



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Hon. Jacquie Petrusma MP

Wednesday 8 June 2022

MEMBERS

Hon Nick Duigan MLC
Hon Ruth Forrest MLC (Chair)
Hon Mike Gaffney MLC (Deputy Chair)
Hon Dean Harriss MLC
Hon Sarah Lovell MLC
Hon Meg Webb MLC

IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Jacquie Petrusma MP, Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management. Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence Minister for Parks

Police, Fire and Emergency Management

Darren Hine	Commissioner of Police/Secretary, DPFEM
Donna Adams	Deputy Commissioner of Police
Jonathan Higgins	Assistant Commissioner Operations
Adrian Bodnar	Assistant Commissioner Specialist Support
Mandy Clarke	Deputy Secretary
Lisa Stingel	Manager, Office of the Commissioner/Secretary
Dermot Barry	Chief Officer
Bruce Byatt	Deputy Chief Officer
Emma Fitzpatrick	Executive Director, Strategy and Capability
Leon Smith	Acting Director, State Emergency Service
Allan Garcia	Chair, State Fire Commission

Prevention of Family Violence

Mel Gray	Deputy Secretary, Wellbeing Strategy and Engagement, Department of Communities Tasmania
Courtney Hurworth	Assistant Director, Policy and Programs, Wellbeing Strategy and Engagement, Department of Communities Tasmania
Prof. Michael Pervan	Secretary, Department of Communities Tasmania
Pip Shirley	Assistant Director, Wellbeing Strategy and Engagement, Department of Communities Tasmania
Darren Hine	Commissioner of Police/Secretary, DPFEM
Donna Adams	Deputy Commissioner of Police
Michelle Plumpton	Inspector, Safe Families Coordination Unit

Parks

Vanessa Pinto	Chief Executive Officer
Jason Jacobi	Acting Secretary, NRE Tas
Stuart Fletcher	Acting Deputy Secretary, Parks and Wildlife Service
Will Joscelyne	General Manager, Parks and Wildlife Service
Jen Parnell	Director, Landscape Programs
Andrew Crane	Project Director, Office of Coordinator General
Vanessa Pinto	Chief Operating Officer
Michael Giudici	General Manager, Land Tasmania
Tim Grant	Valuer General, Office of the Valuer General

The Committee met at 9.02 a.m.

CHAIR - Welcome minister and your team for our Estimates hearings. Most of you might know our newest member, Dean Harriss, the member for Huon. For those who may not, he's a new member, so we welcome him.

Minister, would you like to introduce the members of your team, minister, and then make an opening statement? The portfolio we're looking at first is Prevention of Family Violence. So over to you.

DIVISION 2

Department of Communities Tasmania

Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence

Output Group 5 - Safe Homes, Families, Communities

5.1 Safe Homes, Families, Communities: Tasmania's action plan for family and sexual violence

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thanks, Chair. I'd like to introduce at the table Mel Gray, deputy secretary of Wellbeing Strategy and Engagement, Department of Communities Tasmania. I'm also delighted to welcome Commissioner Darren Hine, Commissioner of Police and secretary of the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management.

While the output we're examining comes under the Communities Tasmania output, from previous experience in previous years, we found that a lot of questions regarding family violence, because it is linked with first responders such as police, did involve the police.

We have a lot of exciting announcements. I want to commend the commissioner for the outstanding work that him and his team are doing in regards to family violence. So there's a lot of work being done in that space. I thought it's important that they're here in case there were any questions that did involve police.

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the original and continuing custodians of the land on which we gather today and pay my respect to their elders past and present.

I'd also like to acknowledge all victims/survivors of family and sexual violence for their bravery and resilience, and those victims who have lost their lives to these terrible crimes. I would also like to thank all those across government and non-government services that help victims/survivors in their time of need and hold perpetrators to account, and for their continued dedication and efforts towards our goal of a Tasmania that is free from all forms of violence.

Addressing family and sexual violence is a top priority for the Tasmanian Government, as well as myself as minister. My role is to help coordinate the delivery of our 40 actions across government, under our second action plan, Safe Homes, Families, Communities. It's now also to oversee the development of our third family and sexual action plan, to be released in July.

While my ministerial colleagues are responsible for their own actions as part of the 40 actions in their individual portfolios, through its coordinated governance that is an

award-winning model we work collaboratively to integrate and influence an activity. In this Budget I am especially delighted that we will be delivering an historic increase in recurrent core funding, as well as five-year contracts for our nine frontline specialist family and sexual violence services.

We will be providing \$75 million in funding over the five years, which is a 37 per cent increase in core funding. Through this investment, our services will have greater certainty and increased operational capacity to respond to the demand needs of victims/survivors now and into the future.

I am also delighted that this Budget commits \$15.1 million to pilot two multi-disciplinary centres in the north and south of the state, with consultation well under way. These centres will provide a further avenue for victims/survivors of family sexual violence to receive integrated wraparound supports in a safe place.

We know that there's still much more work to be done. This is why since 2015 we've invested over \$300 million in responding to family and sexual violence, including \$63 million for specific measures under our first and second action plans, as well as \$19 million in direct funding and \$59 million in indirect funding that we spend to address family and sexual violence every year

This third action plan will continue our award-winning model, which won the Institute of Public Administration Australia award, and continue our flexible and responsive approach to emerging issues as they arise, with a person-centred rather than system-centred response. It will be a living plan that responds to feedback from the community. Most importantly, it will have the voice of victims/survivors at its centre, including the establishment of Tasmania's very first victim/survivor advisory council.

To enable this I want to pay tribute to mayor Mary Knowles OAM. Mary is the mayor of the Northern Midlands Council. She's also a victim/survivor herself, who has greatly assisted us on this journey through being our ambassador for the consultation process, especially of the Hearing Lived Experience Survey of victims/survivors of family and sexual violence at workshops and at public submissions.

I look forward to delivering our third action plan in collaboration with my Cabinet colleagues, as well as all members of parliament, including this committee, especially as in the first year of the action plan we committed \$12.5 million, which is a 40 per cent increase on the annual funding that is part of our third action plan.

Our work is being undertaken in the context of the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings. We all would have listened to the harrowing testimony of victims/survivors and witnesses.

The implementation of our third action plan will be carefully considered in the context of any recommendations of the commission. As it is a living plan, we will update it and we will respond once the recommendations from the committee of inquiry come out.

Chair, I look forward to this morning and to working collaboratively with you so that we can together end family and sexual violence in Tasmania.

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CHAIR - Thanks very much, minister. We allocate lines. I'm going to give the first one to Mr Duigan, who will no doubt ask you something you know the answer to.

Ms WEBB - Can I ask an overview one first, Chair?

CHAIR - Yes. But we'll go straight into it, because they can all fit into overview.

Ms WEBB - Okay.

CHAIR - Into the first line item, right.

Ms WEBB - All right.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes. Thank you, Chair. Minister, you have alluded to the third iteration of the Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan. Could you provide the committee with more detail about the consultation processes that are informing this plan? You mentioned the Northern Midlands mayor, but perhaps more detail about the consultation process?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I thank the member for his question. In responding to family sexual violence, the Government takes a whole-of-government multi-agency approach. Our third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan will be released in July.

The development of our third action plan is to deliberately add the voices of victims/survivors at the centre, as part of our approach to consultation and collaboration with the Tasmanian community. Our approach so far has included five key elements. This includes the Hearing Lived Experience Survey, which I released in February and is open for 12 months. People can access that. There are posters around different areas and people can click on the QR code r.

We're also establishing our first victim survivor advisory council. Victoria's previously established a council and we're working with Victoria so we can get our own council up and running.

There are targeted workshops with a focus on diverse lived experience, especially with people from CALD backgrounds, LGBTIQ+, women with disabilities, young Tasmanians, older Tasmanians. We're also partnering with Tasmanian Aboriginal community organisations and written public submissions. This approach is so that we can hear from as many Tasmanians as possible, whether they're a family member or somebody who's actually experienced family violence and is a victim survivor of family violence. Importantly, this consultation process will be to look at what has worked, what hasn't worked and what can we improve so that we can better improve our responses to family and sexual violence in the future.

I just want to acknowledge Mayor Mary Knowles. She has just been outstanding. She's has turned up to every single one of our workshops and spoken about her own personal experiences with both family and sexual violence, which it is harrowing to listen to, but it's been very important, because it's allowed others to then feel free to be able to share their own lived experience as well.

The survey which you see in different posters, is open for 12 months. If there's anyone who comes to you and has any concerns at all with family and sexual violence, we do encourage

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you to get them to start the QR code. It's open to 12 months. It's open until February 2023. That's deliberate, so that they might have made a submission earlier, but they can go in and provide feedback on our action plan when we release it in July. It is a living plan, and they might say, 'Well, we actually don't think that action's right.'

CHAIR - It is strategically placed on the backs on a lot of public toilets, having used a few along the way.

Mrs PETRUSMA - They're also in Service Tasmania, they're in neighbourhood houses. There's a short story booklet for people who actually don't have good literacy or computer skills, so we've done an easy English version for people who can't use the internet as well. All our services outlets have them as well, so that they can hand them out and encourage people.

