

Tuesday 4 June 2013 - Estimates Committee A (Giddings) - Part 2**DIVISION 16**

(Legislature-General)

Output group 1**Parliamentary Reporting Service****1.1 Production and printing of Parliamentary Reports -**

CHAIR - There is no particular need for any overview.

Ms FORREST - I was going to ask about the impact of additional committee work particularly in the preparing of reports and Hansard, around the forestry committee which was a pretty full-on and intensive bit of work. What sort of impact did that have on staying within your budget?

Mr HENDY - We have done some calculations on the extra costs incurred because of that. It is approximately 84 hours of extra Hansard time required, spread over the staff. We looked at that based on an average rate we pay our Hansard and it is about \$35 000 extra. What we have been able to do is absorb that back into the budget so we have not had to apply for any additional funds.

Ms FORREST - How did you manage to absorb it back in when there had been a lot of other committee work as well throughout the year? Legislature-General supports both Houses in committees.

Mr HENDY - That is correct. I'd like to say it's really good management of our budget. Obviously, we're looking at areas that we can save on a broad spectrum across the budget. Previously, we've had a few staff changes. Last financial year we had two people that finished up which impacted on our budget quite significantly and we were able to pay them out. This year we've been able to make a little bit of a gain with regards to that.

Ms FORREST - So, the reduction in the budget allocation is just related to the payroll tax, is it?

Mr HENDY - That is correct, yes.

Ms FORREST - So it's not an overall reduction?

Mr HENDY - No, it's not.

Mrs HISCUTT - I'm not sure whether this comes in here at 1.1 or 3.1. I've noticed, in my very short time here, that we get *Hansard* at lunchtime and next morning for the afternoon session. I notice that we all have a quick flick through it and then put it into the recycling bin. Is there any need to have that there at lunchtime? It seems like a big waste to me.

Mr HENDY - A good question.

Ms GIDDINGS - There is in the lower House but -

Mrs HISCUTT - Oh, well, that may be different.

Mr PEARCE - The same applies in both Houses. For the morning session, the debate is transcribed and delivered to members by about 3 o'clock in the afternoon in both Houses, generally to enable members to have a look and make corrections if necessary.

Ms GIDDINGS - In the lower House we have question time in the morning and that tends to be the time where we like to reflect back and look at what the answers were and what question was indeed asked; all those sorts of things. Your question time is not until 2.30 p.m. so it's a different -

Mrs HISCUTT - No, I see it, have a quick flick and then throw it all out and think, oh, we've cut down more trees.

CHAIR - We'll move to the next area, the library service.

Output group 2 Parliamentary Library Service

2.1 Parliamentary Library Service -

Ms FORREST - Again, I assume there's been no real reduction in the budget here; it's just payroll tax adjustment, is it?

Mr HENDY - That is correct.

Ms FORREST - I don't have any particular questions about the library. They all do a fantastic job, as we all know.

Output group 3 Parliamentary Printing and Systems

3.1 Parliamentary Printing -

CHAIR - Our committee decided earlier that parliamentary printing is a matter for the House Committee to address. If there are matters there, the House Committee will address that.

Mr VALENTINE - I am interested in the dipping budget; it goes down to negative 8 in the out years from 2013-14 and so on it's plus 3, plus 15, plus 16. Is this just simply a reflection of the cost of IT services?

Mr HENDY - The main driver, again, is we are no longer paying payroll tax so there's a dip from the 2012-13 year to 2013-14.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, that's fine. So, why the increases?

Ms GIDDINGS - It's indexed.

Mr HENDY - CPI index.

Mr VALENTINE - Okay, as simple as that.

I also have a query about the need to print so much. I guess we all have to do our business on the floor and hard copy is an important part of that for some people but I wonder whether we ought to be looking at trying to beef up the use of these electronic things more; perhaps send more out electronically and allow members to use their iPads. I suppose that's something for the members to address rather than the administration.

Ms GIDDINGS - Probably through the Joint House Committee would be the appropriate place to raise that.

Mr VALENTINE - Okay, you learn as you go.

3.2 Parliamentary Systems

Ms FORREST - Does this area also cover the broadcasting?

Mr HENDY - Systems? Yes.

Ms FORREST - Yes, systems. I'm interested in the impact of the forestry committee, again, on IT and the broadcasting.

Mr HENDY - I had a look into that as well. The impact hasn't been overly onerous. Salaries and wages - we've had to send an IT person up north, which was about a \$500 impact. We also needed to get some more hardware equipment to the value of about \$800, so overall it is about \$1 300.

Ms FORREST - What about doing the hearings in Hobart because we are streaming?

Mr HENDY - We are doing it all in-house so there is no impact.

Ms FORREST - That is being absorbed within the current budget?

Mr HENDY - Yes.

Ms FORREST - Very efficient.

Mr HENDY - It is.

Ms FORREST - In regard to the servicing of the northern offices by IT Services, and there has been some in recent weeks, is there a particular schedule for that? I know it is hard to respond immediately. When you have a problem they can log in locally to fix some things but how are the northern offices, anywhere outside Hobart, being serviced?

Mr HENDY - I do not have specific details of how that is. As far as down here is concerned it is on a fairly regular basis but Peter might be able to shed some light on that.

Mr HANCOX - We generally try to service the offices at least twice a year and on an as-needs basis in between servicing. We have a contractor up north who we use if we need to and I believe your office might be an example. We have used temporary equipment to keep you up and running, while we have rebuilt machines that have failed through viruses or hardware issues.

Ms FORREST - Do not need any viruses. There are viruses down the Huon and in the Premier's office at the moment.

Mr HANCOX - All in all, they are serviced fairly well.

Ms FORREST - That is all within the budget you have?

Mr HANCOX - That is correct.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Regarding video conferencing, particularly in the north, we have the room, we have a lot of the set-up, there are some parts, I believe, not quite good enough for *Hansard* but the savings would be enormous if we could have the video conferencing, particularly in Henty House, up and running. It would save members coming down and there would be savings of fuel and accommodation. Have we looked at it, are we looking at it?

Mr HANCOX - We have a software video link for computer conferencing between committee room 2 and the committee room in Henty House. We have tested it a few times and it works quite well but some of the committee secretaries are not too keen to use it. It is not a full-blown video conferencing system like you can purchase but it does work.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Does it work well enough for Hansard?

Mr HANCOX - I believe so, yes.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Maybe we could be trying it.

Mr HANCOX - That will be a matter for the committees' secretaries.

Mrs ARMITAGE - One of the reasons, we have been told, is that *Hansard* say it does not work well enough and maybe we could try that at some of our committees and see if it does work.

Mr PEARCE - That is a matter we can look at. It has been discussed previously. The reliability was the issue and there was a feeling that perhaps it was not reliable enough.

Ms GIDDINGS - Will NBN help?

Mr HANCOX - At the moment NBN is not an option for Tasmanian government because of the Network Tasmania system we have here, and they have not adopted NBN as yet.

Ms GIDDINGS - As yet?

Mr HANCOX - They will though.

Ms FORREST - Is that a government decision that needs to be made?

Mr HANCOX - I do not believe so. It is a feature of the contract to government so it would be a Telstra decision driven by government business.

Ms GIDDINGS - If we were hooked up to NBN we would have a far better quality service but you would also need to make sure that your equipment was able to use that.

Mr HANCOX - That is right, it is not just the service between the ends it is also the equipment and based on cost we put in a software solution which did not cost very much at all whereas some of the higher end video conferencing is \$50 000 an end and we could not afford that.

Ms GIDDINGS - Through COAG there was a video conferencing facility funded but that was not cheap either. It is very useful, excellent quality, but it is in a small room so it is not user friendly for bigger meetings but we have been able to cut down on some interstate travel as a result.

Mrs ARMITAGE - There are quite large savings.

Ms GIDDINGS - That is the sort thing, in time, if you have the right infrastructure in place then those sorts of initiatives can be put up through the budget committee process for the required additional funding to fund something like that, it can be considered at that time against other priorities.

[1.45 p.m.]

Mr PEARCE - Certainly, Premier, this was one of the initiatives that were put up to the budget committee for this budget and the way the budget is at the present time, there are no funds available for it. It certainly was part of our list of initiatives.

Mrs ARMITAGE - It would be interesting to try what we have already, though, just to see how it works.

Mr HANCOX - I believe some of the Legislative Council members use the Health videoconferencing system; I believe Ivan Dean is one of those, so maybe you could check with him as well.

Ms FORREST - We have used it in various committees over the years but it has not been ideal, though, as a user.

Mr VALENTINE - In relation to the performance of systems in-house here and downloads to iPads and the like, it seems sometimes that it runs quite slowly. Are you in a situation where you are reaching over the optimum usage for the network we have?

Mr HANCOX - The wireless network for the iPads and what-have-you is a separate network to the parliament network and obviously this week it is over capacity. On sitting days it reaches capacity - it is just a standard home ADSL service that is propagated around the building through Wi-Fi. Outside this area it is governed by the speed of the Telstra network.

Mr VALENTINE - Is there any way of improving it in-house?

Mr HANCOX - If we had more money we would, yes.

Laughter.

Mr VALENTINE - What sort of dollars are we talking about?

Mr HANCOX - I do not know. How long is a piece of string?

Mr VALENTINE - Is that something we can look at with the joint House committee as well?

Ms FORREST - If that is a slow speed, come to my office.

Mr VALENTINE - It does affect productivity, that is all, and I just wondered whether there was an easy answer.

Mr HANCOX - No.

CHAIR - Is there anything else on that area, members, and if there is not, we are done, thanks, Premier, in that area. Thanks, gentlemen.

DIVISION 8

(Ministerial and Parliamentary Support) -

Ms GIDDINGS - I do have an overview for DPAC but DPAC is a little bit different to Ministerial and Parliamentary Support. That is ministerial offices and the like, which is more in line with my office - did I miss that?

CHAIR - We thought we could get that one done and then come back to it.

Ms GIDDINGS - And then come back to the Department of Premier and Cabinet?

CHAIR - Yes, please.

Ms GIDDINGS - That is fine. I will not do any overview in ministerial - we have continued to deliver savings with ministerial offices.

The staffing in the Premier's office, for instance, has been reduced from 16 in June 2012 to currently 14.2 and the total number of full-time equivalents in ministerial offices has dropped from 82 to 78.8 over the same period.

We have also had a reduction in mobile phone expenditure of around \$40 000, and travel costs have also been reined in by over \$38 000 and we are expected to come in at less than \$500 000 in 2012-13. Our travel policy has been successful in reducing intrastate travel expenses by just over \$20 000 and interstate travel has reduced by just under \$6 000 and overseas travel has decreased by almost \$12 000. We have been making other savings through the ministerial car fleet by reducing them from V8s to V6 vehicles, and we have reduced the number of ministerial drivers from 18 to 16. We have also transferred the ministerial drivers' accommodation from the Port Tower Building to vacant space that was available in 10 Murray Street which has resulted in recurrent savings of about \$63 500 a year. They are primarily the savings that have been achieved and we think that that has been pretty good going.

Mr MULDER - On what basis do we decide what level of ministerial support is needed, not only for you but also for others? How do you decide how many numbers are needed. Is that one of the requirements of the job?

Ms GIDDINGS - It does tend to and it comes with the portfolio areas that you have and the level of advice that is required per portfolio area. Within my own office I have three advisers that assist over the treasury and finance portfolios. One adviser looks after the GBEs which takes up a lot of his time; another adviser provides support around economic advice which extends into providing economic development advice, as much as economic overview of the economy advice; the other adviser is my Treasury adviser who does a lot of the liaising between the department and my office around budget development, overseeing the budget committee, those sorts of things. To ask one person to do all of that would be far too much work for one individual and in the end it would be ineffectual.

Mr MULDER - It is based on the number of portfolio areas of your ministry-ship?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, it is a portfolio that is a weighting within those portfolios so for me those three advisers are fairly critical. To reduce that number would start to affect the quality of the work coming out of my office.

Mr MULDER - This is advice in addition to the advice you are getting out of the ministerials so is it more or less a review of the advice you are getting?

Ms GIDDINGS - It is an element of review and it is also an element of providing alternate advice because while you get independent, fearless and frank advice from the independent public service, it is not always necessarily the only advice going around. There are different perspectives on issues that need to be considered and my advisers can have better contact with people outside of government that may have an alternate perspective that you want to consider within your decision.

Mr MULDER - How many of those advisers are media advisers rather than policy advisers.

Ms GIDDINGS - In the example I have given none of them are media advisers. Those three that look after the treasury and finance portfolios for me, none of them are media. In the Premier's office, in theory, every media adviser is mine and I then share those media advisers with other ministers. In my world I have one media adviser. The rest are part of the government communications unit.

Mr MULDER - The communications unit is also advisory in the role of the media.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes.

Mr MULDER - That is across the whole of cabinet? Then inside the parliament we also have advisers who are paid?

Ms GIDDINGS - Are you talking communication?

Mr MULDER - On a public service salary - media advisers or communications officers.

Ms GIDDINGS - They are communication advisers and we will talk more about that in the DPAC portfolio area if you wish, but as a general overview they are not media advisers, and many of them have nothing to do with the media. They are people who put together newsletters that go out to stakeholders or for the bushfire recovery for instance - I suspect we will talk about them putting a newsletter out every three weeks. They have communication officers who do those forms of communication website communication, brochure communication, internal communication.

Mr MULDER - And the odd media release.

Ms GIDDINGS - They would have some that would do some of the draft media releases for ministers, so where there is a public announcement to be made, the department would generate the draft media release and then the government communications unit would add elements or change the focus if we do not agree with the focus of the media release.

Mr MULDER - We also note in this line item, you mentioned in your overview that you have reduced the drivers by 18 to 16 and that you have found digs at the office for them, rather than out in the corporate world. I am wondering whether any view has been given, given the fact that this is not a huge Island and that most of the thing is that maybe we could move to the private sector for transport. Have we given any real thought to what would be the cost of chauffeuring ministers around the town in taxis or hire cars when they need to travel to other areas of the state?

Ms GIDDINGS - Over the years these things have been considered in terms of what could occur with ministerial drivers and each time in the end they have been not progressed for various reasons and I can tell you that as of Premier of the day while I respect taxi drivers, I would not want to be driven around town by a taxi driver I do not know; I do not know if they are going to overhear a lot of my very confidential conversations. The ministerial car is an office, it is not a car that you are sitting back in and can drive yourself in that respect. If you could be a fly on the wall in a day in the life of a Premier, you would understand that there is no way you could just simply hire a car to go up to Launceston in that respect. I think the reality is that it is just not feasible or appropriate.

CHAIR - Any further questions in this area from any other member?

Mrs ARMITAGE - Yes.

Ms GIDDINGS - Can I make the note in terms of concluding that other conversation around the media? The government communications office has reduced; when we came in it was \$1.378 million and it is now \$0.833 million, so that is quite a reduction from 2009-10. The Premier's office itself has reduced from \$2.197 million in that same year down to \$1.795 million so we have started everything we have expected anyone else to do within the public service.

Ms FORREST - Thank you, Premier. Looking at line 1.1, the forward estimates - I note again that they are estimates - and the 2015-16 which is a big jump up with [inaudible] but 2016-17 is still significantly higher in the budget allocation for that year. Why is that? It usually goes up by about \$100 million or less; it does not drop back, it goes up.

Ms GIDDINGS - Jeff?

Mr REEVE - It will have the normal salaries and wages indexation applied to it.

Ms GIDDINGS - I promise you it is well after any election and all is well so there is no political

Ms FORREST - Yes.

Mr REEVE - Salaries and wages indexation.

Ms FORREST - You are giving a significant wage rise that year, because if you look at the others, it is maybe \$100 000 a year.

Mr REEVE - I will have to take it on notice.

Ms FORREST - One other question, Premier: do you use consultants in this area at all or do you just use all of your internal staff?

[2.00 p.m.]

