

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Tuesday 6 June 2017 - Estimates Committee B (Hodgman)

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Tuesday 6 June 2017

MEMBERS

Ms Armitage
Mr Dean
Mr Finch
Ms Lovell
Ms Rattray (Chair)
Mr Willie (Deputy Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE

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

Greg Johannes, Secretary
David Nicholson, Deputy Secretary - Policy
Ruth McArdle, Deputy Secretary
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
Brook Teale, Senior Policy Analyst, CSR Policy, Communities, Sport and Recreation
Tim Baker, Deputy Secretary, DPIWE

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

Glen Dean, Director of Finance

Tourism

John Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Tasmania

Mark Jones, Director Operations and Planning, Tourism Tasmania

Heritage, Arts and Aboriginal Affairs

Ester Guerzoni, Acting Director, Heritage Tasmania

Steve Gall, Director, Aboriginal Heritage

Gary Davies, Director Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens

Janet Carding, Director, TMAG

David Sudmarlis, Director, Arts Tasmania

Alex Sangston, Executive Manager, Screen Tasmania

Legislative Council

David Pearce, Clerk

Legislature-General

Jason Hendy, Manager, Finance

Peter Hancox, Manager, Computer and Electronic Services

Government House

David Owen, Official Secretary

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 9.00 a.m.

DIVISION 7

(Department of Premier and Cabinet)

CHAIR (Mrs RATTRAY) - Good morning, Premier. Welcome to Estimates Committee B. We very much appreciate this opportunity. I am sure you know everyone at the table, but I want to acknowledge the newest member of the parliament, the member for Rumney, Sarah Lovell. We are very to have Sarah allocated to this committee. We are not sure we are going to keep her for a long time, but we will certainly will be making the most of her enthusiasm.

Premier, can you please introduce your team at the team for Hansard. That would be very useful.

Mr HODGMAN - I certainly shall: Greg Johannes, Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet; Deputy Secretary Ruth McArdle; David Strong, who is the Acting Director of Corporate and Culture; and Mr David Nicholson, who is also Deputy Secretary for Policy.

CHAIR - Thank you. The usual procedure is that you provide a relatively brief overview. Is that something you would like to consider?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, I welcome the opportunity, Chair.

CHAIR - We will then start the line items and do our best to address each one as we usually do in this House.

Mr HODGMAN - Thank you, Chair and members. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you to talk about this year's Budget, which is literally all about building the state's future. With the Budget back in balance, through determined and disciplined financial management, we are now better able to invest in building essential services and better job opportunities for Tasmanians.

Health is clearly a priority in this Budget. It delivers the biggest-ever funding boost to Health. We will fund 106 more beds and around 350 more staff to help build a better health system. Total recurrent spending on health will be in excess of \$7 billion across the four years of the Budget. That is an increase of more than \$650 million.

We well know that our health system is under immense pressure, particularly in the south. We have responded to that in this Budget by injecting as much additional resources as we are able to.

It is not accurate to say that the situation is because of budget savings measures taken in 2014-15 because we actually increased spending on Health in the 2014-15 Budget compared to the year before.

The savings we made on backline efficiencies were reinvested into the frontline of health service delivery. There are almost 160 more full-time equivalent - FTE - nurses in the Tasmanian Health Service. There are more doctors and allied health staff.

The current situation in the south, with temporary capacity constraints at the Royal Hobart Hospital, has been compounded by a significant increase in Emergency Department demand over the past 12 months. That is why we are responding with urgency and priority, providing additional

resources. We are able to because of our strong budget, and are doing so as quickly as we can so that Tasmanians can get the health services they need.

More opportunities for Tasmanians to get a job is also a focus of the Budget with a package of initiatives designed to support 7600 people into work, including incentives for Tasmanian businesses to hire apprentices and trainees. Our commitment to improving education results is also clear with additional funding in the budget forward Estimates period of \$6.4 billion, an increase of more than a quarter-of-a-billion dollars compared to last year's Budget. This will provide more teachers, more support staff and will deliver the full Gonski needs-based funding. This Budget very much puts students first.

We are taking action to reduce cost-of-living pressure for Tasmanians, capping electricity prices to save the average householder around \$300 this year. The key element of our plan to take control of TasWater focuses on reducing water bills for Tasmanians.

The Budget contains \$2 billion in infrastructure investments, literally building Tasmania's future in health, education and human services. There is \$800 million for roads and rail infrastructure. This Budget also supports those in our community who need a hand with more support.

Affordable housing and better support for those who need to provide protection for children at risk or those suffering family violence. In addition to the \$20.6 million committed in last year's Budget to redesign our child protection system, there is additional support in those key areas, always noting that there is a lot more to do.

We are absolutely committed to keeping the budget in balance because it means we can invest more into essential services and build Tasmania's future.

Briefly, I will talk a little about the Department of Premier and Cabinet specifically. I point to some of the key initiatives under this portfolio, with \$8 million in new funding in 2017-18 and \$17.02 million over the forward Estimates for DPAC. This includes \$12.98 million for facilities across the state to support Tasmanians to be active in sport and recreation; facilities upgrades; and a coordinating role by DPAC in our action plan to reduce family violence. I am very pleased that in the first 18 months of implementation, we have made strong progress against each of the actions identified in the plan. Three new actions were announced in March this year to provide additional support to victims to improve their safety at home.

I want to note that during the past year, together as a parliament, we proudly moved to amend the preamble of the Tasmanian Constitution to acknowledge Aboriginal people as Tasmania's first people in our constitution. This Budget also provides permanent funding to establish a state service employment strategy for Aboriginal Tasmanians.

As well, DPAC plays a lead role in a number of key initiatives, including delivery of the \$572 million four-year plan to implement the National Disability Insurance Scheme to provide more support for those living with a disability. On 1 July Tasmania will commence the next phase of the rollout.

DPAC played a lead role in delivering the City Deal for Launceston, only the second city deal in Australia, underpinning \$280 million-worth of investment. The centrepiece of that is the University of Tasmania's new Inveresk campus. DPAC plays a lead role in working closely with

our valued University of Tasmania. Later this week DPAC will also provide support when Tasmania hosts the first Council of Australian Governments - COAG - meeting in our state for nearly eight years. Importantly, Tasmania now chairs key intergovernmental forums - the Council for the Australian Federation and also the Education Council.

I will leave my opening remarks at that and invite questions from members.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Premier. That covered quite a bit of area. Can I take you to one of the issues that is alive and has a lot of interest in the community - the TasWater takeover? All members of parliament, I expect, would have received a media release yesterday from local government indicating there are serious legal doubts over the Government's proposed takeover of TasWater and citing section 109 of the Constitution. Do you have a comment to make about that?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, it is one legal opinion and the advice we have received, including from the Solicitor General, gives the Government confidence that there is no breach of our constitution or legal impediment to what we propose. Those matters will best be resolved by the Government's legal representatives if and as required.

CHAIR - From somebody who always thinks it is best to avoid any legal process if possible, is there another way to engage with local government on this issue? Do you see a better course of action? For their own reasons, local government feels the Government is picking a fight with them. Is there a better way of going about this?

Mr HODGMAN - That certainly is not our intention or motivation here. Our motivation is to fix a system that has failed to deliver the outcomes for our communities, for our environment and for our economy. Yes, a number of local government representatives are not supportive of what we propose. We recognise there is some resistance to our plan. We will continue to work with local government representatives. The Treasurer especially, as minister, has been meeting with them, as have I, to discuss our plan. We want to ensure there are no misunderstandings about what we are seeking to do and what we need to do. There is an outstanding and open invitation for councils to consider how we can best work together so we might expedite progress on infrastructure upgrades as per our proposal and work with councils to do just that.

Ideally, these matters would not enter into legal dispute. I think that ratepayers would prefer their councils to be worried about other things, including how we might improve better services for them and how we might bring down water prices as our plan suggests, rather than spending their rates on legal challenges.

CHAIR - I could not agree more but we will need some strong leadership around that. Can I take it from the information you have just given the committee that there is some goodwill on behalf of your Government to engage at a level with local government that might deliver the outcome but take the heat out of the debate?

Mr HODGMAN - Certainly we remain open to having constructive conversations about delivering a better outcome; that is our motivation. We have no need for, nor do we want, any political brawling with local government. Our intention and desire is to improve water and sewerage services, bring down the cost of so doing, reduce the boil water alerts in small Tasmanian towns and stop the high levels of sewage discharges into our rivers and waterways, which is unacceptably too high. That is something we and the chair of TasWater fundamentally agree on.

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CHAIR - That was the comment I was going to make - that all those points you raised have the full support, I believe, of not only local government but the broader Tasmanian community. Personally, on behalf of the people I represent, I would like to see a cooperative rather than this head-to-head approach. Anyway, I am encouraged by what you said in your address about working with local government rather than, as they see it, working against them. I can only take on board what they provided to members yesterday. Would anyone else like to comment on or ask a question in regard to that matter?

Mr WILLIE - Premier, what was your personal role in the decision to take over TasWater? Was it a decision from your office or was it a decision from the Treasurer?

Mr HODGMAN - It was a decision by government. We formed the view that for too long upgrades required for our services and infrastructure were not occurring as quickly as we would like and that towns, communities and our environment were suffering as a result.

Mr WILLIE - Who came up with the concept of taking over TasWater? Was it your office or was it the Treasurer? You would have brought it to Cabinet for discussion, no doubt. Who drove the agenda?

Mr HODGMAN - The concept was initially flagged by the Labor Party. It was Labor Party policy to have a single entity when the last set of reforms were undertaken. It was the Labor Party's idea.

Mr WILLIE - How many times in this term have you raised your concerns with local government?

Mr HODGMAN - If you want to ask whose idea it was, I am happy to say it goes way back to when the last set of reforms took place when Labor proposed it. It was not something that we -

Mr WILLIE - I am asking about your Government, not previous governments. Who is driving the agenda?

Mr HODGMAN - The Government. I am the Premier; I lead the Government so I am happy to take responsibility and say we are determined to push through with that plan. I and the Treasurer, who is also the Minister for Planning and Local Government, are the lead ministers, but it is a government decision. There is no question about our collective determination to deliver better outcomes for Tasmanians. That is what is driving it and what is motivating it.

Mr WILLIE - Are you concerned about the Treasurer's relationship with local government?

Mr HODGMAN - No, I recognise there are divergent views on this. Some local government leaders support it, others do not. There are some who are particularly adversarial in their approach to this matter. Our commitment and determination are to deliver what we believe is in the best interests of Tasmanians. It may not necessarily be what some local government leaders might like, but it is our determination to deliver better water and sewerage services and reduce prices for the people of Tasmania - not disadvantage councils.

Mr WILLIE - Do you acknowledge that prices will increase over the long term because the debt will be taken on by government?

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Mr HODGMAN - They certainly will not increase to the extent projected by TasWater. That is why we are capping prices. Importantly, we are not disadvantaging councils at all. I am surprised that some might say it is not a good deal for councils when they would be in no worse-off a position for at least a decade and then would receive a dividend beyond that for infrastructure and assets they have no responsibility or liability for.

Mr WILLIE - Are you saying that a majority of councils are wrong?

Mr HODGMAN - I am saying there is very good reason for councils to be supportive of what we propose because they will not be financially disadvantaged. There is no reason they should pass on rate rises to their ratepayers for the next 10 years. They are guaranteed a dividend.

Mr WILLIE - You said you couldn't understand why people would not think it was a good deal. Are you saying that the majority of councils are wrong?

Mr HODGMAN - I think the right thing to do is what we are proposing and that is why we are doing it.

Mr DEAN - You have indicated that the legislation will be coming forward shortly.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr DEAN - What do you mean by 'shortly'?

Mr HODGMAN - It is expected in August.

Mr DEAN - As to the legal advice you have received, I take it you have only received that in the last day or so?

Mr HODGMAN - No.

Mr DEAN - When did you receive that legal advice?

Mr HODGMAN - We received advice - and the Treasurer can confirm precisely at what time - some time ago about the absence of any legal impediment to what we are seeking to do. The advice produced yesterday by TasWater, I would suggest, is highly speculative from a legal perspective; that is the legal opinion. The advice received by the Government was that there is no issue of constitutionality and no legal impediment to what we propose to do.

Mr DEAN - I am just trying to confirm that your legal advice was on the issue raised by TasWater or Sean McElwaine. Has your legal advice been directly obtained on that advice from Sean McElwaine?

Mr HODGMAN - On a range of matters we have received advice in relation to what we propose to do. That has included legal advice or advice that we have received which has confirmed there is no view of unconstitutionality in what we are seeking to do.

Mr DEAN - Will we be given a copy of the legal advice the Government received?

Mr HODGMAN - No.

Mr DEAN - Will it become a public document?

Mr HODGMAN - I expect not.

Mr DEAN - Why not? If you have received legal advice to say it does not breach the Constitution in any way, and we have legal advice now from Sean McElwaine saying it does, why wouldn't the Government provide its legal advice that counteracts the position of Sean McElwaine? Why wouldn't you?

Mr HODGMAN - I am stating the Government's position - that we have received advice in relation to what we are doing and we have made a decision as to that. As I have explained in other committee hearings, it is not appropriate or, indeed, a good course of action for Cabinet to release advice about its policy decisions.

Mr DEAN - I am aware of your reluctance not to release documents, but I would have thought you would in this case because it is legal advice on a very specific matter we will be referring to, and we have legal advice saying it is unconstitutional. You are simply telling us that you have it and we have to believe that?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. If legal matters are to be determined, they are best determined by lawyers and courts, not politicians, but we hope these and any issues of concern can be resolved once the legislation is produced and consulted and available for all members of the community, including councillors, to scrutinise. With a long lead-in time before the proposed implementation date of the middle of next year, that gives us all a lot of time to work through any matters.

Mr DEAN - I doubt that this will be the last mention of this matter.

CHAIR - Premier, since I have been in this place - and it is a while now, 13 years - we as a Legislative Council have looked at advice received by governments in Committee. That advice helps inform Legislative Councillors to provide their support or otherwise to legislation. Is that something your Government may consider when we deal with the TasWater legislation?

Mr HODGMAN - I am sure there are circumstances where it is entirely appropriate and a decision should be made on a case-by-case basis and in that context. Needless to say, if we are seeking to have legislation passed through the Legislative Council, whatever we can do to assist that passage reasonably and appropriately, we will. I am not in a position at this point to make commitments one way or another.

CHAIR - I understand what you are saying but I just make the point that in this place we have in the past taken information that was considered confidential, but to enable members of the Legislative Council to make an informed decision, it was provided in Committee. It is something for you to ponder through this journey.

Mr FINCH - The Chair referred to leadership on this issue. Is it the intention of the Government to continue with the Mexican standoff until the legislation comes before the Legislative Council or will attempts be made to try to heal the schism and bring the parties together to discuss things? Will there be that divide until we consider the legislation?

Mr HODGMAN - There is a divergence in views between some local government representatives and councils -

Mr FINCH - It is most local governments, isn't it?

Mr HODGMAN - and the opposition parties. At least one of them is opposed to what we seek to do. We are doing it because we think it is right and will deliver better outcomes and results. We want to progress these reforms toward better outcomes for Tasmanian taxpayers and ratepayers. We will continue to work with local councils. The Treasurer has met with LGAT and has run through in detail what we are proposing to do on more than one occasion. We will continue to have constructive discussions with councils about it in arriving at a point. I believe this is the right way forward. It will have benefits and it will not disadvantage benefits for councils. They will receive a guaranteed dividend stream beyond the 10-year period, in which time they will not be carrying the responsibility of managing the assets, but will still receive a dividend for them. We are looking to find a way for them not to have to increase rates, as was threatened might be necessary, or for TasWater and its owner-representatives to increase water prices to the extent they said would be necessary.

Mr FINCH - It is difficult, as an onlooker, to see how this situation has developed to where it is now. As you explained it, it should be common sense and fairly straightforward, yet you are not being brought together. This battle seems to be occurring for the benefit of the media, but it is no closer to a solution before it comes before the Legislative Council.

Mr HODGMAN - Six councils did not support the motion at LGAT and that demonstrates -

Mr DEAN - That is not quite right; you need to get that right - they abstained. They did not have a position, so it is not right to say they did not agree with LGAT.

Mr HODGMAN - Well, they did not have a position.

Mr DEAN - They did not have a position. Let us not mess around with words.

Mr HODGMAN - Six out of nine did not support the motion. They did not have a position. By extension, they did not support it -

Mr DEAN - They did not have a position, they abstained. Some did not support it.

Mr HODGMAN - Six out of 29 - for, against or indifferent - demonstrates the flaw in this model of having 29 council owners trying to collectively arrive at a point in the state's best interests. It may not suit a particular council. There are different financial considerations, councils with legacy issues or infrastructure requirements. It is an intrinsically flawed model in which 29 councils are trying to manage an entity with a government structure that should have a statewide perspective.

We offer an alternative that streamlines governance arrangements. It does not disadvantage councils or communities. They should pay less and we will upgrade infrastructure at a faster rate and that is possible. It has been acknowledged by TasWater and council owners that we can do that. If we can do that within an 18 month-to-two-year period, which has been acknowledged as entirely feasible, it will be a great thing for the 20-odd towns with boil water alerts. We have rivers suffering from environmental outflows and discharges of sewage, with an impact on our brand. We

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are putting forward a very compelling case and I hope that councils can accept it as such and we can move forward.

CHAIR - One final question on this.

Mr WILLIE - If the current bill fails in the Parliament, will you rule out bringing the bill before the Parliament in future?

Mr HODGMAN - No, I will not rule that out.

Mr WILLIE - Okay. How does your plan address Macquarie Point, Cameron's Bay and the Launceston combined water and sewerage problems?

Mr HODGMAN - They are a part of this. They will be part of the works program. Once we deal with the priority projects I have referred to, they will be -

Mr WILLIE - Will the Government take that head on, to move those?

CHAIR - That is three questions.

Mr HODGMAN - We are not inclined to privatise the asset, which is the Labor policy position.

Mr WILLIE - It is not privatisation.

Mr HODGMAN - Well, it is because it will be owned by superannuation.

Mr WILLIE - We are prepared to unlock that investment in the state. What is your plan?

Mr HODGMAN - We have a plan, which you have readily acknowledged is not supported by some in the community, including the Labor Party. You know precisely what our plan is. With respect to the projects to which you refer, yes, we want to deal very quickly with the priority issues concerning undrinkable water in communities and failing sewage systems.

Mr WILLIE - I asked about Macquarie Point, Cameron's Plains and Launceston.

Mr HODGMAN - If you let me answer - you asked what our plan is, and I am telling you what it is going to be. We want to work cooperatively with TasWater towards delivering a detailed accelerated infrastructure program. The major capital projects you have referred to - the Launceston combined systems, Macquarie Point and Cameron's Bay - are not currently listed in or included in TasWater's 10-year plan but will be considered and included in our 10-year plan.

Funding could come from a range of sources, including government equity, developer contributions and possibly even federal government funding. We are not inclined to support equity ownership by superannuation companies that will require a dividend, as they all do. They are not not-for-profit organisations. They will require a dividend and it will be the Tasmanian consumers who have to pay.

CHAIR - We have spent 29 minutes on this area and we have equally important issues to discuss. Premier, may I take you to 1.1? I have some questions on strategic policy and advice, which stem from your other review. Next year you might decline my invitation.

Output group 1

Support for Executive Decision Making

1.1 Strategic policy and advice -

CHAIR - The decrease in strategic policy and advice for 2018-19 is significant. It talks about transferring the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) into the Department of Health and Human Services - DHHS. Why does that department appear to be better placed to administer that scheme? How successful has the scheme been? Can we have a quantum of applications?

Mr HODGMAN - I will ask Melissa Gray, Director of Policy, DPAC to provide some context to what we are seeking to achieve.

Ms GRAY - The rationale for the move is to decrease an administrative burden for NILS. The Department of Health and Human Services already administers a grant to NILS. It will consolidate that and make it easier for NILS to receive that funding.

CHAIR - Can I get some understanding of what you mean by it 'already administers NILS'?

Ms GRAY - The Department of Health and Human Services -

CHAIR - They do all the distribution of the funds, so they might as well have the funds in the first place and then put it out, and that takes it out of DPAC.

Ms GRAY - The Department of Premier and Cabinet has worked with NILS over a number of years to professionalise and we funded an external consultant to help the organisation. We believe it had reached the stage where it is able to operate in a more professional capacity and that, accordingly, it was okay for the Department of Premier and Cabinet to provide its funding to the Department of Health and Human Services to administer under the one grant deed because it would be easier for NILS to deal only with one agency rather than two.

CHAIR - From your response, Premier, did you have some concerns about the way the department was administering the NILS program and hence brought in a consultant to streamline the processes? Is that what happened?

Ms GRAY - Through you, Premier, NILS received funding from the Department of Health and Human Services and DPAC under the previous government. DPAC worked with NILS and engaged an external consultant to help it to professionalise and administer an increasing number of loans for that organisation. NILS was so successful in increasing its workload and was operating more as a professional business that the department felt it was okay to provide its ongoing funding to the Department of Health and Human Services which already administered a separate grant for that organisation.

Mr JOHANNES - Chair, this is not dissimilar to the way we often work with small businesses through the Department of State Growth. When they reach a certain level and there is so much demand for their services, often we bring in some external support to help them grow and expand and do professional business plans to make sure they can continue to grow in a professional way. We do not often do it in the not-for-profit sector because unfortunately with the community sector, it is not often that there is this growth opportunity in a quasi-business area. What we have done in

relation to NILS is what we have done in relation for small businesses for many years - supporting them to grow.

CHAIR - Can we have those numbers and quantum for the last financial year?

Ms GRAY - I will have to take those on notice, Chair.

CHAIR - That is fine. Our notes tell us that this line item has an offset of a one-off funding allocation to the Tasmania Brand Skilled Migration Campaign enhancing the Tasmanian branding issue. It is a mighty long title. Can we have some indication of what it actually delivers or is intended to deliver?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. It is in the context of our ageing demographic and also the risk of ongoing population decline. We took to the election a commitment to deliver a population growth strategy, which we have done. That includes a number of priority areas to ensure our population can continue to grow. One way of doing that is by working with business and industry and supporting small business to give more opportunities for people to be work-ready or to enter apprenticeships or traineeships. Business confidence levels are now high and unemployment is below the national average, but we want to make sure that opportunities for Tasmanians especially, and anyone who might want to come and work and live in Tasmania, are also continuing. The Budget commits \$500 000 to support a targeted interstate skilled migration campaign. It is an initiative which combines the Minister for State Growth and the Minister for Tourism and is overseen by the branding steering committee which is working strategies to enhance the value and the attributes of our brand.

CHAIR - So it is a marketing campaign?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, partially.

CHAIR - We are not handing out the dollars to come across Bass Strait, are we?

Mr HODGMAN - No, we still work very closely with the Commonwealth to provide incentives for skilled migrants and there are programs to do that as well. The strategy and the campaign will complement work currently being undertaken by the Department of State Growth encouraging interstate migration and the need for a national campaign to encourage and attract people to come here. It goes to dealing with a very serious demographic issue we have, the fastest-growing aged population in the country and our commitment to sustain population growth.

Tourism Tasmania is intrinsically involved because many people who come to our state as tourists often form the view that it would indeed be a nice place to live permanently. We are targeting or applying an element that captures, within our campaign, people who come as tourists and might have the skill sets businesses require and encourage them to move to this state.

CHAIR - Thank you, Premier. My final question is about the staffing numbers in the public service for this current year. I have last year's numbers right in front of me, so I am interested to see the numbers across the whole of government, the whole box and dice. I am happy for you to take it on notice, but I am sure it is somewhere handy.

Mr HODGMAN - I am advised that as at 31 March, there were an estimated total number of 24 424 FTEs.

CHAIR - So according to last year's figure, which was 24 017, we have an increase of about 410 or thereabouts. Is there some explanation for that?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, there are 158 more FTE nurses working in our health system. I can get a more detailed breakdown.

CHAIR - Premier, we can wait and I will re-ask that question.

Mr HODGMAN - I can provide the committee with some more information. The increase reflects a number of factors, such as the filling of positions made vacant through the Workplace Renewal Incentive Program and the impact of receipt of Australian Government funding and additional funding provided by government to implement important initiatives. FTE levels are significantly below levels that would otherwise occur if constraint had not been exercised. The dollar value of savings required to be made by agencies has been embedded in the forward Estimates and this is a significant factor in the budget outcomes. It goes to that.

CHAIR - We will look at that a little bit more as we move on.

Mr HODGMAN - I am getting some advice that health may not - we have 135, I am advised, but we will get a reconciled set of figures for you.

CHAIR - We will do the employment numbers at 4.1. Mr Willie has another question in regard to strategic policy and advice.

Mr WILLIE - Premier, I refer to a Tasmanian Government media release of 17 March concerning Opposition Leader Rebecca White. Did you authorise that press release?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, it is a press release from the Government Media Office.

Mr WILLIE - Why were there no contact details or authorisation from a sitting member?

Mr HODGMAN - I do not believe they require an authorisation from a sitting member.

Mr WILLIE - Did that comply with the communication policy?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr WILLIE - Do you think that was in good taste?

Mr HODGMAN - Obviously you do not appreciate us pointing to the fact that the new Leader of the Opposition is relatively inexperienced.

Mr WILLIE - Why was no-one prepared to put their name to it?

Mr HODGMAN - It has the state Government's name attached to it.

Mr WILLIE - Why would nobody else put their name to it as with other press releases?

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Mr HODGMAN - It is a statement from the Government, with which you are obviously not comfortable. It does not breach any guidelines. I could have a folder a foot long of media statements issued by the former government when I was opposition leader making all sorts of political and personal points about how I was perceived by the then Labor government. It is not unusual for that to occur. If you are aggrieved, we might point to matters such as the relative lack of experience of the Opposition Leader.

Mr WILLIE - She has been a member of parliament for eight years.

Mr HODGMAN - Fine, you can choose to defend her lack of experience. That is not surprising.

Mr WILLIE - How much experience did you have when you were opposition leader?

Mr HODGMAN - I am happy to have a debate with the Tasmanian people about the strength of my team, the 15 members of my team who have all recontested the next election, as opposed to five, who apparently comprise the members of the Labor Party in the lower House, with two not even wanting to be part of the team. We are very strong, stable, unified and focused on continuing to be a good majority government for Tasmania.

Mr WILLIE - So you are comfortable with the press release?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. As I say, I have a million of them issued by your party telling me my fortune and what you thought of me over my time in opposition, and this is no different to that.

CHAIR - I feel sure we will have this conversation over the coming months, but we have a number of other issues as well. Mr Dean has a question on strategic policy and advice. I am trying to keep people's focus here.

Mr DEAN - Your position has been that this is where I should raise my issue.

CHAIR - You spoke to me about this and I said it is advice and it is strategic, so it covers off on two.

Mr DEAN - It is a pity that the Labor member has upset you -

Laughter.

Mr DEAN - I will now straighten it up. Premier, I want some information in relation to the infamous redacted document that has been a part of the parliamentary process for the last months. I understand that yesterday you agreed you had seen the document. I am not sure whether you agreed that you knew exactly what the content of that document is, but will I ask you that question: do you know exactly what the content of that document is?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr DEAN - Then why will you not overrule the Treasurer in this instance, as the Premier of this state, and provide that document to the Public Accounts Committee, even in a confidential position and/or publicly?

Mr HODGMAN - Because it has been assessed by an independent RTI officer in accordance with established laws and processes to be Cabinet information critical to the determinations and the decision-making processes of this Government. By convention that information can and should remain confidential and there is legal precedent from the High Court, no less, to confirm the importance of us so doing. We are not inclined to upend what is good process and practice that goes to the heart of accountable and responsible government collective decision-making by Cabinet. We are not inclined to compromise or undermine the independence and robust nature of an RTI system which can be appealed against. I note in this instance that while the opposition parties are complaining about the information appropriately being redacted by an independent officer, they did not choose to appeal the decision at the time, as they are entitled to do. It is only now that they want that to happen. It is a political issue.

I take very seriously our responsibilities as a government and a cabinet to be able to make collective decisions on the basis of Cabinet confidentiality. I am often advised by senior members of the State Service that to upend that would potentially put at risk also the ability for state servants to provide frank and fearless advice to government, which bears the ultimate responsibility and accountability for decisions made. In this instance it is not immaterial that the decision we made was not to sell the power station. People can speculate and prophesise as to what caused us to arrive at that decision, but we made the decision not to sell the power station as an integral part of keeping the lights on and delivering our energy supply and security plan. That is what Tasmanians are most concerned about. We have a view that is a shared one, not just that of the Treasurer's or indeed the Energy minister's, that we should not breach those important conventions and processes which, if we did, would only suggest we should continue to do so and that would undermine good government. If you look at the letter from former premier Lara Giddings to the committee, it asked to consider a similar request. I think it, including excerpts from the High Court decision, goes to the heart of this matter and sums up why it is not a good thing for us to do.

Mr DEAN - We have already been down that path. Do you agree, as Premier of this state, that a parliamentary joint House committee is entitled to a greater right to information than any member of the public?

Mr HODGMAN - Members of parliament certainly and collectively have certain privileges that extend beyond what an average citizen is entitled to, and that carries considerable responsibilities. It is also not an immaterial fact that on at least three occasions information from the committee's deliberations became public.

Mr DEAN - But are they entitled to a great level of courtesy, respect and entitlement to documents than a member of the public? Are you saying yes to that?

Mr HODGMAN - I think all Tasmanians are entitled to respect and courtesy.

Mr DEAN - Are not members of a joint House committee entitled to greater benefits when it comes to documentary information, particularly on matters they are dealing with, than a member of the public?

Mr HODGMAN - That was my initial point. There are additional privileges that are afforded to members of parliament. I accept that, but I make the point that the committee was leaking public information which undermined public confidence in that committee.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr DEAN - Cabinet information is provided publicly from time to time as it suits the Government. Is that not right?

Mr HODGMAN - I will need you to refer me to an example.

Mr DEAN - For instance, there were budget discussions held within Cabinet and some of that information was provided publicly here in the last few weeks before the announcement of the Budget. I would have thought they were Cabinet discussions around some of those issues.

Mr HODGMAN - They were policy decisions and funding commitments.

Mr DEAN - The Legislative Council recently passed a motion supported by all members with the exception of the one Liberal member, and there was a pair for the second Liberal member, calling on the Government to release that document to an independent person of your choice and that of the President of the Legislative Council. That person can be anywhere in the country or anywhere in the world.

CHAIR - You have to watch costs.

Mr DEAN - Yes, we do, but the Government is so protective of this document that they might want to go outside the country. Why would your Government would not accept that position? That is, for a person with the legal requirements to make a decision in relation to the content of that document? The document is headed 'Sale of the Tamar Valley Power Station'. If you would make a comment on that first.