So to date we've received 641 responses, and our last survey we did in 2018, we only received 500. So that's a great start. It's important we get as many voices as possible so if I can encourage you, please, do encourage people to fill it in, that would be good. Especially people from diverse communities like our old and young people and also from LGBTIQ+ and people with disabilities. We want to hear from all voices. So we thank you for your -

CHAIR - So could I just follow up on that, Nick, if I might. I actually scanned the QR code in one of the public toilets just so I could go in and have a look. But I'm interested in how much data you're actually aware you've received through it yet. Are you getting feedback around all forms of violence, like, physical, sexual and controlling behaviours, and that sort of thing?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, no, it's coercive control.

CHAIR - So people are actually understanding that there's a greater awareness, that it is a form of abuse.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, and also, we've seen as to what type of services they've used as well. We can see what percentage of services people are using in times of crisis, whether it's counselling services or whether it's legal services, and it's been quite interesting to - I did read something on it which one does have a lot of this, but, yes, it's been quite diverse as to what the experience is and the responses from people has been great.

I think we should ask Courtney to come to the table so that Courtney can - I know that she's had a lot of this. So I'll introduce Courtney. So this is Ms Courtney Hurworth, Assistant Director, Policy and Programs, Wellbeing Strategy and Engagement, Department of Communities Tasmania. We've had over a million engagements in regard to the survey. It's had a big hit of people that have taken part in the survey and providing their responses.

CHAIR - Maybe we could come back to it, minister, if you like.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

CHAIR - Did you have another question, Nick?

Mr DUIGAN - Yes.

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Ms WEBB - Can I just follow up on a comment just then, on that survey.

CHAIR - Yes, sure.

Ms WEBB - Did I hear you say just then, minister, you've had over a million interactions with the survey?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, and I was just trying to find that information.

Ms WEBB - But 600 responses, as people filling it out.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, so there's been over a million interactions and 600 responses to the survey, which has been -

Ms WEBB - What qualifies as an interaction then, because it seems not a very big translation.

CHAIR - Me scanning at the toilet. It would be.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Social media. So it's -

Ms WEBB - I doubt there's a million scannings happening, if there's only then 600 responses.

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's generated over 1.2 million impressions over Facebook, TikTok and Snapchat. Impressions is the number of times the advertisement was shown on screens and reached over 80 000 unique users. We did a breakdown on TikTok and Snapchat as well.

Ms WEBB - Sure, so that's when it comes up on peoples' screens when they're using those apps. For the people who go on to then complete the survey, are you able to track the origin of those responses, like, whether they came from people clicking through those apps where you've advertised it or whether they've come from people using the hardcopy, say, on the back of the toilet door posters?

Mrs PETRUSMA - EMRS is compiling the results. So EMRS every quarter gives us a compilation of all the data they receive. They can break down the demographics as to who has actually responded to the survey. So we get a quarterly report so we know the rough ages of the women - men, there's been quite a big percentage of men too or LGBTIQ+, Tasmanian Women with Disabilities.

Ms WEBB - Will you receive that information that I just mentioned in terms of the origin of where the clickthrough has come from, whether it's come from your paid ads on the TikTok and Facebook or whether it's come from scanning posters?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, it all takes you to the website.

Ms WEBB - Yes, my question goes to, how will you know the effective ways of actually promoting this survey? The way you're going to need to know that is where they came from.

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Ms HURWORTH - So through you, minister. Yes, we do. So we know how many people have trafficked through to the website from a social media site and which one, and how many have just visited the website cold. We also know how many people have used the QR code as opposed to just using the website link. We know how many hardcopies surveys we receive as well. What we know from the data, and it's unsurprising, is that more young people traffic through social media whereas older demographics have tended to use the QR codes. The other thing is, we've put the posters in vaccination rooms as well, in pharmacies, because of people going in for COVID-19, and we've got a huge amount of traffic through people using pharmacies.

CHAIR - Because they go on their own.

Ms HURWORTH - Because it's private.

CHAIR - Yes, they go in the room on their own.

Ms WEBB - How have you tracked that?

Ms HURWORTH - So pharmacies have been able to tell us who's been using it. It's indicative but they've been able to let us know.

Ms WEBB - How has the pharmacy known that somebody's used the QR code.

Ms HURWORTH - If they've seen them do it.

Ms WEBB - So it's anecdotal, that they've seen someone put their phone up to do the QR code?

Ms HURWORTH - Yes.

Ms WEBB - So you asked pharmacies to keep track of that?

Ms HURWORTH - Yes. As much as they could.

Ms WEBB - Right.

Ms HURWORTH - Yes, because we wanted to understand whether it was useful to do that in the future. We'd used script backs before, for information, but the Pharmacy Guild said to us that script backs wouldn't be useful anymore because people generally are now getting their scripts on their phones.

CHAIR - Yes, we'll never go back to the past in that.

Mrs PETRUSMA - It is an equal proportion of men and women using social media too, which is good. It's good that we're actually getting men to engage in this too.

Ms WEBB - Thank you.

CHAIR - Back to you, Nick.

Mr DUIGAN - Thanks, Chair. Minister, given that police are often first responders in instances of family violence, I wonder if you could talk a little bit about the training police officers receive. I know it's an issue that's been raised here in parliament. So training around how police are responding to family and sexual violence incidents.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I thank the member for his question and for his interest in this matter, especially when we've been debating the legislation. It has often been raised in parliament as to what training police as first responders have received. I want to acknowledge, first of all, that today is First Responders Day. I want to acknowledge all our first responders in the room here today, and thank you for their work and efforts. They are the first responders. Tasmania Police put a lot of effort into making sure they do receive training. They receive training through the University of Tasmania, through recruit training, and also as part of in-service courses. The UTAS units that police officers study include victimology and offences against the person, and family violence policing, both of which equate to one unit towards an associate degree.

Tasmanian police officers also undergo family and sexual violence training as part of their sergeants' qualifying process, with all promotional courses, and have a training day every five weeks that is focused on new legislative amendments and procedures for their implementation. As well as these formal methods of training, Tasmania police officers are continually undergoing on-the-job coaching in relation to family and sexual violence response, and the Commissioner of Police has advised me that family violence is the most scrutinised area of police officers.

What this means is that when an officer attends a family violence incident, it is reviewed by their supervisor, then through the family violence unit, and feedback is then provided in relation to the actions taken.

Additionally, Tasmania Police has engaged with the University of Tasmania and the Centre for Investigative Interviewing, which is attached to Griffith University, with a view to informing investigative interviewing throughout Tasmania. The Centre for Investigative Interviewing is led by world-renowned child interviewing expert, Professor Martine Powell. This collaboration has led to Tasmania Police introducing interviewing techniques starting at a recruit level, and with investigative training, including a specialist interviewing course.

The Commissioner has also advised me that Tasmania Police are working on a mandatory training program for family and sexual violence that will require completion by all officers. This will occur biannually, and will ensure our police officers have contemporary knowledge of legislation, practices and policy. This program will be continually updated, and officers will be able to access this at any time. The development of this training has resulted from recent engagement between Tasmania Police and the United Kingdom and Scottish police involving investigation of current training methods for police, particularly concerning coercive control.

I want to thank Tasmania Police for all that they're doing in responding to family and sexual violence incidents.

Mr DUIGAN - Does that training extend to other emergency services?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It certainly does. The Royal Commission into Natural Disaster Arrangements has highlighted that disasters such as fires and floods are also linked with

increased reports of family and sexual violence, and the previous federal government announced funding on 1 January this year of \$3.7 million for Gender and Disaster Australia to deliver online or face-to-face training and resources to more than 1000 disaster responders across Australia, including emergency services volunteers.

This will ensure there is nationally consistent pre-agreed training to address social needs such as family violence. It will also provide frontline responders the tools they need to better recognise and support women and children experiencing or at risk of violence, including resources based on victim-survivor lived experience, and to refer men exhibiting signs of violent behaviours to appropriate services.

This funding will also assist in increasing the understanding and awareness of gendered violence and family breakdown after disaster, with training due to commence soon this year.

As well, under action 37, Safe Homes, Families, Communities will build on early-intervention response capability across our own key workforces that intersect with family violence, especially the emergency services. We have developed the family and sexual violence in emergency events training module, which is live on the Tasmanian Emergency Management Training (or Tas EMT) site, and is freely available on the state emergency service website. It's a very interesting resource that anyone can go on. It just has a few modules, and the great Kath Kerr from the Family Violence Counselling Support Service helped. You'll see Kath a lot in the videos.

It's a resource to enable people with emergency management responsibilities to increase their capability and capacity during an all-hazards phase of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery during an emergency. Lots of people are using it - whether it's local government, state service, volunteers, control centres, response management and management coordinators. It helps them all to appropriately respond to disclosures of family and sexual violence, with the information they need during an emergency and to understand the additional barriers victim-survivors of family sexual violence are faced with, especially during the recovery phase. So I encourage you all to have a look.