Ms GIDDINGS - Mostly it is internal staff but occasionally we might get some external advice. I am aware of premiers' offices where external advice has come in but there has been nothing in the current financial year. Sometimes, if you have an office day where you are doing your planning things, I have known instances where a facilitator has come in but we have not used a facilitator in either of the last couple that we have been involved in.

CHAIR - That is all for that area then.

DIVISION 10

(Department of Premier and Cabinet)

Ms GIDDINGS - I will start with an overview of Premier and Cabinet. In this year the big issue that we have all been confronting has been the bushfires. The Department of Premier and Cabinet is involved to a fair degree in those issues and particularly with the bushfire taskforce that sits within this department as well as the State Service management area which is coordinated through this department as well.

We have been dealing with the aftermath of those bushfires and also working with the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal around the funds that have been raised which, as of 10 May, was \$8 million with an additional \$228 741 in pledges yet to come in. I make the point that this is an independent committee, it is not a government-run committee, so we have a representative who sits on it alongside other representatives from other organisations, but we are not directly involved in this committee.

They have had four rounds now of funds and I am happy to provide you with some information down the track when we are at that point, but we can only help you as far as we have some understanding - as I said, it is not our committee. We have also announced the social recovery plan, a \$1.3 million plan, which is about helping these communities through the dark winter periods and all of those emotions and issues that they are still going through after a tragedy like this. There are four community recovery workers based at the Dunalley Information and Service Hub - otherwise known as the DISH - and other support services that can be obtained through that.

The main work of the year - there have been some key areas we have been involved in but the one that I have driven hard myself has been the development of the Asian Century white paper and I believe that has been a critical piece of work that will help guide government across government departments in how we can start to readjust to this world of the Asian Century and ensure that we are

preparing ourselves for the further work that will be done, relationships built between countries like China, Indonesia, India, Vietnam and you name it in the Asian region where there is a lot of growth going on. There are a number of specific initiatives including establishing an Asia institute with the University of Tasmania that have been key outcomes and that I am happy to talk more about through this process, if you so wish.

Some of the other big national reforms that we have been involved in have been the negotiations around the National Disability Insurance Scheme - NDIS. We have the first stage of that beginning on 1 July with the launching of the scheme that will become a full-blown scheme by 2019-20. We have also some role in the discussions around the Gonski reforms as well.

The other key elements have been around the cost of living and the Social Inclusion Unit. You would recall that with the sale of TOTE we were able to put about \$5 million into cost of living initiatives and there is a number of those that have been supported through the social inclusion unit that I am happy to give more detail about later on. There is a whole list of those.

The other major role of the department is to coordinate the protocol visits. Within the last 12 months we have had the visit of Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall which was highly successful, and, almost on a weekly basis, we have visits from ambassadors and consul generals that are coordinated through the department.

There are a number of ministers who are responsible to the Department of Premier and Cabinet, or the department is responsible to them. I will not be answering questions that relate to climate change, veterans affairs, or local government. They will be handled by the appropriate minister.

DPAC has had its share in the government's cost cutting exercise and in this financial year, 2013-14, they have around \$700 000 that needs to be found and then, 2014-15, \$400 000, and 2015-16, a further \$100 000. We have also been, while finding those savings, absorbing costs in rent, electricity and other general expenditure that has been increasing. We have mostly been able to do that through prudent vacancy control but we have also identified some structural reforms.

We have changed the Tasmania Together progress board which has now been abolished with savings of \$200 000 in board expenses and we have also abolished the office of the State Service commissioner and reassigned those roles to other areas of government including the State Service management office and the Tasmanian Industrial Commission and this has created savings of around \$439 000.

We have had a slight increase in the number of FTEs that are attributed to our department and that is primarily because of the bushfire recovery unit which has had 15 temporary FTEs come into it. Some of those are on three-month contracts, some are on 6-month contracts but, by the end of the 18 months, we should be back to normal.

There is indexation as normal and those numbers are also affected by cessation of payroll tax.

CHAIR - Thank you. We will do some overview areas as usual under output 1.1 and then we will come to the social inclusion.

Output group 1

Support for Executive Decision Making

1.1 Strategic Policy and Advice -

CHAIR - In terms of governance processes, Premier, you have indicated in the past that we should return to 35 members in the House of Assembly but you have also indicated that until the budget gets to a more sound position that is off the radar. Where are you tracking in terms of some

sort of goal in terms of budget sustainability before that matter is advanced? The attached question to that is that the Greens have been immovable about that, regardless of budget positions, so have you communicated that process specifically and formally to the Greens and what has been the reaction?

Ms GIDDINGS - You might be aware of my comments in the lower House estimates yesterday. They were widely reported on the media this morning. The position of the Labor Party has not changed. We have been consistent in saying that there would need to be improvement in the budget situation before we are prepared to increase the cost of the parliament and increase the number of politicians. The Parliamentary Labor Party has not had a party room discussion about this matter since the handing down of this budget so the position of the party at this point has not changed.

CHAIR - The budget, as we understand, is in a challenged position. Have you set any targets in terms of when it might be in a more favourable position before you would advance that notion?

Ms GIDDINGS - No, I have not at all. Certainly, as a principle I agree that parliament would be better served with 35 members. I think the robustness of the committee system would be stronger with 35 members, but when you are still cutting from health services, for instance - an additional \$10 million has been cut from health services in this next financial year - when you are still having to find savings across other areas of government, I am not sure that the Tasmanian public particularly want us to prioritise politicians.

CHAIR - Still staying on that notion of governance, the Greens absented themselves from cabinet decisions and discussions, as much as anything else, is that a matter that you keep a record of, and, if there are numbers relating to that, that this committee could be advised of?

Ms GIDDINGS - We gave those numbers yesterday. On 11 occasions out of 358 matters that have been considered by cabinet the Greens have absented themselves. They at times then go on to support the legislation that they have absented themselves from but if they have not had the opportunity to take that legislation to their party room for discussion and therefore agreement then they will often - well, not often, because 11 is not very much, really - they have the ability to say to us, 'We cannot support the legislation here and now because we do not know what our party room would say in regard to these issues. But if there is an issue we will speak to you as the minister involved' and more often than not it is not a problem and it is really what has helped contribute to having stable government.

CHAIR - In terms of the 11 out of 358, are the topics a matter that you have publicised with the Tasmanian people?

Ms GIDDINGS - We provided this information yesterday and it is on the public record as well. Yesterday in my estimates I did not divulge this because it was cabinet information, but I believe that the Leader of the Greens has made a public statement which is in relation to all of these, so there is not a problem with me putting it on the record now. He has made a public statement in relation to those matters, as I understand it.

CHAIR - Which is divergent to your view that it is a cabinet issue?

Ms GIDDINGS - No. In terms of the sorts of issues they were concerned about, he did not have a problem with talking about that. That was on the public record in that respect. But in my role with the list that I had that are cabinet matters, I am in a different position in that respect. There were issues around forestry that you would not be surprised that they wanted to have those discussions in their party room before they were willing to support a position put forward by the minister. Electricity reform would not surprise you either and, similarly, with complex legislation like that they want to be able to have a discussion in their party room. There are others around gaming which I do not think would surprise you either, considering that they have a different point of view on gaming

than Labor has. Mineral resources - and that would not surprise you, either -considering we have different points of view on mining that they want to have some discussions around that, too - all of which has enabled us to have a stable government.

CHAIR - The use of consultants in the department: the number of and the issues that have been taken up?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, certainly. With consultants and contracts, we have had expenditure on consultancies, excluding TMD, from 1 July 2012 to 31 March 2013 of \$724 837. Expenditure on contracts for services, excluding TMD, for the same time period was \$1 292 795; training services provided through the training consortium was \$391 594; expenditure on consultancies or TMD in the same time period was \$123 430 and expenditure on contracts or services for TMD was \$14 113 946. So in total there was \$16 646 599.

[2.15 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE - Could we have that list tabled, please?

Ms GIDDINGS - We can table that.

CHAIR - Can we go to the Asian white paper that you mentioned because that is clearly a matter of interest to all members of parliament, if not all Tasmanians.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes.

CHAIR - In relation to that, what has been achieved to date? I don't know whether it's widely recognised that Taiwan, a major trading partner of Tasmania, is probably third on our list already. They are such an important player in that sphere.

Ms GIDDINGS - In terms of what has been achieved, the major achievement to this point has been the publication of the white paper process that we worked on with the Crawford Institute from the ANU. We spent about \$250 000 on that. Greg Johannes, the Deputy Secretary who has assisted me in this work, has joined me at the table.

We worked with Professor Peter Drysdale from the Crawford Institute and his team, a very interested and enthusiastic group of students who work with him at the university. The total cost of this is now \$250 000 of which \$150 000 was absorbed by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. \$100 000 was provided as new additional funds to back up this work. This now has a number of recommendations within it and we are now pursuing those recommendations. That includes funding that's been provided in this budget to assist with the establishment of the Asia Institute, for instance, at the University of Tasmania. We are now in negotiations and discussions with the university as to how that will work. We also have some funding that is being provided to establish an officer within Austrade in Shanghai that can help to service the Asian region through the network of Austrade and be a voice and an ear to the ground for us within that major hub that is there out of China.

We also have funding that's being provided to assist with signage and to help shift people across to understanding that we need to be a lot more Chinese literate as that is where we see a lot of the growth coming from in tourism. We've had a 42 per cent growth, from memory, of Chinese tourists to Tasmania. That's a huge amount of work and a tremendous effort from the Tourism Tasmania people and I'm sure the tourism minister will speak more about that and about the people we've got on the ground in Shanghai and Hong Kong.

I certainly agree with you that the Asian area is far more than China. We have had a long-established relationship with Japan, an old trading partner, and with South Korea too and we don't want to lose the strength of the relationship we've built over many years there. There are these emerging economies; Taiwan, as mentioned; Indonesia, another; India another; China, absolutely the

biggest of them all. We need to work through how we can best tap into those opportunities.

We also want to work with the local businesses about how they can become more culturally literate, understanding how people work and cooperate with each other. What is seen as insulting in one culture is acceptable in another culture, that sort of thing, but also ensuring that in hotels and the like menus are provided in Chinese as well as English and that food - congee, for instance, is a breakfast food - product is available in hotels and the likes of the Mercure are already going down this pathway.

CHAIR - Thank you. Is there capacity and value in reinvigorating what has been a reasonably dormant sister state relationship with Fujian Province? It was something which was developed many years ago now but it seems to have slipped off the radar.

Ms GIDDINGS - No, it has not slipped off the radar at all. In fact, it was last year or the year before, we celebrated the fortieth anniversary of our relationship with Fujian and the province set out an acrobatic troupe and a puppet troupe to perform free concerts here in Hobart which was part of their celebration of our relationship. We still maintain strong contact with business within that province and on my visit to China last year I did try to visit Fujian Province as Premier Bacon and Premier Lennon had previously done. Unfortunately, the governor was away elsewhere outside of China and therefore it would have been inappropriate for me to have visited while the head of the province was not available. I am hopeful with my return visit planned in September that I will be able to provide that diplomatic, social and business relationship support at that time.

Mr HALL - Premier, you talked about savings in DPAC awhile ago -

Ms GIDDINGS - Can I, before I leave the Asian white century, give a nice quirky little story that I just thought might be nice to entertain you slightly. I do not think it is in Greg's electorate - it might be in Tania Rattray's electorate - but you might ask why the Ross Bakery is getting a lot of visitation from Japanese tourists -

Mr VALENTINE - The cartoon.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, the cartoon, Kiki - *Kiki's Delivery Service*. It is a 1989 Japanese animated fantasy film produced, written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki; it is based on the 1985 novel of the same name and it is a children's book. The film tells a story of a young witch, Takayama, who spends a year in a town on her own while using her magical abilities to earn her living.

Mr Mulder - This is the member for Apsley, is it?

Ms GIDDINGS - You can call her Kiki from now on, if you like, just not Kinky.

Laughter.

Ms GIDDINGS - Of special interest are the Japanese traits that an inn and bakery have built up as a result of perceived association with a well-known Japanese cult that is *Kiki's Delivery Service*. This particular bakery is featured in this film by Kiki and there are some nice little pictures there for people to see of Kiki but a little connection to Tasmania and the Japanese following that is being felt at the Ross Bakery.

Mr VALENTINE - It is the attic that matters - that is the focus.

Ms GIDDINGS - Is this a grandfather interest or a father interest?

Mr VALENTINE - No, it is because we have a sister city relationship in Japan - sorry, we did have, with Yaizu - so that is how we found out about it. It is very popular.

Ms Forrest - This is regional representation as opposed to the Tasmanian devil that Disney seems to have.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, that is right. It is not just the Tassie devil in the American cartoons; it is Kiki in the Japanese cartoons. Sorry, Greg?

Mr HALL - In Ross, but I cannot quite claim Ross, it is Tania Rattray's electorate.

You talked about savings in DPAC before you touched on that and my question is have you exceeded or will you exceed any of your budgets in this financial year with DPAC itself?

Ms GIDDINGS - The answer is no. The answer is that we have achieved all of our savings.

Mr HALL - Any request for additional expenditure made throughout the year?

Ms GIDDINGS - Not as yet and I am not aware of any coming up, but, if we do have cause for additional funding, that is available at the end of each year that various departments put forward requests. We are not expecting any although my advice is there may be some bushfire related requests for additional funding. But we do not know at this stage.

Mr EDWARDS - You did talk about 15 FTEs before because of the bushfire and some of those were on different longevity of contracts. Are there any other positions that are presently vacant within the department?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, there would be positions that are presently vacant as we are using vacancy control as one of our measures to maintain our savings.

Mr EDWARDS - A list of the ones vacant as of today? They change - someone might resign while someone might go on maternity leave or something.

Mr HALL - You may have to take this on notice. How many state government officers sit on third party organisation boards, for example NRN groups, and on which boards would they sit?

Ms GIDDINGS - We would not have that information easily accessible. It would be quite a huge exercise, I am not sure we could even do it within the time frames of this committee because that is not something that we take note of, particularly with other third party boards. If you wanted to know heads of agency, if you want to narrow it down, we could look at that.

Mr HALL - No, it relates back to the UHRIG reports which talked about the conflicts of interest between state government and public service employees serving on these types of boards.

Ms GIDDINGS - Which report are you referring to, the UHRIG?

Mr HALL - Yes. It is an issue that has been raised in the community with me and that is why I am putting forward the question.

Mr EDWARDS - We do not have that data. People take paid employment on those sorts of boards and they need to seek permission to do that and even if it is voluntary they need to manage any perceived conflict of interest issues. On the other hand, being a small community and the Tasmanian government a reasonable size, a lot of the voluntary organisations rely on state government people to form parts of the voluntary governance of these organisations so if you put a blanket ban on holding any sort of community positions it would be greatly to the detriment, particularly, of not-for-profit organisations. There is a balance in that.

Mr HALL - I understand that but the other points being made are that sometimes there can be potential conflicts of interest, or even breaking the law in some cases.

Ms GIDDINGS - What you would always say is, if there were any allegations of laws being broken, there are appropriate processes to go through of either identifying a problem with the agency who employs that person or the Integrity Commission to look at it as an independent investigation. The issue is if there is a specific decision that has been made and that person should have excused themselves from it, and they did not. But there is no way we would ever know what is going on and it is the watchdog of the community that needs to keep an eye on those issues and if they have a specific instance they are concerned about, to raise it with the appropriate authorities and they can be investigated.

Mr HALL - I have taken the answer that it would be difficult to provide that information. I thought you might have it at your fingertips.

Ms GIDDINGS - No, I would not have that.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Premier, you mentioned in the major initiatives, the community engagement strategy for the government's agenda which you launched in December 2012. It sets out three priorities, modernising the economy, reducing inequality and investing in the next generation. It goes on: a community engagement strategy has been undertaken across the state with the objective of encouraging Tasmanians to directly participate in the application of the agenda in their communities. Funding of \$70 000 is provided. Can you explain the strategy in a bit more detail and what the \$70 000 is, although I am assuming it is not for two cadets.