Mr HODGMAN - We have an robust, independent process founded on processes and laws that have been in place for some time and existed under former governments. We have not created a new set of rules. It has been independently assessed. There are rights and avenues anyone aggrieved with that process might pursue. I was asked by the Opposition Leader yesterday whether there has been appeal to the Ombudsman or to any other party. The Labor Party did not do such a thing when the information, albeit in redacted form, was released.

Mr WILLIE - In referring to the Labor Party, he is addressing the question to the member for Windermere.

CHAIR - It was in the overall context.

Mr HODGMAN - It is the context that there are avenues available to anyone unhappy with the decision to pursue, and they were not by the Labor Party or anyone else I am aware of.

CHAIR - Last question, Mr Dean. I know this is important to you.

Mr DEAN - It is not only important to me, with great respect, Chair. It is important to the Parliament.

CHAIR - Yes, and the Parliament. We do have to move on. One more question.

Mr DEAN - It is the view of the public and the people, many of whom have contacted me, that information in the document would suggest members of your Government have not been truthful in evidence provided about the content of the document.

Mr HODGMAN - I reject that. A lot of people tell me it disappoints them when information that should be treated with great confidence is leaked. Yes, we have rights and privileges that extend beyond the average citizen, but there are also responsibilities. For that committee to have, for whatever reason and by whatever means, leaked information into the public arena demonstrates the high level of risk with which this issue should be considered.

Mr DEAN - Leaks occur from Cabinet discussions. This is a nonsense. That matter has been dealt with as a separate issue.

Mr HODGMAN - I am not sure it has. Mr Sealy, the former Solicitor General, has provided some views. He raised the pertinent issue that concerns about the confidentiality of the committee are entirely founded. The report of the committee confirmed that as well; there have been three occasions when information has been leaked.

Mr DEAN - Have you taken legal advice on this?

Mr HODGMAN - On which element?

Mr DEAN - On this issue concerning the redacted document. Have you taken any legal advice?

Mr HODGMAN - We have taken advice. We have made that clear.

Mr DEAN - Legal advice? Have you taken legal advice?

Mr HODGMAN - As Premier, I take seriously the legal advice that came straight from the High Court of Australia, delivered to us by the former Labor premier, Lara Giddings, that it is not appropriate for Cabinet information to be released whenever it suits people, for whatever reason.

Mr DEAN - Please answer my question. Did you take legal advice in relation to this document that the Public Accounts Committee is seeking?

CHAIR - A yes or a no, and we can move on.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, we have taken advice.

Mr DEAN - On this document? Legal advice on this document?

Mr HODGMAN - On whether it should be released publicly?

Mr DEAN - Yes.

Mr HODGMAN - We have taken that advice. We have said that on many occasions.

Mr DEAN - Where did you take the legal advice from?

Mr HODGMAN - I know it offends some members of the committee, but we are not going to breach Cabinet confidentiality, collective responsibility and accountability. These are responsibilities and burdens I bear as the Premier of the Government. I understand that independent

members and Opposition members may not have those responsibilities. I do and I am determined to uphold them.

Mr DEAN - The matter is not ended.

CHAIR - Thank you, and that is the last time we ask about that in this forum.

Ms ARMITAGE - My question are completely different. Last year in Estimates, Mr Johannes spoke about the audit to look at the strengths and weaknesses in Tasmania. At that time you had not employed someone to do the job.

Mr JOHANNES - Is this in relation to the brand, Ms Armitage?

Ms ARMITAGE - It is, sorry - I should have mentioned Brand Tasmania. You were hoping for an independent Tasmanian expert. Did you find someone? Were they from Tasmania or elsewhere? What strengths and weaknesses did they identify?

Mr JOHANNES - Yes, we did. We invited the brand expert from Tourism Tasmania, a gentleman by the name of Guy Taylor, who is widely acknowledged in Tasmania as an authority in this space. He worked with a steering committee that included myself, the secretary of State Growth, the head of Tourism Tasmania, the director of the Brand Council and Brett Torosi, who is a member of Tourism Tasmania. I think he is also a member of the Brand Council. He, with a team of people who worked for Ms Gray, conducted the audit, including looking at best practice overseas in jurisdictions that are particularly good at managing their brands, such as New Zealand and Iceland. I add, for the record, he did not travel to New Zealand and Iceland.

He consulted directly with 35 or 40 prominent people in the brand area in Tasmania, people active in both overseas and domestic markets. The steering committee took the report he put together with the team, with various recommendations, and put advice to the Premier on the strength and weaknesses of our current effort in the brand area and where we think we need to go next. They basically concluded that the brand is in good shape but there is more we can do around the way it is governed and there is more investment we can make over time, particularly in the way that we bring the general community along in the branding effort. That is where we will focus in future.

Ms ARMITAGE - Did it come in on budget, under the \$100 000, or over budget?

Mr JOHANNES - Yes, it did. I think Ms Gray had the actual costs. Mr Taylor's salary did not come out of the core brand budget. The costs were associated with travel and the like on the island. I doubt we have that number but we can find that for you.

CHAIR - Thank you. I do not think travel on our island would reach \$100 000. I hope it does not, or no-one would want to come.

Mr JOHANNES - I am confident it is well short of \$100 000.

Mr NICHOLSON - It was absorbed within the costs of the division's operation. It was done as part of a standing capacity.

CHAIR - There is not an identified figure.

Mr NICHOLSON - We will double-check that, but Mr Taylor's salary obviously is as an officer, as Greg has described, and the administrative support for his work was provided from within the division.

1.3 Safe homes, safe families - Tasmania's family violence action plan

CHAIR - I invite Mr Willie to ask the first question.

Mr WILLIE - I acknowledge the good work being done and the tripartisan support. What is the plan after 2018-19? There is no allocation of funds in the forward Estimates.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, sure. That matter has been raised before, understandably, legitimately so. It is an important body of work. I acknowledge there is a collective commitment to doing all we can. What is happening in this Budget reflects the fluent nature of our policy responses and the need for additional investments. I can assure members of this committee and the Tasmanian public we remain committed to enhancing our policy response. We will publicly canvass future opportunities and options, how we can best do these and how they will be funded.

When we announced the plan it was for a definitive period with initiatives, noting that we would need to address emerging issues and trends. Our response to supporting Indigenous Tasmanians, for example, is one. The additional responses we have recently announced are a contemporary example of needing to react as we improve our understanding of the issue and how best we deal with it.

The \$26 million that we committed in addition to roughly \$16 million in direct funding to initiatives already embedded within the Budget is being expended. I am more than happy to talk through how that is happening and how the increased demand for services is becoming more apparent. As I said yesterday, it cannot be described as a good problem to have because there are people who are suffering family violence, but it is better that we know the extent of the problem. We have had a significant increase in the number of presentations in various forms of people suffering family violence.

CHAIR - Is that because of mandatory reporting?

Mr HODGMAN - There is a range of reasons why it is so. Just increasing public awareness and the availability of new services to people fleeing family violence have led to an increase. The willingness for brave women and children especially to present. Funding for the plan is provided up to and including the 2018-19 financial year. We will continue to take financial and evidence-based approach to the development of new actions under the plan. We will be outlining our view of how we best do that in the foreseeable future. That can provide assurance to those in the community and those who work in this sector as well as to funding commitments beyond this budget.

Our focus has been in implementing the most effective plan funded over four years to the tune of \$26 million in additional support. I have every expectation that, given the shared support across all political parties and the broader community, our plan will continue and be strengthened.

Mr WILLIE - My next question is about the domestic violence order scheme, a nationwide scheme. How is that unfolding? It passed parliament last year. Has that made a difference,

particularly to victims of domestic violence? Have the police found that a useful tool in their duties protecting people?

Mr HODGMAN - It is a matter that comes under the department of Police.

Mr JOHANNES - Through you, Premier, I will attempt to answer that. I welcome to the table Brook Teale, Senior Policy Analyst in Premier and Cabinet, who is leading our coordination work in government.

My understanding is that work is actually being led by justice departments with a view to nationally consistent legislation and the information systems being upgraded to actually allow family violence orders to be implemented across jurisdictions. We are still a way away from being able to go beyond information-sharing to actually having a system in place that allows us to enforce another state's family violence order. It is a challenge shared across all states, and is not peculiar to Tasmania. Is that right, Brook?

Mr WILLIE - Do you know the expected time frame for that to be resolved?

Mr JOHANNES - Unless Brook knows, or the Premier has it in a brief from Justice.

Mr TEALE - No, there is no definitive date as yet. The states are working with the Commonwealth in terms of the continued development of the scheme.

Mr WILLIE - My next question may be one for Minister Petrusma: I am sure members at the table are aware of the rapid rehousing program. The last update I had there were 46. Is that still the case and what was contributing to the hold-up of the total of 50 properties?

Mr HODGMAN - We certainly may be able to take you some way, but Ms Petrusma as minister would no doubt have a little more. As at 31 May 2017, 46 properties are available. The target is to reach 50 by the end of June this year. Housing Connect is offering a financial incentive, a small one of \$1000, to Housing Connect providers to increase the pool of rapid re-housing homes. An action that is funded to the tune of \$2.4 million under the plan. As at 30 April this year, the Budget expenditure is \$395 000, so it is not for lack of resources; it is a lack of availability. TAFE is to have the full pool of 50 available by the end of this month.

There was an initial delay. The amendments to the Residential Tenancy Act of 1997, which passed in May 2016, have allowed community housing providers to participate in the rapid rehousing initiative. That is to be able to lease properties to victims, and also the perpetrators of family violence. Additional initiatives under the action plan are being implemented to further support those affected by family violence to access safe and affordable housing options. There is a youth relief program, which is similar to rapid rehousing but targeting young people -

Mr WILLIE - It has been held up, has it not, because of the lack of properties available?

Mr HODGMAN - I do not have advice about any delays on that.

CHAIR - Perhaps you can ask that tomorrow.

Mr DEAN - My area of interest is something I raised two or three years ago with the government. That is, the three-year trial using electronic monitoring of high-risk family violence

offenders. What stage exactly are the police at with that? That a program rests with police, and I am very pleased to see it is being trialled. It is being used in other states and countries, and is proving to be extremely beneficial in protecting victims and knowing the whereabouts of the perpetrators.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a three-year trial with electronic monitoring of high-risk family violence perpetrators. One of the actions under our plan is to ensure that perpetrators are held to account and we do whatever we can to strengthen our legal responses to family violence. The trial will be used to determine whether technology can prevent or reduce incidents of family violence. It is a \$2.79 million commitment, a national and Tasmanian Government initiative, with \$1.395 million contributed by the Tasmanian Government. It is action 23 under the Safe Home, Safe Families Plan. It will commence in the financial year 2017-18. It will receive some additional information from the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management.

The trial will determine whether technology can prevent or reduce incidents of family violence or more specifically target high-risk family violence perpetrators, including the monitoring of victims. It is not to offend the victims, rather it is expected that it will reduce repeat family violence offences and increase perpetrator compliance with family violence orders and conditions. For example, if there is an exclusion zone on perpetrators affecting a perpetrator and also decreasing absconding rates, identifying suitable technological solutions to improve the safety of women and children, and, ultimately, increasing convictions also for related offences. This applies not only in family violence, but related offences such as stalking, to monitor the movements of perpetrators and also reduce social and justice related costs.

It is expected to be run in three stages. Stage 1, the planning trial, commences on 1 June, so it has just started. Stages 2 and 3 will include the evaluation phase and a continuation phase dependent on the outcome of the evaluation report. The project manager will work closely with the Safe Families Coordination Unit in the Department of Justice, and it is expected that the learnings of the project will benefit other departments and the work they are undertaking.

Mr DEAN - If the evaluation is positive in its returns, when would we likely see the electronic monitoring in place?

Mr JOHANNES - It is a three-year trial so you would think we would start the evaluation after 12 months. If the results are positive, we would start taking positive results to government and saying this is something we recommend Government considers funding more permanently in the forward Estimates. It is a three-year trial with other jurisdictions and the Commonwealth at this stage.

Mr DEAN - When you say a three-year trial, is it a three-year trial of the electronic monitoring devices in place?

Mr JOHANNES - Yes.

Ms ARMITAGE - I want to ask about the Safe Families Coordination Unit. I remember last year it was going quite well and you had 11 members. Can you give me an update on that?

Mr HODGMAN - It is described, appropriately so, as the centrepiece to our response. It was an initiative brought to our attention by Rosie Batty and authorities in other jurisdictions, notably in South Australia where they established a unit like this which was designed to break down the

silos and improve line-of-sight for any relevant agency or community organisation to understand where there are risks presenting to vulnerable Tasmanians, more often than not women and children but occasionally also men. We should remember it was designed to literally bring all relevant agencies under one roof to have a more collaborative approach, to share data and to have an initial point for rapid response and early intervention wherever possible. It will also monitor the behaviours of those who are connected with family violence incidents, notably the perpetrators, and also to do whatever can best be done for those in a family violence situation, most critically at the point when they might choose to leave that situation, when they are most at risk.

It has the best available information unit from across government to ensure this collaborative approach supports identified families. There are some important numbers I alluded to earlier that I would like to mention to demonstrate the scale of the problem. For the period 1 July 2016 to 31 March 2017, the unit completed the following: number of family violence reports reviewed, 4001; number of families identified as being at high risk and assessed through the unit's mapping progress, 228; number of children identified as affected by family violence, 1237; number of notifications to schools, including government, Catholic and independent schools, 756; and number of recommendations made by the unit to government agencies, 1483. It has \$5.8 million in resource and funding over four years under the plan.

Ms ARMITAGE - Can ask you how long it is going? You said last year it was only funded to 2019.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, the point made by Mr Willie. With a number of commitments that are not funded beyond these forward Estimates, in due course there will be further announcements as to what the future will look like. I cannot imagine there will be any likely scenario of this Government or any other wanting to do anything less than what we are now.

Ms ARMITAGE - Is the number of staffing still at 11?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, there are 11 current operational staff, comprising five sworn police officers, two DHHS officers, two officers from Justice, one officer from Department of Education and one officer from Police, Fire and Emergency Management in terms of an administrative position.

It is a very different approach to our response. The concept of bringing multiple agencies together literally under the one roof is being adopted in other areas. If any members are interested, it is well worth seeing how it operates.

CHAIR - Thank you, Premier. They are some alarming figures that you read out for the committee and the general public to have some understanding of.

Output group 2

2.1 Management of executive government processes

Mr FINCH - Premier, the Premier's Scholarship Fund is highlighted in this process. Before we get onto that, this budget allocation was for \$4.5 million last year, going up in forward Estimates to nearly \$5 million in 2021. Can you give us some idea of what those processes are about? It would not all be going to the Premier's Scholarship Fund. Where does that budget allocation go and what processes are covered by that budget allocation?

Mr STRONG - Output 2.1 covers activities in relation to the Cabinet office within DPAC. In that sense it also funds the executive council secretariat as a function within DPAC and the communications unit and protocol, doing official visits and all those types of events. The funding for this particular output 2.1 is about managing those processes and the interaction between the government of the day, department officers and Cabinet, and preparing information on that side, plus partially funding the operations of the secretary in that role as well.

Mr FINCH - Premier, could the committee have a breakdown of the expenditure and where the various allocations go with those things?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, if we could have that on notice, we can certainly provide that.

Mr FINCH - As to the Premier's Scholarship Fund, my reading of it is that this year it is \$300 000, \$30 000 in the following year, then \$100 000 in the next two years. Can you explain what the Premier's Scholarship Fund is about?

Mr HODGMAN - I certainly can. It is the product of the partnership agreement between the state and the university that we signed back in the middle of 2015. That included a commitment to endow a perpetual Premier's Scholarship Fund. The Budget makes provision for what is a new Premier's Scholarship Fund and students will start receiving the scholarships at the beginning of 2018.

There are two new scholarship programs. The first is the endowed perpetual Premier of Tasmania Undergraduate Scholarship - I did not choose the name, by the way - to reward merit and retain Tasmania's brightest students. This scholarship will obviously be awarded on the basis of academic merit, funded through the endowed fund, with the capital amount of the fund being built up over time. The benefit of an endowed scholarship fund means there is long-term stability for the scholarship program and its future recipients. You may be aware there has been a slightly fluid history of state support, including under the former government, of scholarships at the university. It has been an ongoing issue of interest for both us and the university to arrive at a model that is more financially sustainable and relevant to both organisations, and provides good benefits and outcomes for Tasmanians at the university. This is a different model which is designed to provide sustainability and certainty for the university. They will not have to come back to government if scholarships might have ceased, been renamed or rebadged.

Mr FINCH - How many individuals will benefit? Is it one at a time, one or two per year?

Mr HODGMAN - The second program is targeted at scholarships for people requiring financial support and those who might be at risk of leaving their education, particularly if they have financial difficulties. It is designed to increase attainment and retention in education and will be based on financial need.

The other is based on academic achievement. It will be based on financial need and also likely targeted to regional locations to assist in breaking down any impediment to a student completing or not furthering their education. It will offer a complete program to transition students from year 11 through to the completion of an undergraduate degree. There are a number of wonderful examples of this having occurred - kids at risk of leaving school at year 10 or year 11 who end up achieving an undergraduate degree if they are given bridging support.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

The funds will be administered by the University of Tasmania, with funding of \$588 000 allocated in the Budget across the forward Estimates.

Mr NICHOLSON - There will be one endowed scholarship per annum. We are still finalising the parameters for the financial support-based scholarship for kids at risk of leaving the educational system.

Mr FINCH - Would that depend on the number of applications you receive and who may be supported within that program according to the amount of money in that pool?

Mr JOHANNES - The university administers it. The choice to is offer a small number of people a larger amount of money or a large number of people a smaller amount of money. We will work through this with the university. They are better placed than we are to judge how best to target that to make sure we provide serious opportunities for people otherwise at risk of not being able to participate in higher education.

Mr FINCH - Is this an add-on to the Making the Future partnership with the university from 2015 to 2025?

Mr JOHANNES - No, this is the commitment under that partnership.

Mr HODGMAN - A feature of that partnership agreement was that we find a way to sustainably fund scholarships supported by the state and administered by the university. In the past - Mr Johannes has been around a little longer than I have and it goes back many years - the university did not have funding certainty. I worked closely with Professor Peter Rathjen and want to acknowledge his significant contribution to our state's education landscape.

CHAIR - We teach them well and away they go.

Mr HODGMAN - It is probably always going to happen.

He was keen to work with us to find a more sustainable funding model. That is why the endowment model has been adopted. It was not previously so. This is the first time we will establish a fund to allow us to provide scholarships for a number of students, which we hope and expect will continue in perpetuity.

Mr JOHANNES - Our concern is that as a department we did not do enough in the past to take an active interest in who was receiving the scholarships, what the scholarships are for and how they connected to the government of the day's aspirations. There was an opportunity for us as a department to work with the university to negotiate something that is better for them and better for us as an agency in supporting the executive of the day.

Mr FINCH - Is this scholarship fund now the flagship or is it the entirety the Making the Future partnership? This takes over from that circumstance?

Mr HODGMAN - No.

Mr FINCH - What are the other elements of the Making the Future partnership?

Mr HODGMAN - This is only one feature.

CHAIR - For everyone's information, we are on the third line item.

Mr HODGMAN - The partnership agreement struck between the state and the university has a number of high-level objectives: to increase the number of international students; to increase and enhance our investment and outcomes in important areas, such as research; and to enhance and expand the university's presence in Tasmanian communities. The most obvious example of that is what is happening in Launceston and Burnie, a shared commitment funded by the state, Commonwealth and local governments supporting that endeavour. There are a number of practical outcomes. It features the establishment of the creative industries and performing arts precinct known as The Hedberg as well as the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment and a number of programs associated with that, to which we contribute \$1.4 million. You will note they are very important strategic commitments and shared strategic objectives, but they typically require a significant investment of state and university funding, and, on occasions, national funding.

Another element is a new partnership between UTAS and TasTAFE in establishing the associate degrees in agribusiness, tourism and applied business, which are exciting additional options available to students.

As I said, there is support for research institutes. We have a number of internationally renowned institutes in our state. We have established senior officers to liaise between DPAC and the university. In the past the right hand did not always know what the left hand was doing. It was a source of frustration to both organisations, but we now have dedicated people. This goes to the point that the university is one of our great assets. It is a competitive strength and the sole university of our state. It is important to a lot of what we are trying to achieve for the state and for the community.

It was a formalised partnership agreement with a lot of practical outcomes, of which I have mentioned a few. Seeing the university has an increased presence and engagement in our government primary schools is something new. It is being embraced by communities across the state, such as in the Huon, which I am familiar with. It is multifaceted, providing much better collaboration between government and our university. It is statewide. It is anything but Hobart-centric. There are seven practical actions. It will be reviewed every three years, with the first review scheduled for 2018.

Mr FINCH - Does the Premier's Discretionary Fund come into the processes area?

Mr HODGMAN - It can.

Mr FINCH - I appreciate and understand the quantum now available to you for distribution. Could the committee be provided with a rundown of where allocations might have gone over the past 12 months?

Mr HODGMAN - When we came to government, one of the savings measures we implemented was to reduce the amount available under the Premier's Discretionary Fund by a quarter - from \$480 000 down to \$360 000. It is a fund often drawn upon by members of community organisations, often through members of parliament, which I will talk about in a moment. We thought it an appropriate savings measure to reduce the amount available. This year the total amount paid from 1 April last year to 31 March was \$354 743.

CHAIR - Could we have the list tabled?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, you certainly can.

CHAIR - Time might not allow us to have them all read into *Hansard*.

Mr HODGMAN - By way of perspective, in 2013-14, the total amount allocated by the former government was \$753 000 against a budget of \$480 000. There was an overrun, which we have not had in any of our budgets. The fund has been looked at by the Auditor-General in the past and there were some concerns about how well it was being accessed by one former member - but -

Laughter.

CHAIR - His response was always, 'There is not one cent of that money that has not gone to an appropriate place'.

Mr HODGMAN - I can say that. It has been reported that I disburse the majority of the grants - and technically I disburse all of them - but a number of them come from community organisations directly so that people are aware. It is published on the DPAC website. I think word got around that there is such a thing and there were 240 successful recipients this year, with 139 of them directly from members of the public. A number came from non-government members, and I always welcome and receive them, noting that a process is applied to determine the veracity of the claims. I think with increased community awareness and the support of MPs, requests are often substantiated with supporting documentation from an organisation or a third-party endorsement of some sort. I can say that of 250 requests, 10 were declined for reasons of veracity or otherwise, but it is very unusual for a request not to be approved and they go to varying causes.

Mr WILLIE - Premier, before Estimates last year, were you aware of Mr Brooks' MSS email account?

Mr HODGMAN - No.

Mr WILLIE - So you have not received emails from Mr Brooks' MSS account?

Mr HODGMAN - No, not that I am aware of.

Mr WILLIE - You have not sent emails to his account?

Mr HODGMAN - No.

Ms LOVELL - Premier, I have some questions about your trade mission to India and Sri Lanka last year. During that trip, did you miss or reschedule any appointments in Sri Lanka?

Mr HODGMAN - No, I do not believe so. I do not want to suggest for one minute that I missed a bus or anything like that. I was wherever I needed to be, but it was a very fluid set of circumstances and there were meetings that were changed for one reason or another.

Mr JOHANNES - Through you, Premier, the Department of State Growth is responsible for organising and supporting the trade mission. I cannot recall the Premier missing any appointments. I do recall there might have been at least one rescheduling because of a traffic situation in Colombo

but I cannot recall what that might have been in relation to. I think the Department of State Growth would have all the details of every meeting attended.

Ms LOVELL - Would you be willing to table a copy of that?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, if it is available.

Ms LOVELL - Can you point to some of the outcomes of that trade mission?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, I can. We will get a full briefing from the Department of State Growth that can detail exactly what we were doing and what outcomes flowed from our meetings, which I am pleased to say were then reciprocated by delegations that came to Tasmania in response to our first official state delegation that took in India and Sri Lanka. It was the first that has been led by the state and was supported by a number of other organisations that typically assist in missions of this type. The minister, Mr Groom, was a part of the mission as well, which very much focused on our competitive advantages in areas such as tourism and hospitality skills and renewable energy - another area pertinent to Mr Groom - and resources. We have established important relationships with Indian companies in those sectors.

As part of that, we had involvement with Tasmanian 'ambassadors', a number of whom came with us on the mission, most notably former international cricketers Ricky Ponting and David Boon. They are revered figures in the Indian and Sri Lankan communities and they came to assist us in many ways associated with those areas of competitive strength and promoting our education system to Indian and Sri Lankan organisations and institutions. Other Tasmanian leaders - for example, Mr Bill Lark - were also part of the trade mission as well.

I will get you a more detailed briefing. We could do that before we conclude our business today if the Chair would allow me to do so at a point later in your deliberations.

Ms LOVELL - Just one last quick question. You mentioned some reciprocated trade missions that have come to Tasmania. Where have they been from?

Mr HODGMAN - I will stand corrected, but the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship not that long ago sent a delegation to Tasmania. It was at our invitation after meeting with the minister in India, but again I will provide you with some more detail on that.

CHAIR - Thank you, we will try to slot that in at a later time. If there are no other questions we will move on to 2.2 which is principal and subordinate legislation, one of our real favourites.

2.2 Principal and subordinate legislation

CHAIR - There was a review to be undertaken around the principal and subordinate legislation area. Has that been undertaken and, if so, how is it progressing?

Mr JOHANNES - I am not aware, Chair, of a review. There was an upgrade to the EnAct System which was a major change in the area, but I am not aware there was a review of the area.

CHAIR - We were provided with some notes and that is what the notes say, but I will do my homework and check. If there is no review, I am sure the office will know about it. Obviously it

is always a busy office and we know it is a specialised area, so how are the staffing numbers going and how is the workload going?

Mr JOHANNES - I introduce Robyn Webb, Chief Parliamentary Counsel, to the table.

CHAIR - You are probably all over this, Premier, but you might like Robyn to answer anyway.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. Why not?

Ms WEBB - As you can imagine, the last term of a government in a pre-election year is an extremely busy time for legislation. I think you can see from our numbers that we have been producing a vast amount of bills, many of which are now waiting for your deliberation in the upper House. We have also had 155 pieces of subordinate legislation as well, so I would say that we are at maximum capacity.

CHAIR - So is there a need for more staff or will this momentum roll down a little bit? I am interested in the Premier's view on that, given it is his Government that will be driving a lot of the agenda.

Mr HODGMAN - It is very busy, that is true, and if there is a request or a submission for additional funding or resources that is something we always consider a very important part of the business.

Mr JOHANNES - The committee chaired by the Manager of Government Business in the lower House actually provides an overview of the legislative program across Government and helps allocate priorities in consultation with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel. That enables them to plan their forward work program knowing what government bills and other regulatory matters they will need to work on during the year. An emphasis is placed on actually involving the Chief Parliamentary Counsel in planning of the Government's legislative program over the coming year.

CHAIR - Premier, in 2016, members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Subordinate Legislation travelled to Western Australia for a conference. There we were presented with a paper that talked about how subordinate legislation should be called 'delegated legislation' and it seemed to gain some momentum. How do you feel about changing the name of 'subordinate legislation' to 'delegated legislation'? Is that something that you would be amenable to if the committee were of a mind to pursue that?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

CHAIR - Because it is not subordinate in any way.

Mr HODGMAN - It is probably a matter for - no, certainly not. I understand with my legal training - the more appropriate usage of the term 'delegated', but it is probably a matter for the Joint House Committee of the Parliament to make a decision about that more than -

CHAIR - It is a joint House committee obviously, so we would have to -

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. I am not sure what the right avenue is. I do not believe it is a matter for the Government to determine the names and -

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Ms WEBB - The only thing I would mention about the use of the word 'subordinate' is that I think it highlights the fact that delegated legislation is subordinate to parliament.

Mr HODGMAN - True.

Ms WEBB - While 'delegated' is another term for it, in a sense subordinate is correct.

CHAIR - It does not mean any different, in your view? It is not necessarily -

Ms WEBB - It is a flavour of a word.

Mr HODGMAN - It is not a disparaging phrase or word; it is more to reflect that it is subordinate to the legislation of parliament handled differently. An interesting idea.

CHAIR - It was a very interesting conference.

Mr HODGMAN - Maybe the committee could look into that matter and resolve to -

CHAIR - We have been a bit busy because we have had an enormous workload, both with legislation and subordinate legislation. It has been a bit difficult. We cannot keep our members. They keep on hopping on and hopping off. That is always a challenge for any joint House committee. Any other questions?

Mr DEAN - What legislation can we expect to get through the end of the year, Premier? What is coming up?

Mr HODGMAN - We can get you a forward list. That might be okay. You can see what you have to look forward to.

CHAIR - That would be exceptional, if you could have a list.

Mr DEAN - I would like to mention one piece of legislation. There is a real push at the present time - and you might not be aware of it - from emergency services. I have been approached by emergency services wanting to go down the path of introducing legislation to control speed past any emergency event occurring on the side of a road or attaching to a road.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr DEAN - What they are saying is that South Australia is a good model. They introduced legislation in 2014 that restricts the movement of vehicles past any vehicle where blue-and-red lights are flashing on the side of a road to 25 kph. South Australia once again, as they are in most things in this country, are the leaders. Would we consider that? I will submit a report on it, but -

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. I would encourage you to speak with Mr Hidding about that, including it at Estimates.

Mr DEAN - I am addressing that matter by way of a written report. I have a similar situation with our Tasmanian flag - I have been asked to get a private member's bill in relation to that to ensure it is protected and cannot be changed in any way without the permission of the Parliament.

The legislation went through this place in the 1990s - perhaps 1998 or 1999 - but failed to get through. It did not come into our place. It went through the House of Assembly or was partly debated at the assembly, but did not get up to us for some reason or another.

CHAIR - Food for thought. The member will -

Mr DEAN - They are two areas I will be addressing with the Government.

CHAIR - We will have a busy winter break, I expect.

Mr DEAN - We will see whether the Government will take them on. If not, I would then consider a private member's bill.

CHAIR - It is always a specialised area. We have been presented in the past with the fact that it is difficult to find people to take up the role. If the Government increased the amount of resources to this area, is there any lack of that expertise? We know it is very specialised.

Mr HODGMAN - In the broader community, yes.

Mr JOHANNES - Through you, Premier, it is very specialised. In all honesty, officers across the country tend to steal from each other. It is not that someone with a standard legal background who works in property or criminal law can apply themselves to the drafting of legislation; it is quite a specialised art. If the Government were of a mind to say we need to increase the number of people in the office, we would find those people, but it would take time and we have to be very careful, because not everybody is suited to that work or has the expertise to do it. There is a lot of emphasis within the office on growing people over time. It is one of those classic professions where you have to spend time at the lower levels before you learn the trade and move up.

Mr DEAN - They do a magnificent job, I must say.

CHAIR - Drafting amendments at the drop of a hat.

Mr DEAN - Absolutely exceptional in my view, great staff.

CHAIR - A big tick for OPC. Thank you very much, Robyn, we will let you get back to work.

2.3 Tasmanian Government courier -

Ms ARMITAGE - I notice you have new performance measures. Can you explain the new performance measures?

