through what is a national effort, but also one where we will play our part. Significantly and following the work of a Parliamentary committee we propose to include a reference in the Tasmanian Constitution Act to recognise Aboriginal people in our Constitution. Today we will be releasing a draft amendment to the Constitution Act for consultation to allow members of our community, the Aboriginal community notably, but the broader community to express a view as to that. A draft amendment that has been prepared following our commitment pursuant to the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Community Development and their inquiry into Constitutional Recognition of the Aboriginal People as Tasmania's first people and that report was tabled last year. I am happy to add to each and all of those.

Also in relation to the additional \$3 million in funding that this Budget commits us to over the forward Estimates, including: for culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal children and women as part of our Family Violence Action Plan; two Aboriginal liaison officers as part of our commitment to redesigning the child protection system; and ensuring in both instances where there are Aboriginal women and children or even men at risk of family

violence that our response is culturally sensitive and most effective in dealing with Aboriginal Tasmanians; \$520 000 over two years to implement the insertion of Aboriginal history and culture components into the Australian curriculum to be taught in our school. I have mentioned the work of two additional Aboriginal rangers who will be not only an important part of our ranger fraternity and core, but will be an addition of two Aboriginal rangers and that provides for the ability to allow the Aboriginal community to have greater involvement as they now do and will continue to do to ensure that Aboriginal cultural values in the TWWHA and our national parks are appropriately recognised, fostered and enhanced.

We will continue to support not only Constitutional recognition here in Tasmania with the release today of the draft amendment. We will also continue to work with the commonwealth government on recognising Aboriginal people in the Australian Constitution. Throughout June the Recognise Campaign, which continues to move ahead with great enthusiasm and great engagement I think of Tasmanian people we will hold a Journey To Recognition travel throughout Tasmania. This is a nationwide campaign, a national relay that stops at every state and territory to raise awareness of and support for Constitutional recognition. It is timely albeit a campaign to change our nation's Constitution that this occurring in our state at the same time that we are releasing today a draft amendment to our Constitution Act, which will say, at least in its draft form that:

We, as the Parliament, on behalf of all the people of Tasmania acknowledges Aboriginal people as Tasmania's first people and the traditional owners and original owners of Tasmanian lands and waters and recognises the ongoing spiritual, social and cultural and economic importance of traditional lands and waters to Tasmanian Aboriginal people; and recognises the unique and lasting contribution that Tasmanian Aboriginal people make to Tasmania.

CHAIR - Thank you, minister. Firstly, can I congratulate you on the first initiative of where you outlined that all those identifying as an Aboriginal or Aboriginal descent will have that opportunity to be recognised. That is something that in a previous committee inquiry that I know, as a member of that committee, we felt very strongly about. I am pleased to see that you are acting on some of those recommendations from that inquiry so thank you. Members, are there any questions? The minister certainly outlined a large agenda there with quite a large amount of money to go with it.

Mr FINCH - There is a lot to cover. Probably my first question, Premier, would be with Aboriginal Affairs, do you have an office, officers or a department that look after these things?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr FINCH - Could you give me some idea of the size, the FTEs, people who are in that department?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, certainly. The FTE composition of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs consists of as at 31 March 2016, 6.74 FTEs. You probably want a little more information as to what they do and the role they play, is that what you are seeking?

Mr FINCH - If you want to go down that path, can we have a brief overview of the work they do?

CHAIR - This is Government policy so they are not involved in direct Government policy - forming the policy.

Mr HODGMAN - They certainly assist in administering Government policy and services to Aboriginal Tasmanians. Can you provide some insight, Tim?

Mr BULLARD - The Office of Aboriginal Affairs sits within the Community Sport and Recreation division which sits within the broader policy portfolio that I am responsible for. The offices in that office have a range of responsibilities. Some of it is policy development but it also does that with policy division, our central strategic policy area, and also assisting the Premier with consultation and engagement with the Aboriginal community.

A majority of the staff that work within the Office of Aboriginal Affairs are Tasmanian Aboriginal people and in terms of service delivery, they don't directly deliver service to that community; it is more a policy function but very much a community engagement function.

Mr FINCH - Thanks very much. You mentioned in your overview Aboriginality and a review of that. Could you extrapolate that for me please, Premier?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. It is hardly the State's secret, I know, for anyone with an interest in this subject or close to the work of Government in intersecting with Tasmanian Aboriginal people would be well aware that it has been a long-standing issue of some contention that Government policy, which was established some years ago and, as I say, with good intention and in a different time has meant that there are many Tasmanian Aboriginal people who are not recognised here in their home State as Aboriginal Tasmanians but they are federally. They have been excluded from recognition and eligibility for access to certain Government programs to engage in cultural activities so we propose to restore a whole of Government approach to recognising Aboriginal in Tasmania as eligible for those things that alliance with the Commonwealth Government's method of determining eligibility and, by extension, increasing eligibility for those, until now, excluded Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

We intend to and are in the process of engaging in public consultation which Mr Bullard and his officers have been doing across the State. This comes off the back of the better part of two years of direct consultation that I have undertaken with every Aboriginal organisation and community in the State to understand what their priorities are for Government that wants to reset its relationship with Aboriginal Tasmanians. This is by far and away the number one issue that has been raised from all sides of the debate. It is our plan and intention to change government policy shortly to reflect and align with the Commonwealth Government's policy. We are advised there will be likely a relatively modest budget impact, despite some claiming it will open the floodgates with many people seeking additional funding support. If that is part of ensuring Tasmanian Aboriginals can feel included and recognised by their State Government, I think that is an appropriate and worthy investment.

Mr FINCH - Are you confident this will be achieved?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, I hope so. I have also in the process of consultation engaged the Opposition and the Leader of the Greens to engage them as much as I can - and I am not

declaring their support for what we are doing, other than to say as they have said it is recognised this has been a long-standing issue of some contention. It is not an easy subject and there are some members of the Aboriginal community who are not supportive of a change to government policy and some who are not supportive of changing our Constitution Act, but I believe so far as the former is concerned it is an important symbolic step. As far as the latter is concerned, I think it is essential to provide equity of access and recognition to deal with a problem in our community, a long-standing issue that until now we have perhaps not been able to properly advance. That opens up new opportunities in other areas as well, as I have outlined in what we are seeking to achieve with our priorities for improving the lives of Aboriginal Tasmanians.

Mr FINCH - The mention you made of the constitution recognition by Tasmania, would we be leading the way there?

Mr HODGMAN - No, we would be the last state to recognise in our constitution Aboriginal people.

Mr FINCH - There was a story in the *Guardian* online last Friday that reported Aboriginal cave stencils in the upper reach of the Derwent Valley had been vandalised. Those red ochre stencils are believed to be up to 8000 years old. Why anyone would want to destroy or damage them, I don't know. You are quoted in the story as saying, 'It was a shameful act, which I utterly condemn'. It is virtually impossible to catch the culprit, but is it feasible for more protection to be provided for these icons of Aboriginal culture? I am thinking of CCTV.

Mr HODGMAN - I received a briefing just this week from departmental officers who are joining the effort with (inaudible) assistance from Tasmania Police to identify and apprehend the offender and we remain hopeful. We would expect they would be treated appropriately under existing law which provides for a term of imprisonment if found guilty. There is an inequity or an anomaly between what happens when somebody is convicted of an offence of this type as against what they might be if they were vandals of built European heritage, which I believe needs addressing. Our Relics Act - poorly named but it has been around for some time - needs changing as well to make it more contemporary. A good start would be changing its name and there is an appalling reference to 1876 being the definitive time line in which our legal and social context arbitrarily is defined and which should also be removed. It is important to look to increasing penalties for damage to Aboriginal heritage in line with penalties for damage to non-Aboriginal heritage, bearing in mind this is 8000 years old, not only is incredibly important to Aboriginal Tasmanians but to our state and also how we can best contemporise the penalty range and scale to suit offending of this type to not only punish those who offend in this way but to deter others and to recognise the significance of what this is doing. These are proposed improvements to the Relics Act which has been for many years the subject of some scrutiny review, including by former governments. We agreed yesterday in this process downstairs that it is a complicated and tricky area of legal reform but these are very important significant steps forward we could where everyone is in agreement and at least get the Relics Act into far better shape and help us better protect areas like the one that was so senselessly damaged.

Mr FINCH - So the review of that Act is underway now?

Mr HODGMAN - It has been an ongoing body of work going back to former governments which we have picked up and it comes under the responsibility of Minister Groom. Needless to say, I have a keen interest in it. What has happened recently, as tragic and horrifying as it is, is a catalyst for us to perhaps move on those areas I have identified where I think we can make real progress. There are other broader issues that are more contentious but Minister Groom is working through and is consulting on and he has a council to assist, an Aboriginal Heritage Council, established to assist him in that process. That work can, will and should continue but in the meantime we can at least try to improve things and to hopefully prevent that sort of vandalism occurring again into the future.

Mr FINCH - That work you mentioned of Mr Groom, will that include land return?

Mr HODGMAN - No, that is more an issue for me and for the government. His work relates specifically to the Act but also to land management opportunities which he has responsibility for, in the National Parks and TWWHA. It is something again we are looking at closely with a whole of government lens and we are in consultation with the Aboriginal community to recognise that there are other methods and models for enabling Aboriginal Tasmanians to have access to their land and to be more closely connected with it, not excluded from it as some Tasmanians to have access to their land and to be more closely connected with it, not excluded from it as some Aboriginal Tasmanians currently are. That involves a significant shake up as well, but also an opportunity for us to look at joint management opportunities. There are tourism opportunities, including in the north east where there is a fascinating clashing of Aboriginal heritage and European heritage which is not without some sensitivities but presents as a classic example of where there could be a wonderful tourism opportunity which would support Indigenous Tasmanians as the proponents and operators of such a thing, also recognising dual heritage, potentially allowing for a more contemporary and more effective joint management of the property. It is the most well-developed proposal we have in this space and it is one that the state government is contributing to in terms of its development as a proposal with some financial support. It would be a wonderful thing for our state if we could catch up, like most other states who have a strong Indigenous culture and heritage, showcasing as a tourism attraction our extraordinary Aboriginal heritage and culture. but also allowing the Aboriginal people of Tasmania to be part of our tourism industry, our visitor economy and to enhance the values, attributes and recognition and respect for Aboriginal culture and heritage in Tasmania through allowing our visitors and Tasmanian people would be part of that, an experience.