Ms GIDDINGS - No, it is not for two cadets. This is in relation to the government's agenda, which has been clearly articulated as being jobs, people and opportunities and underneath that creating jobs, trying to reduce inequality and opening up further opportunities through education, skills development - those sorts of things - the use of the NBN and the like as part of the opportunities, part of the agenda. You would recall that in the past we have had what we would call community forums.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Do not even go there.

Ms GIDDINGS - Well, over 10 years we have had those community forums which were highly successful from my perspective.

Mrs ARMITAGE - It is a matter of opinion.

Ms GIDDINGS - Sunday afternoons were made available where the Premier would address the group of people who were there and then there was the opportunity for one-on-one meetings with ministers and heads of agencies after that.

We did find that having had these community forums for more than 10 years we had visited and re-visited the same communities many times and that on subsequent visits they were getting fewer and fewer people. We thought how we could re-invigorate this; it is really important to keep that channel for people open, particularly in regional Tasmania or other parts of the state where the heart of government does not sit.

Here in Hobart it is much easier to see heads of agency and government ministers, it is much easier to access the top parts of a bureaucracy. It is not so easy in Launceston or other parts of the state so we also want to go back into these communities, provide them with the opportunity to meet with ministers and ask questions that might be of interest to them but also provide us with an opportunity to go into these communities and ask what more we should be doing.

The sorts of things we have been delivering on, for instance, have been child and family centres. We have used the work of the social inclusion unit, particularly, to underpin where these communities are that are finding it the toughest, where the inequality is the greatest, where and what services could be provided that would enhance those communities.

Mrs ARMITAGE - It is \$70 000?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, because there are costs involved in the hiring of venues, in the food and beverages that are provided, in the facilitators who assist in these forums and in advertising the forums.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Do you have a breakdown on those costs or could I get a breakdown on the cost of how many forums you have had and the cost per forum, as in so much for food and refreshments, so much for hire? It is interesting; \$70 000 is a reasonable amount of money.

Ms GIDDINGS - The 2013-14 budget, so it has not been spent yet.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I am assuming though you must have had a reason for allocating \$70 000, that you estimated how much was going to go where. I notice there are actually quite a few instances in the budget that a lot of things do not start until 2013-14 or 2014-15 with no guarantee, of course, that a future government will take them on, particularly 2014-15.

Ms GIDDINGS - If that is my future government we certainly will be. I intend to keep it that way, Rosemary.

Mrs ARMITAGE - You have estimated \$70 000 so I am assuming you must have some idea. You could not estimate \$70 000 unless you actually had some figures of what was going on to the different areas.

Mr MULDER - I think the question is how do you apportion that estimate across various cost centres?

Mrs ARMITAGE - Absolutely, yes.

Ms GIDDINGS - We will take that on notice for you and see what can be provided in that respect.

Mrs ARMITAGE - How many forums were you planning to have, how much per forum? You cannot come up with a figure unless you have some idea.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, that is all right, no problem.

Ms FORREST - Have you decided on locations yet?

Ms GIDDINGS - There has been some forward planning with locations but we have not resolved all of them at this point. There was one on 15 May in Ravenswood, there will be one on 12 June in Glenorchy, one on 13 June in East Devonport, 1 July in Burnie, 2 July in Sorell, 3 July in Rokeby and Bridgewater. They are the ones that have been determined at this point.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Another question; integrated Tasmanian government contact centre project -

Ms GIDDINGS - The forum that was held in Ravenswood cost about \$3 800. We've already done seven, so that's already about \$24 000 just in those ones.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I was interested to know how many there are and how much the cost is.

Ms GIDDINGS - That's actually all I can provide you with in terms of costings.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Integrated Tasmanian government contact centre project - I note the aims of the project are to improve customer service delivery. Has this got anything to do with Service Tasmania? Does it involve Service Tasmania? If not, why not?

Ms GIDDINGS - It is about the contact centres. I will ask Kathy Baker to come up to the table. Can you give your title, please.

Ms BAKER - I am the Director of Service Tasmania.

Ms GIDDINGS - Kathy was telling us yesterday that there's about 70 call centres across government. What we're trying to do here is bring all of those into one so that people have one phone number to ring government and they can be provided with the appropriate advice through that one phone call. The Service Tasmania shops and what we provide on the ground in communities will be unchanged by this.

Mrs ARMITAGE - So this won't be assisting Service Tasmania, which I believe are having great difficulty at the moment?

Ms BAKER - Service Tasmania is leading this initiative, which is about the consolidation of contact centres into the existing Service Tasmania business. As you would appreciate, and I've briefed you previously on the reducing trend of customers using Service Tasmania shops, that is still happening across the network.

Mrs ARMITAGE - You say there's a reducing trend of people using it. Do you believe it's because you are not open? I work on the fourth floor at Henty House and I constantly see a line of people out the door. I constantly have people asking me why they aren't open at times that they can actually go; why can't they get served? I've heard that the numbers are up over the phone and on the computer. Do you not really believe it's because people can't access the shops and that's why the numbers are down? Time and time again, people leave because their lunch hour runs out before they have a chance to be served. That's no reflection on the staff; the staff do a wonderful job but people simply cannot get served because the hours of operation have been cut.

Ms GIDDINGS - I will ask Kathy to deal with that for you. There has been a lot of work done around the hours of Service Tasmania shops and a lot of noting as to when people use the service and when they don't. The cutting back of some hours of Service Tasmania has been in line with ensuring that it was around times that people weren't using it. Kathy will have more detail about that for you.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I could provide photographs.

Ms GIDDINGS - We are aware of the pressures in the one that happens to be the Henty House Service Tasmania shop. It's been the one with the biggest demand.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I believe it's the only one in the north.

Ms GIDDINGS - We know that it has had a lot of demand pressures on it but there have been others around the state where we've been able to pull back on hours without affecting any of the service.

Ms BAKER - Launceston is the busiest shop in the state. It takes the largest number of transactions that go through it. With the service provision review that we undertook, we've realigned the availability of staff to meet those peak periods. So, yes, the shop opens later and closes earlier than it used to but there are more staff available when the shop opens and when the shop closes to

serve those customers quickly. Yes, there are queues that eventuate from time to time but we have now got our resources aligned with those known busy periods which are the start of the day, end of the day and the lunch period in the shops. Most of the time those counters are fully occupied with staff to serve those customers. Yes, lines and queues do happen but those queues are being moved efficiently.

Ms FORREST - The idea is to support waiting times and that way they will see people -

Mrs ARMITAGE - Has consideration been given to opening for a couple of hours on a Saturday morning? A complaint I get is from people who work out of the city and don't have access; they don't have a credit card; they don't have the ability to use internet or a phone facility but they simply cannot get into Service Tasmania. They can't get in before work; they start work before Service Tasmania opens; they finish work after Service Tasmania closes; they have half an hour for lunch; they don't have time to come into the city and find a parking spot, let alone stand in a queue for half an hour. I have stood in the queue. Sometimes I have gone there purposely to pay by hand rather than on the phone, just to see how long I will stand there and, as I said, it is no reflection on the staff. The staff are all good and they are very busy but there are a lot of people who are being serviced. Realistically, I was wondering whether some of this \$4.4 million could have been going into either opening longer or providing a service, even computers. Do we have computers in Service Tasmania? I know we have them there so that people can access government stuff but can they actually pay their bills by those computers?

Ms BAKER - Yes, they can. Those computers have full internet access.

Mrs ARMITAGE - So they can use those?

Ms BAKER - Yes, and there is also a bank of computers that are available in LINC Tasmania so there is a range of public internet facilities that are provided where they could go and make internet payments over the phone.

Mrs ARMITAGE - For other people who cannot access or do not have that ability, has consideration been given to open perhaps on a Saturday morning?

Ms BAKER - We trialled Saturday opening at Smithton when Service Tasmania was first established. The usage of it was minimal.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Is Smithton one of the larger centres?

Ms BAKER - No, but it was one of those rural centres where the anecdotal feedback in the community from the farming community was that they found it difficult to get into Service Tasmania during Monday to Friday, so Saturday morning trading was tried and it just was not used.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Perhaps it could be trialled again in Launceston?

Ms BAKER - The other challenge we have is that government as an entity is not open of a weekend and a lot of our transactions require referral back into government agencies, so without the broader government open the service offering that Service Tasmania could provide on a Saturday would be significantly diminished because the supporting resources are not available within the bureaucracy to support an intermediary transaction being fulfilled.

Mrs ARMITAGE - The other suggestion would be whether we could look at opening a Service Tasmania shop in the northern suburbs.

Ms BAKER - We do not have any available funding in our budget to allocate for any new shops.

Ms GIDDINGS - The reality is, and I know that not everybody has a computer in their own home at this point but most of us do have phones - I know not everyone has a credit card to be able to use the phone, either, and that there are options that are not available to absolutely everybody -

Mrs ARMITAGE - Particularly disadvantaged people.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, absolutely - but there is a move far more to that sort of internet-style of banking and transactions; that is what we are experiencing with the shift away from our Service Tasmania shops on the whole, and it is a shift that occurred in other areas like Tourism Tasmania, which used to have Tourism Tasmania shops and then closed them down because people were no longer booking through Tas Temptations; they were booking through the internet. With all of these things, it is about the shift in resourcing and rather than building another shop where we know that demand is trending down, I would prefer to spend the money on looking at how we can assist people to take advantage of the technologies that are growing in usage, how they can take advantage of the NBN when it passes their house and how they can tap into this new way of dealing with business across banking, government and so on. To me, that would be a far better use of our resources than opening up more face-to-face shops at a time of trending down.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Drivers' licences are going to be going over the phone with photographic?

Ms GIDDINGS - In time you do not know how you might be able to use digital services to access a number of those sorts of things. The reality is that those shops are there, they are open in business hours and all of us have to find ways of managing. Right now, I need to get to the bank; I have not been able to get to the bank for a couple of weeks, but I will have to find time during the day to get to the bank.

Mrs ARMITAGE - But you have more ability than someone from the northern suburbs, with respect, Premier.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, but we all, Rosemary, have issues about time and how we get to facilities and services - dentists, doctors, banks, Service Tasmania, mechanics - we all have these issues. Simply opening up another shop is not going to stop or take that away. In terms of limited government resources and how best you can spend them, this integrated contact centre, I believe, is an appropriate way of making business easier for people across the board to access government and we will continue to support Service Tasmania.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Could you explain a little more fully, then, where the \$4.4 million is going over those years?

Ms GIDDINGS - I should mention that Rebekah Burton, the deputy secretary, has also joined me at the table.

Ms BURTON - And Chair of the Service Tasmania board.

Ms BAKER - The aim of the project is to make customer service delivery simpler for the community, so we will be investing in technology to enable calls to be handled across the Service Tasmania network. In a number of our locations there is existing staff capacity within our shop network to not only deal with face-to-face transactions - clearly not the case in Launceston but in a number of our locations - but also to deal with services over the telephone. It is about ensuring the long-term sustainability of the shop network as well as making our contact centre telephone delivery more sustainable as well. There will be purpose-built contact centre capability built into some of the existing shop network as well as maintaining the Hobart dedicated contact centre that we already have. There will be investment in technology and investment in people to answer those telephone calls.

Ms FORREST - Will you be developing a Service Tasmania app?

Ms BURTON - We have not looked at a Service Tasmania app; we have a Service Tasmania website, which is available and is soon to be upgraded to work on mobile devices.

Ms FORREST - The website is quite a lot easier -

Ms BURTON - No, actually, Service Tasmania just recently met and discussed some work going on in the Department of Education that is developing effectively a mobile app for Service Tasmania to take advantage of.

The real issue that is driving the Service Tasmania board at the moment is the absolute fallen-off-the-cliff of transactions; that convergence was talked about in 1998 where transactions in shops would reduce. It has taken well over a decade but the number of transactions being done over the counter is dramatically declining and the number of transactions that are being done over the phone and over the net is increasing and so what is happening in the rest of society is being reflected in the Service Tasmania shops. We want to sustain the network and that is the work that Kathy is going to be doing through the integrated contact centre.

CHAIR - Premier, we might stay with Service Tasmania and not come back to it later.

Mrs ARMITAGE - As a result of the changes to Service Tasmania, from the review that you had previously, has there been an increase in stress leave, sick leave or workers' compensation?

Ms BAKER - The employees who work in the Service Tasmania shops are not the responsibility of the Department of Premier and Cabinet; they are the Department of Primary Industries, Parks and Environment's. I do not have information with me today about any increase in stress leave or sick leave.

Mrs ARMITAGE - That is fine. I will ask for it when we see Mr Green.

Ms BAKER - Correct.

Ms BURTON - It is probably worth mentioning we had a very limited number of complaints. The Service Tasmania board meets quarterly and all of the channels report to the board, which I chair - that is the phone channel, the shop channel and the internet channel. Of note was the small number of complaints. I fully recognise -

Mrs ARMITAGE - They come to members rather than to you.

Ms BURTON - We do actually run a survey in relation to customer experiences and expectations of the shops. As you mentioned, the staff do a great job.

Mrs ARMITAGE - They do.

Ms BURTON - And the level of satisfaction is very high but it is probably worth noting the number of written complaints was less than 10. There are opportunities in the shops for people to fill out a form and we do get complaints, so it is not as if we do not get complaints. We get complaints about issues that arise from time to time with the transactions that people undertake so the board, in monitoring the experience of the reduction in hours, has looked at the complaints. We are more than happy to look at those complaints but the number of complaints has been very small.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I think in fairness a lot of people, particularly the ones I see who walk out in frustration or say something when you are standing in the line and have to leave, do not take the time to fill out a form. They are busy, they just think nothing will happen, they really do not. The majority

of people do not fill out forms and complain. Anyway, I will ask the minister, Mr Green.

Mrs HISCUTT - Following on from that, Rosemary, are the people who work there, if someone complains verbally to them, required to mark that as a complaint or do they have to actually fill in the form? I would complain if I was going to, but I do not because they are so good. I would not bother filling in a form but I would tell you. Are they required to actually record a complaint?

Ms BAKER - We collect anecdotal feedback but the complaints we formally track are those that come in on a written complaint form. If somebody anecdotally provides that feedback over the counter, they are offered a customer feedback form for them to complete.

Mrs HISCUTT - I would not do that and I reckon most people probably would not do that.

CHAIR - We are done with that particular area.

Ruth, still in the overview, the overarching stuff, please.

Ms FORREST - A couple of things, Premier. Last year in the budget papers, one of the major issues was the Cost of Living Strategy. You did mention it in your overview but there is no mention of it in the budget papers. Can you give us some information about what you are doing and where the money is sitting?

Ms GIDDINGS - It is under the Social Inclusion Unit. The cost of living has included a number of programs. There has been emergency relief that we will continue in the coming financial year; there has been the Financial Literacy Exchange (FLEX) Grants Program; the Food For All Tasmanians Grants Program; Working with the NILS Scheme; the Stay Warm Save Money Housewarming Program. There have been a number of those programs which we have been involved in, that have had some really good outcomes. We have tried, through those programs, to create partnerships across different organisations rather than individually fund an organisation to do something. That has been about trying to build sustainability into some of these programs.

The Housewarming Program, for instance, has seen SEMF Pty Ltd awarded \$800 000 to provide that program. That has been highly successful and we would like to see that continue beyond where it currently is. It is a program where people are literally going into an individual's house, looking at their energy efficiency needs and saying to them, not only do you need batts put into your roof, but putting them in at that time; saying, you will get a huge benefit if we put batts into your roof. We then and there put them in or we look at their light globes and say, if you change from this globe to this globe, and we give them a globe and show them there and then the benefit they will get. It is a practical program that is delivering some great results.

Some of the food programs have been about community gardens and encouraging people to grow their own vegetables and deal with the cost of living pressures.