CHAIR - I might just follow up with a difficult one, acknowledging that AFL grand finals also have a spike. It's a disaster for one team, obviously, and their supporters. It's a difficult matter to discuss, and I'm not sure whether it fits here, but how does this police service deal with officers as offenders? Do you want me to ask that in a later -

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, we're very happy to answer it here, because the commissioner has done outstanding work on that. The commissioner and his outstanding team have had a lot of conversations because of the issues and concerns that had been raised. Unfortunately, family and sexual violence impacts too many within our communities, and this includes police officers. Tasmania Police and this Government recognise that members of Tasmania Police can be impacted as a victim-survivor themselves - or unfortunately, on very, very rare occasions, they may even be a perpetrator.

We know there can be barriers to people feeling it is safe for them to report family and sexual violence when it is perpetrated by a member of Tasmania Police. These barriers can be even harder to overcome, especially as police are those individuals we turn to in times of need.

Tasmania Police has the unique role of being the lead enforcement agency in responding to, investigating and managing family and sexual violence involving police, so the commissioner and I have recognised that this may cause actual or potential perceived conflicts of interest, which may deter reporting. We believe it is critical that there are thorough processes and systems in place to ensure any barriers that exist to reporting family and sexual violence involving police officers are recognised and overcome.

In recognition of this important issue, and to uphold their pro-intervention policy, Tasmania Police has developed and is currently undertaking consultation on a draft Family and Sexual Violence Involving Police policy. This has involved work with the Integrity Commission, the Family Violence Counselling Support Service, specialised family and sexual violence services and Women's Legal Services Tasmania. Tasmania Police has also established a dedicated role within professional standards to manage family and sexual violence incidents that involve police officers.

This policy is just one of the initiatives being undertaken by Tasmania Police to ensure accountability and continual improvement to its response to and management of family and sexual violence. One of the key initiatives of this new proposal is the formation of a Family and Sexual Violence Involving Police Review Committee, which will become the peak body within the Tasmania Police review structure for these important matters.

Importantly, the committee will be independent from the initial response and actions of Tasmania Police, making it well placed to review such matters in a partial and objective matter. Also, the committee will include relevant subject matter experts and representatives, and an independent chair from outside Tasmania Police to review any complaint regarding sexual and family violence involving a police officer.

Its key duties will be to provide timely review of incidents involving police, and ensure that decision-making is evidence-based, consistent with legislation, appropriately documented, that there is no perception of bias and no conflicts of interest, and that there is trust built with the victim survivor.

We know that providing these sorts of trauma-informed responses to family and sexual violence is critical in underpinning our victim-survivor central response by government. And I believe that with this policy and the changes the commissioner is undertaking, victim survivors will have increased confidence in reporting these matters to Tasmania Police.

If you go to the Tasmania Police website, you will notice there are now links for family and sexual violence. And if you're a person who has experienced this from a police officer, it shows the process that you can follow, and it offers assistance and help.

CHAIR - Minister, you did say these are very small numbers. Do we have any idea of the numbers, in the total serving force work?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's minute. It's only, like, one or two, a couple.

CHAIR - That we know about.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

Ms WEBB - We have to be careful about these statistics, don't we?

CHAIR - Yes.

Comm HINE - Yes. I've had the conversation with the minister and also various people in the upper House and lower House about these issues. I've also had conversations with victim-survivors involving police officers, and I know the difficulty that the survivors have in reporting this to police. And I quite agree, it's the ones we don't know about that I'm really concerned about.

We've had 12 over the last 12 months, and -

CHAIR - It's not an insignificant number, then.

Comm HINE - Any number is a concern.

CHAIR - Yes, that's right.

Comm HINE - Not all of them have gone down a process where they have been put in non-operational duties. There are three at the moment that are on non-operational duties who have an order in relation to them.

But I always am concerned I've said about any family violence matters that we don't know about, and that's why we've got this independent committee set up after chatting with various members of parliament, the minister, and the victim survivors. The independent chair is from the Women's Legal Service, and also we've got experts, not only police, but also victim groups as well.

CHAIR - So when a claim is made by a victim, what's the process regarding the alleged perpetrator?

Comm HINE - The policy is - in fact, it's being finalised on Friday. There will be consultation back from the Police Association, other relevant stakeholders. That's back on Friday. We've already put the last four allegations, all those ones who have come to our attention through this process to make sure that it is independently assessed and then the action is taken from there to make sure that we support the victim, listen to the victim, and also deal with the perpetrator as well. Then those responses will be dictated by that committee. We've also allocated -

CHAIR - So the committee will determine whether the alleged perpetrator is put on leave or different duties, or whatever?

Comm HINE - Yes, they will make the recommendation to me about what should be done, and obviously then that process will take place. I was going to say that we've actually allocated one of the fifty additional resources from the police that the government has given us to professional standards to be dedicated for that function so they build up expertise in relation to this as well.

CHAIR - Sure. Are there dedicated programs for perpetrators who are found to have offended, to participate in to help them to deal with that, because if we just don't deal with this problem the problem doesn't go away.

Comm HINE - Yes, and that'll be dictated to by the committee about what assistance we can give the perpetrators. One of the things which came out of discussions again with members of parliament and others that some of the victims were afraid that if their partner lost their job then of course the family income would be affected as well. So it's a very complex situation. We need to take all that into account.

CHAIR - It's not just women or partners of police officers who fear that.

Comm HINE - I know, but it's more - it's probably magnified in a policing relationship as well. We've got to be sensitive to all those things. We will reach out to Victoria Police, they've got a dedicated unit as well so we can make sure we learn from their experiences as well.

CHAIR - Do they have resources that you could use in terms of assisting perpetrators?

Comm HINE - We are making sure that we're actually in close contact to see what programs they have as well. But it's not only perpetrators that are police officers, but its police officer as victims as well. Of course we do know there's misidentification involving police, so we have to make sure that we question that. So it's any matter, from a family violence point of view, involving a police officer whether it's witness or victim.

CHAIR - Sure. Anything on that?

MS WEBB - You covered quite well, thank you, Chair. I'm concerned that we wouldn't actually be asserting that this is a minuscule problem because I think we just can't say that based on the data. In fact, there's evidence from other jurisdictions of Australia that there might be a higher rate of perpetration amongst police officers. I'm not saying that to be negative or detrimental; I'm saying it to recognise the reality of issue. Which is why it's fantastic to see these responses coming forward, and I'm really pleased to see them. They sound really thorough. In many instances it's not going to be an instance of where someone's looking - might not be a physical violence issue where you're looking to have an order. It might not be an issue where you're wanting a criminal justice response.

In those instances it's going to be more about how you support the perpetrator and ensure that they're able to be assisted to deal with the behaviour they might be exhibiting. Where those issues that you spoke of came up, where people who are bringing it forward - the partners who are bringing it forward might be worried about the impact back to the family. So specifically, will you be looking to set up programs within the force to provide that support? You said the determination will be made by the committee, but -

CHAIR - Could you get the question, please? The question.

MS WEBB - Yes, that was a question.

CHAIR - Yes, let him answer the question.

PUBLIC

MS WEBB - I was just going to be asking, is that something that the committee is working on, or is that separate to the committee process?

Comm HINE - It's part of the policy. We ought to make sure, as you did quite rightly point out, there's no point having an identified perpetrator who's a police officer and having no support mechanisms or training around - and again, you're quite right. That does then support the family. It does support the partner of that police officer as well, whether they be a victim or a perpetrator as well. So I quite agree with you, we have to make sure that's covered off as well to make sure the - so we're using the programs that are currently in the community, and also what Victoria Police may be using. Or there may be a gap where we need to actually fill that gap with assistance and training.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I know that family members have been referred to other of our counselling services through the police referring them on, so there are arrangements made with organisations.

MS WEBB - My question was more about the perpetrator and support to assist behaviour change with the perpetrator within the police force.

Comm HINE - Yes, yes. Short answer is yes.

MS WEBB - Whether there'll be investment into those programs?

Mrs PETRUSMA - The Attorney-General has perpetrator programs that we can refer people to as well, so that's under the Attorney-General that there's quite a few different perpetrator programs.

MS WEBB - Would there not be sensitivity though to refer someone from the police force to an outside perpetrator program? Surely that probably is not the first option to look to.

Comm HINE - Yes, and look, and it's -

Mrs PETRUSMA - No to Violence is an online phone call one, so that does offer discretion. So it's - yes. So it can be separate phone call. But, yes, it's the - Commissioner will -

Comm HINE - Through the minister. Yes, there are sensitivities as in being a police officer does bring some unique challenges going into these programs. So we're sensitive to that as well. We don't want to further put stress on a perpetrator in a program that mightn't be appropriate. So, yes, your point is quite valid. Whilst the government has absolutely great programs as well, where it's appropriate we would actually refer a police officer, but we also are acutely aware of the sensitivities of being a police officer, and being identified as a police officer in some of these programs. So we're acutely aware of that.

Ms WEBB - Might there be an internal program?

Mrs PETRUSMA - The Men's Referral Service, it's an online one and it is a confidential service too. So they would be able to, yes, through a confidential service.

PUBLIC

CHAIR - Just while on the point of perpetrators if I might, minister. This crosses over into justice as well obviously. Have you had any discussions with the Attorney-General about potentially providing for court mandated referrals to - for treatment?