Mr FINCH - With what you are saying and the interest you seem to have in this area, are you going to make some moves in this area, Mr Premier? Are you setting yourself an agenda to achieve something in respect of that?

Mr HODGMAN - The tourism venture you mean?

Mr FINCH - The tourism venture and land hand backs and those sort of areas? There has been a lot of talk and not much action.

Mr HODGMAN - Really? Who is saying that?

Mr FINCH - I am looking for assurance, Premier.

Mr HODGMAN - The property damaged by vandals we handed back to the Aboriginal community last year, so that was actioned and sadly now the subject of another discussion around vandalism but that was a positive step forward. Today we are proposing a change to our Constitution, a symbolic but a significant action. We are acting by putting more money into the education of young Tasmanians about our culture and heritage. By the end of this year there will be components of that in our curriculum which I think is a really significant thing.

It surprised me and it would surprise many people to think there was not a dedicated component in our curriculum teaching Tasmanians about our Aboriginal culture and heritage. Yet there would be, no doubt, on European heritage and culture or Australian history more broadly. I think that is a significant step forward.

Changing the eligibility criteria or regime for currently non recognised Aboriginal Tasmanians has been described as everything from bold to courageous and politically dangerous. The work on that we are treating very sensitively and not rushing to implement because we want to be respectful of all Aboriginal Tasmanians and the organisations who represent them. The impact it might have on budget and other things. Mr Fullard and his team are doing an important thing in opening up for public discussion this idea which, as I say, has not been warmly welcomed by everyone. I think it is a really positive step in the right direction. I contend we are not acting. There is a lot of action going on.

Mr FINCH - Thank you, Premier.

CHAIR - It might only be your boys.

Mr VALENTINE - I think Mr Finch was thinking of the Larapuna, Rebecca Creek were you Mr Finch.

Mr HODGMAN - Hand backs, yes.

Mr VALENTINE - Has that been progressed in any way?

Mr HODGMAN - That remains unresolved. It was our position in opposition to support the former government's legislation to progress that. The chair has reminded us there were other matters that impeded the progress of that legislation but perhaps, horrible expression, ripped the scab off a number of other unresolved issues which we are now endeavouring to tackle through our reform agenda.

The last thing, and I said this from day one, I want to do is repeat the mistakes of the past. That is an unfair characterisation of it but to presume we could progress legislation that stalled in our parliament simply because there has been a change of minister, I think would a foolhardy enterprise and endeavour. We are tackling those issues identified because they go to many of the matters of the committee. I think that opens the prospects for greater progress next time around.

Mr VALENTINE - Dual naming?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr VALENTINE - Are you progressing that?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr VALENTINE - I see that through the nomenclature board. They come up from time to time. It is the expectation or the desire the Aboriginal name ends up being the predominant name in that circumstance over a period of years or not? What is the vision there?

Mr HODGMAN - I think by their nature, equal. It is a dual. Complementary.

CHAIR - It is not necessarily how they are referred to in that dual status any more. Often one gets used instead of both.

Mr HODGMAN - No-one is legally advised to call it one or the other or even both. They can do what they want. The Government policy is established and there are 13 features and places around the state that currently have dual names. Proposals for future name changes or by including an Aboriginal name brought forward by the Aboriginal community they will propose through the Nomenclature Board process. We have seen as I say 13 places already assigned names under the policy and no doubt there will be more to come. I am not aware of any others currently in the system.

Mr VALENTINE - The point is there is a respectful process that is being undertaken to your mind. No doubt there will be some feathers ruffled.

Mr HODGMAN - I think it is important that we consult as broadly as we can. As we discussed last year some times these things can come as a bit of bolt from the blue for communities. We need to be respectful of that and do our best to explain why it is and why it might be.

CHAIR - To both indigenous and to Tasmanians if you like.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. My department will continue to work with the Aboriginal community and the relevant agencies, local government authorities as well to review the implementation of the policy to make sure and we will do this by the end of this year. We can perhaps improve the processes because the work for the somewhat mysterious Nomenclature committee can suddenly appear with little warning and perhaps not be as tailored to good community consultation as it might.

Mr VALENTINE - Or education for that matter, Premier. I have had feedback that some people know that for instance Mt Wellington was kunanyi.

Mr HODGMAN - It is based on very positive and worthy objectives and can in its own way be really ? marketing and let alone important and appropriate recognition of those places and their connection with Tasmanian Aboriginals.

CHAIR - It is just how the message is presented.

Mr VALENTINE - There are not too many people that call Uluru Ayers Rock these days.

Mr DEAN - The Government did offer a further briefing to myself and the Launceston members on what is happening at Launceston. I am trying keep up with it as well and I am getting a bit side track because of further things happening right now, pretty bad, but anyway I just wanted to mention that.

Mr HODGMAN - On the floods.

There is an evacuation notice that has been issued to the people of Invermay. I might be able to get the precise details. My apologies. I did mean, Ivan, to give you an update. It is a very important point.

CHAIR - If we just finish these two questions then perhaps the Premier.

Mr DEAN - That is why I am side track just trying to keep up with it because it is impacting on my area.

CHAIR - Lets get this done.

Mr DEAN - My question, Premier, is how much finance has been allocated to manage the land under their control and what checks and balances are in place to ensure the funding is used for that purpose. The second question is which will probably come with that is what Government department is responsible for checking and auditing that funding and how frequently is it done.

Mr HODGMAN - The Council gets an annual grant to assist with its operating costs, coordination and land management activities associated with that land that has been returned to the Aboriginal community, currently funding of \$314 000 a year. The majority of lands returned to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community require the establishment of land management regimes to ensure they have ongoing sustainability as well as economic viability. ??? currently has ownership or management rights over approximately 63 557 hectares of land on 19 sites, 55 617 hectares of which was land returned by the Tasmanian Government. The additional element of 10.4 hectares relating to a 40 year lease, Lapoinya. A further 7929 hectares acquired buy out through private negotiations. That gives you the context of the area that they have management rights, ownership and responsibility for - just try to get straight to the chase. What were the other questions you had there?

Mr DEAN - The question was to help to manage the land, how much you allocated be under their control and what checks and balances are in place to ensure the funding is used for that purpose? What government department is responsible for it and how often do they review and audit the process?

CHAIR - How often does anyone go to Wybaleena?

Mr BULLARD - The Land Council reports back to us annually about how it has expended the funds.

Mr DEAN - To Sport and Recreation?

Mr BULLARD - Yes, to Community, Sport and Recreation.

Mr DEAN - How do you audit that to review it to check it to see all of that is correct?

Ms KENT - By analysis of what is on the ground. We meet with them as necessary. We raise issues with them about what is required to be delivered. We work with them collaboratively like we do with other organisations that we administer grant deeds for. If concerns are raised with us as they are in any organisation -

Mr DEAN - Do you do site visits to see what is happening and what is going on and how often do you do that if you do it?

Ms KENT - We don't have a regular regime of site visits. We would go to visit sites when invited or if the community or issues have been raised with us. Just like through other feedback through other agencies as well that work on land matters. I guess the question would be what are the concerns that people might have around a particular piece of land being managed. If there were issues TALC, themselves, would raise concerns if they felt like they were not able to address some matters, but there is not a regular regime of site visits to every piece of land that is returned.

Mr FINCH - It is interesting to me that there is \$314 000 for each of the last three years and I would have thought that there would have been increasing costs over that time. I am surprised that it has plateaued?

Mr HODGMAN - The Council has made a submission for increased funding. It is, as you would appreciate, under consideration.

Mr DEAN - It is a good point that you raise because we have the large amount of land that they are responsible for the TALC is responsible for \$314 000 really when you are looking over all of that management process is not a large amount of money at all I would not think. That is why the question has been asked. The question was asked by a person who has a huge interest in this and I am simply relating that question here today, because he has concerns that the management is not as good as it could be. They are the true facts. Are you satisfied that it is being managed and money is being spent where it should be?

Mr HODGMAN - That is a good point.

Mr DEAN - Sadly we all saw the program on television the other night, I would have thought, on *60 Minutes* and the tragic situation of the funding of Aboriginal areas on the mainland. How it is all being rorted not by the Aboriginal people, but by those people administering it and providing the funding and so on. It was a terrible indictment on the funding process, the management and administration around that. Those who did not see the program, it was on *Four Corners*.

CHAIR - Certainly nothing like that I would suggest.

Mr DEAN - No, but I am just saying - I am not suggesting that it is - I am suggesting is that enough funding for TALC to be able to do what they need to do and how is it being audited?

Mr HODGMAN - They would argue no in terms of the quantum and that is a budget issue for us and will be the subject of further discussion and consideration into the future.

Mr BULLARD - I was just going to make one point, Mr Dean, and this is why I have been looking on my phone. The grant to the Aboriginal Land Council is slightly different to other grants we administer, which are a government decision. It is actually legislated under the Aboriginal Land Council's Act that they will receive an allocation as determined by the Parliament and that is done through the Budget process. Then there is a statutory obligation on the Council to discharge its functions and duties using the allocation that it receives. Strictly speaking we don't have to administer it as if it was a grant, but we do obviously meet with representatives of the Aboriginal Land Council, fairly regularly. We also do request that they report back to us on how they have expended those funds on an annual basis.