We continue to also provide money, \$20 000 each, to three food vans, including Loui's Van in the south, Mission Beat in the north and Gran's Van in the north-west. There are a number of programs.

I commend the Social Inclusion Unit for the work they do. You have three reports now; the social inclusion initial work, the cost of living work and the food security work. All three of those strategies have been used to underpin this work we are doing. Some of the program we begin, we fund them in the first instance but then they go across to other government departments where they sit better with, to continue those programs into the future.

Ms FORREST - Does bushfire management sit under this area or is that another area?

Ms GIDDINGS - The bushfire is another area within DPAC. It is 7.2 and I am happy to invite

Michael Stevens to join us at the appropriate time to go through all those questions for you.

CHAIR - I think we are done with the overarching stuff and we have probably covered off on 1.1 in doing so.

Output 1 Support for Executive Decision Making

1.3 Social Inclusion -

Mr VALENTINE - Is there a payroll tax component in the dip?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes.

Mr VALENTINE - Going from 6.149 to 4.367. You have taken out emergency relief and lower cost of living and reduced the funding on cost of living. Why were those steps taken? Simply to save dollars or was it to do measures and checking on the delivery and saying that these programs were not working?

Ms GIDDINGS - No. The cost of living initiatives came out of the sale of TOTE. We had \$5 million put aside out of the sale of TOTE to fund a number of these initiatives. Those funds will come to an end. I think we have roughly \$2 million left and we are in the process of working through how best to allocate the funding across programs for that remaining \$2 million.

Mr VALENTINE - Hence not funded in 2014-15?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, that is right. Those issues would need to be considered. If there is ongoing need, for instance, then next year's budget process will need to consider that but it would have to be new additional money put in. Emergency relief funding, for instance: until about 2010, I think it was, we did not put any money into emergency relief but as the real hit of the GFC started to take effect and we could see that people were hurting in the community, we put some money into emergency relief at that time; that has been followed up by a portion of the TOTE money going into emergency relief. I intend to put some more money into emergency relief out of the remaining \$2 million to keep that going for the immediate future.

Mr VALENTINE - The lower cost of living project, that was cut? Not the cost of living project but the lower -

Ms GIDDINGS - I will bring Ann Herbert to the table, the director of the Social Inclusion Unit.

Ms HERBERT - When the interim cost of living report was brought to parliament - that was about six months prior to the cost of living strategy and before the 2011-12 budget - in response to what was in that interim strategy, \$2 million was put forward for two years and that is what was called the emergency relief lower cost of living initiative; that is what you are seeing phased through there.

Mr VALENTINE - That is one project and not two projects? It read as if it was two projects in the notes, that is all.

Ms HERBERT - A single fund labelled up like that and then the cost of living initiative has continued the commitment to emergency relief.

Mr VALENTINE - How is the success of these projects being measured?

Ms HERBERT - In the case of the Food for all Tasmanians grant, the FLEX grant and the

Housewarming program, we have put some quite robust monitoring and evaluation into the reporting requirements for those organisations. We also have reporting requirements for the lower cost of living and the emergency relief fund which we are pulling together. That program concludes in June; we are pulling together the results of all that and we will evaluate it.

Mr VALENTINE - Are you still following the social inclusion plan that was put together by the commissioner?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, we are - absolutely. That has underpinned all the work and now the social inclusion plan and, as I said, the cost of living strategy and the food for all Tasmanians strategies have fallen out of that. All three pieces of work continue to inform our decision making around the program policy direction.

Mr VALENTINE - Where does the Ernesto Sirolli stuff sit in relation to this? Is that connected or not connected?

Ms GIDDINGS - No, it is not in the sense that it is a program delivered through Economic Development but it is a social enterprise style of program that we are aware of but it is not part of the Social Inclusion Unit. A lot of that work actually came out of the work of TasCOSS which wanted government to consider that social enterprise style of project.

Mr VALENTINE - No, that is okay. I just wondered whether there was some connection given the fact that you are talking about communities that are significantly disadvantaged, that is all.

CHAIR - Any further questions on social inclusion?

Mr MULDER - Just a quick one. How much money will you actually give - and it might not come under this, it might come under the Department of Health and Human Services budget - is there not an allocation to non-government welfare organisations that directly assist the funding?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, it will be through the Department of Health and Human Services.

Mr MULDER - Is what we are talking about here with social inclusion additional to that sort of money that is being transferred there?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, that is right. But where there has been a successful program then we can work with an agency to see that program continue and we have used some of our money in DPAC in the past to incentivise a government department.

The committee suspended from 3.00 p.m. to 3.13 p.m.

Output group 2 -

Mr HALL - Premier, I cannot remember whether we went through this in any detail but on page 10.9 it notes the decrease in 2013-14. It reflects the transfer of funds to output 7.2 to support the Bushfire Recovery Unit and this is part of the offset by funding allocated to the department for the community engagement strategy. Can you provide any further detail about the transfer of funds for the Bushfire Recovery Unit and what were those funds previously earmarked for?

Mr STRONG - The amount transferred from the Bushfire Recovery Unit was \$531 000 and it was transferred out of savings that were made from the abolishing of 4.2, which is the Office of the State Service Commissioner, and some of the savings from the Tas Together Progress Board.

[3.15 p.m.]

Mr HALL - I think that covers it. Premier, I think we have been through the community engagement strategy. Rosemary talked about that before. I might just turn to the Premier's discretionary fund. I will not be as rude as my colleague who is not here at the moment, who called it the 'pollypill'. Someone else called it 'brothers bonanza'. The question is: how much has been expended this year?

Ms GIDDINGS - My adviser Margot Dawson is at the table, although she will not be speaking.

In the 2010-11 budget, the sundry grants program was \$2.3 million, which included payments for a number of 2010 election commitments that did not fit comfortably anywhere else so it was a great bag in there, a number of different commitments there. In the 2011-12 and 2012-13 budget the amount has been \$480 000 and payments have been held within that envelope.

Mr HALL - Do you have a list of recipients and the 'sponsoring' MP?

Ms GIDDINGS - I will take that on notice and provide it to you.

Mr HALL - Okay, thank you. And the budget for the fund for 2013-14; has there been any change to that?

Ms GIDDINGS - \$480 000. Is that all on the Premier's discretionary fund?

We have split it; there is no longer the Premier's sundry grants. It is now split between two grant pools, one of which tends to be virtually recurrent funding that different appeals expect every year - the Red Cross Appeal, for example. The second part of the discretionary part is the part where members can raise issues with me that they have collected in their electorates and we have accepted sundry grant requests from members outside the government.

Mr HALL - Did we cover how many community cabinet meetings have been held this year?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, we did.

Mr HALL - That is all I have in that line item.

CHAIR - Is there anybody else on 2.1?

Output group 2

Government processes and Services

2.2 Principal and subordinate legislation -

Ms FORREST - I don't have a lot of questions specifically on this area.

The budget allocation drop, I assume, just relates to the payroll tax deduction there.

Thankfully, now the *Gazette* is available online. Do you have some details on the number of hits it has had since that has been in place?

Mr FOULSTON - We don't have the number of hits. We've mainly been concentrating on reducing the number of printed copies. That was our main focus.

Ms GIDDINGS - For the period April 2012 to April 2013, the number of free hard-copy *Gazettes* has reduced by 354, from 1 772 to 1 418 copies. I presume that we would be able to get you information on how many hits the website has had. So we will take that on notice for you.

Ms FORREST - Is there any intention to try to further reduce the number of printed copies?

Mr FOULSTON - It is. That is our main focus as we think a lot of the printed copies are probably not used anymore. People are using the web to access the *Gazette* but they have not cancelled their subscriptions and so we are doing a lot of phone work to try to get people to cancel their subscriptions.

Ms FORREST - Along that line, obviously the focus is the budget, are there challenges keeping within that? You would have taken a reduction, as every other area of the department has, I assume?

Mr EDWARDS - We basically did not take the cuts from OPC during these budget processes. In a way, we were funded at the start of the GFC budgets in 2008-09 and some additional resources were to go into OPC because we were struggling to provide the level of service required with the funding envelope we had - because it is such a vital part and because it is always incredibly busy. The Premier made the observation yesterday that it is also not just resources for them because even if you had money, finding skilled drafts people is the problem. There is a long lead time in training so really our challenges are to train the next generation of the workforce that is coming through as well as provide a decent level of service to the government of the day in their legislative program.

Ms GIDDINGS - I do not think people Peter Conway is allowed to retire.

Mr EDWARDS - Yes, he is going to work until he is 102.

Laughter.

Ms FORREST - With regard to that then and we appreciate how hard they work at times and how much they do not like some of us -

Mr EDWARDS - They do not like anybody.

Laughter.

Ms FORREST - They won't take it personally then -

Mr VALENTINE - Especially if you disagree with them.

Ms FORREST - We do disagree with them - but there have been some significant pieces of legislation recently and a lot of amendments and that sort of thing, and that must put pressure on the resources and the allocation that they have. How is that managed?

Ms GIDDINGS - Skilfully by Peter Conway because it does. It puts a huge amount of pressure on them and at times individuals are working long, long hours to try to help parliament achieve the best results and achieve the intent that parliamentarians want to have achieved through legislation. I believe it was Peter Conway himself who worked so hard on the forestry legislation. They absolutely go the extra mile and I cannot commend them highly enough - not just Peter but the others who work in that team. They really work hard and take great pride in their work as well.

Ms FORREST - We had a couple of private members' bills recently; how does that work as far as the financing of that?

Ms GIDDINGS - In theory, OPC is open to anyone. In practical reality their resourcing does not allow them to do much more than government legislation and there is some support they provide for amendments in the Legislative Council and the like, but it is not easy for people in opposition parties to get access to OPC. When it comes to a private member's bill, and there has been one this year

already with the terminations legislation, what occurred there was the minister who was bringing that legislation in as a private member, and also as a minister in that area, was able to bring that to cabinet not for cabinet approval of the intent of the legislation because this is a conscience vote issue, but to get cabinet's approval in order to have OPC provide support to ensure that the legislation that was proposed in such a sensitive area was of such quality that people could at least have confidence in the legislation. They can then have the debate about whether they agree with the policy intent that is in the legislation but they can have confidence that the expert eye has been over that legislation and ensured that it indeed does what the intention of the member bringing it forward is.

I intend to follow the same process with Nick McKim as the co-sponsor of another private member's bill around voluntary assisted dying for the same reasons.

Ms FORREST - Someone outside the government, though - I understand the workload - but as far as funding that is it done, if OPC could fit it in it is done at no cost.

Ms GIDDINGS - That is right. It is done within the parameters of the resources they have. As the government of the day, cabinet has a say in that respect around agreeing to allow that legislation to have priority over other government bills. In theory, if you have an issue that you want to have considered and it is a conscience vote issue, you could raise that with me as Premier today and I could give consideration as to whether I am prepared to work with you and take that through the cabinet process. I would think it depends on what the issue is in that respect as to whether that process would be available to people outside of government.

CHAIR - Anything further on that line? We will move to the government courier.

2.3 Tasmanian Government Courier -

Mrs HISCUTT - The courier, great service. How many FTEs do you have working there at the moment?

Ms GIDDINGS - We have seven.

Mrs HISCUTT - The reason I ask is that the money seems to be coming off yet the deliveries are staying fairly much the same. I was hoping you were not going to cut the services.

Mr EDWARDS - That is just payroll tax.

Mrs HISCUTT - Oh, right.

Mr EDWARDS - That is the reduction in payroll tax and the normal indexation of the amount so that the number of couriers is staying the same.

Mrs HISCUTT - So you are not thinking of offloading them, you are still going to deliver up to my place.

Mr EDWARDS - No.

Ms FORREST - No intention to come to my place?

Mrs HISCUTT - It used to go door to door, did it not, parliamentary office to parliamentary office?

Ms FORREST - Not to mine, though.

Mrs HISCUTT - Is that true? I think it goes to Service Tasmania now, does it not, up north?

Ms BURTON - Devonport, Ulverstone.

Mrs HISCUTT - So it does not go door to door to parliamentary offices any more?

Mr REEVE - It does not go to electorate offices or suburban areas because it is mainly a central CBD service.

Ms GIDDINGS - Electorate offices are fairly new.

Ms FORREST - Service Tasmania is relatively new. If it is going to Service Tasmania in Burnie why it does not come to Service Tasmania?

Mr REEVE - It goes to Service Tasmania under special arrangement in Burnie and Ulverstone now, I believe, because there are no other offices in those areas that it can go to so there is an arrangement with Service Tasmania and they pay for that service. Mail is collected by government departments from Service Tasmania.

CHAIR - Anything else on the government courier? We will move to corporate support to ministerial and parliamentary officers without addressing the matters related to the Office of Governor, as we have already agreed.

2.4 Corporate Support to Ministerial and Parliamentary Offices and the Office of the Governor -

Mrs ARMITAGE - I am wondering what it does cover and whether it is additional to normal staff; can you explain the shift in funding? I notice there are few different shifts here. For 2013-14 we go down 60, 2014-15 we go down another 38, then in 2015-16 we go up 46 and then 2016-17 we go down 19. It did not fit with the payroll tax and then increased because we had ups and downs. I just wondered about that.

Mr REEVE - This is a mixture of consolidated fund and trust fund. The output itself provides for corporate services to ministerial and parliamentary support, although it is primarily the allocation to the department for corporate services to ministerial and parliamentary support. It also recovers funding from our trust entities, if you like, of which TMD and the Training Consortium are the most significant, so we provide corporate services to those areas of the department as well.

Those funds come into this output. The reason for the increase in 2013-14 is associated with the decrease in payroll tax in that the payroll tax reduction on the consolidated fund also included our trust fund entities, so we are required to recover that portion of payroll tax from those entities back into the department. It comes back into this output and it is essentially tied up with that same exercise.

[3.30 p.m.]

Ms FORREST - I am interested in the amount of money that is made available there. Have there been any upgrades to ministerial or parliamentary offices in the last 12 months?

Mr REEVE - No, there have not. The only amount of funding that was expended was in relation to the relocation of the ministerial drivers from the Port Tower Building.

Ms FORREST - Was that to No. 10?

Mr REEVE - Yes.

Ms FORREST - Why was that done?

Mr REEVE - It was done because the lease was expiring at the Port Tower Building and they wanted the space.

Ms GIDDINGS - And we wanted the budget saving.

Ms FORREST - How much did that save?

Mr REEVE - About \$65 000 a year.

Ms FORREST - How much did the move cost?

Mr REEVE - About \$10 000.

Ms FORREST - It all adds up.

Output group 3

Electronic services for Government Agencies and the Community

3.1 Information and Communications Technology - Policy Development and Implementation -

Mr VALENTINE - I note that you have included here some of the Tasmania Together unit staff and they sit in this policy development area.

Ms BURTON - The Premier mentioned earlier in the day that the Tasmania Together Board has been abolished and there have been savings made from that. There were four individuals working in the Tasmania Together unit and two of those have been seconded to the Bushfire Recovery Unit which Michael will talk about later. Two have joined output group 3.1, the Office of eGovernment. Basically the Office of eGovernment is about ICT quality and capability within government - as you know, Mr Valentine.

Mr VALENTINE - Indeed, I do.

Ms BURTON - What we are hoping to get through cabinet in the very short-term future is a data quality and capability strategy called Stats Matter, and I am sure Ms Forrest will be interested in that. Data quality is a key component of government service delivery. You will not be surprised to hear that the people who worked in the Tasmania Together unit are actually very statistically aware and capable. We have folded them into the Office of eGovernment and we will be running an ICT strategy and what is called Stats Matter, which is the data, quality and capability strategy, so whole-of-government strategies to enhance productivity through better ICT performance in systems but also in data quality.

Mr VALENTINE - Are you continuing with project management guidelines?