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's part of the bill that - one of the bills that's going through parliament at the moment.

CHAIR - Right. We haven't seen that one yet.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Is to court mandated - yes. Yes, so I think -

CHAIR - Well there you go. Sorry. Because we don't look at bills until they come to us.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I think we've started on the second reading downstairs so that is - yes. That'll be coming your way very soon.

CHAIR - There's two bills I'm looking forward to getting now.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, so it's - I can give you a little bit of information on it.

CHAIR - So we don't watch what's going on downstairs until it's done.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, so, it's under action 25 of our action plan, Introduce Mandated Participation in Behaviour Change Programs. That'll be court mandated so taking part in men's employing new strategies program. EQUIPS program, Family Violence Offender Intervention Program, FVOIP, will be court mandated as part of a family violence order. This action requires legislative reform to expand s16 of the Family Violence Act to enable a court to order mandated behaviour change programs. So that work's commenced and that bill is going through our house at the moment.

CHAIR - So with regard to the programs that can be referred to, one would assume that they have been validated, they have been proven to be effective. We know there are plenty of programs that aren't.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Current programs are going to be extended because of this change that will be happening, so yes.

CHAIR - So who's work -

Mrs PETRUSMA - They're under the Attorney-General, the -

CHAIR - The programs?

Mrs PETRUSMA - The programs themselves.

CHAIR - Who will deliver them? Maybe not a question you can answer, but.

PUBLIC

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, we've got - it's Men Employing New Strategies is one program. EQUIPS Program is another program. The Family Violence Offender Intervention Program, and we should have more.

CHAIR - So my question, minister, was how are these programs validated to know that - to be competent I guess for the court to mandated referral to them. That they've been tested, that - I've listened, read lots about these things, and some of them actually potentially don't do much to assist. May actually potentially be more harmful.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. No, we've got the - the MENS program which is independently evaluated and it's found that the program met 20 criteria, and partly met 4 criteria, the minimum standard. So that's developed by Family Safety Victoria, so that's now been - that was done in 2018, so that program's been improved after it was independently evaluated. So it met most of the criteria just before and it's been updated since. So they are evaluating them, so.

CHAIR - Yes. It is important to know that they're not just being sent off for some sort of case of program that actually won't make a difference.

Mrs PETRUSMA - In regard to the Family Violence Offender Intervention Program, the law enforcement studies and University of Tasmania has evaluated that. They review it every 10 years to make sure the program is achieving its aims.

CHAIR - And you have questions?

Ms WEBB - I have questions.

CHAIR - Other ones, yes.

Ms WEBB - Broad ones, yes.

CHAIR - You can go with one and we'll come back.

Ms WEBB - We know only a certain proportion of people are going to come forward regarding family or domestic abuse and sexual violence. Of those who come forward, I think about 20 per cent might be seeking a justice response and maybe go through the first responders. The bulk, maybe 80 per cent I believe is the figure, go to community-based support services of various sorts, whether that's counselling or legal or whatever it might be. Regarding our investment into the family violence and sexual violence space, how does our investment reflect that reality?

Mrs PETRUSMA - As to whether they go to the police first?

Ms WEBB - As to how we fund both the criminal justice side of things and the first responders side of things and how we fund community-based support and services?

Mrs PETRUSMA - With the community-based services, we stay regularly in touch with them to hear how things are going. What they said to me was that they needed a substantial increase in funding. The \$75 million we've announced will be going across the five years. It will be split, I think it's \$51.7 million to family violence services and \$21.2 million to sexual violence services over the five years. That's a 37 per cent increase in their core.

PUBLIC

Ms WEBB - So, just to clarify exactly, though. The \$51.7 million is into the first responders, the criminal justice side of things?

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's family violence counselling services.

Ms WEBB - Within government services?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, that's the NGO and the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service. There are nine specialist services in Tasmania. The two sexual assault support services, Laurel House and SASS, will be getting a \$21.2 million -

Ms WEBB - So, you're giving me the breakup between sexual violence and family ones?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, they've got \$21.2 million.

Ms WEBB - The breakup I was interested in was the investment that goes into the criminal justice response end of things compared to the community-based services end of things.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, Police is getting about \$400 million in its budget. You would have to be more specific as to what you -

Ms WEBB - Well, maybe just in terms of -

Mrs PETRUSMA - Safe at Home is a separate bucket of funding. Safe at Home gets \$4.9 million a year.

Ms WEBB - Yes, and a lot of that is into the government services end of things, yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - And on top of that, there's extra funding for the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service, which is also government-run.

Ms WEBB - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - On top of that, there's extra funding for perpetrator programs and quite a raft of other programs.

CHAIR - Would it be helpful to have the nine frontline specialists listed with the funding they're getting?

Mrs PETRUSMA - We have that.

CHAIR - That's fine.

Ms LOVELL - I will ask the minister if we can get the funding going to each of those services but broken down into grant funding and ongoing funding?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, it's core funding from now on.

PUBLIC

Ms LOVELL - All core funding?

CHAIR - It is good to see it being five years for these organisations.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I have that but can I get a copy, just so I have a copy for myself?

CHAIR - We can. If you table it, we'll give it back to you.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I'll table it, and somebody can give it back. That would be great.

Ms LOVELL - Broken down by service?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. It shows there.

CHAIR - We'll get a copy for each of the committee members. It might be helpful if you get a copy for each.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So, for the benefit of the members, their core funding has now been increased by about 37 per cent. It is now ongoing funding. This is the first major uplift in 30 years. It's a big increase.

Talking to services, what came across is that short-term funding, while it was welcome, led to somebody coming on for three months and then having to go and having to stop the clients. PESRAC's recommendation was strongly that we need to have long new contracts. When I had Human Services, three-year contracts drove me insane.

We're going five-year funding so there's long-term certainty. This is a permanent increase to core, so the Family Violence and Counselling Support Service will have a permanent increase to its core funding. It can increase staff to where it needs to be. It stops those peaks and troughs, otherwise the waiting list will go down, then they'd have to put off staff because the funding ended. I just want it to be constant so that over at least the next five years they can schedule in leave, long service leave, and they can bring in extras.

CHAIR - If I might, minister, on that one.

Ms LOVELL - Yes.

CHAIR - I declare that I'm a member of the Gender Equality Board. This is one of the organisations. I know it's a problem for any Engender, but I'm sure it's a problem for others that the funding that has been allocated, particularly three-year cycles, has lived those very real experiences. Also, there hasn't been money available for administrative costs to enable our service providers, the counsellors and the others, to do their core work. Is this core funding intended to support the administrative functions as well as the service delivery, like the counselling and other supports?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. Helena sent me an email -

Dear Minister Petrusma,

PUBLIC

On behalf of the Engender Equality staff and board, I want to thank you for your recognition of Engender Equality and the extension of our grant funding in the five-year term. The five-year grant will allow us to realise a number of our goals for Engender, including establishing sustainable office space in Hobart and building a strong administrative infrastructure to support the delivery of our therapeutic services.

Then they go into how nice I am.

CHAIR - Do you want to read that out for me next time? I'm kidding.

Mrs PETRUSMA -

We recognise your personal interest there and commitment to these issues and feel very fortunate to have your representation as our Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence in Tasmania. We look forward to continuing to work with you to build a robust community-based response to family violence across Tasmania.

Thank you again for your invaluable support.

Kind regards, Helena

It is so that they can build up capacity and get the administrative support. If the services just have all counsellors, they don't have time to do the administration. There is quite a lot of it.

CHAIR - That's been a problem, funding things.

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's like us. We couldn't exist in our roles if we didn't have our electorate offices, who are amazing support. We acknowledge that they needed people to do the administration work so that they can do what they do best, that is providing direct service delivery. This funding enables that.

Ms LOVELL - Minister, do you have available the current wait lists for these services?

Mrs PETRUSMA - They're not in my portfolio but I can tell you that they have been too high. When I was at Huon Domestic Violence Service recently they said it is one to two weeks at the most. Yemaya, I know, was about four weeks. Engender can wax or wane as you know. If they have all staff on board, it's a few weeks. But if staff go on long service leave and they didn't have the capacity to actually refill that position, then the wait list would increase. Being a victim/survivor myself, having to wait even a week is too long.

This is all aimed at addressing all their community budget submissions. Safe Choices asked for a couple of other things that weren't to do with counselling. We gave them what they wanted for counselling. In regards to just the counselling services, the budget submissions to address their wait list was done in full.

Ms LOVELL - So, your department doesn't have that information?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, it's under a different minister, Mr Street.

PUBLIC

Ms LOVELL - Okay, all right.

Mrs PETRUSMA - My aim was to make sure it's five-year funding and that it fulfilled what they asked in their budget priority statements. That's what we've done. We accept it might take some time for the ones that have bigger wait lists. I talked to Helena at Engender and she told me that this is going to make a big difference in bringing it down.

CHAIR - In the north west?

Mrs PETRUSMA - In the north west.