Mr STRONG - The new performance measures came about in relation to the Auditor-General's report across the whole of government around the performance measures. The department is currently in two phases of reviewing all its performance measures. We have changed some of the performance measures to improve the information around those. As to the percentage of change in delivery costs, we had a similar one last year around the costs in relation to how effective we are in delivering that service from a cost perspective. We put in a new one, which is quite satisfactory with the standard of service provided by the courier service. This is part of the review of the performance measures. We will be doing going out to our clients and getting feedback around how effective the courier service is. That is not to say we have any apparent issues with it, but we want

information to see how we can improve it and whether we are meeting the expectations and needs of our clients.

Ms ARMITAGE - What is the current number of staff?

Mr STRONG - Seven.

Ms ARMITAGE - So there is no change. Is the service outsourced or provided by a contractor?

Mr STRONG - There are staff - five in Hobart.

Ms ARMITAGE - So it does not go out for tender after a certain period?

Mr STRONG - No, we have five full-time staff in the south and two in the north. It has not changed from this year to last year. It has not really changed for a long period of time.

Ms ARMITAGE - I find it a very good service; they do a great job in Launceston.

CHAIR - If there are no other questions in this area, I will suspend and invite everyone to a cup of tea in committee room 3, just up the hall.

The committee suspended from 10.49 a.m. to 11.06 a.m.

CHAIR - Welcome back.

2.4 Corporate support to ministerial and parliamentary offices and the office of the Governor

Mr DEAN - Again, in this area, Premier, we have new performance measures produced for 2017-18. Could you outline what the new performance areas are, what it is all about, and the number of staff in this area as well?

Mr NICHOLSON - I will start with staffing. Staffing in this particular area is 15.92 FTE. To be clear about what this is providing, this particular area is the area of corporate functions required - HR services for ministerial and parliamentary support; financial services, paying invoices and receiving money and budget and financial reporting; managing properties within the MPS portfolio; information services around records management and technology, ICT support; and executive reporting around information we have to include in the annual report in relation to this particular area. This is providing those back-office corporate functions to ministerial and parliamentary support, which is the executive government of the day, the electoral offices and House of Assembly members.

In relation to the performance measures, once again this is part of the review we undertook in relation to the Auditor-General's report. In this particular area we have never had a performance measure so again this service we provide is in the area I manage at the moment. We want to know how well we are going with our clients, to see whether we can improve and to understand whether we are meeting their expectations around the services we are providing.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr DEAN - What is the split of staff there, with the ratio of male to female?

Mr NICHOLSON - I would have to take that on notice because this is a broader corporate support area which also provides corporate support to the rest of the department as well. When I say it is 15.92 FTE, that is a calculation of the percentage of work we dedicate to that particular area. It is not a one-to-one match in that sense.

Mr DEAN - Are all people here in the south and in this building?

Mr NICHOLSON - Yes, they are all at 15 Murray Street

Mr DEAN - The area of managing properties: to what extent is this management of government offices in properties and buildings, for example, Henty House?

Mr NICHOLSON - The Properties and Procurements Branch within DPAC manages all the leased properties that we have so, yes, Henty House. We have what relates to the department itself and any properties leased by the executive government of the day and any House of Assembly members. In Henty House we have Service Tasmania, for example, but that is what the broader corporate area supports. It also looks after the lease in 15 Murray Street, for example.

Mr DEAN - I am not absolutely certain of the role. What is their position with Henty House and the management of Henty House moving forward? With the CH Smith building: what is their position there and what is going to happen from your area?

Mr NICHOLSON - The actual management of CH Smith and Henty House is by Treasury. Treasury has total responsibility for the property portfolio. We are only involved in discussions around what some of the outcomes should be. We are not driving that change; we are just managing particular leases in that area.

Mr JOHANNES - Actually, Mr Dean, we are a tenant.

Mr DEAN - Right. What is the management process for what is occurring? There is a lot of conjecture, a lot of discussion currently around St John Street, Henty House and CH Smith. I was wondering what the involvement was. I realise that Treasury has involvement in that, but what comes back to this department as to your requirements and your organising of the leases? I suspect that is what you are saying.

Mr NICHOLSON - Obviously, Treasury as the whole-of-government managers in this space consulting with us. Our particular service is like the Service Tasmania shop in Henty House. We are in discussion with them and they consult with us around those outcomes. At the end of the day, Treasury are whole-of-government and manages these properties.

Mr DEAN - Are you currently looking at the lease in relation to Service Tasmania? It is understood that they may well be moving into the new CH Smith building. You are not involved in that part of it at all?

Mr NICHOLSON - I am not personally, but my manager would have been in discussions with the Department of Treasury and Finance which are managing this whole process.

Mr JOHANNES - The way it would have worked, Mr Dean, if that were going to happen, is that Treasury would have taken the decision about the government's property assets in the north. They would be saying to us, 'We no longer wish to hold property A; we are now more interested in property B, and we would like you to actually be in property B, as opposed to property A'. Then Mr Strong's people would get involved and say, 'Okay, in order for us to go from A to B, these are our operational requirements'.

Mr DEAN - Thank you.

Mr WILLIE - Premier, have members of your staff communicated with Mr Brooks by his MSS account, to the best of your knowledge?

Mr HODGMAN - I am not aware of that. I imagine members of our staff - all of us receive thousands of emails. I am not aware of that occurring.

Mr WILLIE - If that had occurred, would you be disappointed that your staff had not alerted you to the fact that Mr Brooks was using an MSS account whilst he was a minister of the Crown?

Mr HODGMAN - It depends in which context that has occurred, of course. I do not know whether it has or has not.

CHAIR - If there are no other questions, we will move on.

Output group 3

Electronic services for government agencies and the community

3.2 Management and ongoing development of Service Tasmania

Ms ARMITAGE - Service Tasmania is always an interesting one, particularly where we are in Henty House because we see it regularly as we go through the doors.

First, I will go on from the question from the member for Windermere. I notice that there appears to be some capital investment money provided for refurbishment and upgrade to Service Tasmania centres. You might give me a bit of information on what is proposed for those and which ones?

Ms BAKER - We have a \$250 000 recurrent capital investment program provided to Service Tasmania to undertake core infrastructure upgrades and service centre upgrades with an emphasis on making sure our public facilities are safe for members of the public to visit.

We have two works planned in 2017-18. One is within the redevelopment of the Hobart service centre and is being undertaken as part of the broader works at the Lands Building. We are now in the concept design phase. The emphasis of that work is to take our service centres from what have been traditional transactional business - money in, money out, and people leaving - to creating an environment in which our customer service staff can have longer consultations with members of the public. This is particularly so for sensitive matters such as registration of death certificates, when members of the public are feeling quite vulnerable. The opportunity to take those people into more discreet spaces within the service centre and have those sensitive conversations is something we are exploring in Hobart.

The second aspect is that the Hobart service centre will hopefully have the capability to provide greater level of assistance to members of the public having difficulty completing government forms. The statistics in Tasmania around literacy levels are quite terrible, really. Many of our staff members spend extended periods of time with customers, standing at counters to help them fill in our forms. We are looking to explore the opportunity to provide a more comfortable place where we can assist members of the public, as opposed to it being a transaction at the counter.

There are a couple of other minor works. We co-located with the New Norfolk Police Station but that building does not have disability access. The police station was built in the 1960s. It does not have level access from the street. We are looking to put in a ramp for people with mobility challenges, which sounds simplistic but is difficult and costly when a public building is already in place.

We have an outstanding issue with our St Helens service centre. We have challenges with lighting, and the quality of the digital images captured for customers is diminished at certain times of the year where there are low levels of sun. We are looking at some amenity changes at the St Helens centre.

These are the planned works we have for our CIP in 2017-18.

Ms ARMITAGE - In the past you have cut the hours back, particularly in Launceston. Are there plans for further cutbacks in hours across any of the Service Tasmania centres? Are there plans to close any of the centres?

Ms BAKER - No. We are committed to maintaining the existing service delivery network. However, the demand for face-to-face services is in a gradual decline across the board.

We went through a thorough process in 2012-13 to change the opening hours of the service centres to align with community demand. There is no immediate priority around further changes to service centre hours. We expect the service centres will remain as they are currently operated.

Ms ARMITAGE - Do you have the staffing numbers?

Ms BAKER - Would you like them tabled?

Ms ARMITAGE - If you could. Have they gone up or down, or they are static?

Ms BAKER - They are static. There have been marginal changes and we have an FTE count, which we can table.

Ms ARMITAGE - That would be good. I know stress leave has always been an issue, with a lot of people coming in and waiting for a long time. Have more people taken stress leave than previously?

Ms BAKER - No. Last year we talked about there being a number of indicators of workplace stress. One of those indicator would be employees taking sick leave.

We can table information around the amount of sick leave taken. In the period 1 July 2016 to 31 March 2017, a total of 2 237 days of sick and carers leave was taken. That works out at an

average of 2.32 sick and carers leave days per staff member. There is not an indication of workplace stress per se.

We have had a total of 19 workplace incidents between 1 July 2016 and 31 March 2017. Of those, six were as a result of aggressive customers, people who were abusive or violent toward our staff members; 10 were due to slips, trips and falls resulting in physical injuries or back strains; and three are in a miscellaneous category. That is a total of 19 workplace incidents. None of those seems to be dramatic increases on previous years.

Ms ARMITAGE - Are there any plans to move Service Tasmania across to the new CH Smith building? Do you believe that would be an improvement of service?

Mr HODGMAN - I am not aware -

Ms BAKER - Shall I answer that, Premier?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Ms BAKER - We were approached by the Department of Treasury and Finance which, as Mr Strong indicated before, managed the property portfolio for government. We discussed the appetite for Service Tasmania to relocate from Henty House to the CH Smith building. We have been in discussions with Treasury around our requirements. The decision is one for Department of Treasury and Finance and the Treasurer as to how the tenants are stacked in Henty House and CH Smith because the government will have both buildings.

The feedback we have received is that CH Smith is an attractive proposition for Service Tasmania because of the increased parking and because they would move into a building that is a greenfield site. We would not have to work around some of the logistical challenges Henty House presents.

Within our tenancy we have an emergency fire exit stairwell that comes straight down through the Service Tasmania tenancy. It makes the occupancy, layout and configuration of Henty House challenging for us from a customer service perspective.

The other thing moving to a greenfield site offers is that we could relocate to new premises on a Monday and not have to run a temporary site, as we would if we were to remain in Henty House during the refurbishment. The CH Smith is an attractive proposition in its simplicity.

Ms ARMITAGE - It sounds as if you are on the move. I think the discussion around refurbishment was to move the entrance of Henty House to the other corner. It would take people away from the foyer. What is the reason for that?

Ms BAKER - It was one option being explored when we were considering whether we could make Henty House work differently for us. Taking into account the stairwell runs down through the tenancy we thought that having a different entrance to Henty House would enable us to use that tenancy more effectively.

CHAIR - A couple of very quick questions and quick answers.

Mr DEAN - I might give the same reason as the member for Launceston, I have more questions. You got away with it.

Easter Tuesday is a real concern for Service Tasmania - and on Easter Tuesday this year, it was the same as last year. We had many people expecting Service Tasmania to be open and we know it is closed on Easter Tuesday. The sign was not clear on the outside of the building. It was inside the Service Tasmania door and people were angry. I met a number of people because I was working. Many people were asking why they were not open. One person said - and you can confirm this with me - that the website said Service Tasmania were open. She was very upset that she had come in from wherever it was to Service Tasmania only to find it closed.

Ms ARMITAGE - Someone had left the doors open.

Mr DEAN - The doors were open and they were accessing the building. That was creating enormous problems. They finished up with shutting it off and God knows what else.

Ms ARMITAGE - Then we were locked out.

Mr DEAN - We could not get in or out, but that is another issue.

I do not know whether it was happening down here or not, but I suspect it might have done in other Service Tasmania buildings. What can we do to ensure that Service Tasmania opens on Easter Tuesday? It is a nonsense that it does not open Tuesdays these days, but that is another issue. I guess you cannot get to every person but surely we must be able to have some clear notification to people that Service Tasmania is closed on Easter Tuesday.

Ms BAKER - Service Tasmania is 20 years old next year and in its entire 20 years has never opened on Easter Tuesday. There is probably an unstated expectation that we are not open because we are employed under the State Service Act and Easter Tuesday is a gazetted public holiday as part of the act. That said, we make every effort to ensure that we communicate our public holiday closures to the public. We run Easter advertising in the Saturday paper prior to Easter Tuesday, similar to what we do for Christmas around our Christmas advertising.

I think your point is valid around the local signage in the service centre in Launceston, because our tenancy starts inside Henty House, not on the public doors, so that is something we could potentially have a look at for future years - to make sure a public holiday notice is displayed on the external door at Henry House rather than the inside door that accesses the Service Tasmania tenancy. We make every effort. With the online advertising, maybe the constituent may have misread it. The online advertising is basically a reflection of the media advertising we do in the three local daily papers, and it is pretty clear from that media advertising that we are closed on Easter Tuesday.

I will look at that external signage to see if we can do something more on the external door of the tenancy, but short of mailing every household, which is not particularly cost-effective, I am not sure we can do much more in letting the general public know.

Mr DEAN - They do a great job. How many staff do we have in the policy area of Service Tasmania? Where is the policy area domiciled?

Ms BAKER - We have 10.7 FTE in our project administration and policy areas, and that is domiciled in Hobart at 144 Macquarie Street.

Mr DEAN - You have talked about changes to offices. Are there any areas being looked at for the consideration of Service Tasmania offices? Is Mowbray off the hook?

Ms BAKER - We are certainly not planning to expand the service centre network. The last service centre opened in May 2007 so we have not had a new service centre for 10 years. With the trend towards more customers using online and phone services, I personally am of the view that additional service centres are not warranted at this point in time.

**Output group 4 -
State Service management**

4.1 State Service employment and management

CHAIR - Moving onto 4.1, State Service employment and management. Thank you, Frank; you have been waiting very patiently for us to get to your line item. I promise I will do my best to control Mr Dean.

Mr OGLE - I wish you luck with that.

Laughter.

Ms LOVELL - Premier, I would like to go back to the employee numbers we were talking about earlier this morning, please. I am looking for a breakdown of the employee numbers of both officers and the total State Service, but in particular the gender breakdown, so the percentage of female and male employees.

Mr HODGMAN - When you say offices, do you mean departments or officers?

Ms LOVELL - Total heads of agency, prescribed office holders, Senior Executive Service.

Mr JOHANNES - I can tell you the heads of agency and SES. There is one female head of agency and that is Jenny Gale, the secretary of Education. In terms of the Senior Executive Service, there are about 150 members of the SES, of which about 36 per cent are female, up from 30 per cent a few years ago. I do not know if Mr Ogle has prescribed office holders. I can also tell you for the State Service generally the percentage of women is about 70 per cent.

Mr OGLE - Through the Premier, we might table that if that helps. Mr Johannes was pretty well on the number.

Ms LOVELL - There has been an increase in the percentage of female employees in the SES. The total overall State Service numbers seem to be about steady over the last couple of years, at around 70 per cent. Premier, what strategies do you or your Government have in place to achieve equal gender representation in leadership roles and when do you expect that to be achieved?

Mr HODGMAN - We have a strategy in place to increase the number of women participating on government boards and committees. As we have heard, there has been a slight increase on last year's numbers, but there is obviously a long way to go. In August last year heads of agencies

released the Gender Diversity in the Tasmanian State Service initiative which sets out key actions to increase representation of women across the SES. They have established a target of at least 40 per cent of senior executives to be women by 2020. Eventually we would hope and expect equal gender representation.

Some of the key initiatives are that all heads of agency are committed to working together to identify barriers to women working in senior levels, overcome any unconscious bias and support flexible work arrangements. Heads of agency have recently completed training and coaching in diversity and inclusive leadership, and are now implementing strategies in their organisations to be more inclusive. The first forum held by the State Service focusing on women in the State Service was held earlier this year. They are some of the actions. I do not know if Greg wants to add to that.

Mr JOHANNES - I am happy to build on that, because this is something pretty close to my heart and have pushed as best as I can on, off a very low base. I agree 36 per cent is an improvement but it still has us towards the bottom of public services in the country, though certainly when we started we were at the bottom. Each agency has initiatives specific to where it comes from, because clearly each agency has a different type of workforce. Within DPAC we advertise all jobs as flex, for example, and they are doing something similar in Treasury. DPIPWE has a very comprehensive gender diversity action plan. As the Premier said more broadly, collectively heads of agency are now in most agencies adopting individual targets.

Within my agency, it is 50:50 and we are already there. Overall, as the Premier said, it is at least 40 per cent by 2020. We are reporting publicly, including through my annual report as head of the State Service, but also through individual agency reports, and there has been a strong focus on unconscious bias. Heads of agency and their deputy secretaries went through one-on-one coaching, a workshop and subsequent follow-up with executives. It is a key area that we need to focus on. There is a lot of work happening in this space but frankly, Ms Lovell, there is a lot of work that needs to happen.

Ms LOVELL - That is good to hear because it is something close to my heart as well. I appreciate that.

Mr HODGMAN - The Minister for Women, Ms Petrusma, can speak a little further about our advancements in increasing the participation of women on government boards and committees. We have substantially increased the participation rate. We have some practical initiatives, including providing scholarships and access to a company directors' course to improve the skills and capabilities of women to take leadership roles on those government boards.

Ms LOVELL - Thank you. My next question is to do with fixed-term contracts. At the moment, how many State Service employees are employed on fixed-term contracts? Over the last 12 months, how many have been converted from fixed-term contracts to permanent employment?

Mr HODGMAN - As at 31 March of this year, there are 3661.33 FTEs.

Ms LOVELL - Have you got the head count number there?

Mr HODGMAN - No. The majority of fixed-term employees are in the Health service, 1457.98, while in the Department of Education, it is 1303.32. I have a number here for the general government sector fixed-term employees, which is 3216.57.

I will speak to the second part of your question. What was that?

Ms LOVELL - Over the last 12 months how many employees have been converted from a fixed-term contract to a permanent role?

Mr JOHANNES - We would have to take that on notice, I suspect.

Mr OGLE - It is going to be a bit more difficult because we have devolved that to agencies so it would take some time for that to occur.

Mr JOHANNES - We can ask agencies.

Ms LOVELL - One more question. Premier, as part of the Public Sector Union Wages Agreement 2016, your Government undertook to achieve a number of non-salary outcomes, in particular developing a policy and guidelines governing the ability of public servants to make public comments, including on social media. This work was to be finalised by 31 March 2017. Has that been completed?

Mr HODGMAN - This was asked yesterday in the House of Assembly Committee by the Leader of the Opposition. Mr Johannes provided some information.

Mr JOHANNES - I am happy to speak to that. It has not been completed by 31 March. There is active work going on. The SSMO through Frank Ogle is working closely with various union groups to turn that into a whole-of-service approach. The Department of Premier and Cabinet has a social media policy with respect to public servants participating in social media and it was developed in consultation with the union. That is the basis on which we are trying to put the broader framework in place. It has not met the time frame, but there are two parties to the negotiation. We are hoping to complete in the next month.

Mr DEAN - The example needs to be set at senior people in the organisations.

Mr JOHANNES - My expectation, Mr Dean, is it will apply as much to me as it does to anyone else.

Mr DEAN - The Premier's office as well?

Mr JOHANNES - The Premier's office does not employ public servants. It employees individuals on Crown prerogative and that is a matter for them.

CHAIR - Thank you very much.

Mr DEAN - My question is about family violence leave. I raised this last year and we were given figures. What are the figures for persons within the State Service accessing family violence leave?

Mr HODGMAN - There is now a new stand-alone provision for State Service employees experiencing family violence that provides for paid leave to attend medical, legal, housing, education, counselling and other support services. It reflects our commitment to address this issue through progressive employment practices as well which include the protection of employees' privacy. It is a very sensitive area but one where we have increased the amount of family violence

leave up to 10 days per year with additional leave available at the discretion of the agency should circumstances justify it.

The State Service has supported employees' experience with family violence with access to leave for family violence ordered by Employment Direction No. 28 since November 2012. The formal use of these provisions has been limited, with 29 applications approved in 2015-16 and separate family violence leave is now available as part of the Public Sector Union Wages Agreement 2016. It is accompanied by access to personal leave for an employee to provide immediate support to a family member experiencing family violence.

Mr DEAN - So within the State Service there were 29 applications this current financial year, or the previous financial year?

Mr HODGMAN - 2015-16 is the most.

Mr OGLE - We do annual counts so we will do a 30 June count. I would make the point that one of the agreements discussed with the unions on family violence was confidentiality and the identification issues associated with family violence.

While the Premier quoted the figures we have, I do not think for a moment they are the total figures. People still have the opportunity to apply for personal leave, carer's leave, other sorts of leave, so we do not pick up the total number.

That is one of those difficult things. We would like an ideal world where people could come in and up-front identify that they are victims of family violence, but we are not there yet. People choose alternatives.

Mr DEAN - Nobody expects anybody's name to be released at all. I am not expecting that. I want to know the impact and progress and the amount of family violence occurring within our own organisation in the State Service. An idea of where things are going in this area.

Mr OGLE - I have a view on family violence that the State Service reflects the community and our exposure to those sorts of things is the same as the community.

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Dean, I am aware of a number of cases in my agency of individuals who have been affected by family violence. I am not aware of one of them specifically seeking family violence leave for the purpose of trying to deal with the issues in their personal life.

Mr Ogle is absolutely right. We are a reflection of the community which we serve. Our expectation is that as many individuals in our organisation experience family violence as do in the general community.

Mr DEAN - My next question is around stress leave and the average sick leave days taken within the State Service and the average number of days taken per employee. If I can have those details? I would also like details and the number of complaints made against State Service staff, and dismissals within the State Service. I am not sure whether you want to take that on notice, Premier.

Mr OGLE - I can give you the absenteeism figures because I knew you would ask. The absentee figures over the last three years - when I talk about absenteeism, I am talking about

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

unplanned absence, which is sick leave and carers leave - were: for 2014-15, 76.64 hours per FTE; in 2015-16, 74 hours per FTE; and in the year to date, it is 61.86 hours per FTE. It is probably tracking about the same level. That is absenteeism rates.

Mr DEAN - Yes. That is no so bad really, three or four days we are talking about there.

Mr JOHANNES - Those other questions Mr Dean asked in relation to grievances that individuals might lodge against their managers, we report annually for this service. We get that from agencies themselves in most cases. I do not know if we would have year to date figures. It is certainly our intention to provide that in the report to parliament I produce.

Mr DEAN - So you are saying they will be available? I would also like to see the complaints against State Service staff by the public.

Mr JOHANNES - That is something different.

Mr DEAN - And the complaints made by State Service staff against their employees and senior management?

Mr JOHANNES - We would certainly have the second. The first we do not typically collect. We would not ask the Health system, for example, every year about the number of complaints that staff make against members of the Health system. They may have that themselves but that is not something in the past we have collected centrally.

Mr DEAN - Wouldn't you want to know, though? Your department, your area.

Mr JOHANNES - Not necessarily. We rely on police to manage their interaction with members of the public as opposed to DPAC coming in over the top and trying to provide them direction on how they manage their relationship with the public. The same with the Health system and the Education system.

Mr DEAN - This is not your area. I am asking for the number of complaints made by the public against state service staff and the number of complaints made within the organisations of staff against staff, or staff against senior management. Nothing to do with police.

Mr JOHANNES - We would have the second. The first, police, teachers and nurses are state servants. We would not regularly collect data from other agencies; we would rely on the agencies themselves to manage that.

Mr DEAN - What about drug issues within the State Service? Are there many incidents of drugs? Is there any testing of staff in any way in relation to drug matters?

Mr JOHANNES - Not in my agency, and I have not had reports made to me in relation to illicit substance use and its impact on state servants. I will defer to Mr Ogle on whether there is drug testing in some of our more applied areas, particularly emergency services.

Mr OGLE - The fundamental answer is no. There has been a lot of discussion around alcohol, sobriety and drug usage. We tend to focus more on the rehabilitation side, not the 'gotcha' side. For individual managers, if it comes to their attention that someone is under a cloud, we would expect

them to take action, but we have not entered into a regime of testing. You may remember years ago we had a big consideration of this in the policing area.

Mr DEAN - It is there now, the police have it.

Mr OGLE - Yes, so you could that in those sorts of environments where they have weapons and that sort of thing. It is one of those things we discuss regularly with the unions. We have tended to focus on the preventative side, not the code of conduct side, but obviously managers have to act if a person is not fit to be in the workplace.

Mr DEAN - What is the current security with State Service staff across the state and in the buildings they occupy? Where are we with their protection and support in that area, particularly with what is happening in the world?

Mr JOHANNES - Through you, Premier, we have a very close working relationship with police and Commander Geoff Smith, who is responsible for CT. Commander Smith is available to work with agencies to assess their security requirements and make recommendations on upgrades. We have implemented upgrades in 15 Murray Street; I know he has been engaged with the Parliament, and I think he has had the opportunity to spend time with most agencies and talk about security procedures and recommend upgrades to building security.

Mr DEAN - I could have asked that question of Service Tasmania when they were here but it has often concerned me that they are vulnerable. The staff there are dealing with people who are quite agitated and upset, and there is absolutely no security in that building whatsoever other than the duress alarms that members and people would have. It is not like this building where you have security officers and barriers you have to pass through. It is an open building that anybody can get into at any time. In fact, there has been evidence of them lodging there overnight.

Mr JOHANNES - Mr Dean, I can assure you we take very seriously our duty of care to all our staff. One thing I would say in relation to Service Tasmania is that there is evidence to suggest that creating physical barriers sometimes makes the situation worse, not better. The absence of a physical barrier does not necessarily indicate that we think there is a high-security risk in that environment. In some cases agitated clients respond better when they are not blocked off by a plastic screen that separates them from the person providing service. We take the duty of care very seriously; we regularly review this issue in relation to all the properties, whether they are Service Tasmania or properties in the Hobart CBD, in which we have administrative staff.

Mr OGLE - Through the head of the State Service, Greg, we launched with the unions the occupational violence strategy which fundamentally messages the public about the treatment of State Service employees. That obviously has a positive preventative aspect for the public, but also for our employees. It gives them the authority or the tools to use in case of these situations. I think that has been a really positive thing.

Every agency has risk management plans. Part of those risk management plans is security. You would appreciate certain buildings need greater security than others, so each agency must look at their security development plans and manage the risk but, as Mr Johannes says, that does not always mean physical barriers. My experience at Social Security in Glenorchy was that when we put up bars in the Social Security office, the violence level went through the roof. When we took them down, it went straight down again. It is an interesting exercise for people who study this better

than I do, but Mr Johannes is right - those physical barriers sometimes create an atmosphere of aggression.

CHAIR - Thank you very much. We now move on to 5.1.

Output group 5 - Security and emergency management

5.1 Security and emergency management -

Mr DEAN - This is a critical area and with what is happening around us security is an area we cannot neglect in any way whatsoever. I think we can all put up with the inconveniences that are associated with it. We have improved security in this building, which is very important. What will be the security measures when the new building is occupied in September? I guess there will be access to that building from the street, not necessarily through Parliament House, as well to those offices. What is the expectation there with security?

Mr HODGMAN - As to the specifics, you will need to ask Treasury, the agency responsible for administering the redevelopment of Parliament Square. I am not sure if anyone here is in a position to provide an overview.

Mr DEAN - So security measures have not been looked at or addressed?

Mr HODGMAN - I am sure they have by Treasury.

Mr DEAN - What is the training all State Service workers are provided in relation to security issues and acts of terrorism? I raise that because the Integrity Commission briefs us and is talking to members on a fairly regular basis now, I think annually or two yearly, in relation to integrity issues. What training do all staff get in relation to security, terrorism, how to react and what to do in these situations?

Mr JOHANNES - Training tends to be, in most cases, an agency-by-agency issue. We do not provide specific counterterrorism training to agency staff. We work actively with our staff to make them aware of the security procedures in relation to building security and evacuation procedures and we have regular trials of evacuation procedures in relation to major events.

I can say that one area where we are increasing our investment is in relation to cybersecurity. Members of parliament will shortly be getting a briefing from the Commonwealth's main cybersecurity authority and heads of agency will also be getting that briefing. He has offered to make himself available to other agencies so we can lift our game in the cybersecurity space because it is an area of increasing interest.

There is no specific physical training for state servants in relation to counterterrorism; however, if that was the recommendation from Police and Emergency Management, which monitors this, we would consider it.

Mr HODGMAN - In a national context I can inform the committee that work is done at COAG level. We receive at each COAG meeting a briefing from national security personnel. There is also an Australia-New Zealand counterterrorism committee which works to progress initiatives to counter violent extremism, particularly in relation to youth at risk of radicalisation. The Department

of Police, Fire and Emergency Management has engaged a jurisdictional intervention coordinator to develop a framework for potential interventions. That recognises the essential role of community leaders, family groups and networks and friends of those individuals who might be vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation. A stronger, more resilient, more connected local community can point to individuals who may be at risk and who might be attracted to using violence to achieve their ends. State government services such as housing, health and education are important parts of those networks. As a state, we should be prepared to make appropriate interventions where we are able and to intervene if a young person is on a path to violent extremism.

The frontline service providers such as police, teachers and corrections officers are being provided with assistance to identify at-risk individuals. We hope to ensure they are being responded to by appropriate authority. That is part of what is happening in a national context. The Australian Government has trebled its investment into programs such as this. About \$10 million in Commonwealth funding has been put toward the Australia Counter Terrorism Strategy agreed by COAG in 2015. It goes to focusing on prevention as a first line of defence. In December 2015, COAG agreed to a series of initiative under seven themes: families; schools and youth; online environment; strategic communication; high-priority communities; correctional facilities; and research and evaluation to better counter violent extremism and to address youth who might be at risk of radicalisation.

Mr DEAN - How does OSEM, the Office of Security and Emergency Management, operate? Is that a full-time office with a number of staff and what are their full-time positions?

Mr HODGMAN - The office works in partnership with emergency services, local government, non-government organisations, industry and the community. It is designed to manage the collaborative development of whole-of-government policy advice regarding counterterrorism and emergency management; lead whole-of-government initiatives to improve Tasmania's capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies; contribute to national policy development through active participation with the Australian And New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee, which I referred to in the Australian New Zealand Emergency Management Committee; support emergency services during natural disasters; coordinate whole-of-government arrangements for recovery from emergencies; and manage whole-of-government processes to support Tasmanian relief and recovery arrangements and natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements. We are always familiar with the latter, but have had a recent experience following last year's events.

In terms of FTE, six as at 31 March 2017; in March last year, it was at 6.8 FTE.

Mr DEAN - Who heads that office?

Mr JOHANNES - Simon Roberts is Director of Emergency Management.

Mr DEAN - Simon Roberts?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr DEAN - Right, and they are domiciled in -

Mr HODGMAN - In police headquarters.

Mr DEAN - In police headquarters, right.