CHAIR - So is that information available? Can that be provided? I appreciate that.

Mr FINCH - Just in respect of the additional million dollars over four years for trainee rangers and also for the support for aboriginal women impacted by family violence. That is probably an area I might pursue in question time in parliament.

Just at this stage, the trainee rangers, Premier: we spoke some time ago about Daintree Forest and the aboriginal management of that area there, and the opportunity it creates for the aboriginal community.

Of course people come to Tasmania, this is from your tourism portfolio which we are about to move into, we do not have people come to Tasmania and looking around for that aboriginal experience in their tourism connection to the state, and there is precious little.

Your rangers have been a great success in other states and territories. Do you see their role in Tasmania as helping to connect that aboriginal story to our tourism people?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, we certainly do and our support for increased opportunities in tourism infrastructure, to sustain the sort of Daintree type experience that I think we should well be able to do here. It would be immensely powerful for our tourism industry for how we project our aboriginal heritage and culture and really engaging aboriginal people; another meaningful connection with the land, which they have an extremely close connection.

That is what is motivating me as Minister for both those things, Aboriginal Affairs and Tourism. Also to apply additional resourcing by way of aboriginal positions within government, through the trainee ranger program for example to add or enhance joint land management opportunities with Tasmanian aboriginals in parts of state, the TWHM most notably of course.

It is something that we are committed to. there is a similar Federal Government program. We will employ additional aboriginal trainee rangers to undertake up to four years of full time training. It does involve conservation and land management as well, so it is enhancing our ability to look better look after these areas.

On completion of the training, the trainees will become permanent employees of Parks and Wildlife. They will become established members of the state service. That in fact will

be a different outcome for most other aboriginal ranger programs, nationally I am told. That is a good thing.

That additional funding will also allow for two aboriginal people to obtain a diploma in conservation and land management, also fire fighting certification. There are a range of great benefits through doing this sort of thing. It will certainly be life changing for the individuals who are part of that program.

CHAIR - What is the number that we have?

Mr HODGMAN - Two.

CHAIR - With the aim of more.

Mr HODGMAN - Possibly yes, as the budget would allow.

Just briefly in relation to the family violence action plan, and deliberate again, through developing and implementing our plan we become aware of particular sensitivities around we can best deal with this cultural, social issue and there are slightly different perspectives that we need to apply to aboriginal women and children who are at risk of violence to make sure it is as best targeted and as effective as it can be, which is why we are applying additional resources in that space.

CHAIR - Premier, would you like to give us an update then we will break for a 10 minute break for a cup of tea.

Mr HODGMAN - Just so members are aware, myself and Minister Hidding, the Acting Director of the State Emergency Services and Commissioner Darren Hine spoke to the media to confirm that a short while ago, an evacuation direction was issued for the Launceston suburb of Invermay. That is a precautionary direction, but needless to say, a significant thing.

It is not an order. It is a notice but it initiates action in the local community to inform residents and business operators of a rising risk in that area which will escalate, most probably, over the next day or two, potentially affecting 3650 homes, 795 businesses.

We have needed to move to establish evacuation centres at Silverdome and also at the Newnham Campus, UTAS. Also in Longford, we have got rising flood levels there. That suggests that access to the town need to be restricted. Residents in that area are encouraged to persist with their own individual flood evacuation plan and if they feel the need to self evacuate, they should do so now. Needless to say, we will continue to monitor progress there and indeed in other areas that are affected and likely to be so over the coming days as the weather pattern moves eastward.

We have committed to immediately offer cash assistance of up to \$750 aid for emergency relief through Service Tasmania and that is to help people initially with food, clothing, transport, shelter. Similarly for Tasmanian farmers, through the relief fund, we are providing assistance, or allowing them to access that. These are only initial and immediate emergency responses, bearing in mind, that there no doubt going to need to be a lot more effort from all levels of government in the broader community.

The Federal Government is engaged. The Prime Minister, who was ringing me a moment ago as we spoke, I spoke to yesterday in relation to this. The Federal Government through Minister Keenan has also been closely in contact with Minister Hidding in his department to keep abreast of things and to offer support to all those affected.

An unfolding situation that is probably going to get worse or at least more broadly spread across the state. There are already 200 properties that have been flooded, and 350 requests already for assistance into the SES. They range from relatively minor through to life threatening situations. Sadly we have had confirmation this morning of the death of one Tasmanian citizen and with others still not accounted for, it is extremely tragic.

I also took the opportunity to thank local communities for their efforts and know that councils and organisations in these areas will be seriously under the pump as well as our SES personnel, who have been working flat out now for a number of days to not only respond, but to best equip these areas that have now been inundated with the highest level of flooding that the state has experienced in 40 to 50 years.

Schools, roads and railways are closed. Port of Devonport is out of action with debris and submerged vessels. It means the Spirits not operating and some effort is being made to get freight out of the state via either Bell Bay or Burnie and a large number of passengers who were stuck on the Spirit last night needed to be accommodated as well. TT Line are working with them to refund fares and to make alternative arrangements to ensure that they are well looked after as well.

CHAIR - Thank you very much for that up-date. It is predominantly the Invermay situation, the member for Windermere, Mr Dean's electorate. Mr Dean would almost feel that he needs to be back in his electorate but he has stayed with us.

The committee suspended from 3.44 p.m. to 3.55 p.m.

CHAIR - Welcome back to the table, minister, in your capacity as Minister for Tourism. I know the honourable member for Rosevears will want me to say how pleased he is the Premier of our state is also the Minister for Tourism. He says it all the time. I thought I might put that in. It does not happen everywhere except perhaps in New Zealand.

Mr HODGMAN - Colin Barnett's followed the lead in WA.

CHAIR - Minister, can I take you to 1.1 Tourism: tourism marketing funding of \$18 million over four years from 2016-17. Can I have the key components of that funding and where it is going to be directed and how that is going to build our numbers for visitation to the state? Albeit they probably will not be coming today or tomorrow.

Mr HODGMAN - I will ask Mr Fitzgerald to describe where our marketing effort is targeted. It would be fair to provide the context that what we are doing and I would argue with less than what our competitive jurisdictions have to extend on marketing. We get a very good return on our investment.

CHAIR - But we have the product, minister. They do not have the product.

Mr HODGMAN - I agree we have the premier destination. If you think for a minute that Queenslanders or Victorians or South Australians are not hyper competitive in this space, John will be able to tell you how much their budgets look like. They are certainly a lot bigger than ours. We have increased our commitment to marketing activity. It is absolutely critical we are as active in this space as we can be in targeted areas where there is growth and opportunity.

Our largest source of tourists are our interstate cousins, even our closest neighbours - Victorians - are still a lead cohort of Tasmanian visitors. We are taking our sales pitch well and truly across the world. We are doing a lot to promote the state. Our marketing effort which I personally think is excellent, it is quirky, cheeky, innovative and I think beautifully targets our source markets. This is my personal opinion. I think it can be reflected in considerable growth in visitation of the state which is now at record levels. In growth areas where we have had targeted marketing activity, the eastern seaboard for example, we are getting a fantastic return on our investment.

I introduce to the table the Secretary of the Department of State Growth who provides some assistance to me as well as minister, Mr Kim Evans, the Director of Events Tasmania, Mr Adam Sproule, the Director of Tourism Tasmania, CEO, Mr John Fitzgerald and his deputy, Director of Operations and Planning, Mr Mark Jones. Mr (?) Di Taylor has responsibility for a number of things but marketing being chief amongst them might also - if the committee is interested in getting a more sophisticated understanding of what our marketing effort looks like, we are providing additional funding for it.

CHAIR - It is not an in-confidence marketing exercise, is it?

Mr HODGMAN - Well, there might be bits of it that are, but Guy will keep to himself, maybe for use at a later time.

Mr FITZGERALD - In relation to clarity for what I think the Chair's question is; Is the \$18 million is the \$4 million per year over the four years of the forward Estimates, plus two amounts of \$1 million each, which the government committed last year, \$3 million over three years. We have extended one part of that and there are two, \$1 million lots to come over the next two years. Those four fours are 16 plus the two is the \$18 million, Chair.

CHAIR - And where is predominantly, Minister, where is that funding going into? Is it the quirky, cheeky marketing program that you talked about, or is it a variety? That is what I am interested in.

Mr FITZGERALD - I think I can start that, and maybe Guy Taylor, our executive director of marketing can add value. Most of that, even though this is a pretty fast moving space now, destination marketing, the consumers are rapidly changing and we have to keep up and be agile. 85 per cent of our market still remains travellers from Australia and 15 per cent international. Now we are seeing international grow off that smaller base at a faster rate. We are investing more in international. But of, say, a \$15 million net marketing budget we would spend about \$2.5 on international and the rest on what we call domestic or Australian marketing.

Yes, it will be about investing in our brand, which you spoke about: those differentiating factors. I think you used the word, quirky, and that is part of it, looking at Tassie's strengths and the fact that we are differentiating ourselves and positioning Tasmania differently, we think, to the rest of the states of Australia in both the national and international market place I think is proving compelling and that is why we are seeing the growth we are seeing.

Guy might like to elaborate on that, Chair, as the person who is driving all of that in our business. It is fair to say it is that brand differentiation, I think, understanding who we are now better than we ever have in the past and projecting that really authentically in the market place is what is really appealing to our visitors.