CHAIR - Where we've had real struggles.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, and Yemaya has too. They are allowed to target that funding to the areas with the need but, on top of this, we've also been giving them national partnership funding, a few extra dollars. When they've said to us there's an area that we needed, we've gone out and given them extra services.

CHAIR - Meg, you had a follow up on this too?

Ms WEBB - Well, that mostly got covered because it was a similar question about to what extent was the 37 per cent increase in funding going to meet the need that was there given that the services has described an exponential increase in demand for their services. That's a phrase they've used in recent times. You've answered that to the best that you can in regard to the information you've got in your portfolio.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, look, if it's weeks or months or, you know, six months or whatever, we just wanted to address all of them and, based on the submission that they made, their data, you know, and their own budget priority statements, it was quite big, so.

Ms WEBB - You've met the requests that were made in those BPSs.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

Ms WEBB - Thank you.

CHAIR - Minister, if you could give us some more detail about how the multidisciplinary centres are going to work, how areas such as the west coast, you know, Circular Head, northwest and down to Huon, east coast, are going to have their needs met and a bit more description about how it's going to work.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, thank you for your important question. We might bring to the table Donna Adams, who's the Deputy Commissioner for Police, because she did a big workshop on Friday with a lot of the services to put some more meat on the bones in regard to the multidisciplinary centres.

I'm very excited about the multidisciplinary centres. I don't know if anyone here's ever had the pleasure of going to the multidisciplinary centres in Victoria. They're called an Orange Door over there, and there's some down at Barwon, some at Dandenong. They're in different

areas. If you go there, you cannot help but be inspired by the difference that it makes to a victim survivor, and also to policing services and to counselling services.

So I'm a victim survivor of family sexual violence, I go in the door, I'm greeted - it's a warm welcome - by a counselling service, the appropriate counselling service that can take me into a room and hear what has happened, and then talk to them and give them counselling at the time, and work out what this victim survivor needs for their particular needs at the time. Then if the victim survivor is ready, they can then get a specialist police officer who's - in the models I saw, they're upstairs - to come down and they can interview the victim survivor at the time.

CHAIR - This is soon after the incident?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's a time when the victim's ready. Some victims aren't ready to report. If they're at a centre that's not in a police station, they're a totally different look and feel. So it's not that cold, sterile environment, it's warm, it's inviting, it's caring, it's nurturing and if they feel ready to report, because they've built up a relationship with their counsellor, then they can report to the specialised police officer, who is trained in these investigative techniques that are victim centric, to come down and take a statement and, if that can be recorded, that evidence makes a huge difference to the perpetrator pleading guilty. If you were confronted by somebody who has been, you know, severely injured through family violence and if that is played to the court, usually a lot of perpetrators will plead guilty. It's hard evidence for them to argue against.

CHAIR - So minister, just before we go to Donna, I've read in places, I think they've called them women's police stations, which are in houses, like what looks like a residential house, where it's furnished like a residential house and the services are there. Is this the same sort of concept but having counselling perhaps on the first floor and specialist police services on the next that can engage when appropriate? Is that the sort of thing we're talking about?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, but it can be where you can take a child, like a child that's also experienced family violence. We're going to have specialised police investigators there for children as well.

CHAIR - Sexual assault on children.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, sexual assault on children. It's to have an environment where they can be taken so it's not like taking them to a police station. So not everyone's going, 'Oh, you're going into a police station'. It's different. Then they can work with the victim survivor. If they're ready, they can then have a forensic medical, you know - there's a warm handover so you can organise a forensic medical examination. So you've got the same person with you the whole time. So you're walking a journey with somebody who's going to be there to just basically hold your hand.

CHAIR - So it'll have facilities within the same building for forensic examination?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's something that can be looked at but where they're going to be located is going to be very close to where they are located. In Victoria, they did originally build them all with FMEs available in them and they found that in the end it was they didn't use them very much. That they could take them but if the counsellor is on that journey with

them then, you know, the forensic medical examination can be undertaken. But some people aren't ready, even though they've had a forensic medical examination undertaken, they still don't know if they want to use that evidence then. So that's why we've now spent \$3.7 million in having better equipment and actually increase storing space so we can store these forever if we need to, at a time when a victim survivor comes forward and say, 'I'm finally ready to report'.

Ms LOVELL - Can I just ask a follow up on that? I had a question around that. So that was my question, so this is obviously a model that focuses on prosecution essentially. So how will the service work for victim survivors who are not wishing to pursue a prosecution or, at that stage, may not ever. So what sort of services will -

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well they're getting the counselling services and the support they need. So they get the counselling and then they can work out a safety plan. They can organise funding if they need it, through like, our flexible support packages. We can organise, you know, keeping women safe in their homes. We can say, well, the perpetrator doesn't need to necessarily leave, we can get the perpetrator out and we can spend money on changing your door locks, putting grills in place, putting better services in. It's about working the journey through with the victim survivor as to what they want. Because we'll have family violence counselling services onside, we'll have sexual assault services onside. Sometimes they cross both. Child safety will be intimately involved too. If there's extra help that we need to get for the child, they'll be there too.

It's about making a different environment but if they're warm supported, hopefully they will feel more supported to report to police, who are going to be specifically trained in victim centric responses, so that this is a far better experience and not as traumatic for the victim survivor.

I'll commend Donna and her Deputy Commissioner and her team because they've done a lot of work through talking to victim survivors who have been through processes in the past that we have now turned into learning experiences. Especially with people like Grace Tame and others who have come forward and given us a raft of information how we can make this so much better for the victim survivor.

CHAIR - So are the expertise in the centres too to do like a sweep for surveillance devices that perpetrators often use on their victims?

Mrs PETRUSMA - So we've got mobile phone extraction devices so that we can check and see if there's any tracking devices.

CHAIR - But not just on the mobile phone, it could be on your car, it could be in your home. It could be all sorts of places.

Comm HINE - Before I go to Donna, yes, we're certainly aware of that, that victimisation through electronic surveillance and we know we've got smart phones, smart cars, smart homes, and people who are tech savvy can actually infiltrate them to actually further victimise the person. So we're certainly aware of that and if there's any evidence or a situation where we're concerned about it, we have specialist people that can go and have a look. But it is getting more and more sophisticated, about how people can actually track others, but there's also about given advice to victims how they can actually protect themselves with these things. But again, the sophistication is quite worrying. But again, we need to help victims understand.

CHAIR - Usually one step ahead of us, aren't they?

Comm HINE - Yes. Sometimes. But again, that's where we need to understand what's available, help protect the victim, increase their knowledge and then if there's any other concerns, you know, go in and make sure we're assisting them to disconnect from those possible situations.

CHAIR - Did you have a question you wanted to put before Donna responds?

Ms WEBB - She can respond and then I've got a series of questions on this, so happy for that. Because some of them might be answered through Donna.

Deputy Comm ADAMS - I'll just make a couple of comments, through the minister. We've obviously done a lot of research in relation to what is working effectively in other jurisdictions, and we've taken those learnings and we're working through how we get a nuanced service that's going to support the Tasmanian community. The Minister highlighted the forum that he had on Friday. We had 75 participants across all sectors that were actually engaged in starting that journey of understanding how an MDC should be constructed. The really important part that is in addition to the sector, that came together to work through those issues, is that we do have a victim-survivor advocacy group which is directly informing on what are the key components of a multidisciplinary centre which is going to address some of the issues they have experience through their journey. We want to learn from those experiences and make sure we develop an MDC which is going to address as many of those concerns as we can.

The really important thing is that it is a pilot, because we accept that we are going to make some decisions which may not work, and we need to learn from those. The beauty of going into this with a pilot is that we are all seeking to learn and develop the best multidisciplinary centres that we can, and we're providing that review mechanism to make those adjustments as we go. So there's a lot of work to do in relation to the development.

Some of the comments that you made in relation to what the centre would look like, they will not be anywhere near a police station. We are working with the Sexual Assault Support Service and Laurel House to identify appropriate sites that meet their needs as well as our needs so that we've got a centre that's conducive to a victim-survivor coming forward.

CHAIR - I know they're pilots, we accept that, and for all the right reasons. But a victim from Circular Head, how would they access it?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - At the moment, there's some really strong liaison and structures in the north-west which are working really effectively. Those arrangements which are in place at the moment will continue while we work through the pilot. Laurel House will be the first to tell you that they have an extremely strong relationship with Tasmania Police, and we work together in actually supporting victims. As an example, just recently, within the last five weeks, Laurel House support services actually travelled to King Island with Tasmania Police to obviously provide the right support to victim-survivors on the island, and we work together. So we'll continue to develop those services.

CHAIR - They'll go out as well as potentially bringing someone to support someone to come to the service?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Well, in that example there was an example of an outreach service where we've actually taken the services because it was appropriate in that circumstance. So we'll learn from obviously how we construct the pilot. I went to school on the north-west coast. I know that there's nuances on the coast in terms of, you know, where you're located, and we need to make sure that we provide a service that's actually going to respond to the victim-survivor's needs. It may look completely different to how it would look in Hobart, but we need to make sure that there's some key fundamental things which would apply across the state.