Mr JOHANNES - They are part of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Mr Dean. It reflects the close working relationship we have with police on this issue.

CHAIR - If there are no other questions -

Mr HODGMAN - If there were any questions in relation to last year's events or the response to that, we -

CHAIR - It would be interesting to have that information, but we do not have time, I hope you understand that.

Mr HODGMAN - I am sure our senior officials will be available to brief any members on the response, or lessons learnt in our response efforts, to the floods and the fires.

CHAIR - We touched extensively on the area of the floods with the Minister for Primary Industries and Water yesterday. It remains a focus of the committee and was well covered.

We move to 6.1, which is Community development policy advice.

Output group 6
Community, sport and recreation

6.1 Community development, policy advice and ongoing community development

CHAIR - Premier, this area has seen a decrease in Budget allocation, but it is well outlined in the budget papers. I am not going to go through that.

My interest is in Volunteering Tasmania. There is an allocation of funding of \$200 000 over four years to support and maintain, if required, activating the emergency volunteer and community response to extreme weather. We heard yesterday that there is an overall decrease in volunteering in our community. I am interested in what brought this around. Is it that we have had extreme events or is it that we cannot mobilise our volunteers as has happened in the past?

Mr HODGMAN - The context would be a bit of both. We have a considerable volunteering community, the highest per capita of any state, I am told.

CHAIR - We punch well above our weight.

Mr HODGMAN - Very much so. Increasingly, our awareness of and appreciation for their efforts to support community is becoming clearer. We will continue to work with Volunteering Tasmania to understand how they can best be mobilised to deal, for example, with emergency volunteering and community responses to extreme weather events. Last year was a real reminder to us all, but it was in no way a wake-up call. We do not need much reminding of our vulnerabilities. The impacts of the floods and the fires last year and how we responded is very much front-of mind for us all.

The \$200 000 in the Budget is to enhance the emergency volunteering and community response to extreme weather program, the EV CREW, the Emergency Volunteering - Community Response

to Extreme Weather. It is a volunteer management system for pre-registered and spontaneous volunteers, who often come forward and present following floods and fires and droughts, to be managed by Volunteering Tasmania. In the aftermath of a disaster, the crew service will match volunteers with the requirements of communities needing support. The volunteers can be called upon by any organisation needing assistance to deliver services to impacted communities, including charitable organisations, the state government and its agencies or local government.

It is considered to be a best-practice model for coordinating spontaneous volunteers. It was developed by Volunteering Queensland. It has been implemented here in Tasmania with the assistance of project funding provided by the Australian Government under the National Partnership Agreement on Natural Disaster Resilience. Volunteering Tasmania was working towards establishing the EV CREW when the floods occurred last year.

Despite not being fully operational at the time, BlazeAid was able to use the register to find experienced volunteers and conservation volunteers. Australia was able to access EV CREW volunteers to help their own recovery projects. Around 300 volunteers are already registered with EV CREW. Recurrent funding will enable Volunteering Tasmania to maintain and build the database and provide training for staff and volunteers, and for VT to educate local government and other groups about the availability.

It is about connecting this wonderful resource we have and ensuring they are coordinated and know where to go. We have all seen in emergency situations people coming in off the street asking what they can do to help. Learning through recent experience demonstrates better coordination -

CHAIR - Is there a registration process that goes along with that?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, there is, and 300 of them already are signed up to that.

CHAIR - What about a cost to that? Are they allocated a card or is that not required?

Mr HODGMAN - Are you able to speak any further to that?

Ms KENT - No. It is only through Volunteering Tasmania.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. I do not believe there is any cost for the individual. It is a network, a database mobilising people with -

CHAIR - Any organisation would contact Volunteering Tasmania; they would have the appropriate details and they would be matched in that way?

Mr HODGMAN - They will be the holders of the master list, the database.

CHAIR - Members, are there any other questions? As I said, there is a very extensive -

Mr DEAN - I take it in that instance, the working with vulnerable people and children situation does not arise for those registered with Volunteering Tasmania?

Mr HODGMAN - I need to take some advice from the Department of Justice in relation to its application in such circumstances.

Mr DEAN - It has been raised with me in relation to people who volunteer their services as to what requirements they need to satisfy. Should we not watch that? People working with young people have to have the appropriate clearances.

Mr HODGMAN - We will follow that up with Justice.

CHAIR - Members, any other questions? The notes were very explanatory.

6.3 Veterans' Affairs

Mr FINCH - The Hobart pedestrian bridge project has received a lot of federal dollars. I would like to nail down the state Government's contribution to this. I see there is a cessation of funding from the state Government but what is the quantum?

Mr HODGMAN - It is an unusual arrangement, to be sure, but it comes off the back of a very large Commonwealth program to recognise the centenary of the ANZAC years. The Australian Government is providing \$8 million from the ANZAC Centenary Public Fund for the construction of a pedestrian bridge across the Tasman Highway linking the Soldiers' Memorial Avenue and the Hobart Cenotaph.

Contributions will be made as the level of donations to the funds enables plans to be made. So the fund is being contributed to by donations and the Australian Government has guaranteed funding to build a bridge in the event that not enough donations are received. While donations are accumulating, the Tasmanian Government has been asked, and we are indeed, to underwrite the cost of constructing the bridge to make sure it starts. It is to be completed by Remembrance Day 2018, the Centenary of the Armistice of World War I. That is the time frame we are working to.

The bridge is also an important part of a broader redevelopment of the Queen's Domain precinct being undertaken by the Hobart City Council, which is a key partner in this. The design of the bridge was released for public comment in November 2016. Tender documents for the construction of the bridge were planned for release in May this year with a view to letting a contract by the end of June this year and construction is planned to start in July 2017.

The project was submitted to the federal Department of Veterans' Affairs back in March 2014. Funding consideration costs were estimated across four years and the schedule of payments was endorsed by the DVA and subsequently used by the Department of Premier and Cabinet in forward Estimates to budget for the underwriting as we have done. I am advised that to date the Australian Government has contributed \$3 million from the fund. In short, it is not expected that the state will have to contribute directly to the construction costs of the bridge, \$8 million-worth. That is part of the Commonwealth which that we are merely underwriting while the fund accumulates.

Mr FINCH - When we get down to 2018-19, where will the \$354 000 in the figures be expended? Where would you be likely use those funds once this bridge is built and underway?

Ms KENT - That \$354 000 in the forward Estimates is for other Veterans' Affairs-related projects we have - for example, funding for the RSL and other grants programs.

Mr FINCH - Can we get a rundown of that?

Ms KENT - Yes.

Mr FINCH - Does that include the opportunity, if you can call it that, to attend commemorations in Gallipoli? Does that come under this area of funding?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Ms KENT - The Frank MacDonald Memorial Prize.

Mr FINCH - That comes under here so it will be listed in that. Do we have any idea who will represent Tasmania next Anzac Day?

Mr HODGMAN - No. We recently ran a successful scholarship after needing to reschedule it sadly last year from April to October following terrorism incidents in Belgium in April 2016. We received advice that there were serious security risks for anyone wanting to undertake the tour and we made the difficult decision to cancel that.

Ms Courtney represented the Parliament on the 2016 tour. Mrs Hiscutt represented the Parliament on the 2017 tour. As to who is next, there is typically a rotation of some sort. Are you volunteering?

Mr FINCH - Yes. I will make the statement at the end of the questions.

Mr DEAN - As a returned serviceman, I would certainly make overtures.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Any further questions, member for Rosevears?

Mr FINCH - No. As long as I can be provided with information about what will happen with that funding.

Mr HODGMAN - Sure. We will get you a full breakdown.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Any questions on this line? We will move to capital investment. I will open this up to all members. Any questions on capital investment. No? We will move on.

We will go to Legislative Council support services which is 1.1.

Legislative Council

Output group 2 -

Payments administered by the legislative council support services

1.1 Legislative council support services

DEPUTY CHAIR - We will wait for the Clerk of the Legislative Council. He is on his way to assist the Premier.

Mr FINCH - Would it be too late at this stage, Chair and Premier, to ask about the Capital Investment program.

DEPUTY CHAIR - We can return to that.

Mr FINCH - Is Silverdome in this section?

Mr STRONG - Yes, sport and rec. It is in output 6.4.

Mr FINCH - That comes a little bit later, doesn't it? I will leave Silverdome until then.

Mr STRONG - Capital improvements program - the \$250 000 you referred to is the money provided to Service Tasmania that we referred to when we were doing Output 3.2.

Mr FINCH - Which is for?

Mr STRONG - Ongoing refurbishment of Service Tasmania shop.

Mr FINCH - Around Tasmania?

Mr STRONG - New Norfolk, Huon and Hobart, the ones Ms Baker mentioned before.

Mr DEAN - The one area that I always have concerns with, as does the public, and that is promoting public awareness of the purpose, functions and works of the Legislative Council. What do we do in that area to do this? I think the grade 6 and grade 10 curriculums include sessions relating to government. Should we make any overtures to go to those sessions to talk about what happens in this place? People hear about the other place because of all the argy-bargy and fighting that goes on there, but because we do not have that much in our place, we seem not to do it well. My question is: how are we doing it and what are we going to do?

Mr HODGMAN - In terms of accessing school environments, I recommend you also take that up with the Education minister. I am not entirely aware of what formal arrangements are in place.

DEPUTY CHAIR - I can probably assist the committee. The Tasmanian Electoral Commission has education resources on our system of government. You are right, it is part of the grade 6 curriculum. There is that reach into schools through the Electoral Commission. As far as the Legislative Council, you would be best off to ask the Clerk.

Mr DEAN - My question comes from that, then. As the Legislative Council, what do we do to be a part of that? Do we send in anybody with the background, elected members, to talk about the Legislative Council, its functions and its place in the Parliament of Tasmania? Do we do that?

Mr PEARCE - Not in a formal sense, Mr Dean. In this Budget there is no funding for an education officer. You might be aware that the House of Assembly has an education officer who works across the Parliament, through both Houses, Kimbra McCormack. She is on the House of Assembly staff and works with Mark Baily who looks after our tours when groups come through. We are very keen to invite schools group in and we always accommodate tours wherever we can, because they are very informative. Our staff do whatever we can to provide the sort of education and experience they need. I think there is further funding coming through in the Assembly budget to enhance the education experience, but there is nothing in this Budget as far as the Council is concerned.

Ms ARMITAGE - I could add a bit more if you like. The Legislative Council provides us with books. I have gone into schools in my electorate with some of the literature provided, checked with the schools, taken them in and talked to them about the Legislative Council. The office has been very good to provide the literature we have.

Mr PEARCE - We would love to have funding to provide an additional person to outreach into schools or to work with the Education department in doing that.

Mr DEAN - That was the position I was going to put to the Premier - which we ought to be looking at a submission to the Government for appropriate funding for that to occur. These are going to be our parliamentarians of the future and it is important, in my opinion, that we sell that. The way to do that is to get into these schools at the right time with elected members or an appropriately staffed educational officer to be able to do that for the whole of parliament. It ought to be a consideration.

Mr HODGMAN - We would certainly welcome any submission to that effect. I personally often appear as a living specimen to some of these grade 6 classes by invitation, but it is not formally structured.

Mr DEAN - I am going to ask a negative question here about the upgrade money for the Chamber. We are ecstatic, for want of a better word, that this has occurred, Premier, because I think our place was last renovated in 1856, which is some time ago.

Mr FINCH - I remember it well.

Mr DEAN - When will we see progress in relation to that? Are the plans drawn up? Where are we with the works?

Mr PEARCE - We are at a stage now where there is a certain amount of funding in this Budget to undertake some of those works. We are looking to engage in a project architect at the minute and from there to map out a course of action to address some of the issues we face in the working environment in the Chamber. That will involve consultancy with the project architect once he is appointed, and discussing the matter with members to get a feel for what they want and require in terms of their working environment. It is only early days, but once the Budget passes the Parliament, we will engage the architect. I have one or two in mind. There are a lot of issues and it is very sensitive, as you would appreciate. Parliament is a listed building so whatever we do, we have to be very sensitive to the fabric of the Chamber. It will involve a consultant.

Mr DEAN - I thought the drawings had been done sometime ago. I thought we had the Heritage office and the architects in.

Mr PEARCE - There has been a scoping report to get some ideas, but until we deal with Heritage people on the ground, we cannot go much further in the short term.

Mr DEAN - My other question is around the offices at Launceston. What stage are we at in the relocation of the Legislative Council members in that building?

Mr PEARCE - As you would be aware, Mr Dean, the members on the fourth floor are looking to be relocated. We hope we can negotiate with Treasury to enable them to move to the ground floor of Henty House. I think there are some real advantages in doing that. It is just a matter of

working with the three members concerned to proceed in that direction. Otherwise, our alternative is that you go in different directions to your respective electorates, which includes an additional cost on our budget that is not there at the present time. That is something we need to discuss. We need to move fairly quickly on that while the space is there.

1.2 Committee support services

Mr WILLIE - The forward Estimates for this line item are capped at the same level. Does that take staffing costs and things like that into account? Is it an adequate level of funding? Do you determine that yourself?

Mr PEARCE - It is an amount that has been set. It covers such things as travel and some advertising. Staffing costs are taken from the salaries budget, which is in output 1.1, so there is no salary funding in that particular line. It covers advertisements and travel and other bits and pieces associated with committees of inquiry. Should we run over at any stage, as we have done occasionally in the past, it is a matter of depending on circumstance and submitting a request for additional funds. That is based on the unforeseen such as more committee activity where they choose to travel to undertake their inquiries, so we will seek some additional funds to cover those expenses.

Mr WILLIE - Is it Treasury that signs off on those additional funds?

Mr PEARCE - Yes, it is.

Mr WILLIE - Have there ever been any issues?

Mr PEARCE - There has not been an issue. There is an understanding that committees need to travel to undertake their investigations and funds have always been provided and supported, which we are thankful for.

Output group 2 - Payments administered by the Legislative Council

CHAIR - I do not have any questions in regard to this; it is well articulated in the budget papers what that quantum relates to and we have already talked about capital investment, so if there are no other questions, I will move into the next line item, which is Legislative General - printing and parliamentary reports 1.1.

Legislature General

Output Group 1 - Parliamentary Reporting Service

Mr FINCH - Where is our printing done? Without the Commonwealth Printing Office, where is it done? Is it contracted?

Mr HENDY - Yes, we have an agreement, our printing is done through Mercury Walch.

Mr FINCH - I am trying to find the payments. What is allocated in the Budget for that printing work?

Mr HENDY - It is spread over numerous line items within our budget. It is presently at \$447 000 for 2016-17. It is around the \$500 000 mark for the forward Estimates. It includes things such as printing and binding of bills, letterheads, administrative printing and that sort of thing.

Mr FINCH - Are there variations in what is occurring? Are we likely to see a change of presentation for our printing, a more digital operation? Is the printing we are doing likely to be held at its present rate into the foreseeable future or through the forward Estimates?

Mr HENDY - It would not be increasing dramatically. If I look at our prior history of printing, the 2009-10 year was significantly higher than it is now. On a trend, it is coming down.

Mr FINCH - That is all I have.

CHAIR - Thank you very much. We will move to 2.1, which is Parliamentary Library Services.

Output group 2 Parliamentary library services

2.1 Parliamentary library service

Mr DEAN - We have six fairly strong performance measures for the library to meet. What sort of workload is that putting on our staff? How many staff do we have in the library at present?

Mr HENDY - It is interesting. Our librarian retired late last calendar year. They have been juggling hours in the library. We have a good base in our library. Some staff are not full-time, they are part-time, but we have been able to juggle their hours based on the amount of work they have to do. We have a new librarian starting in July so that will bed things down in our library department.

Mr DEAN - There is no doubt they do a great job. Is our library satisfactorily resourced in contemporary tools, electronic services and so on? Are we up to contemporary standards?

Mr HENDY - We can always look at other ways to provide a better service. With the volume of work we have at the moment, we have people doing the hands-on scanning of documents and providing all the services we currently require, but we can always look at other methods and ways to deliver that service. As far as benchmarking how other libraries provide service, I would have to take that on notice.

Mr DEAN - How closely does our library work with the State Library of Tasmania and other libraries? There is a fairly close connection with all the library services. How often do members of the public use of our library? Is that promoted? Does it occur and if it does, to what extent?

Mr HENDY - We do not openly promote that. It is by appointment only. If a member of the public wants to come in, they have to notify us in advance and tee up a time to come in.

Mr DEAN - I wrongly directed a person here recently. I told them there would be access to our library. I was of the view that they could, but it is by appointment through the library?

Mr HENDY - That is correct.

Mr DEAN - He found what he wanted, so that was good. It is a great service. Well done.

CHAIR - Thank you.

**Output Group 3 -
Parliamentary Printing and Systems**

3.1 - Parliamentary Printing -

Mr FINCH - It is interesting, Premier, how you do not have a sense you are drawing on the library services until you see a list of how often you have been there to gather information. It can be such a great service. The information comes and you use it, and off you go, but they are terrific staff. They are really good.

I have huge notes on parliamentary printing. We talked many years ago about trying to strive toward a paperless society. That is unrealistic, isn't it?

Mr HENDY - It is.

Mr FINCH - Yes. Are there areas where we can be cautious of the amount of paper resources we use? Are we constantly looking at ways to use less paper?

Mr HENDY - Absolutely, we are. Our actual expenditure in this area has decreased over the last four or five years. Staff and members are more aware of the environmental implications of printing out every single email they receive. I have a tablet, so rather than printing off an agenda item, I can have that sitting on the tablet in front of me in a meeting. People are very conscious of not printing if they do not have to.

Mr FINCH - The transition is difficult for some. It is always good to have the paper in front of you.

Mr HENDY - There are exceptions. I always have a copy of our budget papers, for instance, on my folder so I can turn around and take it from the shelf.

CHAIR - Thank you. We will move now to Parliamentary Systems, 3.2.

3.2 Parliamentary Systems -

CHAIR - It has a slight increase. Is there a response to that? Members rely so heavily on IT now, is the increase in the Budget a reflection of that?

Mr HODGMAN - I suspect so.

Mr HENDY - The increases outlined in the Estimates are -

CHAIR - There are no notes for this one.

Mr HENDY - No. There are standard increases for CPI reflected against wages, salaries and those sorts of things. I have also a vehicle in there for the next financial year - Peter's vehicle - previously that was in the House of Assembly Budget and has been transferred over to Legislature General, where it rightly should be. We have a slight increase in there that would reflect the decrease in the House of Assembly budget as that shifted to us.

Mr DEAN - What about spam control? We seem to be onto that now. There does not seem to be a lot of that coming through. I think that is a system IT has worked on.

Mr HANCOX - That is right. We have two levels. There is the whole-of-government level, which is managed by Network Tasmania. Once all inbound email goes through their filters, we capture it in our filters again. Anything that is legitimate is passed through. These days the person who looks after it on a daily basis calls the member of parliament, or staff, if it looks somewhat suspect and asks them if they are expecting it before they release it.

Mr DEAN - I have often been concerned about opening something on my system that seems to be foreign to me. What is the opportunity for a gremlin to come through our system, which happened recently in other areas? Is it likely to happen? Is the risk as great as it used to be?

Mr HANCOX - The risk is always going to be as great. We capture things like attachments but emails may contain links asking you to do something - like go to your bank and log in to your bank details, or click this link - and they are always going to be there. The last one went around and knocked out quite a few different places. The user was the person who initiated it. You always need to be vigilant. If you are unsure, do not open it. Always ask.

Mr DEAN - That is the advice. We come to you. We have done that a couple of times.

Mr HANCOX - I mean something like 40 000 to 50 000 emails a day are caught. Some are always going to get through. We heard about the last one on the Saturday night and blocked all inbound PDFs coming into the place; we then sorted through them on the Monday.

Mr DEAN - It is a very important area; we rely so much on the IT area of parliament.

Mr HANCOX - They do a great service as well.

Output group 4.1

Joint services

Ms ARMITAGE - Are the services outsourced or provided by a contractor?

Mr HENDY - The majority of the services we provide in house.

Ms ARMITAGE - I notice the services - the heat, light, power and rent, but the security services - \$104 000. What does that pay for?

Mr HENDY - We do contract out our security services at the moment to NSS and the \$104 000 we have had an increase is a RAF that Legislature General has put in. There has been a shortfall for a little while but it has recently been put into our forward Estimates, to plug that gap.

Ms ARMITAGE - Given we have a much tighter security presence with the opening doors - and you have to be quick to get in, I might add, on the inward - why do we need so many people attached to the security process when we have the other measures in place?

Mr HENDY - Security as it pertains to Parliament House and our new operations - we do not sit and look at it and say 'Okay, I think we need this many people on board'. We take advice from other departments, state police and anti-terrorist groups. We take advice from them and say 'What do you think we need in an ideal situation?' They have come up with the various numbers we need. We need to abide by their advice.

CHAIR - I am sure the community would expect me to ask that question.

4.2 Joint management services -

Mr WILLIE - Premier, \$408 00 is allocated for this line item. What sorts of services does that \$408 000 provide?

Mr HENDY - That is basically the administrative side of Legislature General - wages and salaries, my administrative staff fall within that, as do some of our insurances, depreciation, communication, meals and superannuation. It is really the administrative function within L Legislature General.

Mr WILLIE - Who determines the amount across the forward Estimates?

Mr HENDY - We put our budgets together, broken down into all those different categories and the increases are tied back to CPI increases and those sorts of things.

4.3 Services to members -

Ms LOVELL - I do not think there have been any significant changes in this line item that are not explained adequately by the budget papers, so I have no further questions.

Mr DEAN - This is an area similar to a previous one, where we have required extra moneys for these joint House select committees and so on. It has always been forthcoming. I recall the previous treasurer of the Labor Party, Mr Aird, making the statement that moneys would always be made available for select committee work and there would be no hassle or problem with them.

So \$50 000 is not much. It is a small amount and it needs to be understood that these committees need to travel. We recently had one from ACT come here to talk to us about the Integrity Commission. As they say, they need to travel and need to see people face-to-face.

The understanding is that it will still be there? We would be able to access any extra funding if necessary for these committees.

Mr HODGMAN - Certainly. That is the intention to ensure that they are adequately resourced and able to acquit their obligations. In this particular instance, given the significant public interest, the expanse and scope of the work asked of the committee, there is a community expectation that we would adequately fund this process. No-one could suggest we are cutting corners or not providing adequate resources to get the most substantive output from the committee.

That funding has been made available, not just in an administrative respect, but also in a community-public interest respect. People would want them to be entirely properly funded.

4.4 Corporate services for parliamentary agencies

CHAIR - Moving on to corporate services for parliamentary agencies. The status quo remains there. It is consistent all the way through. There is no required increase there. It is just corporate services so it does not include CPI?

Mr HENDY - No. The funding we have there mainly pertains to some grant expenses for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. That generally does not change from year to year.

CHAIR - Capital investment. My only question, Premier, is that there is an allocation of \$880 000 in 2016-17, and then that is it. That is for the redevelopment of the security. Are we done in regard to the security at Parliament House?

Mr HODGMAN - I assume so.

Mr HENDY - Those works will be completed before the end of this financial year.

CHAIR - Is the continual maintenance of the exits and entrance into the Parliament under an ongoing contract? They seem to be needing to be at the doors quite a bit. Is there a problem with the operation of the doors?

Mr HENDY - There have been some teething problems. The doors themselves are quite sensitive, as I am sure everyone here is well aware. Particularly earlier on, we had to get contractors back in to make more adjustments here and there. That is all part of a warranty under the contract. We have been leaning on them to make sure we get it to exactly where we want it.

CHAIR - Hence the big signs, 'Do not push'.

Mr HENDY - I put those signs on the doors myself.

Output group 1 The Office of the Governor

1.1 Support for the Governor -

CHAIR - Thank you. I acknowledge we are somewhat behind time, but the areas we are covering are important.

Mr DEAN - On the first point, the increase in appropriation receipts current in 2017-18 reflects the provision of additional funding of \$100 000 per annum to support security arrangements at Government House and \$92 000 to upgrade security equipment. Is that just modernising the security measures within Government House, or does it entail some other device? The Premier cannot answer the question, Chair.

CHAIR - Is the Premier without advisers when it comes to this? Is that because we are ahead of time? No.

Mr DEAN - I think we had the identical problem last year, if I remember rightly. We need to check - our secretary might be able to tell us that.

CHAIR - It had been identified in the morning session so I would like to think we were not remiss at the committee stage. Mr Dean, how do you want to proceed?

Mr DEAN - I have asked the question about security. I can ask the question, Chair, and see where we go.

CHAIR - We are happy to put those questions on notice or would you rather deal with them at a later time?

Mr DEAN - We should not have to; these people ought to have been here. I do not know who is at fault here, but I am pretty confident we had a similar situation last year. I would need to check that - it was either last year or the year before. Estimates is about being able to ask questions and get answers at the time, if they are available.

CHAIR - Premier, it was certainly identified in our before-lunch session on our information, in defence of the committee's work.

Mr HODGMAN - Right. Well, who knows what has happened to Mr Owen? I have some briefing papers here that include details that may be sufficient for the committee, otherwise we may need to defer consideration of it. That is a matter for the committee, not me. In this paperwork, it says that the upgrade of security equipment is to include CCTV camera upgrade, TCom security system upgrade, relocation of CCTV head-end equipment and an electronic upgrade to the rear gate. It sounds like enhancements to the current security arrangements with additional CCTV capabilities that have been deemed necessary.

Mr DEAN - On that point, my further question is about private business at Government House. I am not sure it has been given royal assent yet, but the bill that went through both Houses recently gives Government House the right to carry out and apply for some private business. I want to know what that will do for security at Government House and whether there are now further requirements in that regard. I have a number of questions around that as well.

Mr HODGMAN - I do not want to speculate.

Mr DEAN - No, I did not think you would want to unless you had it there.

CHAIR - Premier, I suggest we look at this after the lunch break. The committee has some business we would like to attend to, so I suggest we suspend now and return at 2 p.m. when we will start with this. That will give time to call the people you need.

Mr DEAN - We cannot go on to the next one, Chair?

CHAIR - No, I think we need to have a discussion.

The committee suspended from 12.50 p.m. to 2 p.m.

CHAIR - Welcome back.

Output group 1
The Office of the Governor

1.1 Support for the Governor -

Mr DEAN - What happened with the non-appearance this morning?

Mr OWEN - I was first notified at 1 p.m. today.

Mr DEAN - Obviously a breakdown.

CHAIR - We will attempt to make sure we contact you directly next time.

Mr DEAN - The Premier was able answer to my question. What did the funding of \$98 000 per annum to support security arrangements at Government House and \$92 000 to upgrade security equipment for 2017-18 entail and what was it for? Was it to bring security up to contemporary standards?

Mr OWEN - Yes, we are up to contemporary standards. The reason for those two additional sums is to fund a new position of a casual security guard in order to institute an overnight buddy system with two security guards on duty. We currently have one security guard on duty from 4.30 p.m. until midnight and a second security guard from midnight until 8 a.m. I have come to the conclusion, after discussion with colleagues, that there are a number of important reasons to have two security guards during the greater period of the night. The new position will run from 9 p.m. until 5 a.m. We will have two instead of one. They will work in rotations, one in the security office and one patrolling either internally or externally. Two is definitely better than one for a number of reasons, even though we have no real history of night intruders. I feel it was a measure, given our circumstances in 2017, well worth putting in place.

The other sum of money is required to upgrade the existing CCTV security arrangements. Although they are fine for the moment, they are showing their age considerably. They underwent an upgrade that included maintenance about three years ago. We feel that the 14 cameras we have, while they pool a lot of visual information, could also be increased and enhanced considerably. I believe that upgrade will be important for Government House and its estate.

Mr DEAN - Following on from that, will security change at Government House in relation to the Government House Land Amendment Bill? Will the house now be able to apply for private business in some areas? What will that entail by way of security?

Mr OWEN - To answer the question concisely, because the forward plan in itself is significant, I would say that implementation of that forward plan will be undertaken cautiously, slowly and prudently. Within the next couple of years there will not be much difference in the way we would see, for instance, the numbers of people coming to Government House every year, which ranges from between 12 000 and 17 000.

We instituted a new system of tours to Government House approximately three years ago. That was the first occasion on which people were able to come to Government House without having

been expressly invited by the Governor. Those tours that in the first period were at no charge; you could go online to book through the website. You could do a tour of the state rooms or the gardens and so on. We have about four or five in operation. That was the instigation of people coming and appreciating the Government House estate and the working residence of Her Excellency. Those tours have been implemented and they work very well. They are very popular.

That is the first element. The second element is that we plan to start hiring out our grass tennis courts, our associated en tout cas court and our bowling green. We have had Tennis Tasmania -

Mr DEAN - Function rooms do not come into that?

Mr OWEN - No, I will come back to that in a minute; it is an important point. Working with Tennis Tasmania or Croquet Tasmania, we will slowly implement weekend hiring of those courts. They will be done very carefully so we do not attract the wrong people. We will have persons who will be the equivalent of the Friends of Government House Tasmania group who will be there for the duration of such. That is all based on appreciation, but within the bounds of what is very important. That is the beginning of it, Mr Dean.

Mr DEAN - I think when we were dealing with the legislation, we said it was a matter of Government House going into a hiring out the tennis courts, the croquet lawns and the bowling green, but that was not right.

Mr OWEN - It is not wrong, but the way it will be implemented is all important. We are all very cognisant of that. That is why, for instance, we will operate through the bodies that govern these particular sports. We think that is important. If these measures work, there is going to be an increase in people coming into the estate for that sole purpose. There is no argument about that. It is the implementation that is going to be important in how we assess it.

Mr DEAN - Is there any idea as to the income that Government House will receive from this? That will offset, as I understand, the expenditure on and expenses of maintaining the grounds.

Mr OWEN - The whole idea is every cent accrued by these measures will go towards maintenance, particularly of the sandstone as it ages. It is difficult to start putting a dollar figure on that. We have barely begun. There are four cottages on the estate and three freestanding homes. Traditionally, they were occupied by staff. In recent years we have rented out a few to private individuals, but we vet them very carefully. There is a little bit of income sitting in our trust account from that.

This is probably not quite what you are asking, but it is an example, for the first time in this building's 160-year history we have some income.

Mr DEAN - That is good. And the function rooms?

Mr OWEN - Yes. There is this question of a venue for hire, which is not where we are going whatsoever. From experience I know some other government houses have, not to put too fine a point on it, come a bit of a cropper by allowing themselves to be venues for hire. They found themselves in situations that were difficult to extricate themselves from. We would be extremely cautious about that.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Down the track, it might be possible to work with another body to have a musical event in what is called our 'patriotic paddock'. That is far away, and the logistics associated with it are huge. That particular paddock, for those of you who know it, is effectively a greenfield site. You cannot just put a whole bunch of musicians in there. It would require a great deal of thought, but it is the closest we have come to the sense of 'for hire'. It is certainly not within the main building. We will work in partnership; we have done a few of those.