Mr TAYLOR - Tourism marketing and destination marketing has traditionally been a lean back postcard-based experience, whereas Tasmania is much more of a lean forward immersive experience, which is as much about the people as it is about the place. It is a multifold cultural engagement as much as it is looking at the scenery outside. We sum that up in the tag line for our above-the-line campaigns, which is go behind the scenery, which of course credits the fact that we have spectacular scenery, but behind that scenery there is so much more in terms of engaging with the people and the cultural experience of the place.

That resonates more so than a typical postcard view of a destination because that is what everyone else is doing. It is embracing the three dimensionality of the Tasmanian experience, both the positives and the fact that we are different from everyone else.

CHAIR - Minister, the 85 per cent from other states, then 15 per cent international, do you have some figures on who spends the most dollars when they come to Tasmania? Should we be 80 and 20 per cent if our international visitors spend more? Do we have some numbers on that?

Mr FITZGERALD - We do. I am trying to see what we have with us in relation to expenditure. We may not have that level of data today.

CHAIR - You may be able to take that on notice.

Mr FITZGERALD - Absolutely. But to give you, I guess, an indication, we do map that.

CHAIR - International would not stay as long as our interstate.

Mr FITZGERALD - That is right. Different markets spend different amounts. We map that domestically and internationally and make value judgments based on who our best target audience are. For instance, New South Wales on average kind of - they do not stay as long as Victorians, but they spend more per day. That is the sort of analysis we do to understand what our target audience is. We probably do not have that detail with us, but we could certainly reduce that expenditure and make the study data for you.

CHAIR - That is fine. Can I - yes.

Mr DEAN - In getting that information, do you survey obviously a number of these tourists annually?

Mr FITZGERALD - Yes, we have got the Tasmanian Visitor Survey, which is the longest-standing tourism survey in Australia. We talk to about 9000 visitors every year at regular intervals. From that we compile all of that data. There is also the national visitor survey and the international visitor survey which Tourism Research Australia have but some of our sample sizes, particularly for Australian travellers, are more accurate than the national data is. When it comes to international, we tend to use their data because it is a bit stronger because only 15 per cent of our visitors are international. It is a bit of a combo of both. We are very fortunate to have the TVS. I think we have had it since the 70s. We have got the longest-standing continuous survey of any state in Australia.

CHAIR - I would appreciate the staffing numbers so we can do a comparison of how the numbers are holding just within the tourism -

Mr FITZGERALD - In terms of our FTEs, Chair? Currently our FTEs are at 49.69 whereas last year I think we were at 51.07. Essentially we have got - we are pretty level. It is about one less FTE over the course of the last year.

Mr VALENTINE - Just about the visitor survey, that is on departure, is it not?

Mr FITZGERALD - Yes, it is.

Mr VALENTINE - It is air and sea departures?

Mr FITZGERALD - Indeed, yes.

Mr VALENTINE - Right.

CHAIR - Any other questions on what we have just spoken about? If not, I am going to go to Ms Armitage.

Mrs ARMITAGE - You have mentioned the quirky advertising and tourism. Are you doing anything with the Take me to Tasmania advertising that we saw at the tourism conference, which was very quirky? You would remember that, Premier. I am sure you were still there when that was played. You might have left. It has been on Facebook and been all over social media. It has been extremely popular. Even friends in the UK have come back and said, 'I love that.' It obviously spent a bit of time and a bit of money federally getting it done. Are we using that? Are we taking advantage of that 'Take me to Tasmania'?

Mr FITZGERALD - That is the Tourism Industry Council's work.

Mrs ARMITAGE - It is, but it would be a waste not to use it.

Mr FITZGERALD - It would. I need to check - I need to clarify that piece of work, to be honest. You have prompted me to follow that up, to be frank. The soundtrack of that is a very famous song, as you know, and I just need to ensure that we have got the appropriate permissions to use that.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I would assume if they were using it, they must have had the appropriate permission. It certainly was very catchy.

Mr DEAN - Do not assume anything.

Mr FITZGERALD - I support what you are saying, it was an absolutely fantastic piece. I remarked to a lot of people because we were talking about the future of tourism being about content development and anyone can do it. I think that was a fantastic piece put together by the TICT. I want to first and foremost applaud that. You have prompted me to follow up just to make sure we are able to use it.

Mrs ARMITAGE - It does not look as if it is schmick. It looks like something that you would see and think, isn't that fabulous? It is the local Tasmania.

Mr FITZGERALD - It is the future, if you like, of destination marketing. More and more the consumers are driving that sort of content.

Mrs ARMITAGE - It appeals to the average person.

Mr FITZGERALD - 30 per cent, I think it is, of our social media followers in Tasmania are Tasmanians. They are actively actually on our social networks producing their own content around Tasmania's experiences and sharing that with the wider -

Mrs ARMITAGE - That was shared so much. As I said, even I had people from overseas come back and say, 'I love that. Take me to Tasmania.'

Mr FITZGERALD - We will follow that up just to see if it is able to be used.

Mrs ARMITAGE - That would be great, because why reinvent the wheel? The other thing I was going to ask you, just looking at the performance measures and the predicted and target to Tasmania - we were looking at 2014-15 being probably our bumper year. It is page 72 in budget paper 2. Just looking at it, I see our actuals in 2014-15 are greater than our target in most areas, apart from the top one. You felt 2014-15 was a bumper year and maybe we are going to be down a little bit? Our targets are lower, 998 down to 974, 198 down to 181, 542 down to 540.

Mr FITZGERALD - We have to set the forward target before we get the actuals for the previous year, so that is why. We have projected our visitors out to 2020 based on the Government's target of achieving 1.5 million. We have to grow it between 5 and 6 per cent per annum to achieve those targets and at this stage we are fortunate to be slightly ahead of that curve.

Mrs ARMITAGE - What are you doing differently to promote Tasmania to visitors interstate and overseas in this Budget compared to previous budgets?

Mr FITZGERALD - We are going to look at where our brand is and see where we evolve that to the next level. That is about staying ahead of the competition. We look at some of what other jurisdictions are doing around the country. It is fair to say there is a bit of a likeness developing in some of that. They have looked at what Tasmania is doing and looked at that sort of leadership and they are getting more connected up with their own experiences. We want to mine our brand stuff a bit deeper and seeing if we can take that to the next level.

The other things we do in a very practical sense, because we are an island and access is incredibly important to visitors to be able to get here, we grew capacity into the state by over 140 000 seats in the last 12 months. Having a great brand that is ahead of the competition in the marketplace and then matching that to the capacity we have to bring people to the state. Those 140 000 seats need to be filled so we work very closely with our access partners, both air and sea, to make sure we are matching that kind of brand proposition in the market to meeting the demand of access to the state. It is being out there with great brand work but also having the great partnerships that align to that that can convert the business and send it to Tasmania.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Previously the importance of markets such as China have been spoken about as key to bringing more tourists to Tasmania. As well as China, what other markets are you focusing on right now? I am assuming you're looking broader than China.

Mr FITZGERALD - Everyone talks about China but our strategy is around Asia. We saw a slight decline in Chinese visitation in the year to March, which was the first decline we have had in some time. We are not concerned by any of that because we had massive spikes, particularly after President Xi visited Tasmania. We might have had a moderate decline in China but we increased quite significantly in Singapore and Hong Kong. We measure Hong Kong separate to mainland China. We had 6800 growth between Singapore and Hong Kong so we are focused in a Pan Asia strategy, which is Singapore, Hong Kong, mainland China and Malaysia. We are still focused in our traditional Western Hemisphere markets which is the UK, Europe and North America. Very pleasingly, they are back to significant growth on the strength of the decline in the Australian dollar. It has released a lot of the pent-up demand that was occurring. Tasmania is winning a fair bit of market share. Our US market has gone back to the top of the pops and grew by 26 per cent in the last 12 months. The UK is back growing. We are doing very well. I was fascinated by one of the stats Saul Eslake shared at a recent event I was at. We have grown our international market share from 2.8 per cent of the Australian market to 3.1 per cent, but within that, 1 per cent of the market, which does not sound like a big number, but it is a big number for Tasmania, 1 per cent of that market are now saying Tasmania is their main destination in Australia for the very first time. We have a multi-market focus, traditional western hemisphere, which we enjoyed for many years but then declined in the post GFC period. We focused on Asia predominantly in that time but now we have the west back growing again. We are in a pretty good space at the moment.

Mr HODGMAN - One of the key initiatives in this Budget is the allocation of funding to support the aviation market development fund and a lot of that work has been done in-house including through Tourism Tasmania and our aviation and access unit co-funded. Collaboration has been pivotal in increasing the number of routes and numbers into the state over recent months which increases capacity which is accommodating the increased demand for visitation into the state. I should align that also with the additional sailings of the TT-Line which have been a critical partner. To invest in that access network to allow more people into the state, it does involve collaborative marketing campaigns and strategic alignments with the airlines, not just our domestic carriers but also international carriers who are now having a very close look at Tasmania out of Asia. This additional investment in that will prove pivotal to taking tourism to a new level again.

Mrs ARMITAGE - One last question about school term dates. Have you found any changes to tourism with Tasmania changing to four terms?

Mr FITZGERALD - I think there has a little bit of impact there but nobody is saying it has been -

Mrs ARMITAGE - Nothing great?

Mr FITZGERALD - Nothing adversely impacting. Some patterns are slightly different and it also depends a lot on where Easter falls and how that all works now. That is probably the major disruption because our Easter holidays now are delinked from the school holidays and the Easter break. The very pleasing thing is that the operators are reporting to me that once upon a time our season ended at Easter but in the last year or two they are noticing it is continuing beyond Easter.