Ms BURTON - Yes. The project management guidelines are relatively static now because the take-up was so good. If I can get on my soapbox just a little here, the project management guidelines are basically the template for what we have done with the ICT strategy and now Stats Matter and that is, we collaborate across agencies to get a better understanding of what is good about doing things in this way. I think Mr Mulder is not here but we do not tell people what to do, we try to assist them to understand what a better future might look like.

Mr VALENTINE - It is a very good mechanism to make sure that everybody sings from the same hymnbook when it comes to process and procedure in terms of running projects, and that's a mitigation exercise.

Ms BURTON - Absolutely, and it has proven to be very helpful. In the ICT space, which you are interested in, Mr Valentine, we have been able to get agencies to develop business cases with some seed funding from Treasury under the infrastructure investment proposal approach. People get funding to develop a business case and that starts the ball rolling under that methodology to end up with a project proposal that is going to actually deliver the outcomes it should.

Mr VALENTINE - Some concern was shown a number of years ago now where people were going into project management who really did not have a lot of experience in that area. The opportunity for certain degrees of failure was always there. Has there been any movement in terms of creating a pool of very experienced project managers to go through into departments to run a project and then come back into the pool and be used elsewhere? Is that something that is being progressed in any way?

Ms BURTON - In terms of a career structure with project management, there has been some development in that, particularly with the Premier announcing funding for ICT projects over the next four years. Agencies, with the ICT strategy now, have a rolling program of expenditure available to them to do some of their big projects. That is often the difficulty; knowing the next project that I am going to be able to work on. That career progression aspect has been assisted a lot by the ICT strategy. There still are issues. The office of the government does quite a lot of work in working with agencies to help them with that project management. The spatial information project, which has been very successfully run by DPIPWE, has used a business case developed in this area.

Mr VALENTINE - The problem is getting the departments engaged in that process and owning it. Is there a mechanism for that to be progressed?

Ms GIDDINGS - There is and Rhys can talk to it but we have established an ICT board across the whole of government with secretaries and those involved. They are aware, where they have their own programs that are ageing and starting to fall apart; we are conscious that in Justice, crimes, for instance, needs to be upgraded. In Treasury, the budget management system needs to be upgraded. There are a number of these programs across government which now are part of this whole of government strategy of working out what needs to be prioritised, where do we put our planning money.

One of the things that I was disappointed to see in the Liberals' alternative budget was that they were going to cut this funding out. To me, it showed an absolute lack of understanding as to how critical ICT is to modern government and how, if we do not start investing more in ICT, we are going to fall behind community expectations because, as we had that discussion with Service Tasmania shops, people are less and less wanting the face to face, and more and more wanting to access government information in various ways and we need to have the systems in place to support that. Rhys, you might have something more to add.

Mr EDWARDS - We established by cabinet decision, led by the Premier, an ICT policy board across governments, chaired by me and has other heads of agencies on it.

Mr VALENTINE - Was that recently?

Mr EDWARDS - No, it has been done in the last 18 months. The first task of that was to get an ICT strategy for whole of government because there were some things that we want to drive whole of government. There are some projects that have come out of that which you might have followed in the last estimates and we can talk about it today, the whole of government email project where we have successfully driven that.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, that is right.

Mr EDWARDS - The second task was to get ICT strategic plans across every agency which they

have all done but we wanted visibility and central government of where the longer term and strategic issues were for departments because a lot of the focus is on the day-to-day business-as-usual operating, which means the issues of our big system replacements often get parked because they are not urgent, they are not this week's or next week's or even next month's problem. We needed a way to get better visibility of that so we have done a lot of work on the ICT strategic planning and asset management planning. Then the next element is once you have a good idea of the investments you need to make and the critical systems, you need a funding line and it is great to see, through the budget process this year, that we now have a multi-year funding line that can assist the development of these new projects.

The last bit is how do we have the capability to do that over the years, which is the question you started with. That comes because we now know we have a slate of projects and investments and a coordinated top-level view of this and we can build good capability. Some agencies, particularly the big ones, can do that; they can support the people required to be able to do some of our more complex projects but it is very hard in small agencies like mine - we cannot. We might have one ICT project every four years. We have to try to avoid building up capability and then when the project is finished, they go off and do something else.

We have not solved it completely but we are much better placed, with an approach like this, than we have been in the past. We can build core expertise and then we will have multiple projects over the next four or five years and people can move through that and have a career progression and keep those skills that are very important for government.

Mr VALENTINE - What concerns me is the opportunity for fiefdoms to continue to exist. In terms of agencies coming into it or being engaged with this strategy you are talking about, is it encouragement or is it mandatory? How are you handling that and shouldn't it start to be mandated?

Mr EDWARDS - Some things are mandated. For example, our whole-of-government networking is a mandated solution and we are doing a Modcoms, a voice project, and if we go to the TMD output at some point we can talk more about that. That solution is a compulsory solution across our government agencies. Our whole-of-government? email project was delivered that way.

Mr VALENTINE - That is successful now?

Mr EDWARDS - Yes.

Ms GIDDINGS - It is 33 000 mail boxes.

Mr EDWARDS - What we are trying to focus on, particularly in my role as chair of the ICT policy board, is that those commodity-type services should be centralised and driven centrally. Ultimately the provision of them might be government or external service provider or whatever but they make sense because agencies cannot add a lot of value to them. The value comes from scale and a core of expertise. What we want agencies to be focused on is the things that are dedicated particularly to their business - in Health, particular Health systems and applications, something else in Justice.

Mr VALENTINE - Almost the outriders as opposed to the core.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes.

Mr EDWARDS - I do not think you will ever have everything totally centralised but you want to take the straightforward stuff and give it some scale and efficiency, and you want agencies to be able to concentrate on the stuff that is important.

Mr VALENTINE - Things like standard operating environments, I mean surely there is an

opportunity to be able to develop one for the whole of the state government as opposed to having half a dozen departments going off and doing all of that study and all of that work to -

Mr EDWARDS - These things are all part of this longer-term planning. I think you will see more of that. As well as standard operating environments, we are doing a lot of work around data centre provisioning and things like that. Ultimately I think there is a lot of software as service-type solutions that agencies are not in the business therefore of detailing infrastructure and other requirements; they just want computing power, they just want software capability. It is the transition you are seeing elsewhere in the world, in government and in the private sector. This is occurring during our time as well here so it is going to be a very different world five or 10 years down the track to the one we have now. All that breaks down those sorts of silos within government but at the end of the day I think there is still a real role where the ICT parts of individual agencies are very focused on their -

Mr VALENTINE - I can understand exactly what you are saying because it is specialist stuff. One more question on this: things like server farms, rather than agencies going out and buying a new server for a new system, which creates another maintenance component within their budget that they have to look after and make sure it continues through to year whatever -

Mr EDWARDS - And often the licensing issue and the physical -

Mr VALENTINE - All sorts of things that come into that. Are we trying to consolidate that more into server farms or not?

Mr EDWARDS - We have two government facilities operating at the moment - one major one and we are in the process of planning and thinking about the long-term requirements. Ultimately, being in the infrastructure business this is not a core capability of governments, and what we want to then see developing in the market here is provision in the private sector that can provide for that. In essence it becomes a contracted market solution to your service needs, not -

Mr VALENTINE - However it is run but I am just saying there are economies of scale.

Mr EDWARDS - There certainly are. The issue for us is that we are still a small market here - combined government and private sector. I doubt you will see massive capacity built in the Tasmanian market but we will certainly look at how we use our business to drive a more liquid market for that.

Mr VALENTINE - Two questions - the core systems, HR systems and the like, payroll, those sorts of things, maybe not rostering, it is a bit specialised in some cases - is that still occurring and are we actually getting better at that to deliver a whole-of-government service in that regard?

Mr EDWARDS - We are certainly happy to talk to TMD more about this in that output group but if you think about the success of email, it has been very pleasing to me to see that project but it is essentially a fairly straightforward one. It is not easy to do - we saw the Queensland government attempt it and fail but we managed to successfully do it. That gives us confidence about the capacity of our organisations moving forward to then consolidate other services, processing services like HR but you have seen attempts to do this in other jurisdictions that have been very difficult too, so I think our approach is modest and cautious and we are doing some planning at the moment around HR systems. We are spending a little bit of money on pre-business case development.

Ms GIDDINGS - Basically feasibility analysis of the existing -

Mr VALENTINE - Mind you, that can take time.

Ms BURTON - I think it's a marathon, not 100 metres, Mr Valentine.

Mr EDWARDS - But it's the direction that we're heading.

Mr VALENTINE - One last question. With respect to the NBN, I believe it's laid in the street out here in Murray Street. We're not on it here; I don't know whether 15 Murray Street is on it or any other government department is on it. What's the strategy here to actually get across on to that superhighway, if you like? Where are we at with that?

Mr EDWARDS - We'll talk about the number of connections we have at the moment, as we do have some. I think it was observed before that we didn't but we do have 26 services.

Ms BURTON - Yes, 26 government sites connected to the NBN; 10 primary and high schools; Smithton, Scottsdale, Sorell, Triabunna, Deloraine, George Town; six LINC's, six police stations, two Service Tasmania shops, one electoral office and one service at the Sorell Community Health Centre.

Mr EDWARDS - But if you think about it, through our Networking Tasmania contract, we've had good connectivity between our facilities for years now so, in essence, NBN isn't necessarily transformational for us; it might be as you get the massively increased capacity but to be honest, we're sort of technology-agnostic in this; we don't mind who has the fibre or whatever between our facilities

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Mr VALENTINE - As long as the service is working.

Mr EDWARDS - As long as the service works. So, NBN - great; our current Networking Tasmania contract - great; the spin-offs for NBN are about what you give everyone else outside of our own wide area network.

Ms GIDDINGS - The issue here, though, with the parliamentary service is that parliament is on ADSL.

Mr EDWARDS - Exactly. That's the choice of presumably not participating in our Networking Tasmania contract so they don't have to be. You like being masters of your own destiny.

Mr VALENTINE - Okay. What about Burnie and Launceston and those other places around the state in terms of accessing the NBN for government offices and the like? You mentioned a couple that I didn't quite catch.

Ms GIDDINGS - Optic fibre services. It's the access to optic fibre services because not all is NBN.

Mr VALENTINE - No, I understand.

Mr EDWARDS - Presumably, as the infrastructure is rolled out, then the services become available. For example, I don't know about Murray Street, but they did all down the street that I live in and so I can access an iiNet service through NBN.

Mr VALENTINE - I'm just interested to know how we are availing ourselves of this wonderful area.

Ms GIDDINGS - It's a whole exciting area in terms of NBN and the thinking that government is going to have to make in and around how we use NBN infrastructure - optic fibre infrastructure that's available around the state, most of which will be NBN if we are successful in keeping the Visionstream contract intact with a possible change of federal government in September. There's no certainty of that, believe you me. If we do end up with optic fibre to the door, as is currently planned,

we need to start thinking more strategically. This isn't just thinking about next week, next month or even next year but thinking about where does e-government go; where is it going in e-health, in education, in community services, all of these sorts of things. That sort of thinking is really only in its preliminary stages or is a little bit ad hoc at the moment, depending on government departments and the need that they have to drive this sort of change at this point in time.

Obviously telemedicine has gone quite a long way over the last decade on some fairly basic infrastructure but I look towards what is the future of telemedicine. We were talking before about the conferencing facilities available for parliamentary committees; it's not up to scratch; it's not up to standard. I envisage that we will all have far more - the sort of conferencing facilities we have now in DPAC that was funded through the COAG process where you might as well be eye to eye across the table; it's that good. The quality, the sound, the flicking between different states is so immediate that you really do not miss the fact that you're not in the room to a fair extent. There is still something to be said about networking over the cup of tea that you can't have through that so there is still some need to have -

Mr VALENTINE - You could have a virtual cup of tea.

Laughter.

Ms GIDDINGS - You could have a virtual cup of tea but there's something to be had with having some ministerial meetings where it's face to face. I don't think you'll need quite as many once you've got that sort of infrastructure.

When it comes to talking about the extension of year 12 into schools, I don't believe at all in the Liberal Party policy around this but I do think that in time we will be able to extend a lot more opportunities for rural children in their own area without requiring them to travel to the city for a number of their subjects and that is not that far away and the \$900 000 that the education minister has put aside, is about developing those sorts of things so that more subjects can be provided at the Huonville High School for years 11 and 12, for instance.

This is one of the most interesting, fascinating, exciting parts of government but it is a balance between having infrastructure there and then having the ability to fund the core infrastructure of programs that will bring all of that to reality and, unfortunately, a lot in the ICT area is extremely expensive, and not everyone has the technology in their own homes. I am not sure opening more bricks and mortar shops in Service Tasmania is the way to go. We are far better looking at programs of how do we ensure that a man or a woman on an old age pension has access in their own home to the internet, to services that mean the community nurse can dial them up and say, 'Let's have a look at your wound today. Do I need to visit you and dress the wound or can I leave it another 24 hours?' Those are the sorts of things that we are looking at.

Mr VALENTINE - One quick question - T&D funding - where is that in the budget papers?

Ms GIDDINGS - It is 3.3, Mr Valentine.

Ms FORREST - I want to talk about Tasmania Together and maybe we should do it under stats. Stats do exist whereas Tasmania Together does not any more. One of my major concerns when the Tasmania Together board was abolished was the loss of that independent oversight and it was made clear by the Premier that it was to be a government priority to be focused on, as opposed to a committee priority. With Stats Matter can you tell me about the data collection that is going on, how it is being stored, how it is being made available more broadly and what community engagement there is in pledging and evaluating or using that data?

Mr EDWARDS - We all recognised at the time that a lot of the value creation through the 10 years or so of Tasmania Together lost the data collection. We still have the data collection in the

ABR, which is online reporting. We are still, at the agency level, collecting the data that supports that and part of Stats Matter is looking across government at all of our statistical collections to say, 'Which are the important ones? Which are the ones that need to continue to be invested in and maintained and updated?' That is the process which we are going through which is sort of a mini-version of something the Australian Government has gone through to look at what are the national significant data sets.

One of the dilemmas we have in the world of finite resources is we need to make sure that we spend money on the things of the most value and what part of Stats Matter project is about is making sure we understand the priorities of statistical assets in government.

Ms FORREST - Whose priorities?

Mr EDWARDS - For provision of information to government to make decisions. This information is, without getting into a philosophical debate, politically neutral. A lot of it is about trying to measure things objectively to then provide that information to decision makers whoever they may be.

Ms GIDDINGS - There is also a lot of KPIs that are set now in a lot of agreements so the collection of literacy and numeracy in education, the collection of data in health around how many occasions a service is provided in hospitals or community health services, and what is happening with the health of the population. A lot of it was already being done and what Tasmania Together did was highlight what were the priority areas that the community wanted to know more about and so we were able to draw all of that data into telling people why they did live in one of the safest communities and still do here in Tasmania when it comes to crime or what we were doing to get the smoking rates down because they identified smoking as a public health issue and they wanted to see more action on it.

That element of Tasmania Together, those key areas that the community said they wanted to know more about, continues. What we do not have is a separate board overseeing that and going back out and surveying the community on 'What's your worry about here?'

Ms FORREST - How do you now assess what the community's priorities are? Their priorities changed from the start of the 5-year review to the 10-year review, and they naturally will because 10 years ago the NBN was not even anywhere in sight. Things will change, so how will Stats Matter achieve that level of - the data collection is one thing and I believe it is really important that continues so that we know where we are headed, where we have been and where we are going, but how will Stats Matter engage the community to not only come to see why and what you are doing about smoking, public safety or whatever it is and to then identify what areas they want information on?

Ms GIDDINGS - Having been someone who was part of the Tasmania Together consultations and things, there are a lot of issues that we ended up filtering out through Tasmania Together by saying not enough people are interested in that, so you ended up with just some core issues which tend to be the core issues that continue. Everybody wants to know about health, what hospitals are available, what services are provided around elective surgery and the like. We provide all of that through the progress report as one measure as well as through Tasmania Together. Or people want to know that they live in a safe community; that was provided through Tasmania Together, the Police department provides all of those statistics on a yearly basis as well. I think what is more important now is that people know they can access the information, and Stats Matter is also, as I understand it, about providing that information in the public arena.