CHAIR - Yes, and the challenge is very much for particularly women who are victims in our rural communities as often the money's tied up in the farm and they simply can't leave or they leave with nothing because the money's tied up in their family farm. It's really difficult.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We'd be very happy to hear your insights as to - you know, especially with your health background and what you feel is the best need for the north-west coast, what could be the best model. At the moment, the stats are showing that we've got 55 per cent of all recorded sexual assaults are in the south, 25 per cent in the north, and 19 per cent in the western district. In fact, there's been a 44 per cent increase in the northern district versus only 4 per cent in the western district. So our stats are showing that it's higher in the north and the south, and for family violence as well.

CHAIR - Higher reporting rates.

Mrs PETRUSMA - There's been a 51 per cent increase in the north versus a 36 per cent increase in the west.

CHAIR - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Launceston and Hobart were the two easiest sites to get up and running, but the north-west we acknowledge it's - and also, keep in mind I only had originally funding for one. I managed to go cap in hand and go, 'If you're going to make this a proper pilot, I need to have two.'

CHAIR - Two.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So I managed to get it to two. I couldn't quite get it to three, but I'm hopeful that it will happen and hopefully sooner, but I'm working on it. But it's going to take us a bit more time to work out what the north-west model is. The Deputy Commissioner has - and, you know, the service providers up there are very keen, too. So we're working on what is the best model. We're really welcome any suggestions as to what people think would be the best model.

CHAIR - Meg, I'm just going to get to follow-up questions on this.

Ms WEBB - Yes, it's definitely questions on this. I've got a number, thank you. I'm interested to understand the model a bit better. As the member for Rumney identified, it sounds like it's at the focus end of the prosecution side of things. In regard to what we know, and certainly from learning from other jurisdictions, what's the balance of what our expectation is

for support provided between sexual violence and family violence? You'll be looking more towards the support for reports of sexual violence rather than family violence or -

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, they're both going to be located at the site.

Ms WEBB - Sure. I understand that they're both available to be supported at the site. What I'm trying to understand is what our anticipated provision of support is likely to look like in terms of a balance, and do we know that from other jurisdictions?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, part of it is that with family violence, about 40 per cent is sexual violence.

Ms WEBB - Sure, there's crossover.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Then you might just have sexual violence. The others, it's - you know, like Ruth was saying, it can depend on the night of the week or the daytime, it can depend on what is happening with the AFL. In regard to the AFL, we're actually doing a lot of work on our watch too in that space.

CHAIR - Yes, I know.

Mrs PETRUSMA - It really depends on, you know, what comes through.

Ms WEBB - Yes, hence my question. We're looking to other jurisdictions to learn about this model and we've drawn on that, which is really pleasing to hear. That's exactly how we'd want to be developing good, effective policy. What do we know from that in terms of when these kinds of support centres are set up as a model where they've got this mixed support available? What do we know about the balance of support provided through that centre?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, on the mainland they were originally set up as sexual violence and then they went to family violence as well.

Ms WEBB - Okay.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So the ones that I went to over there were sexual violence first, then they added in the family violence. But ours will also have a greater focus on child sexual exploitation as well.

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Yes, through the minister, that's absolutely correct. Victoria started off with sexual violence and then realised that there were many victim-survivors who were also experiencing family violence. So they've made later changes to their model. We've had the benefit of obviously being able to learn from their experience, and again, we're looking for a really nuanced service that's going to be tailored to Tasmania.

We've got the opportunity to actually ensure that our program is around to support victim-survivors of family and sexual violence. As the minister says, also to provide a really effective support mechanism for families who have got children who have experienced child abuse as well. So that's how we are looking to develop our model so that we've got, yes, the right support in those centres.

Ms WEBB - To understand that, then, a bit more in terms of how it will actually function and particularly how people present, so naturally, if we took an example of sexual violence where there's been a current sexual assault, people would - if they were going to seek criminal justice assistance, they would go to a police station. What is our expectation - and of course, there's other situations where people might have a historical situation that they're wanting to bring forward and get support for. They might also contact a police station or they might contact support service, probably more likely, like SASS or Laurel House.

Given that those were the two entries into this sort of space before, what's our expectation? People will still go to those front doors, either the police station or the support service. Is it then that the referral's made to the multidisciplinary centre, or are we expecting that we're going to be, to some extent, redirecting people to present first to the multidisciplinary centre?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Through you, minister. One of the things that we discussed with the forum with the members from the sector on Friday was that we do need to continue to promote multiple entry points into - you know, to actually having the confidence that a victim can come forward. That could be through a phone counselling service, it actually could be through, you know, walking through a front door at a multidisciplinary centre, or alternatively as you've described, it could be, you know, going straight to a police station. What we want to ensure is that we are actually tailoring our response to the victim, not the other way around.

Ms WEBB - Yes, which is good to hear. My next question was going to be are we closing any doors in opening this one in terms of avenues for people to seek support? It doesn't sound like we are from what you just described, thank you. My question was about how do we expect people to - what's the primary way we expect people to be presenting at these centres? Via referral, via the fact that they've come through other services, whether it's police or counselling or whatever, is that the main way we're expecting them to come, or are we expecting it to be a front door service where people present straight to it, and will we be promoting it in that way?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Again, through the minister, both of the examples that you've given, we would expect that referral services can refer a victim through a multidisciplinary centre, but alternatively we will also promote and encourage people to have the trust to come forward themselves into our multidisciplinary centre.

Ms WEBB - So we will need to be promoting where they are, and what they do, and so on. How does the governance of these centres work? Who's in charge, how are they operated, what does the governance around this mixed model look like?

Mrs PETRUSMA - On the mainland they are police controlled, because they're on hand if anything does go wrong, and it helps if a perpetrator turns up or something like that. But the police are sort of on the top floor. They're there, they're watching, but it's the soft entry down the bottom, and they're funded out of the Police budget.

Ms WEBB - The services that are there are not all funded out of the Police budget, though? They're funded from a range of funds.

Mrs PETRUSMA - They're funded out of what will become the DPAC budget.

Ms WEBB - Yes. And with the counselling services that are there, say, are they a mix of government-based counselling services and community-based counselling services and legal services?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No. Abuse is more like a person has walked through the door, they're usually not going to need legal services straight up, but as part of that warm handover if they need legal services then we'll be able to do it, through the Health-Justice partnerships or the other establishment partnerships that we have.

It's more about talking to somebody who is experiencing family or sexual violence at the time, and giving them the counselling and the wraparound support - finding out what they want to do then and there. This is all about being victim-centric and knowing what is it that we need to do for them next.

Ms WEBB - Okay, so it's primarily a private partnership between police and counselling as needed.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The police only get involved if the victim-survivor is willing to report.

Ms WEBB - How was it determined that this is the best investment for us to make in the family and sexual violence space, knowing that, as we talked about before, 20 per cent of the people who come forward are looking for the criminal justice support, and 80 per cent are coming to services to get other sorts of support? Because it's a considerable investment.

Mrs PETRUSMA - As I said, back in 2014, I went to Victoria and visited the sites, because at the time they were innovative, and seen as best practice not only in Australia, but in other jurisdictions. We had to wait until the time was right, until we could work through whether it could fit in Tasmania, and over those years a lot of research has gone into the model, and also when would be the best time to bring it into Tasmania.

Especially if we really want to have a true focus on child sex exploitation, this is a very important set-up that will actually help with that, because there is, sadly, too much child sexual abuse. These are going to be set up specifically so that we have specialist investigators on site to also tackle that. And if it's a place where a mother or a father would feel safe to bring their child to, that's different to going through a hospital setting that could be too traumatic for a child.

The Deputy Commissioner has been very involved in the history of this, and the set-up and the recommendations of the models.

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Yes. One of the important parts to this will be the Safe Families coordination intelligence hub. One of the issues that we identified through the work we've done is information sharing, whether that's across government, and also providing critical information to support services to enable them to actually provide appropriate and directed support to victims.

Through this model, we will have the opportunity to build on the established information-sharing networks that Safe Families already has. They will be provided with additional resources so that they're able to undertake analysis of information, whether that relates to

children within families or across departments that may have information that can help support a victim.

It may not lead to a criminal justice outcome, but it will ensure we have better coordination around the support to victims, so that it doesn't necessarily have to fall to a support service such as SAS and Laurel House. We have other support mechanisms in place through this particular model.

Where there is an opportunity that evidence exists for a criminal justice investigation, those packages will be put together and be provided to the police investigators, so they can undertake that criminal investigation as part of the response.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. The question was really targeted not so much about asking for a justification of the model, because it sounds like an excellent model and it sounds well proven. The question was more to do with how was it determined that the \$15 million investment over the next two years in bringing this model to the state at this time was the most worthwhile investment of that \$15 million, when we're thinking about how we respond to and support family violence and sexual violence.

It was more a policy question, just to understand the principles that led us to put the investment there, rather than in the alternative spaces we might have directed it, based on what we know about where people seek help.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, as the Deputy Commissioner outlined, because we now have the Safe Families and Sexual Violence Coordination Unit based there, that unit has helped us have a 50 per cent decrease in high-risk perpetrators in Tasmania through the actions they've been able to take. Which is a huge decrease, and we've seen a decrease in medium-risk perpetrators.