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

Mr OWEN - No, none at all. In the seven years I have been there, there have been about three or four incidences that would classify as calling Tasmania Police, but fortunately they are very low.

CHAIR - Any other questions, members?

Mr FINCH - Only the Governor and her spouse. The work they do for Tasmania is outstanding, as is the way they make themselves available throughout the state, giving plenty of opportunities for normal Tasmanians to meet them and for them to be in our communities. It is excellent.

Mr OWEN - Thank you. I will certainly pass that on. I know the Premier knows that Her Excellency and Mr Warner love what they are doing. They cannot believe that this time next week she will be halfway through her term.

As I have said, we have had partnerships with the state government. They work really well.

CHAIR - Thank you very much. We certainly appreciate you coming along at short notice. We also hope you understand we believe it is very valuable for the community to understand what is happening at the Governor's residence.

Mr OWEN - Certainly, as the Official Secretary, I am more than happy to take questions from anyone at any time.

CHAIR - Thank you.

DIVISION 5

(Premier)

Output group 1

Support for members of parliament

1.1 Support for ministers and certain parliamentary office holders

CHAIR - Mr Willie has a couple of questions in regard to the increase in the output group.

Mr WILLIE - Premier, the budget line item for this output increases by a total of \$500 000 in one year. Can I get a head count of ministerial staff for the year 2016-17 and also this year?

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. I can give you that right now or advise the committee later, whatever you are comfortable with.

CHAIR - Well, there has been some communication and the committee decided this was an area on which, with that increase, it was worthwhile asking the question.

Mr HODGMAN - That information can be made available whether instantaneously or not.

CHAIR - As long as we have a commitment it will come across.

Mr HODGMAN - We can provide that now.

CHAIR - It is called a team effort.

Mr HODGMAN - In ministerial offices, the breakdown of employees - there are currently 81.9 FTEs.

Mr WILLIE - What about head count?

Mr HODGMAN - Eighty-four within government offices.

Mr WILLIE - And for last year?

Mr HODGMAN - I can give you a breakdown now for each office.

Mr WILLIE - Yes, please.

Mr HODGMAN - Premier's office, 13.2 FTE, head count, 14; Deputy Premier's office, FTE 8.2, head count, 9; Treasurer, 8 FTE, head count, 8; Mr Barnett, 5 FTE, head count, 5; Mr Ferguson, 7 and 7; Dr Goodwin, 6 and 6; Mr Groom, 9 and 9; Mr Hidding, 7.5 FTE, head count, 8. Minister Petrusma, 6 and 6; Communications, 9 and 9; Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, nil; Speaker, 2 FTE, head count, 2; Parliamentary Secretary, 1 and 1.

Mr WILLIE - The head count for last year in total?

Mr HODGMAN - As at 31 March 2017, 81.9 FTE and 84 head count. At 31 March 2016, 73.8 FTEs, 76 head count. Do you want the years before that?

Mr WILLIE - Yes, 2015-16 will do.

Mr HODGMAN - At March 2015, 76.8 FTE and 81 head count. Complete as at March 2014, relating to the previous government, the FTE was 83.2 and a head count of 93.

I am advised the reason for the increase is the number of vacancies filled in the last 12 months.

CHAIR - Is that a full contingent? There is no expectation there will need to be any more?

Mr HODGMAN - No.

CHAIR - All those vacancies have been filled?

Mr HODGMAN - There may be a couple of vacancies, but there will not be any material movement.

CHAIR - Mr Willie, are you happy with those numbers?

Mr WILLIE - Yes.

CHAIR - Thank you, members. If there are no other questions on this line item, I will invite the support team for Sport and Recreation 6.4 to join us at the table.

Output group 6 Community, sport and recreation

6.4 Sport and recreation

Mr DEAN - By way of starting, there is a large increase in this area. It is set out fairly clearly in the papers what that covers. The new developments that will be funded moving forward. I think the money is available there for the Northern Stadium Strategy. I would like to know just what that is about. I think \$100 000 is provided there. If I have that right, it seems a large amount of money simply for - as I understand it - a review or planning or an assessment to be done.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. It comes within the context of wanting to increase participation and recreational activity among Tasmanians and also to look at our infrastructure needs and help inform governments about the best strategic investment into the future. The Tasmanian Government has an obligation under the National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework, which has been agreed to by all jurisdictions, to facilitate a strategic approach to the provision of sport and recreation infrastructure, making sure that our investment obviously supports need and demand to increase and maximise participation. The Northern Stadium Strategy will establish an evidence-based strategic approach to address indoor sport and physical activities and the needs of the northern community. The Budget includes \$100 000 to develop that strategy. That is the reason for it.

Mr DEAN - How will that be spent? It may seem a silly question, but will that employ one or two persons to do this? How is it being done, because a lot of activity is already occurring there? I would have thought anybody could sit down in their office and do it talking to the council in probably a couple of weeks.

CHAIR - Mr Dean is suggesting a budget savings measure, Premier.

Mr DEAN - Yes, I am.

Mr HODGMAN - I will ask Ms Kent to provide some context.

Mr DEAN - Yes, if you could, thanks.

Ms KENT - Sure. The money will be used to develop the strategy utilising evidence we can pick up from other jurisdictions as well. We have looked closely at what happens in other jurisdictions and it requires a fair bit of mapping. We started doing some of that this year with our colleagues in the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, and also working with other sporting organisations. As you know, AFL and cricket have also started to do

facilities strategies of their facilities. This money, though, is really used to resource the work that needs to go into that. It is not something that can be done off the side of a desk to make it effective. Also we want to work closely with local government. We have built time into the framework for consultation with them because local government is often the providers of facilities. The resource is to do that planning and work, and we envisage there is 12 months' worth of work to do that.

Mr DEAN - So I have this clear, will that identify what is needed in the way of facilities? Will it identify what areas need to be targeted, what facilities will be required and where they will be? We were talking about the Northern Stadium Strategy. I guess that is right across the north of the state, the north-west as well, but I wonder why it is just to that area?

Mr HODGMAN - Similar assessments have been done in other regions - for instance, in 2015 in Hobart and southern Tasmania, which included the increased demand for access to indoor sports facilities with the idea that a stadium might be built in the greater Hobart area. That concept was considered, bearing in mind there are a number of different concepts, different organisations and groups and proposals for government to consider.

The strategy is designed to apply literally a strategic lens over decisions governments might make, bearing in mind existing infrastructure. There are commitments in the Budget to upgrade the Silverdome, for example, and a commitment to Elphin, so there are ongoing demands on government to invest in sporting infrastructure. I would be the biggest fan of any government doing so because they are so important. It is important we get the decision-making right and, with the assistance of a coordinating committee that is being established, make sure we can map a longer-term blueprint and identify priority areas. That means we will be able to make sure any new infrastructure complements existing infrastructure and delivers areas of increased demand, whether it be a particular sport or activity or in a particular region. In this instance, and quite rightly so, it is in the north.

Mr NICHOLSON - Mr Dean, it is analogous to an asset management plan you might do for government assets, for instance. You look at your needs over a period of time and develop a strategy to address them as funding becomes available. That is very much what is contemplated here.

Mr DEAN - I suppose one becomes a bit of a sceptic because of the number of reports we produce that simply gather dust and serve no useful purpose whatsoever. That is why I and other members want to look at this fairly closely, to see what the return will be. You said that in the current strategy, another indoor sporting centre might be built.

Mr HODGMAN - That was a recommendation.

Mr DEAN - If that is all that came from that strategy, I would question it seriously.

Mr HODGMAN - No, it was not.

Mr DEAN - I would have thought local government ought also to be able to say in their local areas that they have a deficit in a certain area, that this is what they need and this is what they are looking at.

Mr HODGMAN - You are right, and they do. Almost every council can come up with a sporting facility of some sort that it would like built in its municipality and often they come to state governments to fund it. I have no problem with that, but if you build each, any and every one of

them - were you able to - or randomly pick one over another without putting a strategic lens over them, you would make potentially strategically disadvantageous decisions for the region, for the community and to meet future needs. It is a scoping exercise and asset management assessment designed to ensure that decision-making by communities is better coordinated because often neighbouring councils each want the same thing. There was a lot more that came out of the southern exercise and visuals can assist you with that. That was just one recommendation but I wanted to make the point that it has occurred in other regions.

Ms KENT - The other component is that our business cases and whole-of-life analysis of facilities going forward, these are facilities that last for 50 years so what is the -

Mr DEAN - That was done in 2015, so what have we seen happen is as a result of that southern strategy? What changes have occurred?

Ms KENT - That work on the southern indoor sports stadiums is still ongoing. There has been considerable analysis done of over 13 sites. It was narrowed down to 13 across the greater Hobart region. That included whole-of-life business economic analysis of each of those and close consultation with the local governments involved and also key sporting bodies. That was done under the auspices of basketball needs, as well as the needs of other sports.

Mr DEAN - Will a strategy in the north look closely at, say, the Elphin Sports Centre? It is an area that is always flooded with people. It is probably the most-used sporting centre in Tasmania, or one of them. It is old infrastructure, and I notice there is money in the Budget to carry out some urgent repairs to it again.

Ms ARMITAGE - Not a lot of money, though.

Mr DEAN - There is not a lot of money for this type of premises and its needs. I wonder if this northern strategy will look whether it needs a rebuild or whatever.

Mr HODGMAN - It is older than me - it was built in 1965. It is a very well used and important national-level venue for indoor sports. I am told it caters for currently at least around 5000 users a week. It is a state-owned asset managed by Crown Land Services and a very important volunteer network, a representative committee of users, supports its operation. Crown Land Services currently funds all its outgoing costs, including rates and building audits. It accommodates a number of offices for sporting organisations.

Basketball Tasmania and the Northern Tasmanian Table Tennis Association are there, to name a couple. There is a commitment in the Budget of \$230 000 to undertake urgent repairs. This is one of a number of facilities requiring legitimately urgent repairs and safety upgrades to ensure all those within it are safe. A dividing curtain separating the courts has been an issue for some time, as has seating and improved disability access.

There are some instances where you do not need a strategic plan to tell you that investments are urgently required. Since 2005, \$700 000 has gone into Elphin Sports Centre, but there will be ongoing demands. One of the constraints to doing everything a master plan might recommend, or what other stakeholders, such as councils, might want are budget factors that limit our ability to deal with each -

Mr DEAN - Chair, I have other questions, but if I can come back to AFL football later, that would be good.

Mr FINCH - I was thinking about health and sports. It is unfortunate the bulldozers are going to move straight through that site, take the whole thing away and then build a new one. While you are talking about the upgrades, I know the Launceston Tornadoes are now drawing crowds of up to 650 for normal roster games. It is blowing away the SEABL - they cannot believe they have a handful of people at mainland venues, but they come to Launceston and it is like a fortress with between 550 and 650 people a week for a normal roster game.

I like the seating; however, the sound system is abysmal. When you have national competitions, or even our SEABL competition, where a lot depends on the excitement generated by the sound system, the sound bounces around everywhere and some people in the stand cannot understand a thing that is going on. We need a reconfigured sound system that will help the SEABL and anything that requires amplification. You need to be able to hear properly. I point that out as an area of concern.

Mr HODGMAN - Sure.

CHAIR - Your question is: is the Government supporting?

Laughter.

Mr FINCH - Will that be fixed in this Budget?

Mr NICHOLSON - A lot of those issues, Mr Finch, will be picked up in that strategy. There are issues with Elphin and with the Silverdome as well. The Government has invested significant capital in recent times. We need to look at and decide what the north needs in future. That is the purpose of the work.

Mr HODGMAN - A good practical example of where a more coordinated and strategic approach can help is resource sharing. The Collingwood Magpies FC netball organisation is now part of the landscape and has committed direct funding to support the upgrade of the Silverdome. While we were working with them through this arrangement, the idea of whether seating could be used and transported between Elphin and the Silverdome was considered. It may not be feasible, but we should at least look at whether there are mobile broadcasting facilities we can use to support other facilities that may have the same acoustic issues. It is really, as Mr Nicholson said, to undertake a strategic asset management plan.

Mr FINCH - We would worry about logistics of moving seating backwards and forwards.

Mr HODGMAN - It hasn't yet happened, but it was worth looking at that sort of thing.

CHAIR - Any other questions?

Mr FINCH - In respect of this work here?

CHAIR - Yes, it is, sport and recreation allocation.

Mr FINCH - You mentioned the Silverdome. The capital investment program mentions the capital maintenance program for the Silverdome. There is no capital investment program for the subsequent three years in the forward Estimates. Is there a program to be put in place for the Silverdome now? Is that the end of the subsequent time? What spending might occur?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. I can give you a picture of where we are at. During 2016-17, funding of \$850 000 was provided by Government to facilitate maintenance works following recommendations received by consultants in a report the Government received in April 2015.

To date, \$257 756 has been spent. An estimated balance of \$500 000 will be carried forward to 2017-18. The \$850 000 is part of a funding package of \$2.719 million provided by Government over three years to address our priority one and two maintenance issues for the Silverdome. These issues are the building structure, glazing the concourse and kiosk, roofing, ticket office and stadium main entry. The first project is worth \$430 000 and the second \$440 000. As well, road paving is \$500 000; tunnel and cycling-track edge, \$80 000; electrical services, \$122 000; and hydraulic services, \$66 000.

The department is considering these priority issues to determine how to best allocate funds to improve the Silverdome site and increase its usage. We want to ensure this can happen while addressing the priority maintenance issues. This has resulted in a two-stage refurbishment plan for the site. Stage 1 includes priority one and two issues and will be funded by the \$2.497 million provided. Stage 1 will be completed in 2017-18, using the unspent funds from the financial year - the \$500 000 I referred to, plus the \$1.869 million allocated in the 2017-18 Budget. The total is \$2.369 million. It is expected that tenders for stage 1 will be advertised by the end of October. It is a merging of funding streams but they are critical works.

Mr FINCH - Thank you for those figures. It is important that the Silverdome remains a strong sporting venue with opportunities for northern Tasmania.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. The netball to which we refer is a great example of that, with world-class netball being played at the Silverdome; our national team and the Suncorp Super League is a wonderful showcasing of how good the venue is.

CHAIR - Mrs Armitage, is your question in regard to the Silverdome?

Ms ARMITAGE - It reminded me of the Silverdome when I was thinking of the TIS. I was going back to rowing. The TIS is located at the Silverdome. Last year it was mentioned that the men's training was moving to Canberra, but there was some question about the women's. Did they both go? Did we lose the women's rowing as well?

CHAIR - We lost the men's to Canberra, didn't we?

Mr AUSTEN - Rowing Australia restructured their high performance programs. They have two national training centres, one in Canberra and one in Sydney. The women's program is based in Sydney and the men's program at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra. All rowers relocate there when they are selected for the national team. It is the same pathway around Australia. It is a completely remodelled development pathway for athletes in the sport. Our role is to have them selected into those national training centres. Currently, we have two athletes in the women's program.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Ms ARMITAGE - Would having to go there negatively impact on our rowing?

Mr AUSTEN - It is difficult question to answer. It is challenging for all athletes but from a Tasmanian perspective, part of what we do is to make sure they are as well prepared as possible to make that next step with a number of sports. The biggest challenge is when you reach a certain level: how you integrate and perform in a new training environment. It is a more challenging pathway than being able to do it from home. That has always been a bit selective because women often have had to go to different states as part of being selected to join crews.

Ms ARMITAGE - We have done well in rowing in the past.

Mr AUSTEN - Yes, we have.

Mr HODGMAN - During my conversations with rowing clubs and coaches I have often been told that it is hoped it will not negatively impact them. It is not unusual, as Mr Austen said. We are looking at where we can upgrade rowing facilities, as we have done in the Huon. We are currently looking at proposals from other clubs - New Norfolk, for example - to better provide higher level facilities for clubs. It helps create that pathway to get them to elite competition. They may need to relocate, as is often the case at a national level. It is not within our control necessarily to influence or prevent that the process - hockey players, for example, go to Perth. So, I am sure that for the individual, it can no doubt be disruptive, but our challenge is to get them to that point.

Mr FINCH - I would like to ask -

CHAIR - Is that a supplementary?

Mr FINCH - On the Silverdome.

CHAIR - I am hoping to get down to the other end of the table.

Mr FINCH - How is the cycling program going?

Mr AUSTEN - It continues to be a very successful program as far as Tasmania is concerned. We continue to develop athletes of national standing, particularly at the moment in female track endurance cyclists - for example, Amy Cure and Georgia Baker - so we continue to be very happy with the cycling program. Similarly though, we are about to develop athletes who will then have to relocate to South Australia where the national training high performance centre for cycling is located. We continue to receive good access to the track and that is critical to developing cyclists.

Mr FINCH - How many athletes would be involved in the TIS program?

Mr AUSTEN - We currently have 15 athletes at different levels. We have a number of them at what is called 'podium level' - Amy Cure and Georgia Baker - so they are at the highest level. We then have a number of athletes across the different development stages, but they are currently supporting around 15 athletes in cycling.

Mr WILLIE - Premier, what is the Government doing to remove financial barriers for disadvantaged kids playing sport?

Mr HODGMAN - It is a very good question. Often, our clubs and sporting organisations raise this with us, as are families, because getting a kid into a sporting club can be an expensive business. We encourage our kids to be as active as they can. A number of state and territory governments provide a direct contribution to the cost of children participating in organised sport, recreation and cultural activities. It is an option we are actively canvassing. I know there has been some conversation in the broader community as to what model might fit here. We have discussed this at sports ministers' meetings at the national level, and some preliminary work has been done to model what an arrangement here might look like to provide a direct financial support to our kids.

A number of programs relate to the Sporting Schools initiatives, a number of which are supported by the Australian Government direct to primary schools to engage children in sports-based activity within schools and then facilitate the conversion to club-based settings as well. In January this year, the Australian Sports Commission consolidated its offices as part of the budget commitment to fund an extension to the Sporting Schools program, so that is obviously something being done at a national level. CSR here is working on building the capacity of the Tasmanian sports sector in our schools to deliver that program and to transition participants into activity within clubs. Six sports were selected last year by the CSR to identify and address coaching knowledge gaps at grassroots level. The six sports are AFL, basketball, bowls, cricket, soccer and table tennis. The work is ongoing, with CSR promoting that initiative and to providing support.

Mr WILLIE - Do you acknowledge the Government could do more in this space? We had the same conversation last year.

Mr HODGMAN - We are increasing our efforts, but there is always more to do. Anything that can reduce impediments to Tasmanians of any age, but especially younger ones in their formative years, and to encourage and promote healthy lifestyles. We can and should keep working on this as a priority.

Mr WILLIE - As the Minister for Sport and Recreation, did it concern you to hear stories last week about students potentially missing out on sports participation because their families could not pay school levies? Did you have a conversation with the Minister for Education and Training about that?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. The education minister is committed to investigating the application of that policy, which I have to point out, is the same policy used by the former government as well. We are looking into that. We want to reduce anything that prevents a child from engaging in their learning environment, including their health and wellbeing.

Mr FINCH - Premier, a couple of things are highlighted here: the Football Federation of Tasmania and the Grassroots Aussie Rules Football Club, \$500 000 per annum. Are you getting any comment or feedback from parents or from the community in respect of junior developing players in Australian Rules where the AFL is now trying to get at a younger cohort of players, getting to an under-12 representative opportunity for players? The ensuing cost to parents includes only not having to provide uniforms, travel and accommodation, but also the stipulation that a parent now has to go with the child to support them in those trips.

I know of one family who had two boys selected to play in Perth. They are going to have to fork out \$10 000 to fulfil their obligation. Probably one of the parents could stay at home, but they both wanted to go and share that. It is going to cost \$10 000. This is at under-12 level. That is horrendous. I would have thought there might have been some more support from AFL in the first

instance; of course, probably the clubs would need to do some fundraising. Parents need to draw on good old baby boomer grandparents and all that sort of thing. It seems like such a huge impost when the AFL is looking to be the ultimate beneficiaries of this program down the track.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, and I suspect things may change. Perhaps I can talk from experience. Things may change as the child gets a little older, and it is not expected or necessary for an accompanying adult, parent or carer to be with that child. I know at a slightly older age, it is not required, or expected. I am aware of the issue. I think all members would often be asked to provide financial support to parents of kids who are participating in various sports in national and international competitions.

I am sure we all give as generously as we can. I am more than happy to talk to industry bodies about. It is an expensive business for Tasmanians to travel and for sporting teams to travel from here. A lot is asked of parents. We can speak from experience, I am sure. Again we want to minimise the risks of that occurring. Whether or not AFL or any other body can provide direct financial assistance to players from all states and territories presumably competing in those nationals, it would be a big ask.

Ms ARMITAGE - I know I have had that issue with soccer. You will get a few young people who have been asked to play soccer, and the cost is huge. It is sad if they cannot go, and often the parents have to try to fundraise to get the money because they do not want their children to miss out.

Mr HODGMAN - If it is expected that a parent accompany the child, I imagine it is because of the age. I am only speaking anecdotally here but they certainly reach a point where it is not required in AFL. I know that to be so, thank heavens.

Mr FINCH - I just wanted to cite that example.

Mr HODGMAN - Thank you, I will note it down and talk to the stakeholders about that.

Mr DEAN - The question about young kids getting into sport and being kept out of sport is a very good point. Premier, I am of the view - and I have raised this recently with AFL Tasmania - that a kid who is entitled to support going through the education system on the free list, or whatever we now call it - the supported benefits of going through schools - ought to be entitled to exactly the same benefits in sport. Auskick is a good example, and I am aware of other sports as well, where young kids are not able to get into Auskick at that very young age because their parents either cannot or will not pay the \$70 or \$80 fee that is necessary in most Auskick programs. I am of the view - and I wonder whether the state has ever looked at this - that those kids ought to be entitled to that same sort of relief for getting into those programs as they are in other education. It is those kids we want in sport. Currently I am going to be supporting, with AFL Tasmania, some kids from the Rocherlea-Ravenswood area to get into the program because I feel so passionate about it. Should they not be entitled to that support?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, certainly we should aim to increase our access and availability to Auskick or any other sport of their choice. It goes to the point we were discussing earlier. I imagine that has been part of our considerations.

Mr DEAN - Has it been considered, though? Shouldn't similar entitlements to a child on a low income going through school be considered for a child moving into sport? I know of many families

whose kids would be good sportspeople, but their parents will not pay. Basketball is another good example. They just need the opportunity. It would help the state in the long run, in my view. Is it worth considering?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, certainly.

Mr DEAN - Where are we with AFL Tasmania in this state, Premier? Have we hung up the boots on that - excuse the pun - because there is momentum building for our own team in this state?

Ms ARMITAGE - A women's team.

Mr DEAN - Women are moving in that direction.

CHAIR - The way we are going, we will have a women's team before we have a men's team.

Mr DEAN - You are right. Just where are we positioned now? There is currently more information being made available and a push for that to occur in this state and for us to move as far ahead as we can.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, and that compelling case, in my view, for both men and women, has been made and put to the AFL. The timings of these things are such that our prospects for an AFL women's team are greater because the AFL has confirmed an expansion of the competition in two years' time and are actively calling for submissions, which are due shortly. The AFL has said that licences will be granted to clubs that have already received provisional licences, which sends a message that the prospects of a stand-alone Tasmanian team are not great, but it is still a live option for us. It is one that I, the Government and a number of stakeholders and football followers have made directly to the AFL. We might have a stand-alone women's team.

If you look at the other two partners in this space - AFL clubs Hawthorn and North Melbourne - North Melbourne is one of the clubs that has been granted a provisional licence, while Hawthorn has not. Hawthorn has expressed an interest to the state and to the AFL, as has North Melbourne, about wanting to participate. Neither club, nor indeed the AFL, has yet formally put forward any proposal, but I know a lot of interesting concepts are being canvassed, whereby one existing AFL club might play its games in Tasmania and be named and branded differently, and perhaps contain a set number of Tasmanian players. There are four Tasmanian girls in the national competition.

Mr DEAN - One from Rocherlea, I might add.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, and they have made a high impact. There are only four of them so they would need to find some friends to be competitive in the national context, but we are fast heading that way. That is one of the reasons the AFL Women's League wanted to put the brakes on extending the franchises beyond two in the first instance - to not lose control or diminish the quality of the competition, which was very high. That is why they have this staged approach. It is still very fluid, so there may be opportunities. I think the vibe, so to speak, that we have had from the AFL is very positively disposed to Tasmania.

Both Hawthorn and North Melbourne are already valuable contributors to the sport in this state. North Melbourne has particular programs and initiatives it is implementing now which came about as a result of the new arrangement with them, including more pathways and academy programs for boys and girls, but with a very strong focus on women's footy. They got ahead of the game in terms

of expressing an interest to the AFL. Hawthorn is still interested too, but are less advanced. That is women's footy.

On the AFL men's case, our relationships with Hawthorn and North Melbourne are valued and deliver great benefits. We can talk about or debate those at length, but our Government is committed to extending both arrangements, albeit one through the TT-Line. We will always consider the future of any deals with any club, including what those might look like against the backdrop of when Tasmania might seize its opportunity to get a men's team in the competition, which I know the AFL is more positively predisposed to now than they were any time I was around, which is a good thing. A lot of momentum is gaining, as you say.

CHAIR - There is an allocation of \$3.5 million to the Devonport Golf Club over three years. Can you tell me if it is a dollar-for-dollar contribution to that project? I know it is not all in one year. If it is not, why not?

Mr NICHOLSON - Page 176 of the budget papers outlines that is a contribution towards the development of that facility. We would need to get the breakdown.

CHAIR - Thank you. I acknowledge this will probably cater for more senior citizens, although we have quite a few younger people playing bowls these days, and golf, for that matter, but I would have thought that is a significant state contribution to a facility that normally is more directly funded by members and the community.

Mr HODGMAN - The complete project cost is \$8.5 million, \$3.5 million of which was committed by the Australian Government; \$1.5 million is expected from the sale of the Devonport Bowls and Croquet Club; and the Tasmanian Government is contributing the balance of \$3.5 million over three years - \$1.4 million in 2017-18 and 2018-19, and \$700 000 in 2019-20. It is intended that the result of this will be the establishment of the Devonport Country Club, which is an amalgamation of the bowls and croquet club, the golf club and the Spreyton Bowls Club. It is a project that has been on the drawing board for some time. The Devonport Country Club will use land currently owned by the Devonport Golf Club at Spreyton. The development includes construction of an international standard eight-rink indoor bowls centre, four green outdoor bowls centre, a complex of two croquet lawns, improvements to the golf course to meet demand in new golf tourism expectations, as well as a multi-purpose club house facility. It will be available to cater for a range of events, including masters' golf, national bowls, and sport and tourism conferences in the north-west coast. It will also generate income from function catering and facility hire.

CHAIR - Thank you very much for that extensive explanation. I will move now to your role as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

6.2 Aboriginal affairs -

Mr WILLIE - Premier, what is the Government doing to support teachers and students in schools with Aboriginal history and the delivery of that curriculum? In my experience as a teacher, a great number of my colleagues were anxious about teaching that curriculum because of the cultural sensitivities. At times, it felt as if there was a lack of support. Those connections to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community could be improved for the delivery of the curriculum to be the best it can be.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. On coming into Government we committed to undertaking a number of important initiatives, one of which inserting into the Australian curriculum, via the Department of Education, a component of Tasmanian Aboriginal history and culture.

As you identified, developing a series of professional development resources in consultation with the Aboriginal community includes noting sensitivities around subject matter and language. They are important issues and something to be carefully handled in consultation with the Aboriginal community.

There is \$520 000 allocated over two years, which was committed in the 2016-17 Budget to support this work. On 15 December last year, the Minister for Education and Training launched the first resources. These included five professional learning videos and accompanying learning tasks which were developed to raise awareness and improve understanding of Tasmanian Aboriginal histories and cultures in schools, and to raise aspirations for the level of attainment and further education for Aboriginal students. Further curriculum resources are under development. The Department of Education is consulting with the Aboriginal community in developing an Aboriginal histories and cultures framework, which is informing development of additional curriculum resources.

The Minister for Education and Training will be able to provide further information as to where that is, but we have commenced the program and the process to do so. I have some additional information, if you would like, in relation to national initiatives. As far as the state Budget is concerned, we have commenced that work. We are in the second year of funding it and are conscious of managing the sensitivities surrounding content closely with the Aboriginal community.

Ms KENT - At our interdepartmental committee recently, Richard Angus, the officer in DoE leading this process, was able to show us a couple of the modules. They are very interactive; they have been developed with close consultation with the Aboriginal community. It is a great thing for the Aboriginal community that they are in the work. It is film and other historic data aimed at different levels throughout the school curriculum. The initial response from teachers has been very positive.

Mr WILLIE - It is good to hear it; it sounds as if I missed out.

Ms KENT - One of the suggestions would be, through the Minister for Education and Training, to do with presentation. We thought it was worthwhile to give a presentation to members of parliament.

CHAIR - The honourable member might like to pursue that with the Leader's office at some time.

Mr WILLIE - Can you tell us more about health outcomes and specific programs the Government is focusing on to improve smoking, obesity and those sorts of issues prevalent across the whole community but also specifically related to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, this might be something best referred to the Minister for Health, noting the national Closing the Gap initiatives.

Mr WILLIE - I am happy for that to go on notice if the Government can provide details of any specific programs targeted at improving health outcomes.

Mr HODGMAN - Apologies, Chair, but a number of these are contained within programs and services expenditures within the Budget. They may not go into enough detail for the member and committee, so if we can take that on notice and provide a written response at the earliest opportunity?

CHAIR - Premier, you may be aware that there have been calls for the prosecution of quad bikers who drove through the Arthur-Pieman Conservation Area, which was closed in 2012 to protect Aboriginal heritage area. Do you support the prosecution of those quad riders?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, certainly. Anyone who has broken the law should be prosecuted and held to account. It comes under new laws passed through parliament, and the courts and authorities are better placed to apply penalties that more appropriately reflect the seriousness of these actions, which are damage important Aboriginal heritage assets. We hope those penalties will deter people.

CHAIR - There are significant penalties in place following the passage of legislation last week.

Mr HODGMAN - Exactly, and you cannot now use the defence of ignorance. There has been an extension to the limitation period under which a prosecution might be pursued. That extends the time frame in which authorities can pursue offenders. It is totally and utterly unacceptable.

CHAIR - I have a follow-on question. The federal Minister for Environment and Energy is considering whether four wheel drive tracks in the area should be reopened, as your Government advocates. How will you protect Aboriginal heritage from vehicle degradation if the federal minister decides that these tracks can be reopened?

Mr HODGMAN - That is right. If and when the referral succeeds to reopen the tracks between Sandy Cape and Pieman River, a commitment we made before the last election. What we propose will also happen, in addition to the measures we have just discussed, is that the referral would include a detailed description of mitigation actions put in place to ensure the area's natural and cultural values are protected. That will allow recreational use by operated vehicles but not in a way that compromises those values. The sorts of actions we propose would include rerouting of tracks where necessary, installing clear and visible signage, clearly marking the location of the track, closing access to any unauthorised tracks and increasing compliance monitoring.