Rather than seeing those central points of Tasmania Together, for instance, if you have an interesting NBN, something that I think will be interesting to all of us is: how many people will take it up and how many people have internet access in the home? We know the recent census statistics tell us that information. We also know there is other information now coming out through NBN Co. that

tell us more about the take-up. Tasmania Together was never going to be fluid enough to be able to keep up with all of that.

Ms FORREST - How will Stats Matter communicate this information? As a member of the public I am interested in the take-up of the NBN, I want to know when it is coming to my street, and when it comes to my street how many other people take it up, that sort of thing.

Mr EDWARDS - We already publish enormous amounts of data, including administrative data; it is on all of our websites. Partly what Stats Matter will say is there is a whole range of reporting that is, as the Premier said, now standardised because of some of the major national reforms - in the National Health Reform, there is a large part of that which is about transparency, health data, MyHospitals-type website reporting. In the education reform space you have touched on the NAPLAN data but also with the Gonski reform, the MySchool website - again, there is a huge amount of data available.

What you find is that for a lot of the key areas that people want to know, those building blocks are now being established; they weren't back when Tasmania Together started but they are now, and that will continue. What we then need to look at are some of the data sets that we are wholly responsible for, that are important both for the management of policy decision-making but also reporting, and a good example of that is, as I was at an Early Years Foundation board meeting earlier today, the Kids Come First data set, which is a collection about data in the early years, and that is what Stats Matter will help to do.

The other data sets that are vitally important that help meet our national reporting obligations through, say, the review of government services and things like that, through our COAG commitments, to which almost every national partnership agreement has a reporting obligation, and then there will be some stuff left over that might not be dealt with anywhere else. A chunk of what is required will come out of the former Tasmania Together data sets and then there might be some other ones that we decide are priorities of the government of the day or they are community-driven desires. We need to find the right data to report and present, and that is part of this as well.

Ms FORREST - Tasmania Together had a very good website; it was live and you could drill down into the data to find out the source of the data, if it was from the ABS or whoever it is. Is that going to be part of Stats Matter?

Mr EDWARDS - The current consideration is: yes, what do we need to do with that? We have that capacity at the moment and we have a whole range of benchmarks. We need to work through the Stats Matter process to say which of this data collection needs to continue to be reported on and then having some sort of online pool is not almost taken for granted, that you will have an ability to interrogate data and drill it down.

Ms FORREST - That is what I am asking for, where is that going?

Mr EDWARDS - That is part of what we are working through with this. Until we go through the project more, we won't know but I think it will be highly unlikely if we said that none of the data is valuable and we are not going to report anything online.

Ms GIDDINGS - But in the meantime, the Tasmania Together website is still up and is still functioning.

Ms FORREST - Personally, I would see if it was information about access to hospitals and whatever, the hospital website point them to that. I think there needs to be one point of contact where people know they can go and get the information and maybe direct it to other websites at different times but -

Ms BURTON - The issue that Rhys alluded to earlier was the Australian Bureau of Statistics has done this ESA - Essential Statistics Australia - and so there is now a list of the core data sets for Australia so what we are thinking about is doing exactly the same thing for Tasmania and the ABS has been jointly working with us to develop this strategy which is heading for cabinet. It has not been signed off yet but if it were to be signed off, it would be addressing the issues that you are raising from the phoenix of Tasmania Together. We are seeing that there is this ongoing importance of statistical quality and capability.

Mr EDWARDS - I would make the observation, though, Tasmania Together data collection was not perfect because there were a whole lot of benchmarks that we did not have any decent measures for so we need to make sure that we are not spending effort collecting data that does not measure what you are intending to measure because we have more than enough sets of issues that we really need good data around. What I am trying to help provide to the government is a key information source of the important data that we have and that is reliable and you know it is measuring the things we want to measure and that we can invest in, as in the capability of the people that manage and run these data sets.

Ms FORREST - That is what I want.

Mr EDWARDS - And that any government and any parliament can have confidence that we have the sort of data available.

Ms FORREST - That is my concern, that we do not lose what we have had because it is historical whether it is no longer particularly relevant but it does provide an historical base and if we continue to collect meaningful data and making it available to the public.

Mr EDWARDS - We are on the same wavelength, absolutely.

CHAIR - I detected that a little while ago.

Ms FORREST - Their retrospective scope is fine.

CHAIR - I think we are done on 3.1, 3.2 we have already covered, and 3.3 has no appropriation so -

Mr VALENTINE - There is no appropriation and it is apparently because IT Transformation creating the government's technology future is finished, so what has finished? What has been completed and delivered in that regard?

Ms BURTON - There was an appropriation from the consolidated fund several years ago and that was for the email project and that is all agencies moving to the one email system which was preferred. TND, as Rhys said, eats what it kills, so TND earns money by managing contracts and by providing services in the IT space so the lack of an appropriation is still an operation of able people. When you look at the contract expenditure by TND, the \$14 million includes the cost of data services from Telstra so do not be too concerned about that very large number.

Mr VALENTINE - Outsourced.

Ms BURTON - Correct. It is about \$13 million -

Mr VALENTINE - It is still a government service but it is outsourced.

Ms BURTON - Yes, that is the contract expenditure.

Mr EDWARDS - We buy wholesale services from Telstra and we manage the delivery to

agencies.

Ms BURTON - When you go back to that number I did not want you to think that TND was expending \$14 million off its own bat. It is the contract that we have had for 17 years with Telstra and other entities.

Mrs HISCUTT - Does that mean that your trial with ASDEC is not going ahead?

Ms BURTON - That trial is for mobile devices. I notice a few of you have iPads and it has been developed by a local company and we have been trialling since COAG last year. This is a highly encrypted secure service so instead of Dropbox, which some of you may use, this ASDEC application means that you can have your documents downloaded to it and it is highly encrypted. The trial has been free because it is a local IT company and we are still trialling it.

Mrs HISCUTT - Do you know how long that will be? Do you have to come to an end? Do you have to purchase? What is the obligation?

Ms BURTON - No, there is no obligation. They are very keen to get their product used by people like Premier and Cabinet and the West Australian Premier and Cabinet department as well is one of their trial sites - it is a quid pro quo. They get the benefit of being able to say they trial it with us and we get the benefit of this free application. If it were not to be free at that time then we would be going out to the market to procure an application that would provide this high level of encryption for documents that we would not want in the public domain.

Mrs HISCUTT - The free trial will go on indefinitely?

Ms BURTON - Not indefinitely. We talk regularly with the local Tasmanian company and they are still developing the product. I think the issue is we do not quite have trim -

Mr REEVE - It is not totally integrated at the moment.

Mr BURTON - With our records management. There is still development being undertaken, hence the trial continues.

Mrs HISCUTT - If that all comes together, is it your intention to purchase?

Mr REEVE - Or go to tender.

Ms BURTON - Or go to tender, yes. There is absolutely no commitment involved.

CHAIR - That is output group 3 done, thanks Premier.

Output group 4

State Service management

4.1 State Service Employment and Management -

Ms GIDDINGS - I invite Frank Ogle to the table.

CHAIR - We might move to trooper Hall for the first question.

Mr HALL - Premier, in footnote 7 on page 10.9 it says: 'The decrease in State Service Employment and Management from 2013-14 reflects a decrease in revenue for The Training Consortium (TTC) resulting in decreased expenditure.' Why is there a decrease in revenue for the TTC; what is the reason for that?

Ms GIDDINGS - There has been reform of that area which has provided some savings but Frank might like to talk about that.

Mr OGLE - There is no doubt that we have seen some downturn in members accessing The Training Consortium. Remember The Training Consortium is a self-funded part of the State Service Management Office that coordinates training for not just the service but also other member organisations such as some of the city councils, the university and the Australian public service. It is like a consortium that centrally manages and charges a membership fee and charges for each training course. There has been a little bit of a downturn in the revenue, mainly through last year.

I am happy to report that the last two months have seen a really good increase in the revenue coming up but it is just one of those watch-and-see type arrangements. We have five people running The Training Consortium and running programs - everything from leadership programs, co-ordinating in-house programs - mainly focused on people management-type activities. We are really reliant in that on member organisations participating in the different training.

Mr HALL - In footnote 6, Premier, on page 10.25, it notes that 'additional funding has been provided to undertake a review of the Tasmanian State Service jobs website's ageing platform and infrastructure'. Can you provide some details on this and what is proposed?

Mr OGLE - The issues with the jobs website is that at the time it was introduced it was probably leading edge in many ways and it was an electronic gazette in many ways. We find that people use that more as their method of accessing state service jobs, but there are a number of issues with it. One is that it is becoming antiquated but it's also on a platform that causes some issues around security so, through the Treasury investment fund, we've been able to access funds to at least have a look at the jobs website. I'd prefer to call it - it's bigger than the jobs website - it's actually about what I'd describe as e-recruitment. A person should be able to go into the jobs website and automatically upload what an advertisement is, automatically put in an application and automatically get a receipt. The money put aside really is the first stage of what is called the jobs website project. We have 12 months to deliver. You'll see a new entry point to the advertising of State Service vacancies.

Mr HALL - With regard to State Service governance reforms, Premier, we might have already hashed over some of those already. What has been implemented and what remains to be implemented? Have you a running sheet there?

Mr EDWARDS - Basically, the parliament passed the changes to the State Service Act which abolished the role of the State Service Commissioner. That has happened and you can see references in the budget papers to the winding up of that function and some modest savings that have been made there. The responsibility is now all with the employer and we have done some rearrangement of Frank's area, the State Sector Management Office, to do those and issues of State Service appeals have gone to the Tasmanian Industrial Commission; that has been established. In terms of the higher level architecture of how the system works, that has been done. The project is complete. Obviously, the ongoing responsibility is now to manage all of those bits of the State Service in the way that the changes to the act provide. That is what we are doing.

Mr HALL - Finally, a couple of stock-standard questions, Premier.

The current number of people in FTEs employed right across the state sector, how this compares with previous years and how many vacancies there are across the sector.

Mr EDWARDS - I don't keep figures on the number of vacancies but I have the March figures in relation to FTEs. At March it was 22 178.

Mr HALL - How does that compare?

Mr EDWARDS - March last year was 22 118.

Mr HALL - Okay. You mentioned, Frank, that you couldn't provide how many vacancies there were across the sector at this stage?

Mr OGLE - The trouble is that it's a moveable feast. Every day vacancies occur. That's the sort of information agencies hold. We don't keep any central record of vacancies.

Mr HALL - Okay.

Ms FORREST - Before you go on to something else, there are a number of additional positions from March to March. Where were those positions? Some of them may have been the bushfire -

Mr OGLE - Bushfire recovery would be one and the hospital environment would be the main other area through nursing and service delivery.

Ms FORREST - The Minister for Health did mention some staff increases in nursing.

Mr OGLE - That would be the major increase. If you look down there are sort of bits and pieces of each. Numbers can be a bit deceiving because I know certain agencies, if you like, may have increased their FTEs but they've re-profiled the levels within that agency, so some utilise what we call our workforce renewal incentive program, deliberately got rid of certain high level jobs and recruited younger people or people at lower levels, so FTEs can be a bit deceiving in that way. As I said, it's really the health area that has had the increases. The increases in health are of the order of about 250, which means all the other agencies have basically dropped something, but the health area has increased in the service delivery end.

Ms FORREST - I mentioned to the Treasurer earlier a paper Treasury put out recently about the structural reform of government. They claim in there that the non-front-line positions exceeded the front-line positions that have been removed from the public sector. Do you have figures around front-line versus non-front-line?

Mr OGLE - I'd like to have but no, I don't.

Ms FORREST - They told me you would know that.

Mr OGLE - They say I know a lot of things.

Laughter.

Mr OGLE - We don't have those sorts of figures. In fact today I asked whether that's the sort of coding we need to do. It's a coding issue at the front end.

Ms FORREST - Treasury in that paper make that claim quite wildly.

Mr OGLE - If they make the claim then I don't know.

Mr EDWARDS - That's not surprising, though, because if you think through the post GFC budget cuts, front-line services were quarantined to a large extent but we still saw a reduction in FT headcount across the service, and a reasonably substantial one. That would have come by definition from the areas that were not quarantined. I think they are probably right in a way.

Ms FORREST - That did indicate that might have the figures.

Ms GIDDINGS - In terms of who would have the figures, if they existed, I think that is where the reference was.

Mr OGLE - We could probably find the figures out of the reduction - what sort of areas they were in. Remember, though, there are reductions and there are increases like health. I think the Secretary is right, that the majority of the reduction that has happened over nearly the two years has been out of what you describe as the non-service area. Part of the problem is defining what is the non-service area.

Mr EDWARDS - Whenever I talk to people, everyone is in the front line of service, particularly if there are job cuts.

Laughter.

Ms FORREST - That's right. I guess in areas like health and education and police and emergency services it's probably a little easier to identify who would see themselves as front-line as opposed to non-front-line. In those three areas, for example, do you have the differences between who would be classified as front-line -

Mr OGLE - I do not have them here.

Ms FORREST - Do you think you have them available?

Mr OGLE - It would be an exercise to do. I could point to the reduction of 34 in state service in police, and they would be non-front-line. They would be backroom people, state service-type people, in the whole of the police department. By definition they are not police officers, they are state servants.

Ms FORREST - Are you saying that Treasury are stating the obvious?

Mr VALENTINE - It would not be a reduction in services as a result of those people going.

Mr OGLE - I think you would have to ask every agency. I would say there would be some.

Ms GIDDINGS - It would depend on each agency because there would be some services that are no longer provide it. Depending on your definition of front line, those positions have gone. If you are talking about the front line in emergency services then certainly initially after 2010 there was a quarantine around front-line services of health. From memory, the 2011-12 budget removed that quarantine and essentially we had to free up agencies to make the appropriate decisions as to where they would find their savings because if all the front line was quarantined it would have been impossible to make the savings.

In the subsequent cuts we had to make in last year's budget, the front line was quarantined because we quarantined health, education and police from any further cuts. Even when you go into the discussion of the front line there is a whole debate about who is on the front line so the health services, even the nurse who is not at the bed but is behind the beds doing the paper management would still consider herself or himself as being on the front line. Others would argue potentially differently.

Ms FORREST - They haven't even got a nurse manager in the paper.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes.

Ms FORREST - It is highly paid paper shuffling.

Ms GIDDINGS - That can happen, and the same can happen with police who arguably are taken off the beat to do paperwork behind the headquarters. Are they still front-line or not? It is quite a grey area in definition as well.

Mrs HISCUTT - You mentioned that you did not know the vacancies that were there. There used to be a central vacancy management group but is that no longer in existence?

Mr OGLE - No. There is an identified centralised process that happens around what they call 'vacancy control' where jobs are put up and we try to match those with potentially surplus employees.

Mrs HISCUTT - So you do not have a group?

Mr OGLE - Yes, there is a group. It has been absorbed into my office and I do not have a central vacancy control group any more, but they do manage the process of matching vacancies with surplus or potentially surplus people. They meet weekly to try to match that so there is a process before a vacancy goes out to the *Gazette*. We have a look and clear that vacancy: is there anyone in the state service who might be in that potentially surplus bucket that we could transfer? I could probably get some figures around that if it were critical but again, it moves every day.

Mrs HISCUTT - No, I do not think it is critical. It is just a question. Premier, in June 2011, which is two years ago, the Integrity Commissioner released a report recommending that you implement the ministerial staff code of conduct. How are you going with that?

Ms GIDDINGS - All those codes of conduct have been implemented.

Mrs HISCUTT - They have been?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes.

Mrs HISCUTT - So you do not see a conflict between that code of conduct and a possible purchase from the IT company Asdeq Labs?