CHAIR - It depends on the weather and the time. Can I take you back to the China effect? It has been suggested and I was listening on the radio, travelling down a couple of weeks ago and, minister, you probably already have the answer because I talked about it in my reply to the Budget speech about Tasmania not being China ready - it talked about the fact we shut too early in the day and most of the Chinese visitors get up late and they are looking for dinner later in the evening and we are not focused on that as a state. Do you have some comment about that?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. It is an ongoing body of work for us and we have put additional support into working closely with key stakeholders like the Hospitality Association, accommodation providers to ensure we do get up to speed and be as China ready as we can be. Our initial efforts in that regard have been important but we need to continually work with the industry to make sure the experience is culturally sensitive, appealing, encouraging a return visitation and a rewarding experience.

It is really important part of what we are doing in providing physical amenity to Chinese tourists.

CHAIR - Signage and all those things.

Mr HODGMAN - Exactly.

CHAIR - We talk about it every year but I am not seeing a lot of changes.

Mr HODGMAN - One of the most significant things we have done in this space is to establish Wi-Fi hot spot connectivity across regional Tasmania, especially where it is critical that not only Chinese tourists but particularly them, are able to access the internet and to engage in social media. It is more than a comfort blanket for them; it is part of what they expect and need. The Minister for Information, Technology and Innovation, Michael Ferguson, can talk to the roll out of that. It has been a critical part in providing greater support for people who work in the tourism and hospitality sector so that they are trained, they are aware of these issues and able to provide a better customer experience.

Mr FITZGERALD - I can add to that, Premier. Both Kim and my agencies are collaborating with the industry on that because part of T21 visitor economy strategy is the government will do certain things and the industry will do certain things and the industry is committed to also help in that area. There has been some China-ready work done in the state,

led by the Tourism Industry Council previously and they are talking to us as government agencies. Without making any announcements, they are very keen to do another phase of the China-ready stuff which was in train. I know the report you are referring to. We have started to talk about that stuff before we saw that was pretty timely.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I was only going to say on the same subject that the local councils have been involved and in Launceston the Launceston City Council has wifi in all the major areas; the civic square, the mall, so that visitors, but particularly Asian visitors - you see them all the time on their phones and it does make it easy access. They have come to the party. They are trying to provide the wifi in those areas.

CHAIR - Progressive council in the north.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I am sure they would appreciate if Tourism was to help them fund it.

Mr HODGMAN - They are important, as are the regional tourism organisations. They are a critical part.

Mrs ARMITAGE - That brings me to my next question, Minister, in regard to the support and training of our first point of call, which is often the Visitor Information Centres who are predominately volunteer based. I talked about this in my Budget response, about the fact that they can't afford the fairly high cost of going to some of those training and information centres. They are often beyond their capacity as an organisation to pay \$75 or \$100 and they are looking for support in that area of getting information but not having to pay for it. They want to attend those events and those arranged seminars but they can't afford to go when they are only volunteers.

Mr HODGMAN - In our 2015-16 Budget we have provided professional support to them in the coordination of their network.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Would those information centres be eligible? I thought that would be a good question for the tourism arm through perhaps their regional networks to be able to fund some of those places. Even if it was a small contribution, rather than when you invite industry and people who are in the hospitality industry, they can probably afford \$50 or \$75 but volunteers cannot afford that cost.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a good point and note from my briefing that the current grant deed for the Tasmanian Visitor Information Network expires in June this year. New arrangements will be influenced and I expect to continue to support them but new arrangements will be influenced by the finding and consultation currently underway and the preparation of the Tasmanian Visitor Engagement Strategy which is due in September this year and that could form part of those matters for consideration. There is an annual conference for the Visitor Information Network where they are able to attend and obtain professional development networking opportunities through that forum.

Mrs ARMITAGE - That is only once a year. They are looking at attending a lot more of those events, if there is that opportunity to have that engagement. They have cited to me that it is a large impediment for them to be able to keep up to date with what is available in their immediate areas and what is available in the hospitality and tourism areas.

Mr HODGMAN - As you say, they often the best port of call, aren't they?

Mr FITZGERALD - I think that we can through our relationship with the Tasmanian Visitor Information Network we can take that issue up directly with their management.

[4.30 p.m.]

CHAIR - I would very much appreciate that. I thought you might have already done and you had read my speech but perhaps you haven't had a chance. You can only hope. Thank you it is a really important area of the work they do. They are often the first point of call for our visitors, particularly in my Evandale Information Centre. They get off the plane and they head straight to Evandale and why wouldn't you, a perfect spot.

Mr HODGMAN - You have a cracker up at Scottsdale as well.

CHAIR - Kathy Dodds leading the way.

Mr FINCH - I have a beauty in Exeter.

CHAIR - See we all have them and we want to support them as best we can. They predominantly run by volunteers.

Mr HODGMAN - Kathy has mentioned these issues to me and she does a great job. She is a single individual, but she has raised this and does get conferences like the TICT Conference most years. It is a very valid point. Mr Fitzgerald has undertaken to take this up with them.

Mr FINCH - Premier, just talking about the extension of the airport with the runway, whatever you call it.

Mr HODGMAN - Hobart?

Mr FINCH - At Hobart, a fantastic development. I am just curious about and Mr Fitzgerald was talking about the possibilities in Asia - I am sorry if I missed the conversation - but did we talk about the possibilities with New Zealand with the development of the international airport? I am wondering if they are on the radar? You might remember, Premier, we have mentioned before about that trip we took with Don Wing with his tourism with the Attorney-General -

CHAIR - You haven't stopped talking about it.

Mr FINCH - That is right.

Mr HODGMAN - Recommended we set up Tourism Tas as a statutory authority.

Mr FINCH - We talked over there to airline people, Air New Zealand about the possibility. It then became quite obvious that the New Zealand travellers fly into Melbourne. They have the choice of going north to the Gold Coast or coming south to us. The choice then is to head north up to Sydney, the Gold Coast and that sort of thing. It is that getting them to come into Tassie first up and then savouring our delights, and having like

a bit of a Clayton's sort of international trip first, because we are very much like New Zealand. We now have the attractions and infrastructure to a certain extent that match what New Zealand have to offer. I have a sense that we have an opportunity there to explore. Maybe I can get a comment on that possibility?

Mr HODGMAN - I have raised it in various forums, the national meeting of tourism ministers, the Ministerial Council involves a minister or the minister, or one of them, for tourism from New Zealand. The minister is in fact the Prime Minister, but he has two assistant ministers who attend those meetings. At every opportunity I have discussed with them the notion of increasing our links. I have raised it with our national carriers as well that the prospect of this. On most occasions it is identified as a prospect for us. Our aviation director is in constant contact with international carriers, a number fly through to New Zealand and into Australia, which have their own partnerships and code share arrangements in place, which lend themselves to possible strategic partnerships into the future that could re-link us to New Zealand.

There is certainly a lot of effort being undertaken. The fund that we have established goes to seizing opportunities as they present. It is a very fluid market I am finding out, domestic and international aviation, potentially very fertile, but improving our connectivity domestically and internationally is very much a focus of the Government's work through the Aviation and Access Unit, the director. It is a large part of what we do when we go abroad on trade missions and that is to connect with carriers in Asia, not just China, but continue to work with them. Increased access into the state by air is central to Access 2020 Strategy that we launched last year. The visitor economy, T21 Strategy as well. It does require not only an investment of time, but also potentially a collaboration or co-investment from the state or our agencies to facilitate these deals as we have done with Qantas, the Qantas Group and Jet star and also Virgin recently increased their routes and flights into the state and increased numbers. Yes, it is a very exciting area of opportunity that we are still working on. Air New Zealand are aligned with the United States.

Mr FITZGERALD - I support what the Premier is saying Mr Finch. Our strategy is around Asia Pacific so it is covering the areas you are talking about. We have a number of business cases that we are working through with carriers but as you will also appreciate the commercial in confidence and if we were to reveal those you are giving the heads up to their competitors. I think it is fair to say that the jurisdictions you have been talking about, we are active in all of those areas.

If you look at the case in New Zealand it also potentially provides us with better connectivity through the U.S.A. as well. What we want to be providing in Tasmania, as you said, they come in perhaps before but they can also come in after they have had a holiday in other parts of Australia. We want people entering and exiting Australia via Tasmania.

Mr FINCH - That is why they have an international airport. It is a great opportunity, even before, when we had the connection with New Zealand before without an international airport, we still had good numbers of people travelling on the flights.

Mr FITZGERALD - The numbers are growing. We had 11 per cent growth out to New Zealand last year.

Mr FINCH - This is when we had the direct flights to New Zealand before.

Mr HODGMAN - That will be completed by early 2018 is the scheduled completion date. It is federally funded in collaboration with the airport owners. That is progressing and should be up and running by early 2018.

Mr DEAN - What you have just covered off there: that is the \$1.25 million funding over the next two years to increase that aviation market. Is that it?

Mr FITZGERALD - To build the market to potentially get to a position on where direct service lie and are actually viable.

Mr DEAN - Another question I want to ask, in relation to taxis and I noticed this on the first point of entry for tourism to the state. In many cases it is the taxi operator that gets to see these people first of all and you visit other countries in the world and a good example of this is Taiwan. All of their operators they must appeal to tourism - that is one of their training things. They must be able to talk to tourists but they all dress in a uniform, they all must wear white gloves and they must present well. I would like to be able to say the same for our taxi drivers and operators here but you cannot quite say that unfortunately. I am wondering how Tourism Tasmania sees this as to whether or not we do focus enough on our taxi operators in this state and in the industry?

Mr FITZGERALD - I guess when you look technically at what our role is, it is not necessarily about engagement with the taxis but I think the broader visitor economy role, it is a very legitimate point. One of the things that Kim's agency is currently funding is what is called a visitor engagement blueprint. I must admit I have been pushing for this in my time in Tasmania which is all about how do we develop a system of engaging our visitors from point of entry at Evandale through to all areas of Tasmania. If we cannot do that well as a state, who can? That is why Kim's agency is providing the resource and we are all collaborating on that through the steering committee of the T21 which the Premier Chairs to look at what are all those touch points?