It is envisaged the referral will also describe an adaptive management model involving regular ongoing assessment and monitoring of the tracks for possible damage to natural and cultural heritage and in response to this, if it occurs, further mitigation will be implemented. I am advised by the Parks and Wildlife Service - this falls within the remit of Mr Groom - that immediately prior to the opening of the tracks, an additional two park rangers over and above the existing number will be employed to work in the APCA, the Arthur-Pieman Conservation Area. At least one of those rangers will be a member of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, employed through what is becoming a highly successful Aboriginal ranger program.

CHAIR - My final question is around the work you and your Government have been undertaking to reset the relationship with the Aboriginal community. We know that not all parts of the Aboriginal family are seeing eye-to-eye, particularly some of the more regional groups. Can you apprise the committee of what you are doing to reset these relationships?

Mr HODGMAN - Recognising the sensitivities to which the member refers, it is a very important symbolic statement by government to say to Aboriginal Tasmanians from across the state is that a new government policy will recognise each and every one of them. In the past it has not been so and we have had the perverse situation of some Tasmanian Aboriginals being recognised by our Commonwealth but not by the state of Tasmania. We have changed the eligibility rules. Most significantly government policy changed last year, providing greater access to programs and support services for all Tasmanian Aboriginals and better alignment with Commonwealth government arrangements. This is designed to ensure that any Aboriginal Tasmanian who is entitled to a service or program is able to get it.

I think equally as significant was that parliament passed legislation amending the Constitution Act to recognise Tasmanian Aboriginals. That bill received royal assent in December last year. It was, certainly for the Government and perhaps more broadly for the Parliament and community, a proud day to introduce a clear statement of acknowledgement of the first Tasmanians in our Constitution. We are undertaking a lot of proactive work to engage Aboriginal Tasmanians in the management and maintenance of our wilderness areas, with an \$800 000 commitment over four years in the 2016-17 Budget for joint management of the Aboriginal cultural values in the TWWHA - this is Mr Groom's area but I also have a keen interest in it - and \$660 000 to employ two additional people under the ranger program I referred to. That is allowing Indigenous Tasmanians, the first Tasmanians, to have greater access to and say over the care and maintenance of our precious wilderness areas through a consultative council Mr Groom established to assist in that with DPIPWE, combined with the activities that support the joint management area efforts under the TWWHA but are integrated within the Aboriginal Heritage Register.

There are a number of other important practical applications of partnering with Aboriginal Tasmanians. These include the Wybalenna project in the north-east to support the development of an Indigenous tourism venture that will add to the wonderful things our state already offers but will be the first of its size and scale that points directly to our Aboriginal heritage and culture in the most beautiful part of the state, of which, of course, the Chair has the honour of being the local member.

To summarise, what we are endeavouring to do is collaborate with all Indigenous Tasmanians to work constructively to deliver better outcomes. We should never lose sight of the important Closing the Gap Commonwealth initiatives to improve health services and educational outcomes for Indigenous Tasmanians. I think it is fair to say we have reset the Government's relationship with the Aboriginal people of Tasmania. We are now at a point where we are moving proactively to deliver very positive outcomes for all of them under a framework that is very inclusive and captures regional organisations that were not previously recognised. The sky has not fallen in, as some thought it may, and more importantly, we are starting to get very positive outcomes for Indigenous Tasmanians.

CHAIR - Thank you, and I appreciate the contribution to that question. I am very mindful of when we were having the briefings before the Legislative Council debated the Constitutional Recognition Amendment Bill. A member of the Aboriginal community reminded me it was just like a family - not everybody gets on all of the time. I have held that very strongly front and centre of my mind ever since, and it has helped me work through that because it is so true.

Mr DEAN - What money, if any, has been allocated or will be available in the 2017 Budget for the proposed Tasmanian Aboriginal Reconciliation Council and how are we progressing

reconciliation? Are we any closer to formal reconciliation than we were 15, 20, 30, 40 or 50 years ago?

Mr HODGMAN - I believe so. The number of initiatives I have spoken about, from my and the Government's view, point directly to reconciliation and very practical outcomes. When we reach the point where the likelihood of an Aboriginal Tasmanian not going to jail or not concluding their education or having better health outcomes is equal to non-Indigenous Tasmanians, we might be able to say we have achieved reconciliation. That work is ongoing, but in terms of direct contribution to the council, I will shortly to meet with the reconciliation council as part of the national campaign for recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the Australian Constitution. This work is an offshoot of that. There has been no request to Government for funding and there is no provision in this Budget for it.

Mr DEAN - What about the allocation of money in the 2017 Budget towards assisting with administration and verification of Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage items? Is there anything there for that?

CHAIR - That is in 6.3, so hold that one.

Mr DEAN - What money has been allocated or it is available in the 2017 Budget towards assisting TALC and/or other Aboriginal bodies in administering and/or caring for lands currently under Aboriginal jurisdiction or care?

Mr HODGMAN - We provide an annual grant to the Aboriginal Land Council to assist with its operating costs, coordination and land management activities associated with land returned to the Aboriginal community. They currently receive recurrent Tasmanian Government funding of \$314 000 per annum.

Mr DEAN - That is recurrent?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr DEAN - Thank you.

CHAIR - The last question in this output area, Mr Finch?

Mr FINCH - Premier, as you might recall, I was very disappointed at missing the opportunity to rename my electorate 'kanamaluka' because of the dual naming of the Tamar Estuary that goes the length and breadth of my electorate of Rosevears. I felt I had tacit approval to use that name. At the death knock - the day before my submission was to go to the Electoral Commission - I received an email from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Council that I would not be given permission to use the palawa kani language in that submission.

It was tied up in that email with the desire for the TAC to progress designated Aboriginal seats in Parliament. Three were cited. Do you have any interest in that? Is that on your radar, to in fact, progress that thought?

Mr HODGMAN - I am aware of the proposal. It is not a government position or policy to move to establish designated seats within our parliament for that purpose. I regret the fact that in

not so doing, it might prevent other things positively from happening, as arguably in your case you might say it has.

Mr FINCH - Yes.

Mr HODGMAN - I hope that all members of the Aboriginal community and their respective organisations are able to look carefully at each and every thing we might offer to improve the lives of Tasmanian Aboriginals, to advance reconciliation or to close the gap without making it conditional on doing something else.

Mr FINCH - Thank you.

CHAIR - We will now move to the much-awaited output group of tourism.

DIVISION 10

(Department of Tourism)

Minister for Tourism, Hospitality and Events

Mr HODGMAN - Mr Kim Evans, the Secretary of the Department of State Growth, and we have others waiting in the wings.

I will very briefly point to a couple of key things. All members will be well aware of the ongoing sustained growth in our visitor economy. We keep breaking records, which is great for Tasmania. It is wonderful to see strong rates of growth in tourism right across the state. We have taken some deliberate actions to provide greater access for our visitors on the *Spirits* with increased sailings and reduced fares. Our airlines are now scheduling over half-a-million more seats per year to our state.

The general view about what we offer is very positive and the experience that our visitors have is second to none. We rank very highly. This Budget reflects my Government's commitment to ensure we keep heading towards our T21 goals, which include the number of visitors, their expenditure and length of stay, a stay supported by investments and infrastructure and in the skills of those who welcome our visitors and provide front-of-house experience, whether it be through tourism operations or our hospitality sector.

There are significant commitments in the Budget to invest in infrastructure, including Cradle Mountain and the Three Capes. Mountain biking is fast becoming a real growth area and a strategic competitive advantage throughout the state, in the beautiful north-east especially. Ongoing efforts to increase investments in and around our wilderness areas in a sustainable way are another way to keep Tasmania at the front of the pack.

Investments in the Great Eastern Drive and into our greatest of assets - that is, the people who work in our tourism and hospitality sectors as well. We are providing them with a strategic framework and visitor engagement strategy to best equip them to provide what should be, and more often than not is, a first-class experience.

We are supporting a number of events as well. Most notably, significant commitments and increased investment into marketing which increases the annual marketing budget this year to the tune of \$18 million. That is \$7 million a year more than when we came into government. It is

probably not anywhere near what Mr Fitzgerald would like and what his competitors in other jurisdictions have to play with.

CHAIR - They do not have the natural assets that we have, though.

Mr HODGMAN - Or the natural skills of people working in tourism. It is very much a partnership with industry. T21 is one of the strongest and most robust partnership agreements between a state government entity and industry. That keeps us all on our toes and is very much a blueprint that we are achieving our targets against, but constantly looking at challenges facing the industry and our state off the back of so many tourists coming into Tasmania.

It is a very good problem to have. Skills development impacts on our environment, capacity constraints and infrastructure and improving access. These are all areas where government as a whole really now looks at our visitor economy because it is so much more than just tourism.

It involves a number of areas within the Department of State Growth. It branches right across into how we manage our natural areas, the infrastructure we provide and how we skill up and educate Tasmanians to be part of the visitor economy in a number of respects. It is the Tasmanian experience wrapped up into what we typically call tourism, but is a lot more than that, which is also invested in this Budget.

This is probably the strongest commitment to tourism marketing, investment and related infrastructure upgrades and investments that the state has seen. I am very proud to be the minister for Tasmania's great tourism industry.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, I appreciate that, Premier. Mr Finch - your number one favourite topic.

Mr FINCH - Thanks. The visitor economy is fantastic. It sounds a bit like New Zealand where everybody is involved, the whole community, and learning. Wherever you go in New Zealand, everybody feels they are part of the visitor economy. It is good we have that front-of-mind. You answered my first question. I was going to query just how much we spend on marketing and you mentioned a figure of \$18 million. Of course, spending \$30 million a year on tourism is a pretty healthy figure, although, as you say, Mr Fitzgerald would probably like more. You have an additional \$2 million - page 74 is the reference - on marketing for this fiscal year and an additional \$3 million next year. Is that just trying to catch up with the competition, trying to keep abreast of what is going on with other states and the spend they are putting into marketing?

Mr FITZGERALD - Yes, I think we have been very fortunate. Since the Premier has come to power, I think we have been given at least \$7 million extra, Mr Finch, and that certainly made us competitive in the marketplace. The pleasing thing is we have put every cent of that into marketing. We have kept our costs to a minimum. In fact, we have reduced our costs and have managed to put more of our fixed costs into marketing as well, so the amounts are a little bit more than that. We are obviously very pleased about that level now and we see that as genuinely competitive. You do not always have to be the biggest to be the best in the fight. I think we have proven that time and time again with our brave approach to the way we now understand and articulate our brand in the market, which others are trying to copycat in some respects. Having the right amount of resource and understanding the brand really well has made us competitive and I think that is why we are seeing the sorts of results we are.

Mr HODGMAN - Sorry to interrupt, but I will just add context from my point of view. A strategic decision we took on coming to government was to separate Tourism Tasmania and establish it as a statutory authority, and thanks to the Legislative Council for assisting the passage of that legislation back then. It was designed to put Tourism Tasmania in a position where it focuses on its core function of marketing. It allows - and I am sure this has been the experience of governments before this one - to know with confidence that the funds provided are being targeted and being strategically applied and Tourism Tasmania is not being burdened with other responsibilities. Those are now the problem of Mr Evans, I hasten to add, but in our view they are better dealt with in areas combined with state growth, economic development, training and skills, development workforce and supply-side issues. They have increased the burden in Mr Evans' department, but we believe in a strategic way that sharpens the focus and the output. The record speaks for itself. We are more than competitive. I think it was an important shift in the mindset of government to do that.

Mr FINCH - The figures are astounding, of course. The development is wonderful, with 1 359 000 visitors expected in the current financial year, increasing to a lot more than that. It does not show too many targets, though, beyond this fiscal year. Is the expectation that this trend will continue? Do we have a risk assessment that there might be a global financial crisis around the corner? What sense do we have of the immediate future?

Mr FITZGERALD - That is all set out in the T21 agreement, Mr Finch. We based our visitor growth trajectory on a seven-year average. That is not only looking forward at what we might think will happen, but is looking back to see the experience Tasmania has had over a seven-year period. During that last seven-year period we had the global financial crisis, so we projected forward with a view that there may be some unavoidable event that might disrupt the market in some way. Even with that, we are still on the right trajectory to reach our targets. We projected that on an annual basis. I think that only gets projected out a couple of years into the forward Estimates but we, ourselves, have looked beyond that period.

Mr FINCH - The performance measure table has some very impressive figures, but there is no breakdown of where our visitors are coming from. I am sure you could give us some idea of the figures. I am particularly interested in the Chinese visitors because when we talk about the expansion and growth in this area, China gets the big mention.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, they are still very important, but you may be surprised to hear they have been overtaken by our friends from the United States of America, which is a wonderful development.

CHAIR - I am not surprised, because the member for Western Tiers, whose son-in-law is an American, flew in today.

Mr HODGMAN - I can talk you through those and make the general observation -

Mr DEAN - They're not people wanting to escape Donald Trump?

Laughter.

Mr HODGMAN - There is a 13 per cent increase in the year to December 2016, which sees the USA top of the tree. I think the pleasing thing is that while there has been a slight coming off in Chinese visitations following the surprising peak after President Xi's visit, it points to the fact

that we have not put all our eggs in one basket and we are still a very attractive proposition to the traditional market, no doubt, but one which has not been as strong in the past and presents its own set of challenges, including distance most notably. If you would like, I can give you a breakdown.

Mr FINCH - Of where the visitors are coming from?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. United States of America, 31 700 in the year to the end of December 2016, up 13 per cent; United Kingdom, second with 25 000; China, third with 24 000; Hong Kong, 23 300, still a significant number from that part of the world; and New Zealand, 15 400. Hong Kong, I should point out, is up 34 per cent. Mr Fitzgerald can tell us why this is happening. Singapore had a massive jump also with 29 per cent there, just behind New Zealand, with 13 700; and Malaysia, 13 400, up 71 per cent. There was a decline in visitors from Germany and they round out the table I have, at 9700. We have more specific breakdowns in relation to why they come, for what purpose. John might provide some context.

Mr FITZGERALD - They are the international numbers, and about 17 per cent of our market now it is international. That has grown over the last few years and is growing at a faster rate than domestic. Domestic is still 83 per cent of our market and growing, but the international is growing faster off a smaller base so we getting double-digit growth internationally every year. I travel a bit internationally and we also go to international events. Tasmania is just very much on people's radar and now, as the Premier said, out of Hong Kong and Singapore. They are pretty mature global travellers there, whereas the Chinese are still becoming global travellers, if you like. They are multiple-trip visitors to Australia so they are now looking at new destinations and I think we are being seen as this island of abundance. As well as being seen as part of Australia, we are almost seen as a separate island as well, in our own right now, so I think all of that is playing into our hands, particularly in Asia and, with the Aussie dollar coming off, the US has really come back strongly. There has been some pent up demand there. As soon as they have the currency working in their favour, they have started to hit Tasmania in a big way.

Mr FINCH - Has there been a new marketing strategy in those areas that might -

Mr FITZGERALD - We are active in all those markets.

Mr FINCH - What would be your main marketing push in, for instance, America?

Mr FITZGERALD - It depends. It is nuanced by market. For visitors from the United States, it is about our nature, our wildlife and our people. That is what the US travellers are looking for. They are interested in the Australian character and, as you know, we have it in spades in Tasmania. The Americans love the Australian wildlife and we have an abundance of wildlife here. Our nature is accessible, you do not have to go a long way out of the cities to see nature. More and more, the whole food and wine presence is resonating with that part.

Mr HODGMAN - We have been very active in inserting ourselves into the national Tourism Australia campaigns, which in recent years have had a focus on food and wine tourism. This gives us a massive competitive advantage, I would suggest. The current campaign is coastal and aquatic. We are perfectly placed to capitalise on that.

John might confirm that there has been a very high level of Tasmanian content in those national campaigns. They play beautifully to our strengths. We are working to leverage off what we are doing here. It is not credit to me as the tourism minister, per se, but I love being the only premier

who sits around the COAG tourism meeting, demonstrating our commitment. We are doing so with increased funding and seeing extraordinary results. Tourism Australia tells me it largely benefits its campaign to provide a new, very different product for international visitors.

The rate of growth of international tourists to Tasmania has been the highest in the country at various points in recent years. We are doing a lot more than punching above our weight, we are leading the pack. I have interstate visitor numbers too, Mr Finch, if you are interested in that.

Mr FINCH - Please; did you want to table that?

Mr HODGMAN - I can tell you quickly, because they are often an underestimated cohort. There is over 1 million - 1.04 million - up on the previous year. One million interstate visitors are coming into Tasmania now. Visitor numbers from Victoria increased by 7 per cent, to 457 100. New South Wales is up by 6 per cent, to 277 000. Queensland dropped a little, by 1 per cent.

Mr FITZGERALD - We are not concerned about that. We are working toward better direct access from Queensland. We have direct flights but they are pretty full. We think there is a bit of pent up demand in Queensland. We will see that growth if we can create better access.

Mr HODGMAN - When you consider there are almost as many Victorians as there are Tasmanian citizens coming to the state now, they could take us over if we are not careful.

CHAIR - King Island is thinking about heading over, aren't they? They will really bolster the numbers in Victoria.

Mr HODGMAN - That is why a lot of work takes place domestically. I have participated in trade missions for tourism-related events in Asia, where we are in the sweet spot, as well as some work in Singapore. It is important we continue to have a presence in those markets and support the efforts of Tourism Tasmania and Tourism Australia as best we can.

CHAIR - For the last few years I have talked about the challenges with the Great Eastern Drive. I know your Government fully supports that initiative and it is becoming a real focal point, but it still has some challenges when you are driving it.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

CHAIR - I know that it somewhat belongs to the infrastructure minister, but I still feel it needs the focus of the tourism minister to drive home those initiatives around lay-by areas.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, sure.

CHAIR - Some people who need it for work commitments, but others would prefer to travel at a much slower speed and enjoy the ambience. Can you tell me where those upgrades are?

Mr HODGMAN - I will do. It has been a great success. It was an election commitment pre-2014 and has proven to be quite the drawcard.

CHAIR - It has been fully supported by the east coast community as a whole. They have embraced it.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. The RTO and individual operators talk about engaging and activating what is a fairly simple concept but it has captured the interest of the east coast tourism sector. It is worthy of additional support and this Budget provides \$6.3 million on top of previous commitments.

It goes to some important infrastructure upgrades. State Roads identified passing lane opportunities and they have developed to concept design level preferred passing lane opportunities on the drive in the vicinity of Cherry Tree Hill at an approximate cost of \$2.4 million. There are other opportunities as well, such sealing shoulders from Basin Creek to St Helens Point Road and sealing the existing pull off areas at the Mayfield Bay visitor lookout.

CHAIR - There are a number of areas you could use. They need to be well signed to give people advanced notice that they are coming up. You don't necessarily have to widen a heap of road verges. They are there.

Mr HODGMAN - We had a discussion with the council and the municipality of Break O'Day about identifying those options. A number have been, and concept designs have been finalised to proceed. They are not cheap. It is an ongoing commitment to ensuring upgrades in the infrastructure.

You are right. There is increased traffic on the roads, so we need to look at areas for lay-bys and to closely monitor driving behaviour and speed limits. Mr Hidding will happily talk you through that.

CHAIR - We have had a number of conversations. I will continue to progress them at every opportunity.

Another area I am interested in, and I believe the tourism industry has a role, is signage. We have signage, but often it is at the last minute. If you are looking for a turnoff and you are trying to concentrate on traffic - for example, driving out of Hobart and heading toward Runnymede - if there were larger signs, you would be more aware of your turnoff. It would avoid having to do U-turns on pretty busy stretches of road. What kind of conversations have you had around signage?

Mr HODGMAN - It is a discussion best had with Mr Hidding. In conjunction with Mr Hidding and local councils, I often have discussions about this issue across the state. The first tranche of the Great Eastern Drive concept was erecting large signage to increase awareness and give direction.

It is an ongoing challenge and one that needs to be considered in a holistic framework. My Visitor Economy Advisory Council, which intersects with infrastructure and local government authorities, makes sure they are well placed.

Mr EVANS - It is fair to say that we are working closely with State Roads through our supply-side group to audit signage and to provide advice on priorities around that but it is something we could look at more broadly.

CHAIR - As a holistic approach, particularly when people are looking to get off onto some of those roads that are not easily identifiable until you are virtually right on them. It is all right for those of us who know where we are going. Not everyone knows where they are going and Siri doesn't always get it right either.

The committee suspended from 3.51p.m. to 4.00 p.m.

CHAIR - Premier, thank you very much for your indulgence. I had made a commitment and I wanted to honour it.

Mr DEAN - Just a quick tidying-up question. The visitor numbers to this state from Victoria and the other states, do they include those coming here to AFL football from Victoria?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, they could.

Mr FITZGERALD - The bottom line is these are sample-based surveys. The numbers are never an absolute. It is all done on a sample. That would pick up people -

Mr DEAN - Along that line, have we figures for those coming here for the AFL football, staying on for a period of time after the football, or coming early?

Mr SPROULE - We have a couple of different sources verifying attendance at the football. Obviously we have source ticket sales, based on postcode. That is one way of determining where they are coming from. As John pointed out, we can also pick it up through the TVS survey where people identify their purpose for travel. In addition to that, we do undertake, together with Hawthorn and the Launceston City Council, an annual survey which gives us the average length of stay for visitors.

What I can tell you is that over the 14-year history we have had the Hawthorn games, even though we have had a relationship for 17 years, but how long we have had the reports going for. That number has always sat at between 20 and 25 per cent of attendances from interstate.

Mr DEAN - From interstate at the games. Have you any figures on those who come three or four days or a week earlier or stay?

Mr SPROULE - We do, but I don't have them in front of me.

Mr DEAN - If they are readily available, can we get them on notice?

Mr SPROULE - Yes. We will give you what we have.

Mr DEAN - It is interesting information to have for those who come to you and say it is of no value, it is wasting money and all that, so it would be good to have that.

Mr FITZGERALD - There is significant anecdotal evidence to say how well the regions do out of it. I have seen you at the Hawks games and I have spoken to a lot of the operators, the wineries et cetera in the Tamar, and they will all tell you how many people come pre- or post-the games.

Mr DEAN - It brings the area alive for two to three days. If it is a Saturday game, the area is alive on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, so three days at least; and if it is a Sunday game, it is normally Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Mr FITZGERALD - We get all that information, but I will have to check what we have in a data sense.

Mr DEAN - My other question is: what are the numbers on intrastate travel, people travelling around the state here or leaving to do their trips?

Mr FITZGERALD - We do not overtly measure that under the T21 measurements but we do have the intrastate data. We capture that as to intrastate travel as well.

Mr HODGMAN - The events side of the visitor economy which Mr Sproule represents has a large focus on intrastate movement to get Tasmanians travelling around and visiting areas to attend any number of our wonderful events and festivals that the state supports.

Mr DEAN - The other question I have is on the tourism heritage report. I want to know where we are going. I understand some recommendations from that report on both the tourism and heritage sides of it will be considered.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr DEAN - The reason I raise it is that this report has created a tremendous amount of interest around the state. You would be aware of the conference here in Hobart a few weeks ago that I could not get to. They have another one coming up in the north at Woolmers.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

Mr FITZGERALD - We will be represented at that, too.

Mr DEAN - I have been invited there. The member for Rosevears would have been as well, being a member of that committee. What is happening with the report?

Mr HODGMAN - It is a very useful tool for the Government, our visitor economy and those agencies attached to it. Heritage will be before the committee in just a moment as well. I was also at that forum and a lot of stuff is happening in this space. All the findings, recommendations and pointers contained within the report are being embraced and a number of initiatives. John can talk a little more about the place that our heritage assets have in marketing. I know members have asked previously about this. Also within our T21 strategic framework there is specific reference to the value of our heritage, built and natural, and also to some of the innovative approaches now being undertaken. There is work with the THA - the pubs and hotels in Tasmania which have remarkable stories to tell, to ensure that the operators of those places are open to tell that story and engage as a new initiative. There is a lot I could talk about and we might get onto that in Heritage, including important infrastructure, investment at Woolmers and Brickendon.

Mr DEAN - I was not quite sure where to raise it because it is correctly with Tourism and Heritage, too.

Mr FITZGERALD - Tourism is still one of the key pillars, as we have spoken about previously. Nature and heritage are the two big pillars and then are supported by Tassie's adventure, food and beverages and that sort of thing.

Mr DEAN - I might raise the other issue while we are addressing this, of the national heritage office now moving into Launceston, which I think the Premier and others were engaged and involved in - the members for Rosevears and Launceston as well. I think they want to forge a closer relationship with tourism operators, the tourist side of things, to see how they can work on getting more people here for the right reasons.

Mr FITZGERALD - We are happy to engage with them.

Mr DEAN - That is great. I am very much looking forward to that.

Mr FINCH - This question enables me to get an amazing figure into the budget Estimates. The agency outline is very impressive about this. Tourism accounts for 36 700 direct and indirect jobs in Tasmania. That is 15.3 per cent of the workforce. That must be an all-time high, Premier.

Mr HODGMAN - I believe so, yes.

Mr FINCH - How impressed are you with that?

Mr HODGMAN - Very. It's great.

CHAIR - I think the member for Rosevears is just showing you he has done his homework.

Mr FINCH - It is an amazing figure. How accurate do you think that figure is?

Mr FITZGERALD - Well, it is as accurate as it can be. It comes from a breakdown of the tourism satellite accounts. Tourism is not a category of measurement in the economy. Things like transport and retail are, so federal government researchers have to take that information and extract what proportion of each of those categories relates to tourism. They are federally produced every year and are disaggregated down to state level so it is comparable with every other state of Australia. We are the most dependent tourism economy in terms of the most employment of any state in Australia.

Mr FINCH - You might not remember, Premier, but we had a great deal of difficulty when we had our last tourism investigation trying to quantify just how many people were involved in the industry. It was difficult to talk the industry up when we had no figures to verify how important we thought it was.

Mr HODGMAN - Reshaping the conversation around the visitor economy, I think is a critical part of broadening people's appreciation of the value of the sector to the economy and to the state's cultural and social development. I fundamentally believe that to be so. I think we are less likely now to hear people telling politicians that it is not all about tourism and tourism comes and goes, not talking it down but perhaps not fully appreciating its value. I think we are at a point now where people recognise it is a lot more than the tourism experience; it is about all those business right across the state that benefit from our tourist activity and the visitor economy, so it has been an important shift, I think, in the minds of Tasmanians.

CHAIR - Does the member for Rosevears want to show off any more?

Mr FINCH - No, I am quite okay.

**Output group 5 -
Culture and creative industries**

5.4 Events and hospitality

Ms ARMITAGE - I will start with a question with regard to the output group where it mentions in the footnote that movements in events in hospitality reflect the funding for Dark Mofo in the 2017-18 Budget initiatives. I notice it is actually only going up for two years and then back down. Could you explain that because my understanding is Dark Mofo has five-year ongoing funding? It is on page 283, output group 5, events and hospitality, 5.4. It starts at \$10 870 000, up to \$14 272 000. After two years, it drops back down to \$3 million again. It is only the footnote mentioning Dark Mofo and some of the others. Dark Mofo has five-year funding of \$2.1 million. Can you explain the \$3 million going up for two years and then down? The \$14 million is really within the 2015-16 Budget.

Mr G DEAN - You are questioning why the money drops off in the out-years?

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes, the footnote mentions Dark Mofo, but I appreciate that Dark Mofo has five-year funding at \$2.1 million.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, so you don't believe it is correct?

Mr G DEAN - We do not include notes on every item, otherwise the budget paper would be -

Ms ARMITAGE - I appreciate that, but we are looking at \$2.1 million.

Mr G DEAN - The major dropout in 2019-20 relates to the tourism and hospitality supply side, an issue that came in and has been announced this year. The \$1.35 million drops out of the 2017-18 Budget. There are some movements in previous initiatives, the V8 Supercars that go back some time, nearly \$1 million comes out in that year. Some major events festival commitments voids this funding, about \$300 million drops out. Other things that do not relate to Dark Mofo also come out.

Ms ARMITAGE - That is fine, the footnote is the only one that mentions this Dark Mofo. It did not make sense when Dark Mofo made a deal for five years at \$2.1 million.

Mr G DEAN - We can look at those notes as we move forward.

Ms ARMITAGE - That is fine. Part of the funding agreement with Dark Mofo is that they will deliver a regional expansion program every year. Does the Government ensure that they do, particularly in the north, for example, in Launceston? I am sure other members know that when Dark Mofo is on, there is almost no-one in Launceston. It is a real exodus of people coming south. It must be very hard for a lot of the businesses there. It is great to have them bringing people in but we need to share them around the state. We cannot have everyone leaving the north.

Mr HODGMAN - No, and that was all part of the deal and the conversation with MONA. Dark Mofo is, as you say, having an extraordinary impact. There are commitments from MONA, as part of the deed: to increase the number of visitors, interstate and overseas; to grow overall attendance; to increase media exposure and promotion; to deliver regional expansion; and to ensure at least \$250 000 is invested in the programming and support of local arts-based organisations.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

For 2017, the event sees the inclusion of a performance titled *Crossing*, which begins in Launceston. It is a pilgrimage along the Midland Highway, calling in at selected churches in Cleveland, Ross, Oatlands and Kempton before heading further south. That is the first instalment of the regional expansion element.

Ms ARMITAGE - Hopefully it will grow and they will have more than one event. I think we had one event previously.

Mr FINCH - The big blow up.

Ms ARMITAGE - That was a long time ago; I am not sure that was Dark Mofo.

Mr HODGMAN - They are not short of good ideas. They are often coming forward with all sorts of -

Ms ARMITAGE - I can recall one year they were going to do something, but they required a substantial amount of funding from the Launceston City Council, which they could not afford. It cannot be contingent on funding from someone else that cannot be guaranteed.

Mr HODGMAN - That is why we have stepped in and supported the continuation and expansion of the festival and required an element of regional dispersal.

Ms ARMITAGE - So we will ensure it continues, that it does grow? The Government will be looking to make sure they are not taking the money and not doing anything around the statement -

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, it is a requirement and no, certainly not.

Mr SPROULE - I can say something if you would like. We work very closely with the Dark Mofo organisers. It is correct, it is a requirement of them to include a regional activation as part of the event every year. One of the things we also built into our arrangement with them for the new contract is that the size of that activation has to be a certain size in terms of cost.

How it will typically work is that they have an event plan, which is a milestone in their contract that they have to come and talk to us about and which outlines their plans for the future. That is when we have the opportunity to ask about their thoughts about regional activation. The regional project the Premier outlined is the one they are doing this year. You may recall last year that they did something in New Norfolk, which was a fairly significant -

Ms ARMITAGE - There was something. It would be nice if they could cover more than one region.

Mr SPROULE - Yes.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. They are this time.

Ms ARMITAGE - For \$2.1 million a year.

Mr HODGMAN - They are heading down through the midlands -

Ms ARMITAGE - New Norfolk to us in the north is still considered south.