Even though there's been an overall increase in reports of family violence, it's been due to the fact that there's been a 66 per cent increase in low-risk incidents. So they're having an impact on high-risk and medium-risk.

Now we go to sexual violence, especially child sexual violence, and this is where this unit - especially with the harrowing stories we're hearing through the commission of inquiry - we see that this is one way of making sure we have specialist child investigators who can look at this crime and make a difference in this area.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. We didn't quite get there. The point of the question was this is focused essentially into the police space, and we already have really excellent initiatives in that space that are - as you've just described, minister - appearing to deliver really good outcomes.

This is another investment into the police space, into the criminal justice end of things, when we know that the bulk of people coming forward are seeking help not in the criminal justice side of things, but the community-based services side.

So it was a question about the decision to direct more funding there, into the police space, rather than funding into the community-based space. Perhaps we've got to the end of that question.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The Safe Families coordination unit isn't just police. It is in partnership with Health, it's in partnership with Education, it's in partnership with Communities, it's in partnership with CYSO. That's why it gives a more holistic response to a victim-survivor coming forward, and this is where Safe at Home then steps in.

If they're looking after a family, they can say, 'all right, the child's at risk', so they refer it to Education, and Education then steps in with what they need to do to ensure the safety of the child. Or, they can say 'all right, this mother and children are at risk of homelessness', so Housing Tasmania comes in. They can go, 'this woman needs extra money flexible support packages because something's up'.

That's what the Safe Families coordination unit is all about. It is bringing all the government services together to look after it - so it's not just police, it's also a whole-of-government response.

I just want to make sure that it is clear that this is not just police.

CHAIR - I think that we've gone down this enough.

Ms WEBB - That's fine. I'll go to the numbers, then, if that's okay. The funding that seems to be allocated is \$8 million in 2022-23, and then just over \$7 million in 2023-24, and I believe that in each of those instances there's \$3.3 million for capital investments - so, presumably the physical spaces that are to be set up in each of the locations.

Of the remaining funding beyond the capital investment - which I think would be about \$4.7 million in 2022-23, and about \$3.7-3.8 million in 2023-24 - what specifically is that funding in the centres?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Minister, I'm happy to talk to that. There will be additional police and state service positions that will work within the centres.

That will include employees from the Department of Communities. It will also include Family Violence Counselling Services. It will also include the development of this facility with soft interview rooms and the opportunity for having tailored support services operate out of those centres.

Ms WEBB - Just to clarify, to fund those services or to create the space for them to be in?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - To create the space for those services.

Ms WEBB - That is not part of the capital investment, minister? You mean to make them nice spaces?

Mrs PETRUSMA - As part of the \$15.1 million, it is funding for extra positions for the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service, as well as the Child Safety Service.

Ms WEBB - Can you break it down a little bit further for me? There'll be how many additional police positions?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - In the north, there'll be FTE for police and one analyst, which will be a State Service employee. There will be a department of Communities employee who will work out of the north and also a family violence crisis support service worker. In the south, there will be 10 police and three State Service employees who we're seeking will have analytical expertise. There will be two employees from the department of Communities and one from the family violence crisis service.

Ms WEBB - That funding is allocated over these two years because it's the pilot. Our expectation is we will be continuing past that but because we're going to be reviewing and learning, we have in this Budget seen what the allocation will be?

Mrs PETRUSMA - We want to come up with a Tasmanian model. Through the first year we might realise we need to add in this or that service. The Victorian model has been evolving since 2014 and they have only just added in family violence. Whenever I've been contacted, it's changed, it's morphed. Things they started off with they decided that wasn't how it works.

CHAIR - A forensic examination facility, for example.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We want to ensure its future success, so we need to get it right. We're not going to say we got it right from the start. The deputy commissioner and her team are doing a lot of consultation, a lot of talking to try to get it as good as we can from the start. We'll keep on building on that. The difference it has made to people in Victoria has been huge. It's something that I think will make a huge difference in Tasmania. I think it's the most monumental change we've done in family sexual violence since we've come to Government.

Ms WEBB - The model sounds really positive, certainly, from what we hear from Victoria. Back to the numbers around those positions being funded through the operational aspect of the funding. From what you described of the model earlier, the police will be upstairs and will be brought in if and when needed and the focus is on the other sorts of support. However, the staffing profile you just outlined to me is very police heavy. There are 10 police in the south compared to six other positions. Given the staffing profile that's described, it sounds like the police aspect is expected to be -

CHAIR - Question?

Ms WEBB - Will the police aspect be the greater part of the functioning of these centres based on that staffing profile?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No. That's why we're looking at buildings with SASS and Laurel House because we'll probably be co-located. Downstairs, as I said, will be a totally different look and feel. We have the support services downstairs. Upstairs will be specialist police investigators. You must remember that all 10 are not going to be in the south at the same time. They're either on site if a victim/survivor wants to report or they are investigating serious child exploitation cases which, sadly and tragically, are happening in Tasmania. It's something we want to take a zero-tolerance approach to and to tackle. That's why there's going to be specialist investigative skills put into this. We don't have that sort of capacity.

CHAIR - I think we're repeating ourselves now. Just on that, minister. The very tragic stories that you referred to in the commission don't go anywhere near the tragic, harrowing

stories that children experience in their own homes as victims of sexual violence. This is an area that's being overlooked at the moment. What I am hearing you say around the operations of this is that to co-locate will possibly enable more of those children to come to light?

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's what is shown on the mainland. Also, because we'll be having access to witness intermediaries. This is just to change the whole look and feel. If any of us had a child that was in that situation and we went to the Hobart Police Station, it's old -

CHAIR - I don't think you would. In Launceston too. We've heard from the member for Launceston, how bad that is.

Mrs PETRUSMA - There's nothing warm about it. But this is set up differently. It's going to be designed as a place where a child, if they come in, are going to have specialist investigators who have done special courses in child investigation. The mother can have her support person there to look after her or the father. It might be an aunt or uncle bringing the child in. As you said, it could be familial. It's a different thing and because it's not a police station, we're hoping more people will come in and report.

CHAIR - But what colour would the door be?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's orange in Victoria.

CHAIR - We don't want to be like Victoria. Maybe a nice soft yellow or mauve.

Mrs PETRUSMA - In Victoria, everyone knows if you go the orange door, they know what that means.

CHAIR - Yes.

Ms WEBB - Just can I have one final one?

CHAIR - As long as it's not repeating what we've already covered.

Ms WEBB - No, it's not repeating what we've already covered. We have the pilot, we're going to be reviewing and learning, is there a way we're doing that objectively, externally, evaluating, putting the framework in place to gauge success? Can you describe what that would look like around the pilot?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Through the minister, one of the most important ways is for us to consider an engagement with a university to look at the longer-term benefits. Given the fact that the pilot is a two-year pilot, the steering committee - and Mel, SASS and Laurel House were on the steering committee - is looking at some of the options.

I understand DPAC has a small group that undertakes evaluations of Government policy and programs, so we've already engaged that unit to look at setting up some evaluation criteria. The steering committee has only met once. We're meeting monthly. The next important part for us is to identify evaluation criteria. It can't just come from the steering committee. One of the important points from the forum on Friday was to actually understand from the sector what it thinks the things are that we need to consider. How will we measure the effectiveness of a

program such as this? We'll be wanting to hear from those key experts about how we build evaluation criteria.

Ms WEBB - Thank you.

Mr DUIGAN - Minister, yesterday this committee had an afternoon visit from Teddy the Wonder Dog, a therapy dog in the mental health space. It highlights the growing importance of a family pet. Can give us some information on support in the Budget for pets and a pet's role in instances of family violence?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Pets can, unfortunately, be victims of family violence or be caught up in family violence. We understand that pet owners often face additional challenges when trying to leave abusive relationships or that harm or threats to harm pets can form part of a perpetrator's pattern of behaviour. Concern for the welfare of pets when leaving relationships extends to a variety of animals. Not only cats and dogs but also animals such as rabbits, horses, sheep, pigs and llamas.

Family violence in Tasmania includes threats and intimidation in addition to damage caused directly or indirectly to any property. Therefore, harm or threats to harm pets in a family violence incident is family violence. And when assessing risk in family violence matters, police take into consideration threats and harm against pets. Support for people with pets is available through the Tasmanian Government's Flexible Support program which is providing flexible and responsive practical support for people affected by family violence. The Tasmanian Government launched this program in 2021. It provides up to \$6000 for victims/survivors of family violence for practical support to enhance safety and wellbeing when leaving an abusive relationship.

Now, flexible support packages have been used to cover pet expenses such as kennel costs while a victim survivor was in emergency housing. Kennel cost for travel on the Spirit of Tasmania for a victim survivor who is relocating interstate. And government or nongovernment services can submit an application on behalf of a client after they have undertaken family violence risk assessment and created a safety plan. And in 2022-23 we will be providing continual funding of 330 000 to support this valued program.