Visitor Centres will obviously be one of those that you mentioned earlier but points of entry into the state and what is that visitor engagement experience like from the moment people arrive to the time they leave and all points in between? How might we be the best in Australia at delivering an experience and we are actually going to talk to some of the past visitors that we have got through the Tasmanian Visitor Survey that have said to us they are willing to talk to us. We are actually going to consult them directly on what is has their visitor experience been like. I think your idea of getting transport operators involved in that is a logical opportunity to use this process to get better at doing that.

Mr DEAN - And the other thing I take it from the brochure the tourism industry put out in relation to the Budget. There is much discussion on this on the \$15 million to progress this, citing Cradle Mountain master plan and involvement in that. Do you wish to expand on that?

Mr HODGMAN - What we have committed to is up to \$15 million. A precise figure is to be determined by the SIR process which you would expect good government to adhere to. It is our view it is likely to be in the vicinity of \$15 million as that is the funding proposal that has been brought forward by those in connection with the Cradle Mountain master plan, which is a much bigger thing altogether.

What we have committed to do in this Budget goes to ensuring there can be important upgrades to the Cradle Mountain infrastructure asset at Dove Lake, at the lookout and in the precinct. It is the responsibility of the state to accept that the property which is iconic, critical to Tasmania's destination offering be properly maintained and upgraded. That is what this will do. It will also co-contribute to the delivery of the master plan, potentially. There are still some spaces that need to be filled in that regard including what may or may not happen from a Federal Government, or who may or may not materialise as a potential private investor and operator of a cable car, for example.

We believe that in any event a \$15 million contribution and commitment to upgrading the infrastructure is critical and will revitalise Cradle Mountain as a destination of choice. That is why we have put that into the Budget. It is contained within an infrastructure provision. We have committed to it and we will deliver it.

Mr DEAN - There has been a bit of press in recent times in relation to the way we protect tourists when they are in the state, particularly on our roads and with our licences and the fact it is perceived some of them come here and they do not have a great understanding of our driving laws and regulations. Hence, unfortunately and sadly, we have seen some crashes with fatal results.

Premier, is there anything we can do? Some people have suggested they have a special number plate.

Mr HODGMAN - We are not considering that. It goes to the issue of being China ready. It goes way beyond the Chinese, I hasten to add. It goes to providing them with a comfortable, safe and secure environment in which to enjoy their experience. I think it is a wonderful thing, insofar as Chinese visitors are concerned, there are more of them becoming independent travellers. They are getting around the state in their own means of transport which typically means they stay longer.

That is a really interesting change in the demographic and cohort of visitors who are coming to the state from China and Asia, more broadly. We do need to provide greater signage, greater ability for them to access information communications technologies to be able to more practically manage to get themselves safely around our state to where they need and want to be. We took a relatively inexpensive and quite innovative approach to engaging Chinese visitors through the extraordinary fascination they have with Bobby the Bear, which is palpable. I am not sure you have all witnessed it, or at least heard of it? They are fascinated with the bear. We have co-branded or co-signed Bobby in signs that will draw the attention of Chinese visitors to our road rules, which side of the road they are expected to drive at which speeds.

CHAIR - If you could get Bobby to say 'Do not stop in the middle of the road to take a photograph' would be very helpful. Unfortunately that is what does happen.

Mr EVANS - The only thing to add is that, through the Road Safety Advisory Council we are currently in the process of reviewing the Road Safety Strategy. This will be a focus of the new road safety strategy.

Mr DEAN - One further question if I might. It is the old question line. The report that we have recently put in in relation to Heritage in this state, Premier, we are still waiting for something to come back from the Government on it. One of the very important points that came out of that whole inquiry was the relationship between tourism in the state and the heritage we have to offer, as to just how much work the tourism area is doing in relation to that, the promotion of these sites to work in with what they are doing. It is getting visitors to this state.

We know, and they keep throwing up the survey results of a number of years ago, and I don't know what the more recent ones say, that about 70 per cent of the people who come here come for the purposes of looking at our built heritage and our other heritage sites.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, it is important and it dovetails with the discussion we had a little earlier about the value of Aboriginal culture and heritage, not only as a precious piece of Aboriginal heritage but also something of great interest to the rest of the world, which we should embrace. The review and its findings are certainly pertinent and valid and part of -

CHAIR - And the response is coming along.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, you will get that in due course from, I imagine, the Minister for Heritage, Mr Groom. He would be beaver away on that as we speak. It is being properly considered. There is a lovely alignment, Mr Fitzgerald has just reminded me, between a member of the board of Tourism Tasmania, Brett Torossi, who is also the Chair of the Heritage Council, which ensures that there is a symbolic intersection and connection between the two. It is huge, and John can talk no doubt to the value of heritage assets as part of the reason why Tasmania is such an appealing destination.

Mr DEAN - One of our concerns is that you drive around and you see the winery routes, tourist routes and so on. We know very well that the majority of tourists to the state do not come for the purposes of visiting wineries and drinking our wine. They come for other reasons.

Mr HODGMAN - Actually about one-third of the people coming to this state come simply to go to a winery or brewery or a nice restaurant - food.

Mr DEAN - That is so but about 70 per cent of them, when they come here, want to look at our built heritage and all those sites.

Mr FITZGERALD - I think there are a couple of things to add to what the Premier said. Heritage is still at the core of what we put out into the market place. If you look at all of our campaigning, there will be elements of heritage in that. In the most recent one we are doing these video vignettes. We use Francis Ransley in that, most recently as a great example of that; and the Red Feather Inn as some of our built infrastructure.

One of the things I have already fed into the visitor engagement blueprint process is that this is an opportunity for us to look at how to share more specialised information on particular elements of the Tasmanian experience as a result of the work that is done. We should be able to, particularly digitally, share with people a depth of experience that they have never had before. I have already fed that into that blueprint process to see if we can get better outcomes for how our visitors are engaged.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a good reminder. I will take it up with the minister as well to remind ourselves. I think it is true to say that Tourism Tasmania are very much with the program. They get it. A lot of their advertising and marketing material does contain heritage images and concepts. The Discover Tasmania website has a substantive section, an entire section indeed, on heritage and history in its various forms - maritime, rail, walks, convict et cetera.

CHAIR - I will go straight to the end of the table to the member for Hobart, who was the Chair of that inquiry.

Mr VALENTINE - My question is urging that the inquiry be given a reasonable response. A one-pager would not be something that we would be looking for. We would like to see each of those recommendations addressed, which would be great. One of the things that came out of that inquiry, and I thank the member for Windermere for pinching my question. A lot of people on this side of the table recognise the importance of it because a lot of them are on the inquiry. The member for Windermere was also.

One of the aspects that came to light was how fragmented built heritage tourism is across the state. You have the regions doing their own thing and you get outcomes such as Port Arthur pointing upwards of 360 000 visitors this year. It is an incredible amount. You get 26 000 going to Brickendon at Woolmers and 17 000 going to the West Coast Heritage Museum. I am not quite sure what Burnie is but it is nowhere near what Port Arthur is experiencing. I understand it is a huge attraction but there ought to be that opportunity for Tourism as a organisation to provide expertise to the regions together so they can hear the same story, get some information that helps them to work together and deliver a whole-of-island experience instead of this fragmented experience. It would pick up places such as Fingal which has a convict history, too. You get the on-farm experience in Brickendon Woolmers and the incarceration experience in Port Arthur. Would you care to look down that track and provide some of that expertise, possibly from PAASMA to help those other organisations out in the regions, to help develop that coordination?

Mr HODGMAN - From my experience, they are as active and as willing to do such a thing as you might expect and hope from a site that is a World Heritage listed site.

Mr VALENTINE - We have five of those.

Mr HODGMAN - I know, they are world class and world renowned. They are a wonderful opportunity to leverage greater visitation into the regions in which they are located. They are often the target of many visitors who come wanting to see that higher quality, extraordinary experience that comes with each of those properties. One of the most important connections we have into this space is through our regional tourism organisations and other local tourism entities, as well as councils, many of which have resources and/or personnel attached to these properties.

Mr VALENTINE - With respect, they tend to operate in silence. What is being suggested is if you have a statewide forum and roving curators, similar to what you have with the arts, that might add some value to those organisations. You probably couldn't buy that service for a start. It is about getting the synergy happening. It is an idea you might care to either comment on or take on board.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a valid point and I get it. As part of the council's review, it is something under active consideration.

CHAIR - You could learn a lot from the Woodsdale History Museum. They do it very well.

Mr VALENTINE - The other aspect I wanted to ask about was the possibility of heritage tourism units being incorporated into tertiary education in, say, TAFE. Do you see that might be an opportunity that could be taken up and worked through with TAFE?

Mr HODGMAN - Why not. We have an emphasis this year in this Budget to enhance our skills and training sector in areas of competitive advantage, notably in tourism and hospitality.

Mr EVANS - There is additional funding in the Skills Tasmania budget for this sort of thing this year.

Mr VALENTINE - The thing is they are the face of any organisation or tourism group. It is important that they are projecting a very professional approach. Personal stories can go a long way with any of this so it is good to know that at least there is some attention being paid to it.

Mr HODGMAN - I think it is a valid point as well and it is something that is worth pursuing with the minister or ministers.

CHAIR - Who will drive that? Where will that go from this suggestion from the committee from now?

Mr EVANS - The priority setting for workplace development and training is Minister Groom's responsibility through his Skills Tasmania and he puts out an annual plan that we consult broadly on on the industry-wide priorities. Certainly hospitality and tourism feature very heavily in that plan and then that aids the decisions about where to invest the Skills Tasmania funding, both through TasTAFE and competitively through the private RGOs.