Mr HODGMAN - That particular installation was venue-specific.

Ms ARMITAGE - I appreciate that. I recall the event.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. The MONA team is very creative. We are not expecting them to not do anything but look really positively at -

Ms ARMITAGE - I appreciate the north-west coast as well. It would be nice if we could cover the three regions, if they could have something in each region.

Mr SPROULE - They certainly have ideas.

CHAIR - Thank you.

Ms ARMITAGE - The other one, the Breath of Fresh Air festival, has been cancelled this year due to lack of access to the higher grade projections. Has the Government looked at providing funding to assist with this event in the future?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. It is another one of the many interesting elements of our events and festival matrix.

Ms ARMITAGE - It is a great event for the north.

Mr HODGMAN - We have provided funding to the festival since it began in 2011, totalling \$575 000. In October last year the organisers notified Events Tasmania they would not be applying for funding beyond the current contracted period, which concluded at the completion of the November 2016 event. They advised they are planning to review the scale and format of the festival. I can assure you we are very hopeful they might, working with Events Tasmania, remain in contact regarding the possibility of future events -

Ms ARMITAGE - They need the higher grade projection for their films.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. There is no aversion to the festival within government or Events Tasmania, or what it -

Mr SPROULE - Yes. As the Premier outlined, they have self-selected on this occasion not to progress. You probably know this.

Ms ARMITAGE - Yes, they did not believe the money that was required for four days was economically viable.

Mr SPROULE - Yes. I think they were looking at only having one venue that they would be able to show the films. A lot of films under distribution now only come out in a certain format, which would have to be shown at the Village Cinema in Launceston. The Festival director, Mr Tilbury, is aware of some potential new sites that might be coming online in the next couple of years in Launceston.

Ms ARMITAGE - There has been potential for a great many years, if you might remember. It has not eventuated yet.

Mr SPROULE - No, but we have left the door open for them to come back and talk to us about that and we hope that he does.

Mr HODGMAN - Typically, government funds events and supports them but does not run them. There is a large requirement of organisers and proponents to do that work and to help it stack up. We provide support for Events Tasmania to find ways to make them sustainable and succeed, and this is one that we hope can return at some point in time.

Ms ARMITAGE - It has been very good for the north, particularly.

Moving on to hospitality, you have announced \$3.2 million of funding for Drysdale. Can you give me the split between the three campuses - Launceston, Devonport and Hobart?

Mr HODGMAN - We do not have a breakdown on that. The intention is to use the facilities outside Hobart.

Ms ARMITAGE - I was just interested to read that the audit found that TasTAFE students were down 23 per cent from 2012, and courses funded through Skills was down 43 per cent. Do you feel that this will actually rebuild the -?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, and the aim is to rebuild the state's reputation and capacity through more contemporary facilities and training methods, and it includes the north and north-west.

Ms ARMITAGE - There is such a shortage of hospitality staff, particularly chefs.

Mr HODGMAN - That is right. It is very much a down payment, you might say, a critical infrastructure upgrade. The facility is in serious need of an investment like this and has been for some time. We figure we need to ensure something happens sooner on that front, to restore its base rightfully as one of the nation's leading hospitality training providers.

We want to consider the findings of the taskforce review commissioned by government, expert consultants, and industry leaders. It has provided us recently with a number of options, including better support for our current infrastructure as well as other options moving forward. That will all be a part of that. Anyone who has been to Drysdale recently would appreciate that its best days are behind it per se. It needs a significant investment in its infrastructure as well as more contemporary teaching methods. Using the other facilities, there are clearly issues there. This recognises a critical infrastructure investment potentially. We expect to utilise capacity in the private sector to support the demand, but also to use the facility as well and to leverage off the investment in that property.

Ms ARMITAGE - I know this is a little from left field. Does the Premier have an opinion on whether the penalty rates changes will make a difference to people going into hospitality?

Mr HODGMAN - I can only reflect the opinion of industry stakeholders, who do not believe it would have a detrimental effect.

CHAIR - The first tranche of that reform starts on 1 July, and it is coming in over four years, so it will take a while to really assess.

Mr WILLIE - Wage growth is at a record low, too.

Ms ARMITAGE - A lot of the staff in hospitality are university students.

CHAIR - Mr Dean, I can see you have something underlined there, and I know you have been wanting to ask about that underline.

Mr DEAN - You are very observant.

The funding for netball, and netball is included in the budget commitment under this area, with support going to the development of the Tasmanian Magpies team. It also goes on to say -

... grassroots netball players, coaches and umpires, developing clinics under the development clinics under this area ...

How that is going to occur? How much money will we put into that? I have a connection with netball in that I support them. It is a big sport in Tasmania, as we know, and the netball centre in Launceston is a good example of the number of people playing.

I also raise at the same time, Premier, that there is another game in this state called softball. I am a patron of a softball club and they say they continually miss out. They really are not considered among sporting activities in Tasmania, and issues are always being raised about that.

Mr HODGMAN - The sport and recreation people have taken with them the breakdowns for who gets what, but I certainly noticed a pitch for softball and netball because it is a huge participation sport. The deal that comes with these events is an exciting new partnership and does take some getting used to, but one with the Collingwood Football Club -

Mr DEAN - You are right. It does take some getting used to.

Mr HODGMAN - and Netball Australia. I was in black-and-white at the Silverdome and the Magpies played their Suncorp Super league game. They have just been knocked out of the finals, sadly.

CHAIR - Look how I am dressed and I am not a Collingwood supporter - I am a Carlton supporter.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a lot more than a football club. They have a massive reach into a range of programs. They now have a netball team in the national league and they have a real interest in Tassie which I welcome. I relish and embrace that. We looked at a deal, and struck one with the Magpies with a fairly short run-in time into this season, bearing in mind that netball is restructured nationally and has just established this new league. There has not been much time to do anything but hang on and be part of the program of visits. It is an exciting deal. It is \$1.65 million over three years. It delivers a lot more than the Super League netball game.

CHAIR - So it was \$1.65 million over three years? We have \$1.1 million over two years. I am sure your figures are right.

Mr SPROULE - That \$1.65 million is the whole amount for the partnership. Of course, some of it is actually for the financial year we are in now. So the money you are seeing in the Budget is for year 2 and year 3.

CHAIR - My question is around that then, Premier. I agree - netball is a significant sport. Will that contribution by the state make it more accessible for those interested in the game to go? Will it reduce the actual ticket fee?

Mr HODGMAN - No.

CHAIR - So what does the \$550 000 cover if it is not going to do that?

Mr HODGMAN - I can tell you what the deal delivers. The Super League Netball game - at least one and possibly two games. It is a wonderful event and well supported. The broadcast of the game is guaranteed through Netball Australia's broadcast partner Channel 9. That involves a lot of promotion opportunity for the state.

Mr DEAN - National broadcasting, I hope?

CHAIR - It is on a Saturday afternoon.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, they can be at all hours of the day and night.

CHAIR - I think they repeat them on Saturday afternoon. My mum watches every week.

Mr HODGMAN - Collingwood Football Club is investing directly \$75 000 to support the Tasmanian team in the Australian Netball League -ANL, which is the next tier down. It is the second tier national league. The Tasmanian Magpies are now participating in that, including a number of Tasmanian players. Also by Collingwood, an infrastructure investment of \$150 000 into the Silverdome complex in Launceston, referred to earlier. An earlier iteration of our discussions involved whether they might support infrastructure investments into other supporting facilities in the north, but clearly the Silverdome is a good place to start.

There is a lot of activity by the club in the community - a pre-season camp to be held each year, and opportunities for Tasmanian players to train with Collingwood players at their high performance facilities in Melbourne, which are extraordinary. Also, coaches and administrators have similar opportunities to participate in high performance programs, along with the players and Magpie squad activities. There are formal structured development opportunities for coaches, umpires, bench officials, administrators and staff, and we have high-level umpires and officials from Tasmania, including Netball Tasmania board members, being integrated into the Magpie machine. There is also a range of sponsorship benefits, branding and signage, and a lot of activation by the players in Tasmania. Our experience of it, for what it is worth, was very positive. They now have a 100 per cent strike rate home court advantage. They look forward to coming back. It is an exceptional deal. It was assessed by Events Tasmania. It was another opportunity to take an event into the north because Collingwood may play games in some other part of the state, even Hobart, but it was part of the deal to say they could play their game in the Silverdome. It was very well attended and the coverage was exceptional.

Mr DEAN - Will the V8 Supercars continue to be funded irrespective of the position of the Greens? You are not taking too much notice of them?

Mr HODGMAN - I hope so. It will be a matter for the Government, of course, but I will very strongly advocate that it continue. We fought hard to keep it here. It is a tremendous event and it

has been flagged that we will need to start thinking about the future. We are under a lot of competition from other places as well.

Mr DEAN - When will we start advancing those talks to see whether we can regain it over the next years? How far advanced are we?

Mr HODGMAN - I have not had any formal discussions. I met with the executives, owners and operators of the supercars at Symmons Plains when they were last here, but had no formal discussions, nor indeed did they raise the prospect of the next deal. We are getting to a point in time where that conversation will start soon.

Mr DEAN - I ask because other people have asked me that question as well, and they are fanatical about these events. If we leave it too late, we will let the other states get in again and we will have to catch up.

Mr HODGMAN - We do not want to lose it. I should point out that the infrastructure upgrades of the track and the facilities there have been very well received by the administrators and the drivers I spoke to. They appreciate that we are very invested in their sport and in the event.

Mr DEAN - There is no issues with Targa, I take it? Targa is here to stay.

Mr HODGMAN - No, none at all.

Minister for Heritage

Output group 3 -

3.2 Historic heritage services

Mr HODGMAN - I introduce Mr Tim Baker, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks Water and Environment; and Acting Director of Heritage Tasmania, Ester Guerzoni. We have other officials on hand should we require. I am happy to get straight into questions.

CHAIR - Okay. There is nothing you need to share with the committee?

Mr HODGMAN - There are a lot of very positive things to talk about. If there is anything I feel we have missed when we conclude, I will add it on.

CHAIR - I have a question in relation to the initiative that commenced in 2014-15 with your Government - the development of the multipurpose visitor centre at Woolmers. It says that this will be completed in the second half of 2017. I am interested in whether those works have been completed. Was the budget allocation and the generous commitment by the state of Tasmania enough to address the matters put forward and to deliver us a first-class project?

Mr HODGMAN - Sure. It is indeed a first-class, world-class World Heritage site. In responding, I want to acknowledge the extraordinary and generous commitment and contribution by Mr Nigel Peck, who was very attached to the property and committed to the development of this new facility.

We made a commitment before the 2014 election to deliver this project. I am very pleased to report that the major construction phase of the visitor centre was completed in February 2017. Work has now turned to finalising the fit-out, landscaping and interpretation so it is true to say the bulk of the work has been done. It is not fine-tuning or the finer details; it is making sure it is as well presented as it can be for the expected opening and commencement of operations a little later this year.

We contributed \$1.72 million towards the development as part of our commitment to ensuring that the World Heritage values of Woolmers Estate and Brickendon are recognised and appreciated. This will allow more people to experience that. In fact, it will be an attraction, a drawcard, to the property. It will amp up, if not reset, our view and its place in our historic heritage asset.

It will be a multifunctional facility that will allow a range of activities to be hosted at the site as well, which will also generate revenue for the ongoing presentation and conservation of Woolmers. It has had its challenges in the past and, as with Government House and other heritage assets, if we can find ways for them to be revenue generators - as this will be at Woolmers - that will be an additional benefit. It has been an extraordinary effort by all those connected with it and again, my compliments to the committee and volunteers.

CHAIR - I was going to say that a significant number of volunteers would make that place tick.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, they are very passionate. With the last instalment of state funding, \$438 000 payable on 1 August, it is understood that the cost of constructing the new centre exceeded the allocated budget. That is where Mr Peck rose to the challenge and provided additional funding for that allocation. Expenditure has been reduced in a number of areas as part of the construction phase and in other areas like landscaping, but at no additional cost to the state but an additional cost to the Budget. Construction was delayed a little also due to inclement weather, with very heavy rains over winter. It is due to open at some stage later this year. Hopefully it will be a pivotal moment for the property.

To go the point made earlier about capitalising on our heritage asset, this Government is certainly investing significantly and in this case is co-partnering with the private sector to invest in one of our great heritage assets. I hope everyone comes along for the opening a little later this year.

CHAIR - Let us know - we do not always get invited. That is a discussion for another day about inviting members in their local area. I think you have opened a can of worms there, Premier. In regard to other projects, and you indicated there was a number of them: is there a new project members may not know about that you believe is significant? That is the only one that has been identified in our paperwork.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, Highfield House is another commitment.

CHAIR - That is at Stanley?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. That is an amazing property as well. Maria Island is another recipient of additional support; a rediscovered initiative to remind people of the amazing iconic destinations for tourism we have: Cradle Mountain; Highfield in the north-west; and Maria Island's World Heritage site, Darlington, which is an amazing place.

We have committed \$1.8 million over two years to support restoration of the World Heritage-listed Darlington site to provide substantial improvements to visitor services. Members would be aware of the new ferry service now operating; it is allowing more locals and tourists to rediscover Maria. It is a world-class experience, an iconic destination, and we are providing the sizeable investment of \$1.8 million to increase visitation.

There is additional funding, \$760 000 via parks and wildlife, for conservation works at Entally; Darlington, as I mentioned; Maatsuyker Island; Bruny Island; Cape Wickham; and Low Head and other sites. Whilst not the minister for parks and wildlife, I know they also contribute significantly to the heritage assets. Our heritage estate, which, dare I say, is part of the visitor economy. Those members keen on our response to the efforts and increased attention paid to heritage tourism will see this Budget demonstrates we are investing heavily in these extraordinary places. I can talk about Highfield, if you would like.

Ms ARMITAGE - It is probably not necessary. We can always read about that.

Mr HODGMAN - Okay, CH Smith building in Launceston - there are a lot.

CHAIR - No disrespect to our north-western colleagues, but I know there will be some interest in the CH Smith building.

Mr HODGMAN - Where there was a blight, not an attractive first impression in the city of Launceston, there is now well and truly work underway. Bear in mind, its cultural and heritage values, which are well protected and advocated for by a number of enthusiastic locals. Development is now occurring on this site after more than two decades of very little happening. It has been the subject of community interest for many years. In 2016, Mr Errol Stewart and Mr Scott Curran purchased the site. They announced plans to redevelop it in a way that will allow the re-use the site's historic buildings. The developers - and I have spoken to them both about it - have a strong appreciation for the site's extraordinary heritage values. They came up with a proposal that has managed to successfully tick all the boxes.

It was great to visit the site recently and to see the jobs and activity at that place. The Government provided a \$60 million loan fund to the City of Launceston as part of the Northern Economic Stimulus package, which was designed to stimulate growth in the northern economy during a short period of economic lull. The city is using \$9 million of that to support the initiation of the project. Who might occupy the premises, as we discussed earlier on, is a matter for the Treasurer, but I am sure it will be an attractive site to potential tenants. I want to sincerely acknowledge the efforts of Errol Stewart and Scott Curran in working closely with local heritage groups. They are enthusiasts. By working collaboratively and responding to the concerns of those groups, with the support of the Launceston City and the Tasmanian Heritage Councils, we are now at a point where this site is being revitalised. It is a good thing for the city.

Ms ARMITAGE - They have the runs on the board to achieve it.

Mr FINCH - I am smiling because two decades ago Michael Larissey, the owner of the site, lived on one side of me, while John Millwood, who put a stop to the development, lived on the other side. I felt as if I lived in the demilitarised zone a couple of decades ago.

CHAIR - So, the honourable member moved out.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, amazing history. It is good to see some progress.

Mr DEAN - Yes, thank you. Some of these questions dovetail across to tourism, but how will the Government encourage a greater appreciation of our built heritage in Tasmania?

Mr HODGMAN - Mr Baker, you were not here when we talked about the findings of the legislative council inquiry and review. That is prompting a lot of activity around tourism and visitor economy-related assets we have spoken about.

We have better collaboration between agencies - Heritage; notably, tourism, as Mr Fitzgerald confirmed, and parks and wildlife - to ensure a more holistic, whole-of-government approach.

The T21 strategy, which captures the Visitor Economy Strategy to 2020, comprises the framework for achieving greater visitation and ensuring important elements of the brand and the state's positive attributes. Again, as referred to by Mr Fitzgerald, we are capturing the heritage aspect. It is a valued part and a key attribute of what brings visitors to the state and encourages Tasmanians to travel around the state to access these various heritage sites.

Mr DEAN - Thank you for that. In a way, we are delighted that both tourism and heritage come under your umbrella as minister and as Premier, which is a great thing for National Trust and heritage sites. They are hand-in-glove in many respects.

Mr HODGMAN - I would have said in the opening exactly that point. We had to, unfortunately, consider a reallocation of portfolios. Mr Groom, taking on additional responsibilities, needed to give something up, and heritage sits well with tourism and Aboriginal Affairs.

Mr DEAN - There is no suggestion that the minister, Mr Groom, was not doing a good job in that area.

Mr HODGMAN - No, he was not happy to give it up. I had to wrench it off him.

Mr DEAN - In what ways will the minister encourage Tourism Tasmania to work more closely with the National Trust and other heritage bodies to facilitate tourists' desire to visit heritage buildings and precincts around Tasmania?

Tourism Tasmania has received a considerable amount of funding in this Budget. Can the National Trust look forward to Tourism Tasmania providing some of that money into promoting tourism objectives in some greater degree?

Mr HODGMAN - We missed the opportunity to talk directly to Mr Fitzgerald about this. He is aware. I think one of the benefits of these committee hearings is that it reminds us all of the need to intersect and coordinate what we are doing. At the recent forum there was a commitment to involve the issue of heritage tourism in future meetings of the Premier's Visitor Economy Advisory Council, which deals with multi-agency-level conversations on issues such as this. I note, as Ester reminded me, that Brett Terossi is a well-respected and valued member of both the Tourism Tasmania Board and the Tasmanian Heritage Council. He is the chair. He provides a very useful intersection at that high level. We are taking more positive strides forward.

With respect to the National Trust, which you rightly mention, perhaps Tim could provide some perspective as to how the National Trust might be a partner as well in what we are seeking to do.

Mr BAKER - Perhaps to give you some sense of that, the numbers for visitors at National Trust properties - which I suspected I might get a question on - last year was 55 742; and this year it was 56 000, a slight increase, which is strong. You mentioned in the earlier session that it is really important the National Trust has found a new home. That is going to be in a heritage building, which is very good, and I commend Ester and the team for what they have done working closely with them. It is a much better office space; it is in the city and where the National Trust's customers and where there volunteers are, which I think is a really strong point.

The Government provides \$300 000 a year, and they are continuing to do that. Ester can help me with this, but my understanding is that the agreement is due at the end of this financial year, so we are in discussions with them around that funding, but we have budgeted it out to continue it. It is really just around working on the broader issue of how we can get better synergies with them.

The Premier mentioned this, but I reinforce that Brett Torossi moving to be the chair of the Heritage Council has been really important. Brett brings a huge tourism background to the role and there has been a real push within the council and in Heritage Tasmania and the department more broadly on what those synergies are, particularly working with Parks in our department and also with Tourism Tasmania.

Mr DEAN - But the news is not all good. There is the integrity project and the removal of places from the register, plus they have had six managers over 18 months, so how can we have faith in the project? This included a resignation of the registration manager who claimed he no longer had faith in the project. Do you wish to comment there, Premier?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, I will make some observations about the importance of the project as to some of the personnel issues noted as of interest to government. We can talk a little more as to how big a deal that is. I do not understate the issue, but the project itself, bearing in mind it was commenced well before my time as minister, was designed to improve the integrity and the value of all properties, assets and entries on the register, which should, if it is to be seen as a serious account of our heritage asset, contain properties worthy of entry onto the register.

Back in 2013-14 or thereabouts, an independent audit of the register concluded that 70 per cent of its entries met the registration criteria and the balance required review. So around 30 per cent of the properties on the Heritage Register were dubiously contained within the register and afforded that status. Notwithstanding their merits individually, it started to bring into question the integrity of the Heritage Register which I think we all agree should have the very highest standards of probity and integrity attached to it.

The register was the subject of a review in 2014-15 and very extensive public consultation process, a remarkable effort in my view by the council and its chair, Mr Torossi. They engaged with the community to deal with some of the misapprehensions and misrepresentations about what was in fact occurring. The process ultimately removed 514 properties, around 10 per cent, from the register; it was concluded in December last year. I think a very pertinent point is that throughout the process and through to its conclusion, there were no appeals from any property owner, about decisions to remove the properties from the register. There are some concerns around the impact -

Mr DEAN - Sorry, Premier, when you say there were no appeals, I recall forwarding a report through to the Heritage office myself in relation to the streets and the ingress area. It may not have been taken to an official appeal, but certainly there were appeals to the Heritage Committee not to remove that listing.

Mr HODGMAN - I was literally about to refer to the next element of public concern, which is understandable, but that is the impact of the new planning scheme and the place of streetscapes, which would be to your point, and the protections available for such areas. I am advised, and I will be corrected if I am wrong, as to whether any formal appeals were commenced or not. It is not to say it didn't raise some concerns in the community, and there are some other matters which we will go to in just a moment.

Mr DEAN - If I could butt in there, the information I have is one-third of the staff at HT were cut when you came to power. The comment made after that was, 'How can we believe the removals were done thoroughly when the staff numbers were so low?'

Mr HODGMAN - I will get you the precise numbers, but that is not the case.

Mr DEAN - I am reading from advice given to me so I am not saying that - it is a question I have been asked to ask.

Mr HODGMAN - I will tell you exactly what the numbers are.

Mr BAKER - The numbers I have are from 2015, when the total number of FTEs was 10.7; the current number is now 14.

Mr DEAN - So what was the number when the current Government came into power?

Mr BAKER - I took this one on notice yesterday. I might have to take it on notice again to get you the 2014 numbers. As to the overall question of how you can have confidence in the process, I can tell that every removal was done in accordance with the act. The process followed was in accordance with the act and, as the Premier has indicated, there were no appeals. Yes, there were 37 objections when it first came up. They were assessed by the council. I suspect conversations were had and the outworking of that was that there was no appeals, which is a really solid number.

On the question of the number of project managers on the project, I have heard a bit said about there being six. I repeat what I said yesterday: that is not consistent with the numbers we were told about the number of project managers. There has been some turnover, and that is a reflection of staff moving around in our department, which happens a lot but is not necessarily a reflection of anything other than that. On the registration manager, yes, the registration manager resigned. There was an acting registration manager who was working very closely with the director, Pete Smith, whom many of you would know, and a new registration manager has been employed and has continued to have oversight of registration on the register.

I understand this was a contentious issue and there was a lot of public comment around it, but we remain firm that the best way to manage heritage in this state is to have the most accurate register possible. We are now in a position, as you can see in the papers, where we have reached 90 per cent accuracy. Everyone would like 100 per cent accuracy. It is an ongoing process in terms of new properties coming on, but we are in a stronger position to manage heritage now than we were

before we started this process. Ninety per cent accuracy on a register with just over 5040 properties is pretty good considering the scale and the amount of heritage in the state.

Mr DEAN - I am told we have nominations from 10 years ago still sitting in the pile for consideration. Do we have nominations from that long ago or for longer periods still to be assessed?

Ms GUERZONI - We have a number of nominations more than five years old sitting there but I would not know the oldest one without going through them all. A few years ago the Heritage Council made a concerted effort to get that number right down, and it has done so. More recently they instigated a process of having a prioritised assessment list each year so they have a specific work program that picks up nominations. We are also now responding more quickly to nominations as they come in. Those that would never meet the criteria are dealt with straightaway so the list does not start growing again.

Mr DEAN - How many would we have on that backlog list?

Ms GUERZONI - I would have to check the exact figure, but it would be around 300.

Mr BAKER - It is quite an involved process to get off and on the register, by design, given the importance of it. It is probably worth very quickly explaining the process to get on the register.

Ms GUERZONI - It is a two-stage process. It takes 120 days and that is without doing some consultation with the owners before we even start putting the place on the register. There is discussion with the owners now, which never used to occur.

There is an assessment of the history. A recommendation goes to the Heritage Council and it is provisionally registered. The owner is informed and then there is a public consultation process. Any representations from that are reviewed by the Heritage Council. A decision is made to either permanently register a property or to say it does not meet the criteria.

CHAIR - Is that the entire list?

Mr DEAN - No, I have a heap more, but I will put them on notice. There is just one final one, the nominations - you interrupted me. It was quite an important question too. It will come to me in a minute, if there are any further questions.

CHAIR - Any other questions in relation to the Heritage Register?

Mr DEAN - I know what the question was not. The question is this: The concern of people who are passionate about their heritage, about these ones that have been nominated, is that in the meantime some of those buildings will fall apart or will become part of a development application and could well be lost under that process. Once they are nominated, and if a development application comes into local government for that to be pulled down, what impact does the nomination have in relation to that development application?

Ms GUERZONI - Under the legislation, there are no provisions. The Heritage Council, like any other person, could make a representation if they so choose to in relation to the development application. There are some local councils that seek Heritage Tasmania advisers' advice in relation to developments, even though a place might not be on the register, and we give that freely.

Mr DEAN - Right. It is questionable and it is not a foolproof position we have. Thank you. I will ask those questions on notice.

Ms ARMITAGE - Regarding properties, very old properties, on the register, does the Heritage Council do anything to ensure they are looked after? That they are not allowed to, as the member next to me said, fall down and go into huge disrepair when they are very important?

Ms GUERZONI - Unlike the legislation in other states, there is no specific provision in our Tasmanian historic heritage legislation that requires maintenance. The vast majority of property owners do maintain their heritage properties and are very passionate about them.

We offer free advice. Any property owner can come to us for advice. We often get neighbours ringing up to say something is happening next door. We look into that. It is through those mechanisms.

Ms ARMITAGE - The property I am thinking of is one that dates from the early 1800s which is in a terrible state of disrepair. The owners do not wish to do anything. So there is nothing that we can do to enforce it?

Ms GUERZONI - The other thing is that Heritage Council makes these works guidelines available online. Local government uses these as well. It is the most downloaded area of our website.

Ms ARMITAGE - So unless you want to do it, there is nothing to encourage people?

Ms GUERZONI - There is no compliance.

Ms ARMITAGE - No, and no funding.

Ms GUERZONI - There are abilities for orders under the act to repair. Heritage Council has not used those very often in the past.

Ms ARMITAGE - So they can?

Ms GUERZONI - Yes.

Mr BAKER - If it is reported. The issue raised has got to be reported.

CHAIR - That may affect neighbourly relations. Thank you. Now we will move to 3.3, which is Aboriginal heritage.

3.3 Aboriginal heritage

Ms LOVELL - Premier, I would like to acknowledge the work the department has done on the amendments to the Aboriginal Relics Act. I welcome and look forward to the full review that will take place over the next three years. I think really important and beneficial work is being done there.

Looking at the output group 3 line items, and particularly line 3.3 for Aboriginal heritage, and the amount of money that has been dedicated to that. We put a lot of money towards colonial

heritage. When you compare or look at the amount dedicated purely to Aboriginal heritage, it is significantly different. Does your Government have any plans for a more equitable share of funding?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes. Certainly I would say the passing of that legislation is a recognition of the increased community appreciation for Aboriginal heritage. That is reflected in those laws, and appropriately so, not just with respect to what might happen to those who wilfully damage or permanently damage those sites, but also their value. It is reflected in the new Aboriginal heritage legislation, which I think was not insignificant, that passed through parliament.

It was the result of a lot of hard work and effort, including by former governments. There has been a lot of very sensitive consultation and engagement to try to get to where we are, bearing in mind it is only a significant step. There will be a process of review. I certainly accept there are also budgeting issues attached to this. I know Mr Baker wants to provide some context. As the new Minister for Heritage, I am more than happy to take on the challenge.

Mr BAKER - I would like to make a few points. First, we have had a conversation with the community and the community groups over a period of maybe two or three years about attempting to level off that funding. If you have a look at the way the department now works, it has a division which is natural and cultural heritage, whereas the focus before was always very much on the natural, and then the cultural was in a group over here.

We have brought them together, and I think that has made a big difference. We have Steve here, who is the director of cultural heritage. I would also say, and I am in no way making excuses for this, but a lot of the work that Parks does, which is in that big Parks budget, is both cultural and natural heritage. What you are seeing is the line that is specific to cultural heritage, but a lot of what Parks does is in this space

Second, I quote David Gough from the Six Rivers Aboriginal Corporation. When I gave him this very spiel about rebalancing, he made it very clear to me that to him there is no difference between natural and cultural heritage, 'natural heritage is Aboriginal heritage'. So from that point of view, I think it is more about taking an Aboriginal viewpoint with the way we manage natural heritage, as well as it is just simply putting more money into cultural heritage. It is a longstanding issue and it is going to take time to balance the two. It is also about changing the way we think about natural heritage.

Ms LOVELL - My second question is in relation to joint management opportunities. I believe the funding was over four years and we are in the last three years of that funding. Is that right?

Mr HODGMAN - That is right. Yes, the first was last year's Budget.

Ms LOVELL - What are the plans for that program post that funding?

Mr HODGMAN - We are only one year into the four, and an \$800 000 commitment. It is another result of our reset agenda and the consultation process that took me and other ministers across the state talking to Aboriginal Tasmanians and imagining what other things we might positively do with respect to connection to country. That is an option, but so too we thought and with great enthusiasm and advocacy and encouragement by Aboriginal Tasmanians, the joint management of reserves is another option available to us.

A cultural management group within Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania was established to oversee this program and work closely with Aboriginal people and organisations. Desired outcomes include delivering relevant outcomes from the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area management plan completed in 2016; establishing improved links between the natural and cultural heritage aspects of Aboriginal interests; providing advice on matters pertaining to Aboriginal cultural values in the TWWHA; leading policy and project work, including development of interpretation material; and leading the development of joint management arrangements for the TWWHA. We are not at this stage wanting to be pre-emptive or prescriptive in terms of how the funding is used and what might come of it because we wanted very much to let the Aboriginal community itself take the lead.

A concept plan for joint management is now being developed into an options paper by the cultural management group. That will be used for consulting with the Aboriginal community over the next 12 months. The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area management plan allows for two years to fully establish the cultural management group and five years to establish governance arrangements that provide non-government Aboriginal organisations in the joint management of the Aboriginal cultural values of the TWWHA. Developing a joint management framework that is agreed and accepted by the Aboriginal community and the Government will, of course, take some time to deliver, but we have set out four areas for how the funding will be spent, reflecting the priorities established in the management plan. They are establishing governance arrangements for joint management, developing interpretation material, delivering cultural awareness training and providing regular access program for Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal Heritage Council will play a key advisory role.

In summary, and with respect to future funding commitments, a lot is being done with what we have committed now that will no doubt fuel the ongoing work in this area as this very substantive, exciting and evolutionary piece of work is unfolding.