Ms GIDDINGS - There is no purchase. What you are saying here is that this company has a former premier, David Bartlett, who has been involved in that company and, as it was described to you, there is a free trial going on. There is a development of a program and the reason why it became known that there was a gap in the system was because that former premier was very frustrated in his job with COAG and other papers not being electronic. It was through his own frustration that the work has been developed. But, as the department said to you, that if it were to go to a point where we were going to purchase a program they would go through a proper tender process.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Premier.

Output group 7

Development of Local Government, Security and Emergency Management

7.2 Security and Emergency Management -

Ms GIDDINGS - I have at the table Michael Stevens, Tasmania Bushfire Recovery Coordinator; Mathew Healey is also at the table, who is Director of Bushfire Recovery Unit and Director of the Office of Security and Emergency Management.

Ms FORREST - Some of these questions are probably for the Minister for Finance as well, but with regard to bushfire management, what has been the total cost and how much of that is recoverable through the Tasmania Bushfire Management Fund?

Ms GIDDINGS - It is not just that but it is also recoverable through our commonwealth arrangements and our natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements. We expect to be able to get about 50 per cent of some of the costs back through that process. The total cost estimates to the state are in the vicinity of about \$45 million and that includes the cost for Aurora and other agencies, not just core government.

Ms FORREST - It does include -

Ms GIDDINGS - It does include and the costs, though, at the moment are still an estimate and we will not know the final cost until down the track. The total cost for 2012-13 for response and recovery activities for the January bushfires is approximately \$28.5 million; there is around \$9.14 million for fire fighting activities with the Tas Fire Service; about \$3.25 million in immediate response costs for other emergency personnel; about \$5.71 million for Dunalley School, the temporary school facilities, site clean up and the commencement of the school rebuilding works; \$6.17 million for the clean-up of affected areas which reflect the costs of site clearing and the treatment, removal and disposal of debris to ensure the affected areas are safe; \$1.24 million in financial assistance grants to individuals and businesses; \$1.34 million for the provision of emergency food, clothing, accommodation and other essentials to individuals affected; \$513 000 in replacement of essential public assets; \$1.07 million in business and social support services. In addition to that, the costs to Aurora were \$8.36 million.

Ms FORREST - The decision was taken by government to clean the sites up and I remember you saying during the event that it would assist people who have insurance to use their insurance for the full rebuild as opposed to the clean-up. Where are we at with that?

Ms GIDDINGS - We have done very well. I can announce that we have finished the clean-up. Hazell Brothers have been able to clean up about 306 properties that were destroyed and essentially they are in the process of withdrawing from that area. They have used about 47 of their own employees and 56 sub-contractors and considering they have completed that work in about four months it is quite extraordinary. What was interesting in the asbestos enlightened community that we now live in, and understanding the dangers, we have come to understand what is required in clean-ups like this.

It has not just been removing the surface debris, it has also been about removing the topsoil and, in some instances, the asbestos contamination had gone down a metre. Whereas we first anticipated the costs being around basics, we have found we have had to remove a lot more debris. We have had about 44 000 tons, or about 3 000 truckloads, of material that has been removed and taken to the Copping waste facility. That is well above the original estimate of 6 000 tons that we thought we would have to move.

That has had a big impact on the total cost of the clean-up which now stands at about \$6.9 million but we expect to get about half of that back from the Australian government and I thank the Australian government for its cooperation and work with us around that.

The costs have been on average about \$13 000 per property.

Ms FORREST - You mentioned Hazell Brothers' own employees and 50-odd sub-contractors. Were the sub-contractors local?

Ms GIDDINGS - A number of those sub-contractors were local. I do not know whether we have a breakdown of that but they were. I know that some of the workers who were disrupted at the Kelly sawmill, were picked up and used in that clean-up operation. So that gave them something to do while -

Mr HEALEY - They employed 16 people from the local area.

Ms GIDDINGS - We are proud of the fact that so much has been done in a relatively short time and particularly the last 20-odd properties, as it was difficult to contact the property owners so we probably could have finished earlier if we had been able to get in touch with all of those property owners in faster time but, considering that, absent owners that were hard to find, but we have done it now.

Ms FORREST - We know that bushfires are part of our landscape in Tasmania and unfortunately it will happen again, hopefully not in such drastic consequences but what are you doing? Is the responsibility of this line item to actually do some fire prevention measures, or is that it?

Ms GIDDINGS - Not so much, the task force has been about the immediate clean-up, the immediate work within a community and we expect the task force to be in place for about 18 months in all and we would hope that this time next year we will be able to announce the closure of this period of time. The other sort of work will be part of the bushfire inquiry that has now been established with Malcolm Hyde, the former South Australian Police Commissioner overseeing that. Submissions to that inquiry close on 14 June and that is where issues that people may have around concerns of whether there was enough burn-off occurring on private land or public land prior to those bushfires can be looked at and examined. We have obviously done work around the Victorian Royal Commission and picked up a number of those recommendations which are in the process of being implemented. The one that has been the most controversial one has been around the 5 per cent cap, what is the word?

Mr HEALEY - Target.

Ms GIDDINGS - The 5 per cent target of burn-offs every year. Our advice before and even after the January bushfires is that those sorts of arbitrary targets are not necessarily useful at all but I would expect the inquiry would look at those sorts of issues. We did find that the targeted strategic burn-offs around Bicheno - I think they were done by the Parks and Wildlife Service - did prove to be very beneficial in protecting Bicheno in those January fires. We have pursued Mount Direction fires with the burn-off in the last week or so, which would be beneficial in protecting the Eastern Shore should there be bushfires in this coming fire season. Our hope is that what we saw on that day was one of those freak events and we certainly have not seen conditions like that since the 1967 fires. Have they become more prevalent? We do not know at this point but there are certain issues that will be considered through that inquiry.

Mr VALENTINE - The provision of psychology services to those who have been through it, is that going to continue? You talk about closing down the unit at the committee at some point.

Ms GIDDINGS - We believe that that 18-month period will probably be sufficient at the moment; if there is ongoing need we will consider it. We have been using expert advice on how communities respond to disasters like this and following that advice so the DISH at Dunalley has social workers and others there so that people can access that support. We have also partnered with Beyond Blue and that has been a deliberate partnering through the school at Dunalley because we know that children tend to show the effects through their behaviour, through drawings, through stories they tell - those sorts of things - and that package with Beyond Blue is \$1.3 million in total as part of our social recovery plan that I announced yesterday. Sorry, that is another so I will separate the two and come back to the \$1.3 million but the Beyond Blue one is the best way of also then being able to talk to the parents and find out if there is other assistance that is required in the family.

The school environment is one of the best ways of touching on those other social issues but the social recovery plan, the \$1.3 million that I announced yesterday, will ensure that those recovery workers remain in the community for the foreseeable future and that is what we see as being within the next 12 months. Clinical psychologist Rob Gordon is a person who has been providing us with a

lot of the advice around how to support.

Mr VALENTINE - That was an excellent briefing to; I went to that. I have handed that paper out to a few people and they have been very encouraged by it.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, good. It was very timely. Even just watching the reactions of people who had been involved in the immediate recovery in these communities, seeing some of their reactions that Rob told us we could anticipate seeing - we certainly did see them and we could identify those actions and put supports around people.

Mr VALENTINE - Thanks for that.

Ms GIDDINGS - It is really important.

CHAIR - There are no further questions in that area, thanks Premier.

Ms GIDDINGS - That is it for DPAC then?

CHAIR - Yes.

Ms GIDDINGS - Thank you very much to Premier and Cabinet.

DIVISION 1

(Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts)

Output group 4

Arts

4.1 Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery -

CHAIR - We will go first of all to TMAG.

Mr VALENTINE - I am interested in the expansion project. Can you explain that budget line item, the way it moves? It was mentioned earlier that the expansion project comes into that.

Ms GIDDINGS - The first stage of the re-development of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery has now been completed. At the moment we do not have funds in the budget for stages 2, 3, 4 and however many other stages there may be.

What we do have in the budget is the core of the development team funded so that we can now review the work of the initial entire plan and look at whether or not that can be broken down into other stages for stage 2 and possibly other stages and whether indeed the initial plan that we have for the entire development needs to be reconsidered in light of, for instance, the MONA effect that has occurred. We still anticipate going ahead with more of the re-development of the museum and art gallery and having the larger vision which was around a \$200 million vision come to reality over time. It is not backing away from that vision at all but it is understanding whether or not we have to keep it more contemporary according to the changes that have occurred in our cultural communities since we first brought forward the initial vision.

There will be some of that work going on around the review of the architectural conceptual plans that we have in place. For that reason we are keeping Root Projects Australia engaged to help us undertake that review as well. We are really excited and very pleased with the outcomes of the \$30 million re-development. It has gone down very well, everyone is speaking very highly of that. People are voting with their feet with in excess of 180 000 people now through the door.

Mr VALENTINE - That was my next question. You pre-empted it.

Ms GIDDINGS - Right - 180 000 people now through the doors. It is roughly about 2 500 people a day at the moment who are visiting TMAG which is exceptional.

Mr VALENTINE - That redevelopment presumably brings with it increases in maintenance costs and the like that is all encompassed so you have an ongoing extra cost as a result of the development. Do you have a handle on how much that is?

Ms GIDDINGS - We have increased the recurrent budget of TMAG by some \$800 000 to assist the costs that are now there to open all four floors of the Bond Store which previously were not open to the public and did not have disability access but now do. We have catered for those costs around the redevelopment but that is not to say that the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery is not without its pressures. All areas of government have their challenges and the costs have to be absorbed.

We have put additional dollars into the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery to help deal with that increased floor space that they are now having to manage and the electricity costs, security costs and all of those sorts of costs that come with that. I expect that there will be ongoing discussions with TMAG, as there are with other parts of government, around how they manage other challenges that they still have.

Mr VALENTINE - The FTE level has risen to what, as a result of that?

Ms GIDDINGS - In terms of the staffing levels?

Mr BLEATHMAN - We have had an increase in front-of-house staff because of the additional space we have opened up to the public. We have a commercial manager for our shop facility and we have a volunteer coordinator that are on staff and it is very much assessing it as we go - 71.82 is the FTE position which was mentioned yesterday.

Mr VALENTINE - That is obviously up from last year. What was last year's level?

Ms GIDDINGS - We might have to take that on notice and come back to you. The museum has had some reduction in FTEs over the last couple of years but they have had to find some budget savings alongside everyone else so there has been a reduction in FTEs in recent years. With the increased floor space we know we have to increase that FTE.

Mrs HISCUTT - I heard that the planning for the redevelopment cost about \$10 million, is that correct? That is a huge amount of money.

Ms GIDDINGS - No, not in the scheme of a -

Mrs HISCUTT - It might be if you look at it from my point of view.

Ms GIDDINGS - I understand that would be the case for you but for a \$200 million project, \$10 million in planning is not much.

I will go through the stage 1 budget for you so you have that - \$30 million. Constructions and exhibitions, stage 1, are about \$20 million out of that \$30 million. Detail, design and construction plans for stage 1 were \$2 million. TMAG project and transition costs were \$3 million. Project director fees and associated costs were \$2.6 million. Master plan and site investigations for the full project were \$1.1 million and the full project architectural concept design was \$1.3 million.

Mrs HISCUTT - You had an 18-week closure, was there a reason - trouble accessing the premises?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, absolutely. I will get Bill to describe to you why that happened.

Mr BLEATHMAN - We have the most complex and significant collection of heritage buildings on one site in the nation and we had tradesmen in all but one of those buildings and so by November it was obvious to us that with the pressure to get the job finished, it was unsafe for the public to be entering the building with the amount of tradesmen there so we made the decision from a public safety perspective to close. We closed in November and reopened on 15 March. Whilst we were disappointed there was a spin-off to all the small museums in Hobart. The Maritime Museum had a record November, December, January and February and they were picketing for us to stay closed -

Laughter.

Mr BLEATHMAN - to try to assist them in that.

[4.45 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT - OH & S.

Mr BLEATHMAN - It just becomes a public safety issue and with so many visitors coming in it's just impossible with tradesmen going through the building. We're re-opened now and we'll be open for the next hundred summers.

Mrs HISCUTT - Good. I heard recently that the Markree House is under you guys -

Mr BLEATHMAN - That's right.

Mrs HISCUTT - and that there'd been some stolen artworks from there and someone's been charged. Has the artwork been recovered?

Ms GIDDINGS - I don't think all of it has been recovered.

Mr BLEATHMAN - No.

Ms GIDDINGS - Somebody has been charged and there is a court case in regards to that so we can't really talk about it here.

Mrs HISCUTT - So you can't tell me whether or not you got a bit of that artwork back?

Mr BLEATHMAN - We've identified a number of objects that are missing. The police have made inquiries through eBay; they know the people who have the objects and that's part of their investigations.

Mrs HISCUTT - Good. So you keep a list of registered artwork, of course?

Mr BLEATHMAN - Oh yes.

Ms FORREST - Fancy putting it on eBay; that was a dumb thing to do.

Laughter.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Can you tell me what the total spending on the TMAG upgrade was?

Ms GIDDINGS - \$30 million.

Mr VALENTINE - The West Coast Mines Museum; is that still connected with you?

Ms GIDDINGS - That comes more under Arts Tasmania rather than TMAG so when we get to that output group I'll get Katherine Hough to the table.

Mr VALENTINE - Okay.

Mr BLEATHMAN - The collection is part of the museum.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, the collection is part of the museum.

Mr VALENTINE - What connection is there apart from the collection being a part of you? How is that museum managed in relation to your jurisdiction?

Mr BLEATHMAN - Back in about 1996, I think, they leased part of the museum and art gallery before that and then in 1996 they were privatised to the West Coast Heritage Authority in order to give them greater access to regional tourism money and regional development. They've done an absolutely brilliant job in terms of turning that museum around. Part of the agreement was that the collection as part of the museum would be long-term loaned to them and it's worked remarkably well. I think they're suffering from the downturn in numbers through that area a bit.

4.2 Art Industry Development -

Ms GIDDINGS - I bring to the table Katherine Hough, the Director of Arts Tasmania.

Mr VALENTINE - I see the budget there and I wonder about the increase in that line item in 2015-16 and 2016-17. Is that just indexation again?

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes. The Arts Tasmania budget had to do its fair share of the budget savings as every other part of government has had to do so it has had some reduction in that respect to its funding over the past couple of years. Its savings targets will remain there in that respect. What you would see in terms of increases would be in line with indexation.

Mr VALENTINE - Is that taking into account the payroll tax as well?

Ms GIDDINGS - The payroll tax reduction as well, yes. And the 27th pay would also account for some of the increase.

Mr VALENTINE - Obviously, this is a state component so presumably a lot of the work that's been done under this budget is statewide, not just south-centric. Can you explain to us a bit about how that's spread?

Ms GIDDINGS - Individual artists and organisations apply for the grant programs. They are reviewed by peer assessment boards that oversee the distribution of those funds and they are then recommended to me for funding. That's how it happens. Katherine, is there some weighting around regional focus or not?

Ms HOUGH - No, there's no weighting around regional focus but it is taken into account when they're looking at the overall funding for a program. If there was an organisation's program and nothing had been funded in Launceston we would have a look at why that might be so. You can access all of the reports on the Arts Tasmanian website to give you a breakdown by region, by cultural category.

Mrs HISCUTT - Is that for grants?

Ms HOUGH - Yes.

Mr VALENTINE - With regard to cultural industries, there is a decrease in gross state product of \$1.3 million down to what is \$56.6 million. I find that fascinating given the fact that we have MONA happening and so much attention and I do not know whether anyone can comment on that. It is not something that is in your budget papers, as far as I am aware. There has been a reduction in the Arts contribution to state gross product.