CHAIR - As the chair, I am looking to see who is writing that initiative down.

Mr DEAN - It is on *Hansard*.

CHAIR - I am not sure when they will get back to read *Hansard*, honourable member.

Mr VALENTINE - The other thing, I guess, Premier is the issue of consistent branding for built heritage tourism. You know, the branding and the messages that are getting out there, if they are working in regional silos that is not happening effectively and so the question is, can something be done to assist in that forum with all of those bodies there to somehow get a consistency of branding a message?

It is probably something that Mr Taylor is more across.

Mr FITZGERALD - The Premier did speak about the regional tourism organisations before and I understand your point that they are regionally motivated. We come together three times a year to talk about what are the areas of common interest are and it seems to me this is an experience area of common interest. We have a meeting coming up and I am happy to table this as have the regions considered in the Legislative Council review.

If this is an area where we can have a better collaboration, I don't think there is anything preventing that from happening because, as a state, we are always looking to project the right things in the marketplace and we rely and work with our regional partners to say, 'Give us the best of the best that you have'. People still see Tasmania as Tasmania, and not necessarily a bunch of regional destinations.

We are always after the best experiences from the regions to add to that Tasmanian. There is nothing to prevent that probably from happening albeit, I hear what you are saying about the structural challenge of that.

Mr VALENTINE - It goes to another of the recommendations about a statewide built heritage tourism route and if you had that you would then get some of that opportunity for people to learn about what is in it, are in it, and what are those structures in the other regions and experiences to be had. It is worth absorbing.

CHAIR - You probably haven't read the report but we would invite you to.

Mr VALENTINE - No, I think he would have read it because he came and presented to us.

Mr FINCH - Twice.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, he did.

Mr FITZGERALD - We are certainly interested in it. How we engage the sector to bring that stuff together and present it I think is the challenge we are discussing.

Mr VALENTINE - I realise there is a boundary with responsibility, if you like, that you have that you bring the people to the State and the regions are then charged with -

Mr FITZGERALD - As we said, it is embedded in our brand, if you like. I am interested in how we can practically be supportive of those things, even if we are not necessarily the deliverer of everything. I will certainly take that up with the group and see if we can bring that to a more cohesive place than it has been.

Mr VALENTINE - The last thing, Madam Chair, was the mobile phone app. Can you give us an update on how that is going because, from what I have heard, it is absolutely fantastic. The GPS for visitors taking a mobile phone tracking where they go. Do you have much interaction with that?

Mr FITZGERALD - We have certainly been presented the initial outputs of that.

Mr VALENTINE - Is it exciting. Do you see it as being useful?

Mr FITZGERALD - Yes, it is exciting. It is always exciting to get better granular data of what our visitors are doing. It is early days, but it is fair to say there is genuine excitement right across the industry as to the potential power of that tool, if we can scale it up.

Mr VALENTINE - Perhaps you might explain. I do not know that every member is aware of what that app does.

Mr FITZGERALD - It is basically electronically tracking our visitors around the state.

CHAIR - What happens when there are black spots on the East Coast? Do you lose track of them?

Mr FITZGERALD - No, I am not sure. You are asking me the technology which I am not up on. You might need to ask the academics that from UTAS.

It is fair to say when it comes into an area, it loads up the data that has been happening where they have been. It catches up the GPS tracks.

CHAIR - We have got such a lot of black spots.

Mr FITZGERALD - They have reasonably overcome that. What they had to do on this occasion was give a device, a mobile phone that had all of its other functions stripped out that they carried with them. There were 465 visitors. One of the key findings was that visitors are actually happy to be tracked, whereas a few years ago people were uncomfortable about it. Now we are tracked all the time as I am sure you are all aware.

They are quite happy to use the devices. The next step would be to try and socialise that into a broader audience beyond 465 people. The people at UTAS and Sense-T are looking at a mobile app because that is the easiest way; to get it on to somebody's existing device rather than ask them to carry a device.

There is qualitative surveying goes on as part of the Sense-T process where we get to talk to those visitors to understand, not just where they went but what sort of experiences they had and enjoyed and all that sort of thing. It is exciting.

Mr VALENTINE - It is most definitely exciting. No question about that.

CHAIR - Can I take you to the local tourism strategies with regional tourism organisations? They have been put in place now.

I do not need to know if everyone is doing a good job because I know that my East Coast tourism group would have to be one of the most proactive groups that I have ever had the privilege of going and listening to and being part of their network. Is everybody else doing a reasonable job as well?

Mr HODGMAN - More than reasonable. They are all attached to deeds that outline very clearly our expectations. Mr Fitzgerald can talk you through in a little more detail what that involves.

CHAIR - We have not had any movement in the strategies. Is that just steady as she goes. The number are 4, 4, 4 and 4, actual, actual, target and target. That is on page 72 of the Performance Information.

Mr HODGMAN - They have all been done and we are now moving to Destination Actions.

CHAIR - We have not got any expectation that they will be increasing those strategies.

Mr EVANS - We have also got additional money in the state growth budget under output 1.2 - \$230k per annum to support those organisations.

CHAIR - Those organisations.

Mr HODGMAN - That is right. They have all delivered their destination management plans and we are now delivering or implementing 32 destination action plans which is more localised. Targeting the localised thing. We go to a lot of the issues that we have discussed today. Action plans. There is one for Bruny.

They will be rolled out across the state as well. We believe that the model is right and working effectively.

CHAIR - It was a big change.

Mr HODGMAN - The first iteration did not quite go to plan but that was before our time. We have adopted this arrangement.

Mr FITZGERALD - Chair, what you are looking at in the budget are the four organisations existing every year, that is not strategies.

CHAIR - That is not actually strategies, it says strategies.

Mr FITZGERALD - Local tourism strategies with regional tourism realisations.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes I can understand.

Mr FITZGERALD - A little confusing yes.

CHAIR - We might mark that as something to fix for next year.

Mr VALENTINE - I think it points up an important thing, that the strategies themselves, need to be inside a strategic framework to develop holistically.

Mr HODGMAN - Which is T21, that is right. That is the state-wide visitor economy strategy.

Mr FITZGERALD - It names up that we should have destination plans.

Mr HODGMAN - So that is our state-wide helicopter view that goes to the points that you raised, that are entirely valid.

CHAIR - I am going to invite any member of the committee who has any remainder questions in 1.1. No, if not can we move on.

Mr VALENTINE - Identifying online content that could be used in media to promote the state. Some time ago now, I sent something to Mr Taylor that a touring motorcycle group put together. . It was just brilliant in terms of marketing it to motorcycles. You might say we do not want people coming and having accidents.

Mr FITZGERALD - Motorcyclists are welcome.

Mr VALENTINE - For most parts that was a brilliant piece of work, yet it did have a couple of points in it that you would not want to put in an ad.

Do we ever look at the net and look at what we can gain. Without having to go out

Mr FITZGERALD - Absolutely we are moving more for a content creation agency to a content duration agency, which is the very thing you are saying. Everyone is producing content, I know it is agonistic, sorry for using that word, experiences or whatever. We are all doing it on our mobile phones every day. Some with more sophistication than others. We are definitely progressing more in that space. We spend a lot of money creating stuff and we need to continue to do some of that because that is the way we project our brand. That sort of stuff that we call brand align. We would want to sweep that in and curate it, and redistribute it through other channels.

Mr VALENTINE - That is great and you would provide links to it.

CHAIR - Thank you terrific last question

Mr FINCH - Interesting Premier that this is cultural and related industries and then we get to what is actually occurring in this area with the budgeting and of course it is really about sport.

Mr HODGMAN - Nice even spread.

Mr FINCH - I am thinking culture and creative industries, do we have things under that heading, that might fit into this budget output.

Mr HODGMAN - yes we certainly do and we have the creative industries strategy, which is the governments roadmap for better supporting the creating industries. In terms of funding which I imagine is what you are pointing to is our practice and indeed has been the practice of governments to ensure that there is a relatively equitable spread of funding support for events, that could be described as cultural as against those that are of a sporting nature, as best as we can spread across the state. With a targeted initiative that we announced in last years budget to support the start up festivals and events in anywhere but Hobart basically with our regional events start-up program which is underway and proving to be a successful.

If you like we can go through the breakdown in more detail. I am not sure Adam if you have at your fingertips a dollar split but by my rough calculations the other day it is a fairly equal split.

Mr FINCH - And what those events are.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. I think he meant for all events funding is that issue of whether we are funding sporting versus cultural.

Mr FINCH - Just a picture of what is in that line item.

Mr HODGMAN - I think it is a misnomer that people often say we only fund the footy.

CHAIR - And the V8 Supercars.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr SPROULE - It is about a 45 per cent 55 per cent split between strictly sporting events and what we would term cultural and artistic events. You are quite right. People often do think because of the big ticket items like V8 Supercars and the Hawthorn Football that most of our funds are going into sporting activities.

What you do start to see once you move out into the regions though is some of that balance starts to shift. For instance in the north because of the V8 Supercars and the Hawthorn arrangement the percentage of our funding that goes into events does start to look greater for sporting events. Does that make sense?

Mr FINCH - Yes.

Mr SPROULE - One of the things that is properly worth pointing out in this output group is we do not administer the funds for *Ten Days on the Island* which of course is an artistic event which is statewide so that needs to be factored into that.

CHAIR - That will be the Minister for the Arts.

Mr SPROULE - Yes.

CHAIR - We will do that on Thursday.

Is there a list?

Mr SPROULE - Yes, we can certainly provide a list.