Ms BAKER - I think that was perfect. The only thing I would say in addition to that is that the TWWHA management plan the Premier mentioned is a pretty extraordinary document. It is the first statutory plan in this state to have dual management named up in it. Certainly we are talking about a very large area of huge significance. In a lot of ways that sets out the pathway for how we get to an agreement on dual management. Really, if you are talking about the TWWHA, you are talking about the highest priority areas in the state. The key point is this is not going to be about the department telling the community what dual management should look like. It is going to be about us going into community, talking to them and finding the models that work, as Ms Rattray said, as best as we can for as much of the community as possible.

CHAIR - Thanks very much.

Mr FINCH - Premier, we know that penalties are being increased. Despite the minister for the environment saying everything possible is being done to monitor Aboriginal heritage in the north-west, quad bikers have illegally accessed the Arthur-Pieman area. The minister also says a number of infringement notices have been issued, but they do not seem to be a deterrent. Apart from increasing penalties, what else are you going to do to protect Aboriginal cultural and natural heritage?

Mr HODGMAN - There is a massive increase in penalties which should serve to deter most Tasmanian citizens, but there is no way to legislate against imbeciles who would do such a thing willingly and knowingly damage Aboriginal heritage. A very important step forward was the passing of the change to the Aboriginal Relics Act, the Aboriginal Heritage Act.

Mr DEAN - It will not be a deterrent unless you get the message out there. How are you going to get the message out to them that those penalties apply?

Mr HODGMAN - By getting some successful prosecutions.

Mr BAKER - I can talk about how we are going to get the message about the changes out there. I am very conscious I am not here representing the Parks and Wildlife Service, but I can give you some context. Yes, there is active monitoring going on up there right now and that includes rangers on the ground and other compliance tools such as cameras. We have made that clear in the public in the past. Large fines work as a deterrent when people are caught, and that is the challenge. The challenge for the Parks and Wildlife Service will be to catch someone and then use the penalties. I can assure you, given the size of the penalties, hopefully if and not when someone is caught up there doing the wrong thing, they will get a much bigger whack when the act comes to life than they would have otherwise. I am also aware, having been up there recently with Steve, that there is increased signage from what there used to be and we are doing our best to put the signs up and make them as clear as possible, but, as the Premier said, it is hard to legislate for imbeciles.

Mr HODGMAN - Something else that came out of the debate about Aboriginal heritage and recreational access, which is very much part of the Tasmanian lifestyle and culture and trying to find the right balance, is that it has increased awareness of these issues and the passing of new laws. It has been difficult in the past when former governments tried to progress things. It is not easy, it is a sensitive area and we have to be mindful of the views of Aboriginal communities across the state, a number of which have differing views on these subjects as well, so it is about trying to find the right balance.

It increases awareness and we need very practical illustrations to changes to laws and signage, clearly closing unauthorised tracks, marking the location of tracks so no-one has an excuse - and they are not able to plead one under the new laws either - and increased monitoring through various means, including potentially engaging rangers. Having an Aboriginal and non-Indigenous ranger presence in areas at risk is an important way to catch those who offend and visibly demonstrate that we are not just leaving people to their own devices but that their behaviours and activities are being monitored and, in some cases, as the deputy secretary has said, being filmed.

Mr FINCH - Do quad bikes have registration numbers?

CHAIR - Some do, but not all. Mr Dean, do you have a question?

Mr DEAN - I have already asked and it was put on hold to be answered in this session, but I think it has been partly answered. It was about what money has been allocated or will be available in the 2017 Budget towards assisting with administration and verification of Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage items?

Mr BAKER - One of the projects Steve's team is working on at the moment is called the cultural mapping project. It is a project to the value of around \$400 000 of Commonwealth money and is specifically looking at mapping and further mapping Aboriginal heritage in Tasmania in the World Heritage Area and more specifically in the extension that was added recently.

The key focuses of the project are mapping heritage to find out where this Aboriginal heritage is, developing a long-term plan for how we continue to map heritage in the state and finally doing

an extensive desktop assessment of what we already know about what heritage we have. As I am sure you can imagine, Mr Dean, we have piles of paper everywhere in the department. We have already done a big piece of work to bring that together.

The current Aboriginal Heritage Register has 12 500 entries on it already and we have talked in other forums about how that information is now going to be made available via Dial Before You Dig. We are also hoping by the end of next year the actual register itself will be made available in a more presentable way for the general public as well, conceptionally sort of like a layer within the list. That kind of thing. The work around the cultural mapping extension project is ongoing. It has obviously been well-funded, which is good. We have archaeologists and members of community on the ground in the summer time in the TWWHA because it is a bit more difficult in the winter to go through and do that work. What will be the really important piece of that, as I mentioned, is the long-term plan for how we continue this work. It is being run by Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania and overseen by the Heritage Council.

Mr DEAN - That is good and predominantly I guess those items are pretty well around the state?

Mr BAKER - This is probably a very good point to ask Steve - Steve Gall is the Director of Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania.

Mr GALL - Since about 2010 we have brought in standards and guidelines, well in fact 2009. Around 2010-2011 we brought in very new standards about how consultant archaeologists and heritage experts are to provide us with information and so the level of information is now at a much better level.

They provide things like shape files so the maps we are now producing are much better; more informative. You can predict a lot more of where there is high potential and things like that. Previously we used what was called a dot point data, so one Aboriginal site the size of my fingernail is a dot on a map while a midden two kilometres long was just still only a dot on the map. With the technology now available, we are getting much better reporting.

Under the new act there is certainly a continued requirement for people to report, and so there are lot more opportunities for us to get stuff onto the map. Historically it is more for the consultants, private consultants and so on to provide us with information as they do their assessments. That has really been where much of our information has been gathered from.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, gentlemen. Can I now move to 3.4 which is the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens?

3.4 Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens

Ms ARMITAGE - With the upcoming bicentenary for the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens in 2018, what improvements or promotions are planned for the gardens to help celebrate this occasion?

CHAIR - Unveiling a plaque of Peter Cundall, I reckon.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a very special event in our state's history, the bicentenary in 2018 of the gardens. There is a planned annual program of events in development. I am very pleased to be

able to say that the Government is contributing \$75 000 towards the bicentenary in terms of planning and supporting such an event. We recognise the important role the gardens has played in our community over the past 200 years and the very special place it holds in many people's memories. Increasingly, it is a destination of choice for our visitors and also locals and the numbers we can talk about in a moment continue to increase.

There is no doubt more may be asked of government, which I am more than prepared to entertain because it is a very special occasion. We want to ensure that appropriate support is provided to allow for the planning and implementation or delivery of a range of programs, noting, of course, that there will be many other sources of support through planned marketing activity. No doubt there will be revenue from generous donors, commercial activities as well as through relevant grant programs.

The program will include significant horticultural displays on site, including 200 highly visible feature and major infrastructure projects to mark the year. These will include a \$160 000 upgrade of the very popular lily-pond deck with a contemporary lilypad deck feature that will see three architecturally designed platforms built in the shape of a lily. A lilypad floating above the water to create a unique function or wedding venue.

A major renovation of \$366 000 is also planned for a sustainable learning centre. We have a community food garden that will serve as a unique function and a learning space as well in the future. These major projects are supported by bequest funds, philanthropic donations and a grant from Skills Tasmania. It also should be noted that the volunteer group, Friends of the Gardens, has donated \$42 000 toward the lilypad project, which emphasises the importance afforded community groups.

There will be improved signage and amenities on site in preparation for the occasion, and the interpretation of the front gate, as well as newly developed collateral for visitors to navigate around the site with a theme around the bicentenary. There will be a range of official openings, community events and activities, no doubt, as well as a gala event in the planning. Theatre in the gardens will be a part of major events and concerts, as well as more traditional celebrations in the seasons of autumn and spring, including the iconic tomato sale, which generates \$30 000 or thereabouts annually.

To leave a permanent reminder of the occasion, the major project under the bicentenary is the production of a coffee table-style book, pictures and stories about the gardens, which is underway. What makes it special is that members of the public have been invited to submit their own photos or memories for inclusion. This has been funded by DPIPWE, and all profits will be returned to the gardens for their conservation program.

A lot is underway - a lot that we can look forward to - and it will be a very fitting celebration of what is a very significant event in our state's history.

CHAIR - I expect that Gary is already working out what extra funds he can ask for, given your generous indication that you are happy to provide more.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, in the first instance, to understand the program of events and there might be opportunities for the Government and other organisations to help. We want to make sure it is a memorable year, and a lot has already been planned.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Ms ARMITAGE - You mentioned tourists, is the Government looking to have the gardens included on a short tour for some of the cruise ships? Has that already happened or not?

Mr DAVIES - Yes, we certainly have. They were on the agenda; they were on the bus route for the red bus tour so we really work in that parameter and market it in that way. When we look at the number of ships that come in, you can see our restaurant figure and our day takings, and our numbers increase dramatically. So it clearly is directly proportional to those ship visits.

Mr BAKER - I think you will find the free entry to the gardens is very attractive.

Mr HODGMAN - It is a key element of the Tourism Tasmania visitation strategies, the local visitation strategy, and the numbers as you can see in the budget papers speak for themselves.

Ms ARMITAGE - How much of the forward Budget goes specifically towards the Tasmanian Seed Conservation Centre? I assume it is a fairly important part of the gardens?

Mr BAKER - We have the number of seeds but not the budget. I might take that one on notice, if I may.

Ms ARMITAGE - That is all right.

Mr DAVIES - It has gone up from 1600 to about 1800 over the last three years. Those are our living collections; that is, the seeds. This program, just so that you are aware, is in conjunction with Kew Gardens, so we have quite a prestigious system in place.

Ms ARMITAGE - Just one last question. I am wondering how many employees there are and how many volunteers?

Mr BAKER - There are 135 active volunteers contributing to the garden. It is about 1500 hours of volunteer work, which we equate to about \$750 000-worth of effort. I am a member of the board of the gardens and I am the secretary's representative, and I can tell you the Friends of the Gardens and the volunteers in their different forms are the lifeblood of the gardens. They are part of what makes it such a special place. If you walk into the gardens, usually the first person you will see is a volunteer handing you a piece of paper and hopefully reminding people to donate. They are a very important part of the gardens.

I might have to take the question about staff on notice. You have it?

Mr DAVIES - We have 36 staff members, 27.3 FTEs if you want to be exact.

Mr FINCH - When you have a free day, do you still have an opportunity for people to donate using the donation box?

Mr DAVIES - Absolutely.

Mr FINCH - There was some talk some years ago about increasing the area of the gardens, has that idea been dropped?

Mr BAKER - No, it has not been dropped. We are in healthy competition with Her Excellency at Government House. There was a suggestion we might move in that direction. I think Her

Excellency is happy to keep her borders where they are. The other piece of land often discussed is the zoo site up on the top, the old Hobart Zoo site. The board has looked at that and we have been in discussion with Hobart City Council. It is Hobart City Council land; not state land. We are open to any opportunity but, as it stands, particularly in a bicentennial year, Mr Finch, we have concentrated on what is happening within the boundaries of the garden. We remain open to ideas.

Mr FINCH - Are there opportunities to come around the bottom of the garden toward Government House?

Mr BAKER - I think that is Government House land.

Mr FINCH - They are only paddocks, though, aren't they?

Mr BAKER - That is all Government House land.

CHAIR - It might be Government House's next concert arena, so you better be careful. They are looking into that space, aren't they?

I have a question in relation to the Tasmanian Community Food Garden. Does the produce grown in that garden go to Second Bite?

Mr DAVIES - It is Second Bite. The produce goes to Second Bite and we use a lot of the produce and the herbs in the restaurant. It is a really big selling point for the restaurant that it is grown on site. It is a really good thing. It is all used within the environs and within the community.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Gary, for joining us today.

Thank you very much, Tim, for pre-empting so many of our questions. We have a reputation here and we are upholding it. We welcome back Jacqui.

Minister for the Arts

Output group 5

Culture and Creative industries

5.1 Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery -

CHAIR - Minister, on behalf of the committee, I would like to acknowledge the work that Dr Goodwin has done in this area and that she would loved to have been with us today. I spoke to her earlier in the week and she was always interested and remains so, thinking about the work of her portfolios.

Mr HODGMAN - Watching with great interest.

CHAIR - Thank you very much for taking over this important portfolio she continues to have great interest in.

Mr HODGMAN - Again, her beautiful combination with my other portfolios, I would suggest.

CHAIR - Do you have an opening statement?

Mr HODGMAN - I am happy to launch straight into it. There is a lot of exciting stuff happening. We are going through a very rich vein of form across this portfolio. I am happy to go straight into questions. It is not all perfect.

Ms LOVELL - I am interested in the changes made through the bill currently being debated in the upper House, in particular the changes to the function of the board.

Mr HODGMAN - TMAG?

Ms LOVELL - Yes, TMAG. We were advised in a briefing last week that it is not currently part of the strategic plan for TMAG or an expectation of the minister to introduce a general admission fee, being that the main key performance indicator is around visitation and the obvious impact a general admission fee has on that.

Why have you deemed it necessary to amend the legislation to give the board the power to introduce a general admission fee? I am not as concerned with fees for special events and visiting exhibitions, but in that general admission fee. Is this something you are anticipating may be introduced in future?

Mr HODGMAN - Sure. There was a lot of debate about this in the lower House and understandably so. It is a contemporary governance structure and framework for the organisation to continue to be the success it now is.

It was overrunning budgets by around \$1 million per annum not that long ago. The directors, here today, along with the rest of us want to do everything we can to ensure it keeps on a positive growth trajectory and not do anything to compromise that.

Ms LOVELL - Which it is has been, in my understanding.

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, it has. The bill, noting it is currently before the council, is designed to better enable TMAG to be on a sustainable financial footing with stronger governance structures around it. It was also developed to ensure an ongoing skills-based board drives its objectives, which are very important and not only financial. The act entrenches its purpose for being and its value to our state. It allows, other than through appropriate powers or options for a minister to provide ministerial direction, the organisation to operate in a contemporary framework.

It has been extensively consulted. It has been met with the approval of all key stakeholders. We can speak further on what the organisation does to secure revenues. There are a number of ways that occurs. It is not envisaged there will be a massive departure from the ordinary course of business, but to fetter in some way, the ability of the organisation to operate with a fair degree of autonomy. Corporate flexibility was a principle we wanted to adhere to. I am sure the director and no minister is going to want to do anything to unduly deter or discourage people from coming back to visit.

Would you like to add anything - just in terms of the likely impact?

Ms CARDING - The clarity TMAG has been looking for is that the trustees have the power to be able to charge fees for a range of services and things that happen at TMAG. In the current act there is not that clarity; it is silent on those issues. My understanding in the request the trustees put

forward was that there should be clarity around that issue. Jacqui might want to speak more to the way that has been put into that.

Ms ALLEN - In terms of drafting, we have the expansive ability or power for the trustees to set or charge fees. We believe that within the structure and administration of that are a number of checks and balances, if you like, to the capacity of trustees to set those fees. There is obviously a business plan the trustees must develop and submit to the minister and the minister must approve. The minister has the capacity to provide direction, which is not something available under the current legislative environment, so that acts as an opportunity for a minister to set expectations. The drafting approach was to look at that issue of power to set and charge fees because while there is a range of things we know the trustees might want to charge for now, we do not know in 20 years time what that might be.

As I think as we talked about in the briefings, there are a number of checks on that. There is the ministerial statement of expectations, the ministerial power of direction and TMAG's own objectives, which include visitation, so that is always going to have to be very carefully considered in levying a general admission fee. That is the basis on which the bill has been drafted the way it has.

CHAIR - My question is around the budget allocation, the funding. You indicated, Premier, that it has been about \$1 million over budget and yet there is only \$700 000 extra. Is that right?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, and thankfully we are not having to -

CHAIR - So are we still expecting to have a RAF in the future? That is the concern.

Mr HODGMAN - An operating deficit, you mean?

Ms CARDING - We delivered within budget last year. At this point we are scheduled to be within budget at the end of this financial year so we were not planning on putting forward any request of that nature. The budget allocation, rather than operating, is targeted towards organisational reform, so it is ring-fenced for particular issues.

Mr HODGMAN - It is to keep it on this very positive trajectory. That is an additional funding allocation for that purpose, not to run to deficit.

CHAIR - It has still gone into the line item. I am very pleased to see we are coming in on budget. If everybody goes over budget, the Budget is in trouble. That goes for all of us. In the briefing process last week we had a representation from the Royal Society, and they were certainly very keen to hold onto their space. Are you aware of that issue, Premier?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes.

CHAIR - Do you support the Royal Society in their endeavours to have their space clearly articulated in the agreement moving forward? They have that deed of agreement, but making sure that they are secure into the future for the next 187 years, I think, was what they were looking for.

Mr HODGMAN - I am shortly to meet with them.

CHAIR - They will be very strong in their representation. They certainly were to the Legislative Council.

Ms ALLEN - As we discussed at the briefing, there is a deed in place between the Royal Society and TMAG trustees which is not affected by the drafting or the passage of the bill. There is the capacity for them to hold tenure over that space until such time as they renegotiate an agreement with the trustees.

CHAIR - They certainly will make a strong representation. Are there any other questions in regard to TMAG? Members feel like we have talked about TMAG for two weeks straight now so that is probably why there are not as many questions. We have certainly looked at a lot of aspects of TMAG over the last week, so thank you very much. I appreciate that.

5.2 Arts industry development

CHAIR - We have a funding increase that would obviously be very important, Premier, when it comes to the Tasmanian Youth Arts Strategy. Is that strategy to be rolled out in all regions across the state and how will that be implemented? It is \$360 000.

Mr HODGMAN - The Tasmanian Youth Arts Strategy is the first dedicated youth arts and engagement strategy. It is a new initiative backed by a recurring commitment of \$360 000 per year and is the state's first dedicated youth arts strategy. Its objective is to support and invigorate Tasmania's youth arts sector; improve the social health and wellbeing of young people through arts education and arts engagement; and continue to support young Tasmanians into jobs and engage with cultural and creative industries, making sure that young people with an interest in arts and those who might not yet know it are provided with support and encouragement. We have a very vibrant arts sector and no doubt many young Tasmanians who can contribute to it in the future. Program guidelines for the Youth Arts and Engagement Fund are under development and will be released very soon. It is statewide, to be clear, and will be based on applications through a peer-assessment process, which is very much the norm now when it comes to arts funding.

CHAIR - I will ask a question I know I have asked in this area before. There is a policy in place where a piece of art, to a percentage value, has to be included in every new building constructed by the state Government. I believe it used to be 2 per cent of the overall cost of the project. Is that still the case?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, it is 2 per cent of the capital works budget for government building and refurbishment projects over \$250 000, to be set aside for commissioning of public art.

CHAIR - That would be nearly every building. You do not build very much for \$250 000 and you could hardly do a refurbish for that now. Is that policy by any chance being reviewed at any stage, given that almost every development would fit into that category? When that was set \$250 000 probably brought you quite a lot of redevelopment.

Mr HODGMAN - I am advised the program was reviewed not that long ago.

CHAIR - And is there a new policy?

Mr HODGMAN - To process but not policy. I am not sure why that was.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

CHAIR - Probably because of the questions that were asked through this committee process when times were pretty tough in the budget process. Has there been a change to that policy?

Mr HODGMAN - No, there are issues with the process.

CHAIR - What is the outcome of the review, then?

Mr HODGMAN - That is a very good question. It was designed to strengthen the process of projects being approved through the minister, to give them more oversight of the project as it progressed. It was not a review of the sort you are suggesting. It is a reasonable proposition and something I will get my head around.

CHAIR - Thank you. It would be worth looking at as an overarching theme. I am not saying that some of these are installations and not important. My thoughts have been that in the past we did not use enough of our own local art instalments in some of these areas and there is not always the need to have it at 2 per cent of the capital expenditure.

Ms ALLEN - Perhaps I can add some further context. The 2 per cent budget allocation in some instances goes toward specific artworks. In many instances it is allocated toward structural components of the buildings. An example might be a design requiring installation of a glass screen in reception area; then often that is the part of the project targeted as the percentage for art projects. An artist might be engaged to assist us with the design of that screen. While in some instances, the budget is allocated to purchasing artworks, to the best of my knowledge, in the great majority of circumstances, it is engaging with artists - and predominantly local artists - to design parts of the building that would need to be there anyway. The discipline of public art in buildings these days is about integrating artworks and design into the fabric of the building. It is about adding a design element by engaging an artist to a structure that would be there in either case.

CHAIR - I acknowledge that. We have some unusual pieces of art, and beauty is in the eye of the beholder when it comes to that. Art in the front of schoolyards, for instance, nothing to do with the structural component of a building, and they sit there because there has been a redevelopment. They have come from somewhere, possibly not local, and I have always thought that when you have a redevelopment in a community it would be nice to reward a local artist. Whether it is broadly in Tasmania or in the local town, we should look at our own first if that policy is in place.

Mr DEAN - I am considering putting a Richmond football poster in my new building.

CHAIR - That may come under the Tasmanian Youth Arts Strategy funding because they are probably the only ones that would be able to paint something of a Richmond orientation.

Mr HODGMAN - There are a number of programs that favour or support local artists.

CHAIR - Local artists often struggle to make ends meet unless they are very well known or are of world renown. I bring this up every year and I see the same nods, so thank you.

Mr HODGMAN - It is the first time for me.

Ms ALLEN - I can confirm that the commissions are all Tasmanian artists. Part of the intent of the program is to support local artists.

Mr DEAN - Is it done by tender or do they go to a specific artist?

Ms ALLEN - There is a process of developing an artist brief. The process is managed through Arts Tasmania. The commissioning agency works with Arts Tasmania to develop a brief and then that brief is circulated to a number of artists who might be able to respond to that brief and then a decision is made about which concept between the commissioning agency and Arts Tasmania in terms of which concept would go forward.

CHAIR - Is there a register artists can register to, so that their work might be looked at or they might be invited to present a concept when something comes up?

Mr SUDMALIS - Thank you for that question. There is no register because the tender is completely publicly available and available to all interested artists. An artist will respond directly to the brief. The briefs are ordinarily site-specific depending upon the needs and desires of the commissioning agent. The response from any particular artist must address those concerns.

CHAIR - You are not concerned, Premier, in your new role that there is not a register for all Tasmanian artists? I appreciate it is an open tender and publicly available. Is that in the local newspaper? Is it on a website? How do people know an opportunity may be coming up?

Mr SUDMALIS - It is distributed through a number of different means: Tasmania's extensive social media, Facebook and Twitter; the Tasmanian Arts guide; the fortnightly newsletter for the art sector; and the networks of the commissioning agency.

CHAIR - You feel the process we have in place to make sure all our Tasmanian artists are given or know of the opportunities is solid at this time?

Mr HODGMAN - I believe so. If that is not the case, if there are any unsure of how it operates, or if there are other ways we can enhance awareness of it, we would be more than keen to hear those. It has been a successful scheme for many years.

Mr DEAN - Who is required to put the advertising to the artists for the artwork on the sites? Is it the builder, the architect or the developers? Do they come to you?

Mr SUDMALIS - No, we do that.

Mr DEAN - So, they come to you?

Mr SUDMALIS - They come and we work the brief together in order to frame it in terms of the Art Site Scheme guidelines. This is to make sure all the insurances are in place, that due diligence is performed and the sites of the work are appropriate, meet all appropriate legislative requirements around public health and safety and are relevant to the commissioning agency as well.

Mr DEAN - Is that built into the contracts that apply to all public buildings?

Ms ALLEN - It is part of the budget allocation. An amount is delivered to Arts Tasmania in respect of each project which they manage in partnership with the commissioning agency.

Mr FINCH - I am pleased with the figure being expended by the Government in arts industry development. I believe you said the Tasmanian Youth Arts strategy was a statewide project, which

has been allotted \$360 000. They are the words to describe it here are really wishy-washy. It does not give me an understanding of how this is going to unfold for young people. How do they access it? How do they join the program? Is it going to be done through schools, through university; how is it going to work?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes, we are developing it as we speak. It is a significant commitment financially and in terms of wanting to engage young Tasmanians with an interest in the arts. Jacqui might provide you with some insights into our thinking at this early stage. It is \$360 000 recurrent so it is an ongoing commitment.

Ms ALLEN - As the Premier said, we are still developing the detail of the program. I think there is an expectation that parts of the program will be available to support arts organisations working with young people. Part of the program will be available to support an application process. We might receive applications from young artists, to undertake their work, but all of this is subject to being finalised and conducting appropriate consultation.

Mr FINCH - What sort of groups do you have in mind?

Mr SUDMALIS - In terms of cohorts of young people or in arts organisations and groups?

Mr FINCH - Yes, young people. Is it dance, is it theatre?

Mr SUDMALIS - It is across all artistic disciplines and practises. It also will include new and emerging art practices, those that might be screen-based, cultural knowledge and cultural transmission.

Mr FINCH - Cultural takes that back to the account for the Tasmanian Aboriginal youth arts and culture, is that part of this program?

Mr SUDMALIS - Yes.

Mr FINCH - Okay. It will be interesting next year at budget Estimates to drill down a bit to see what has unfolded.

Ms ARMITAGE - On the same issue: I can see they are still being developed. Is it likely to be run through the Department of Education?

Mr SUDMALIS - This will not be run through the Department of Education. In the first year, I will be looking to striking some good partnerships with education so that we can assist each other in meeting some of our creative education and aesthetic education goals.

Ms ARMITAGE - Any idea how many new staffing positions will be needed?

Mr SUDMALIS - In terms of administering this fund, zero.

Ms LOVELL - Premier, I have a question about a community arts group in northern Tasmania, Interweave, one of the largest community arts groups in northern Tasmania. I understand they met with the Treasurer recently and voiced some concerns about funding.

Can you give us any information about any funding that might be available to Interweave or groups like it in the Budget?

Mr HODGMAN - Interweave specifically, I have not yet had an opportunity to meet with them. I am not au fait with their particular circumstances.

Ms ALLEN - There are a range of programs through Arts Tasmania, but perhaps David could speak.

Mr SUDMALIS - Interweave is an arts company based at the Inveresk precinct. They have a focus on young people and on arts and disability practice. If I can draw a line up to this particular point, Interweave has come to Arts Tasmania and been successful a number of times. They have also been unsuccessful a number of times.

They have come to Arts Tasmania for discrete funding under an Arts and Disability Program. They have also come to Arts Tasmania for funding an organisation's program. I expect they would be able to come to us for support additionally through the Youth Arts Strategy.

The most recent time of application from Interweave was an application that was not successful. I am meeting with Kim Schneiders of Interweave on the afternoon of 14 June to discuss further options for funding.

CHAIR - Thank you. If there are no other questions, we will move to Screen Industry Development.

5.3 Screen industry development

Mr FINCH - The increase in funding for the current financial year is because of additional funding for Screen Industry development, which is going to cease next financial year. What is the Screen Industry Development Program and why it is being dropped next financial year?

CHAIR - Given that *The Kettering Incident* won a Logie.

Mr FINCH - Yes, *Rosehaven*.

Mr HODGMAN - It goes specifically in this instance to securing the second season of *Rosehaven*, one of the current very successful local productions that received a Logie nomination for most outstanding comedy program and very high levels of rating on the ABC and its various platforms.

Knowing many people wanting to see what might happen next, season two will be shot in Tasmania over the winter. The project is in preproduction. In 2017-18 the appropriation that the member refers to, the Screen Industry Development output, includes the additional allocation of \$300 000 for supporting the second instalment of *Rosehaven*.

Mr FINCH - That is good, Premier. If further opportunities come to Tasmania, because people are glowing in their praise of the location opportunities for film and television work, is the Government flexible enough in its thinking and funding to be able to add support, as you have the additional funding here? If it needs another \$200 000, \$300 000 or \$400 000, are you prepared and do you have your radar up to jump to those opportunities?

Mr HODGMAN - Our radar is sitting here. In my short time in and around this place, and knowing how enthused the minister, Dr Goodwin, is for what is the purple patch for Tasmania's screen industry, we are very watchful and would welcome other opportunities as they arise. They will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you consider the extraordinary year we have had in Tasmanian content on the large and smaller screens, with *Lion*, *The Kettering Incident*, *Rosehaven* - all of them have received extraordinary critical acclaim and award success. Many other things are happening behind the scenes, so to speak, perhaps at a lower level.

We are always very prepared as a government to seize opportunities as they arise. We have discussed a number of them today. Having some flexibility in our Budget better enables us to do so. While we would love to be able to predict what opportunities there might be in the set of budget papers, they tend to come quickly. I think our track record shows that we are keen to do our bit to support not just film and television but the Arts portfolio generally with investments like this for a number of reasons. It not only supports our local arts sector, it is wonderful promotion of our state and adds another string to our bow in terms of our visitor economy, as well as opens the eyes of producers to the magnificence of our state and its environment, and the quality of our people emerging, enhancing the talent pool. That capacity is something that we want to sustain. With each experience and each opportunity that happens, our reputation grows. We may be a little overexcited, but we are developing quite a strong reputation globally in this sector. I can assure you if other opportunities like this arise, we will be well prepared to play our part.

Mr FINCH - Coupled with the arts industry development opportunity, we are bringing on these young people in this area. You mentioned screen development and it may be part of that program. Vicki Madden, the Launceston-based playwright who wrote *The Kettering Incident*, has another project called *The Gloaming*. I wonder if we could be apprised of where that might be at this stage and are we supporting the development of that project?

Mr HODGMAN - I was thrilled to meet Vicki and see her Logie just last week. She came into the office, which was lovely. For a lot of us who perhaps have not been that enamoured with the Logies before, we should be now because it is wonderful in terms of its impact, highlighting and showcasing our reputation. We should warmly welcome the acclaim that comes with it.

Mr SANGSTON - Mr Finch, we have been dealing with Vicki on *The Gloaming* now for at least six or seven months. She put in an application for development funding and we provided her and her co-producer, John Molloy of Mushroom Pictures, who won a Logie for the *Molly* television miniseries, with \$15 000 last year, and she subsequently secured additional development money from Screen Australia. They are writing the project now. We anticipate that once it is written, she will probably come in for production investment money if she is able to close the budget with the broadcaster.

Mr FINCH - Would the idea be that it would be filmed in Tasmania?

Mr SANGSTON - As I understand it, yes, this is a Tasmanian project.

CHAIR - Exciting news, isn't it?

Mr FINCH - I think it is such a wonderful way, Premier, to introduce the landscape of Tasmania and what Tasmania has to offer through osmosis - it can come through the screen to show people what a magical place Tasmania is.

CHAIR - What a positive note to end our day of scrutiny. Thank you very much, Alex and Jacqui. Premier, on behalf of the committee, I extend our thanks for the level of detail you provided during the day. To those who are not here at the table but who helped you during the day, please extend our personal thanks. If you would like to discuss any of the workings of the committee, please feel free to do so in the President's Room in about 15 minutes. We appreciate the effort and magnitude of work that goes into providing this output group information. My members do their homework fantastically.

The committee adjourned at 6.16 p.m.