Ms GIDDINGS - The information I have before me does not compare from year to year in that respect but the ABS statistics have said that expenditure income and industry components of the GSP in Tasmania could be attributed to arts and recreation services to the tune of \$179 million for the year ended 30 June 2012. Arts Tasmania has extracted the data specifically for the cultural industries only and that analysis shows that the 2011-12 contribution to GSP by cultural industries is \$58.6 million.

Mr VALENTINE - It might have been a 2010 figure I had.

Ms GIDDINGS - We are anticipating it going up in terms of performance information. We expect the contribution to GSP will be some \$59.5 million in the 2012-13 year and \$60.5 million in the 2013-14 year.

Mr VALENTINE - Given you have a more stringent situation, what principles are you using in terms of funding various artists or organisations? You must have a strategy that you are following in that regard?

Ms HOUGH - The Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board looks at this seriously and we have been doing some research around new funding models. The board has done a lot of work around how we can best invest the dollars that we have for the maximum public value. I am making a recommendation that will go to the Premier in July around ways of slicing the paper differently, if you like, so we are looking at a range of options which might include leveraging funds from the Australian Council for the Arts, given that they are now reviewing how they are working with Creative Partnerships Australia, which is the amalgamation of the former Australia Business Arts Foundation and Artsupport Australia, and also looking at mechanisms such as seed funding for crowd funding support, more rounds for individuals to access micro loans as well as subsidies, a whole range of mechanisms.

At the moment for applicants in calendar year 2013 applying for 2014 programs and projects they are still being assessed on the criteria around their capacity, the quality, the artistic idea and the benefit but those criteria will also be assessed to look at how we can extrapolate the impact and the reach of those projects better.

Mr VALENTINE - And that is to expose more people to the arts across the island?

Ms HOUGH - Yes.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Given that the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, a regional museum in the north, has a very positive profile and really is Australia and world renowned, could you explain, Premier, why there is such an inequity between government funding for the QVMAG and TMAG? I already acknowledge that one is owned by the Launceston City Council and one is owned by the state government.

Ms GIDDINGS - That is fundamentally the difference.

Mrs ARMITAGE - You would be willing, if it was offered to you for \$1, to take it over?

Ms GIDDINGS - It will not be offered to us for \$1, I can assure you.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I am not so sure.

Ms GIDDINGS - I have had those discussions with the Launceston City Council and there is no way they want to give up ownership of QVMAG and I have discussed with them that they are the only museum outside of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery to be indexed, the only museum. We support a number of regional museums around the state and when I have said to people, 'Well, if we put more money in, you'll have to give us more control' - 'Ooohhh! Don't do that, we don't actually want you.'

Mrs ARMITAGE - I have not heard that, Premier, because at the moment you are probably aware that the ratepayers put \$4.3 million into a regional museum.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Can you give me the latest figure the state is putting into it?

Ms GIDDINGS - The latest figure? Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery gets \$1 297 700, almost \$1.3 million goes into QVMAG, compared to \$130 500 for West Coast Pioneers Museum, a regional museum; \$63 000 for the Burnie Regional Gallery; \$63 000 for the Devonport Regional Gallery; \$63 000 for maritime heritage; \$40 500 for Narryna Folk Museum; \$18 000 for the Australasian Golf Museum and \$18 000 for the Woolmers Foundation Incorporated.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I think comparing the QVMAG though to the other regional museums is drawing rather a long bow.

Ms GIDDINGS - No, no, no. You go into those regional communities and they are very important to them too.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I am sure they are important but I think we can all acknowledge that QVMAG is at least Australia-renowned and often world-renowned.

Ms GIDDINGS - It is a wonderful facility, absolutely.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Can I take from your comments then, following the review that the Launceston City Council is doing, if they were to provide more control to the state then you would be prepared to put a lot more money into it?

Ms GIDDINGS - Realistically, Rosemary, that is not going to happen because as I said from conversations I have had, people do not want to have that interfered with and, essentially, if you were actually talking about a state government takeover, that would be a very different discussion we would be having.

Right here and now we do not have funds to put into that museum, just as we have found \$800 000 for the whole state collection at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery - which is the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery; it is not run by the Hobart City Council or anyone else, it is the state collection and TMAG is under financial strain. Our own state collection requires more assistance. We have put in \$800 000 extra but I know there are still challenges for TMAG, so there are not available funds to put into QVMAG. It is a regional facility, it is a world-class regional facility. It is one of the reasons why the state government also put in about \$3 million, I think it was, into its re-development in recent times. It is one of the reasons why it is an indexed facility but these are discussions about regional offers that really the Launceston City Council needs to consider in terms of other councils that benefit from that being there. I know you have a similar situation with your regional swimming pool as well.

Mrs ARMITAGE - In fairness to the smaller councils with their lower rate base, I think it would

be very hard for them to put extra funds in. I think we have to be fair when it comes down to it. It would seem incumbent upon the government - and I appreciate the fact there is no hay in the barn, as we hear constantly - but it still is difficult when one set of rate payers, as opposed to which council it might be, is funding continually regional facilities for a region.

Ms GIDDINGS - But that is true of so many facilities. The same argument could be put forward around the Aquatic Centre and I know the Launceston City Council would put a similar argument around the regional facility of the Aquatic Centre there.

The same argument would certainly be put by the Burnie Regional Gallery. They are funding and subsidising, through the Burnie City Council, a regional facility that helps provide a tourist attraction for people in that region.

These are pressures that are felt around the state, and I acknowledge that the Launceston City Council right now is finding it pretty tough on a number of fronts. They are not the only level of government finding it tough. The Australian Government has made some big cuts, and you would think politically unpalatable cuts, at this point in time leading into a federal election because they are finding it tough.

We, at the state government level, are finding it tough; we are still pursuing further cuts across government, including Arts Tasmania and regional museums. In fact, the regional museums have done it pretty tough in terms of what funding we've been able to provide for them. They have arguably gone backwards while the QVMAG has continued to go forward because of -

Mrs ARMITAGE - And TMAG.

Ms GIDDINGS - No, not at all. In that sense of QVMAG under its separate agreement that it has with the state government, it is protected from cuts. I don't think QVMAG has had one cut through this period whereas TMAG has. TMAG had to reduce its staff over the last couple of years. Small museums around the state have had their budgets held back, if not cut. For them, some of those cuts have been \$2 000 and when you have a budget of \$18 000 to \$40 000 then \$2 000 is a lot of money.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I accept that but, we can't forget the \$30 million we've just spent on TMAG when we're talking about reductions.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes, the state collection, Rosemary, in a state institution is the sole responsibility of the state government. That's reality and to compare QVMAG to TMAG is wrong. QVMAG is fantastic and I think what we were able to support QVMAG to achieve in its redevelopment was sensational. It is brilliant; you walk in and the experience is up there with the best experiences I've had in the world. I think people who are involved with QVMAG should hold their heads high. This political debate that's starting to emerge in terms of the Launceston City Council's responsibilities for its own collection and trying to put it at the feet of the state government is wrong.

Mrs ARMITAGE - Well, we'll just have to agree to disagree on some of these issues and continue with it at another forum.

CHAIR - Okay, we're done on Arts Industry Development, I think.

4.3 Screen Industry Development -

Ms GIDDINGS - I bring to the table Karena Slaninka, the Director of Screen Tasmania.

Mr VALENTINE - I am interested, Premier, in how we might be capturing the attention of the world in terms of Tasmania with its wonderful environment. Are we spending any money in that

regard to promote our state for film companies to come here and create magic?

Ms GIDDINGS - Absolutely; we're working with -

Mr VALENTINE - As they're obviously doing in New Zealand.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes. We certainly are. In fact, there have been some major achievements with Screen Tasmania in that area. In recent times, of course, *The Hunter* has been the biggest and most successful film in that respect with its coverage around the world; it was filmed here in Tasmania with Willem Dafoe. There have been other smaller productions such as *The Last Confession of Alexander Pearce* and there was another film about Alexander Pearce.

Ms SLANINKA - *The Outlaw Michael Howe*.

Ms GIDDINGS - Michael Howe.

Ms SLANINKA - It has just finished filming and *The First Fagin*.

Ms GIDDINGS - Yes. I think that was different; there was another Alexander Pearce movie that was made? There were two.

Mr VALENTINE - One was a documentary, I think. I think the two Irish companies may have come.

Ms GIDDINGS - That's it. So there is a fair bit but there are other films are under way too. Karena has just mentioned and I'm happy for her to speak up and talk more about the sorts of feature films that are under development. But we're not just looking at feature films, of course; we're also looking at the digital area -

Mr VALENTINE - *Blue Rocket* and those sorts of things.

Ms GIDDINGS - *Blue Rocket*, absolutely, *The Buzz Bumble Show* and those sorts of things which are more consistent work that we can develop for the local industry rather than a one-off feature film here or there. Karena, do you have an update in terms of other films?

Ms SLANINKA - Yes, sure. Personally, I would also say that what we have done is to prioritise support for the development of the local industry and local production activity. That means, for us, ongoing series production where we can generate job opportunities and an ongoing churn of production activity. A really good example of that and the way in which we have been building reputation is around animation and the interactive online, content space. The production has currently teamed up with an Indian co-production partner, which is fantastic, to produce 52 11-minute animated children's television series, *Buzz Bumble*, for Channel 9.

Mr VALENTINE - *Buzz Bumble*?

Ms SLANINKA - Yes, that is currently in production and is employing 23 Tasmanians and injecting \$2.3 million into our economy. From our point of view, we get a far greater bang for our buck because that is ongoing employment for 23 FTEs over an extended period of time of 9 months rather than a feature film coming in and filming for 6-7 weeks and employing maybe 12 or 15 people. Whilst it is fantastic to showcase our wonderful locations, what we are trying to balance out is building an industry, and building the capacity here, and so strategically we have taken the decision to prioritise support for ongoing production and that includes television drama which is the holy grail. We have spoken before about things like a *Hamish Macbeth* or a *Northern Exposure* or a *McLeod's Daughters* here in Tasmania, so that is the kind of thing that we have been looking at developing and we have been developing a number of those sorts of series and we have a couple that are very close to

getting fully financed with international co-production partners and our financing model is quite different to arts in the sense that it is an industrial model.

It costs a lot of money to make a film or a television series so there is an expectation that we are a co-investor with other financing partners, so Screen Tasmania manages, with the Tasmanian production company, to leverage and attract a great deal of investment into Tasmania. For example, with *Buzz Bumble* we only put in \$203 000 of that entire budget of \$3.5 million with a \$2.3 million spend in Tasmania so you can see the economic advantages in our strategic priority in focusing on television drama series, for example. A good example is a television drama series has an average budget of around \$10 million to \$12 million for a 13 by half hour series, a large proportion of that would be spent in Tasmania and that would equate to anywhere between 50 and 70 fulltime FTEs for around about a 40-week production period. In terms of economies of scale and the employment opportunities, the ongoing skills development, that is something that we really prioritise as an important area for us.

Mr VALENTINE - Has there ever been any expression of dismay or otherwise, about lack of facility that we might have in this state?

Ms SLANINKA - Like a film studio?

Mr VALENTINE - A studio or other infrastructure that might be required.

Ms GIDDINGS - Karena can say differently if it is true, but that is not something that I am aware of. In the early days of Screen Tasmania, around 2005, we established the Goodwood studios and that was there to provide some support to production. The reality is the high tech equipment that you need in production now, we are not going to be able to afford to provide that so you are far better to use facilities elsewhere and the studio at Goodwood is too limited in terms of what benefit, the techno park, it could really provide and in the end, it was used just by the ABC for the Collectors program and it has been decided to close that down through economic development as it is not really useful. We are open to looking at whether there is a need for other facilities in time and we keep our eyes open to what might be useful space should it become available but it is not the highest priority in terms of the development of the screen industries.

Ms SLANINKA - I think an interesting case in point is South Australia. The South Australian government, a couple of years ago committed \$43 million to the redevelopment of their Glenside Psychiatric hospital and turned them into state-of-the art, beautiful studios. They have been lying dormant for the last couple of years now and they have been really struggling to get production in there. It has been a bit of a white elephant and a bit of a folly. We really don't want to harness ourselves to an old machinery-style production when online and digital opportunities are really beckoning for Tasmania.

Mr VALENTINE - I was just asking the question whether anyone had expressed any misgivings about the lack of facility or otherwise. With this line item, how many FTEs are you talking about?

Ms GIDDINGS - Six.

Mr VALENTINE - The majority of these funds would be specifically for facilitation?

Ms GIDDINGS - We have here somewhere the overall breakdown of the budget showing how the funds are split. Digital innovation program - there are six FTEs but then there is other funding that they have. Screen Tasmania has committed a total of \$782 034 and they are supporting a total project of about 45 projects, 165 practitioners and one not-for-profit organisation. There are five major funding streams and the dollars are broken up with \$47 460 for the digital innovation program.

Mr VALENTINE - Where are you taking that from, Premier?

Ms GIDDINGS - This is a breakdown of the budget within Screen Tasmania. It is not a line item in your budget papers but this is the detail behind it.

Mr VALENTINE - Can we get a copy of that?

Ms GIDDINGS - I can certainly table this for you.

Mr VALENTINE - Thank you. That is all, Mr Chairman. I think it is an exciting opportunity for us.

Mrs HISCUTT - Yes, I think it is really exciting, too. With the six FTEs, the money just seems to be a little bit down on normal. Have you enough money to keep going?

Laughter.

Ms GIDDINGS - If you ask that question to any part of government the answer is no, I have not enough money, I want more.

Mrs HISCUTT - Let me rephrase that. Are you going to be able manage on the allocation?

Ms GIDDINGS - And the answer to that is yes, because the reality is again, every government department and part of any agency would love to have more money and in these circumstances that we are in we just cannot provide it. The funds that are provided are the funds that they have to manage within. What is exciting about the area that Karena is involved in is that we are only one source of the funds. She can leverage a reasonable amount of other money of a fairly small amount that she may be able to put in.

For instance, there is a documentary called *Mary Meets Mohammad*, which I would recommend everyone see, a documentary into which we have put about \$36 000 to help that filmmaker produce that documentary down to a half-hour or two-hour program. It can be shown on ABC on *Compass*. The overall cost of that production is far more than the \$36 000 that we have put in but it has been critical to leverage it. You can make a dollar go a long way in this sort of area.

Mrs HISCUTT - When you say you employ 35 or 50 extras, is that like extras as in -

Ms GIDDINGS - That is the production itself.

Mrs HISCUTT - Yes, so that is not coming from us.

Ms GIDDINGS - No, that would be from our \$36 000 that we've put into *Mary Meets Mohammad* that has helped support a director, a sound recordist and an editor and all of the production crew that sit behind that.

Mrs HISCUTT - Do those funds pay for the cost of a board? Is there a Screen Tasmania Board?

Ms GIDDINGS - There is a Screen Tasmania Board and there is a small amount of funds that goes into those sitting fees of that board.

Mrs HISCUTT - Do you have that figure at hand or is that just a nominal amount?

Ms SLANINKA - For the sitting fees, the chair is paid an amount of \$3 000 and each member is paid something like \$260 for a two-hour phone call, so \$540 for a full-day sitting fee.

Mrs HISCUTT - Do they meet often?

Ms SLANINKA - Six times a year, so not big costs.

Ms GIDDINGS - For what we get out of them and the expertise that sits around that table it is incredible really.

Ms SLANINKA - They do it because they have a vested interest in the industry and they want to grow the industry in Tasmania.

CHAIR - Premier, we are finished with the Arts output group.

Ms GIDDINGS - Thank you everybody.

CHAIR - The only thing left for the committee to consider is grants and subsidies, Ten Days on the Island, the TSO and the Theatre Royal. Does anybody have any questions on those three areas? There are no questions, Premier, thank you.

Ms GIDDINGS - The Theatre Royal is also a state institution. I had the same argument with Mrs Armitage before around the QVMAG to be put forward on the Princess Theatre and others.

Mrs ARMITAGE - I did not put that forward, did you notice?

Laughter.

The committee adjourned at 5.16 p.m.