Mr HODGMAN - We have a list of all supported events which include major events, small events and the regional start-up events. It was our targeted initiative to take the MONA effect out of Hobart and to develop new opportunities for festivals and events start-ups in regional Tasmania.

CHAIR - Triabunna?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr SPROULE - Would you like me to add to that, Premier?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. I can give you a list of what is being funded. I think, as we have said, it is a good initiative and there has been a good strong uptake following the announcement last year. I am being facetious about the MONA effect. People were in places outside Hobart although MONA delivers extraordinary benefits to our state with 8 000 or 9 000 coming into Tassie; to somehow get the good feeling of Tasmania's exceptional event and festivals calendar out into regional Tasmania and to support some really exciting start-up opportunities and to make them sustaining as well. We are trying to move to a model where we can put the events and festivals on to a more self sustaining model and make them less dependent on recurrent expenditure. That is a condition of this program as well or a critical element of it.

Mr FINCH - People too, Premier, might come for MONA or their first visit to the state or come for Port Arthur or whatever and then see what else the state has to offer are those returned visitors and I think our numbers are growing in that respect. They are being attracted back.

Mr HODGMAN - Exactly.

We launched the program last year in October. We received 44 applications as part of the expressions of interest process. They were assessed by three industry experts and successfully or otherwise were assessed on a similar criteria to the major events partnerships program. In March this year we announced seven successful recipients which are Blooming Tasmania Flow and Garden Show, the Cradle Mountain Film Festival, Gone Nuts trial run, Effervescence Tasmania, Farm Gate Festival, Steampunk Festival and the Queenie Muster. They are all north, north west or west based events receiving \$248 500. It is estimated that they will inject about \$10 million back into our economy and particularly regional economies. We will continue to support -

CHAIR - Is that it. Is that the list?

Mr HODGMAN - For the regional events start up program. Major events and smaller events funding it is a much, much longer list but we will table that. You can see there there are close to 80 all round this year.

Mrs ARMITAGE - It is hard in the north particularly with events like Dark MOFO. You do find that all of a sudden in the north over that weekend or that period of time is devoid of people.

CHAIR - Can we ask how many regrettably miss out? If there were 80 funded -

Mr HODGMAN - There were 44 applicants for the regional start up program and seven successful ones.

CHAIR - That is a lot of disappointed communities.

Mr SPROULE - Basically the EOI process is a two stage process. In the first stage we did start with 44 and we deliberately made it a kind of blue sky dreaming kind of process. Tell us what your great idea is because as the Premier pointed out the idea of this program is to start investing in events that hopefully over time and over a number of years will start to get new big major events, a new Festival of Voices, maybe the new Dark MOFO. Who knows. If we do not start having a conversation now we won't get there in the future.

Yes, there were 44 and it is true to say that the second stage we got down to about 13 and I would say we individually worked with all 44 people who put those applications forward. Yes, you are right. There is some disappointment but those people have now gone away and either thought maybe the idea was not a good one or maybe we will reposition and come back at a later stage. I would like to think that some of those people we will see pop up in the future at different times.

CHAIR - Was there a feedback process about why they were not successful?

Mr SPROULE - Absolutely. All 44 applications were provided feedback and offered one on one feedback as well and often it was more than one. It was me and others from our team going along and we provided the feedback that came from the independent assessors. It was well received.

In relation to the second stage process we worked very closely with them.

Mr FINCH - Do they get to go again? Those who were successful; are they for a period of time?

Mr SPROULE - The regional events start up program at this stage is a one off program. So it is three years of funding. The people that were unsuccessful may choose to apply under some other programs in the future. Indeed I think we will see that happen.

CHAIR - For the smaller quantum.

Mr SPROULE - Smaller Marketing Tasmania funding or some of our other programs.

Mr FINCH - Just a point of concern I had in this output, Premier, is that there is a general decline over the forward Estimates. This financial year it is 11.947 then it goes down to 9964 in 1920. It is not covered off in the explanatory notes as to why we had that decline heading off into the forward Estimates.

Mr SPROULE - Firstly, from my perspective there is no decline in our recurrent budget for Events Tasmania. What you are seeing in those figures there is we have in addition to our grant programs that we run we also administer funding that comes in and out of our budget from time to time. A good example of that would be we have just received some funding in this year's budget for the Masters Games which is being held in the north west so of course the budget goes up and then when the budget is expended it comes back down. We also administer funding for infrastructure improvements at Symmons Plains which again is funding that comes into our budget and then comes out. Our core programs, our major event funding programs, are grant programs and regional programs. Over the forward Estimates, funding remains. That is what explains that movement.

Ms ALLEN - There is another matter of clarification. The Lyon events in hospitality also includes programs for hospitality. There is included in that our four year commitment to the Tasmanian Hospitality Association for a range of activities which is part of the reason you see the numbers fall away from the 2018-19 Budget.

CHAIR - What are those activities?

Ms ALLEN - There is an allocation of \$200 000 a year to implement the strategic plan. There are some activities around workforce development that we support the THA to do and there is also their great customer experience program.

Mr VALENTINE - Drysdale?

Ms ALLEN - No.

CHAIR - Those programs have been in place for a while now.

Ms ALLEN - Not those programs with THA.

Mr HODGMAN - They are all new.

CHAIR - They are all new. I am sure we had them last year.

Mr HODGMAN - There are initiatives of the new Government.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Yes, but not just this year.

CHAIR - They are not brand new this year.

Mr HODGMAN - No.

CHAIR - How are they tracking? How are the numbers in those areas?

Ms ALLEN - We are working closely with THA. In terms of the customer experience program, as an example, that has just been trialled as a pilot and what it involves is intensive work with hospitality businesses around having someone go in and work for the businesses and do a bit of a diagnostic process and then match the training requirements of the business so there is targeted and focused training around customer service. Training people for customer service is an issue that has been raised fairly consistently with us by the Hospitality Association. There is a range of ways we are working both with the more vocational education and training system through Skills Tasmania and TAFE and there is also some very targeted industry based work we do with THA and the great customer experience program is one of those things.

CHAIR - Is there some data relating to those, the numbers that are participating in them for the funding allocation?

Ms ALLEN - I am not sure I have that.

Mr HODGMAN - In relation to the great customer experience program, which was initially trialled in the east and north-west coasts, it was going to be rolled out to 200 businesses across the state throughout 2016. The number of businesses already is 20 initially. By the end of the year will have covered 200 statewide.

CHAIR - 180 to go, that is a big effort. Then there will be some numbers next year. Will we see those in the budget papers in a table?

Ms ALLEN - No, they will not be linked to KPIs or anything like that in terms of our reporting.

CHAIR - The third program?

Ms ALLEN - There is a workforce development program the THA runs and I can flag now that I do not have the numbers. This is a program where THA goes out into schools and provides advice to people about training options and employment options in tourism and hospitality. That is an outreach program they wanted to develop and we have supported them to do that through the funding package.

CHAIR - Can we get some numbers on that, how many schools and where they are visiting? I feel sure that the THA -

Mrs ARMITAGE - I have not heard about them doing it in the north.

CHAIR - No, I have not either.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I am not sure they have THA in the north.

Ms ALLEN - They have not yet. Their membership is distributed around the state.

CHAIR - Plenty of members.

Ms ALLEN - The great customer experience, the 20 pilot sites were north coast sites. They piloted that program up there.

Mr HODGMAN - North-west and east.

Mrs ARMITAGE - From a hotelier perspective I have heard nothing, so I will have a little look.

Mr HODGMAN - Man and/or woman on the ground is the THA in the north.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I do not think we have anyone apart from members of the board.

CHAIR - How much is the quantum of those three programs that are provided?

Ms ALLEN - It is \$200 000 a year towards a strategic plan. It is two tranches of \$150 000 a year for Great Customer Experience. The total package is \$1.5 million over four years.

Mr HODGMAN - It is \$400 000 over four, \$100 000 per year.

CHAIR - It is significant dollars.

Mr HODGMAN - That is a very, very valid point. They are relatively new programs and the reports we get back through the THA and industry partners into the department are positive in terms of their reach. It goes to dealing with the supply side constraints in the tourism visitor economy, which are not inconsiderable because of the growth that we are experiencing. It is getting industry leaders and representatives into regional communities as well. We are not expecting them all to come to Hobart or anywhere else, but actually into their workplaces to tailor responses to develop linkages into communities to encourage people to take up a career in tourism or hospitality.

Mrs ARMITAGE - If you could look into that, minister, regarding whether it is just Hobart based where the office is, or whether they do have an outreach going into other areas. I have not heard about it and I certainly have not seen any emails about it.

CHAIR - We have someone with a bit of expertise in that area. Thank you very much minister. We have exhausted our lines of output groups and questioning for today. Can we say a very sincere thank you to yourself and all your team. We know that everyone goes to a huge effort to put together the information and we very much appreciate the opportunity to be able to drill down into some of those areas. I am really encouraged by some of the positive feedback that we got today, particularly around some of the initiatives that individuals were mooted. We look forward to some progress on those. Thank you all.

Mr HODGMAN - Thank you. It is certainly a very different experience to the House, but you would expect that and that is a very important part of the process as well. I am not being critical of that having been involved on both sides of the fence for a number of years. I do appreciate and I am sure our officials do getting some feedback as well on some pointers on areas where we can do better. It is a very useful exchange. We certainly get pointers to how we can do better in the other Estimates as well. It is great.

CHAIR - We would like to think that we run a constructive process.

Mrs ARMITAGE - We like to work together, don't we, Chair?

CHAIR - We do and we work as a team here and we want to assist in whatever way we can to support our communities and Tasmania in general.

Mr HODGMAN - Just sing out on any of those issues and we will follow them up.

CHAIR - Thank you.

The committee adjourned at 5.28 p.m.
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