But I'm also delighted to announce today that under the new national partnership on Family, Domestic, and Sexual Violence Responses 2021-23 we'll be funding the RSPCA with \$100 000 to pilot their Safe Beds Program which will establish a coordinated network of Safe Bed providers and Safe Bed places for pets of Tasmanians in situations including family violence and homelessness. This funding will also assist in increasing the understanding and awareness of gendered violence and family breakdown for these families.

Our pets are part of our families and many of us rely on them for emotional support during difficult times, and this is why this government is continuing to support the flexible support packages and providing RSPCA with funding to ensure the wellbeing of victim survivors and their pets in escaping family violence. So it's a very great announcement, and I know that Jan Davis, when we told her, she cried. She was so delighted.

CHAIR - She did give evidence to the Royal Health Enquiry too talking about their value, yes.

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Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. I know that they're very, very much welcoming.

Ms WEBB - Can I follow up on that?

CHAIR - Yes

Mr DUIGAN - Thanks, Minister.

Ms WEBB - To follow up on that Minister, the Safe Bed Program that you've just announced, which is really great to hear about, will that involve again short-term options for pets to be cared for while people are seeking support and might be in emergency accommodation or crisis accommodation?

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's right. Yes, it's family violence or homelessness situations that they'll be able to use the Safe Beds Program.

Ms WEBB - And so in terms of under your portfolio of family violence prevention, knowing that those short-term measures are great and you've got funding available already, and now this is additional to that for those short-term options. But of course the greatest barrier is when people are moving into medium and longer term housing options as they're leaving these situations, typically in a private rental sector, where it's very difficult to have a pet. And so people are still going to be experiencing the same issue after the crisis or emergency accommodation period.

So what advocacy are you doing around say reviewing of the Residential Tenancy Act so that we can look at matters amongst others like the expectation that pets could be allowed in private rental tendencies? Because that's something that's been brought in in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and ACT where the assumption is pets are allowed unless there's other arrangements that have been warranted. So are you advocating from a family violence point of view on that?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, there is a - Residential Tenancy Act comes under Minister Archer of course, and she already - I know she has already made changes to residential tenancy laws I think back in 2017 to allow, you know, victim survivors if they're caught up in family violence relationships where they're not responsible for the home stuff. So I know that she is very much aware of what - yes, different things. So it's - - -

Ms WEBB - My question was around, what advocacy are you doing with your prevention of family violence hat on to advocate for changes to the Residential Tenancy Act so that victim survivors have that option available with their pets as they exit into more permanent housing arrangements?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. Well in regards to their long term residencies the Attorney-General states she hasn't received any representations to support the view that those escaping family violence are being made to leave shelter accommodation after three months, nor has the Attorney-General received any other representations that the current protections are having an adverse impact on property owners or the vulnerable members of our community that are experiencing family violence. And she remains committed to assisting Tasmanians in need and receiving feedback on any instances. So if you've got an example like you're describing I'd encourage you to please refer it to the Attorney-General so that she's aware of it.

Ms WEBB - Well my question was more about your representations to her on behalf of family violence victim survivors.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well I think we need - as she's outlined, we need examples. So if you've got actual examples of people - - -

Ms WEBB - Of people who are having difficulty because they've got a pet entering the private rental market as they're exiting emergency accommodation?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Please do write, it might come under Minister - - -

Ms WEBB - Perhaps there's something to be captured; if you're assisting people with their pets during the time they're in emergency crisis accommodation, clearly they then have what happens next as they exit, perhaps that's a good opportunity to gauge from them - - -

CHAIR - That's a comment rather - - -

Ms WEBB - Sorry.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Also it would come under Minister Barnett's work too. So very happy to - for you if you want to formally write.

Ms WEBB - Sure.

Mrs PETRUSMA - But it's Family Violence. Again, it's across government. I've got what is in my space but Minister Barnett is housing and the Residential Tenancy Act comes under Minister Archer.

Ms WEBB - Yes, indeed.

Mrs PETRUSMA - But if you've got any specific examples I'd really encourage you to write, because we can only action if we have actual examples.

Ms WEBB - Yes. I believe the government would be well aware of the vast anecdotal evidence about people with difficulties there. The fact that you're funding pet assistance - - -

CHAIR - This is a comment, we got a question? Yes, I'll go to Mike. You got a question?

Ms WEBB - - - - in these instances shows you are. So I'll certainly get in touch with you about that, thank you.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So in regards to what I'm talking about it is because actual people have come to us and we've got flexible support packages in times of crisis because they needed support in regards to short-term shelter for their dog or for transport their dog. This is why we've set up the Safe Beds Program.

Ms WEBB - And I've congratulated you on that.

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CHAIR - Come back to Mike please. Yes, Mike.

Mr GAFFNEY - Just on that Minister, that \$100 000 would be a welcome announcement for the RSPCA. I'm sure Jan will be pleased. How do you evaluate at the end of the 12 months whether it's been used? Is there an expectation that the funding would roll over or there'd be an extra \$100 000 every year if its used enough, do you know what I mean?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's 100 000 for two years.

Mr GAFFNEY - For two years.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So, yes. But the department always conducts evaluations so we get data back from the services as to what - how many beds is being used, what the locations are, so we can actually determine if it's a bigger issue in the north, the north-west, the south. Because it helps - all this sort of information we feed into our Safe Families Coordination Unit to actually - it helps us to build a better picture and profile of what is actually happening in regards to family and sexual violence in Tasmania. So definitely we'd be expecting results and statistics so that we actually see how much is needed. And, you know, how many times it has been used, so.

Mr GAFFNEY - And does the RSPCA have facilities across the state, or just in certain areas?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well they actually use also Safe Beds, so it's not just at their own locations. They also they provide beds to their volunteers and other ways to so that they are in different locations.

Mr GAFFNEY - Those people who are suffering or are experiencing domestic violence in areas where there is no RSPCA facility, they can still go through the process of having their pet looked after?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, to a Safe Bed. So this will help cover the cost of a volunteer or someone who offers to look after the - - -

Mr GAFFNEY - Thank you, that's good. Thank you.

CHAIR - Do you want to go to another area?

Ms WEBB - No. I can do. But I'm happy for others too as well. I'm mindful that I've had time.

CHAIR - Yes, Nick's got another one, but if you want to go down one.

Ms WEBB - No, that's fine. You can come back to me after.

CHAIR - All right. Nick.

Mr DUIGAN - Thanks Chair. Minister, under the second Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan the government established an Our Watch Primary Prevention Officer within Tasmania. Can you outline to the committee what this role has achieved please?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, thank the Member for the question and for his interest in this matter. And, yes, Our Watch, we've been a very proud member of the National Primary Prevention Organisation Our Watch since 2015, and in 2020 we established our nation leading Our Watch Senior Advisor in Tasmania. And I can say the Women's Safety ministers, which is the ministerial councils that are set up for all jurisdictions in Australia, they're all watching what we're doing in Tasmania with the Our Watch Senior Advisory. Because what the Our Watch Senior Advisor in Tasmania has enabled us to do is to work closely with government and nongovernment services to build primary prevention capacity, capability, and expertise to support and drive change in Tasmania's communities and settings.

Especially because workplaces place such an important role in actively promoting gender equality and challenging sexism and discrimination, and that's why the Tasmanian State Service is implementing the Our Watch Workplace Equality and Respect standards through all Tasmanian Government departments, which the senior advisor has been able to assist with.

Now we've also - the senior advisor has also posted the online Tasmanian forum on Changing the landscape, which is a natural resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disability for policy and practice in Tasmania. She's hosted the Our Watch Primary Prevention Hub Tasmania forum. Also, she's obtained a women's leadership in sport grant from Sports Australia for Football Tasmania to undertake a state based version of Our Watch's equality and respect in sport program. And the Our Watch Senior Advisor Tasmania will also be working with AFL Tasmania. And the work that's really come to the fore lately is supporting the workforce development program in local government across three different councils, and also undertaking the Workplace Equality and Respect standards

The senior advisor was also instrumental alongside Mayor Mary Knowles in the Local Government Association of Tasmania's recently-passed resolution to implement a family and sexual violence prevention framework for local government across the state at the March 2022 general meeting. This has been a motion that Mary's taken a couple of times. Sadly, in the past it wasn't passed, but now, through a lot of work and effort with local government, it was nearly unanimously passed.

We're delighted that we're making progress. I had a really good meeting with the chief executive officer of the Local Government Association of Tasmania, Dion Lester, recently, because he wants to build how we can work together with his local government and government to build capacity in local government, and so we're working on, you know, policy and a framework. The Our Watch senior advisor will play a very important role in this going forward because he will provide opportunities for individual councils to take locally-appropriate action within an evidence-based framework aligned with the plan in their own local communities. So we're very excited about the Our Watch senior advisor position going forward, and especially our work with local government to help build capacity in local communities around Tasmania.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you.

Ms WEBB - Yes, thank you. So just looking at the budget papers, page 41 of budget paper 2 no. 1, looking at this line item and the allocation that's there, we see the increase from about \$8.5 million up to the \$12.8 million in that line item for this year, 2022-23. I'm imagining that bump is to do with consultations and developments of the new plan that's underway.

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Mrs PETRUSMA - So sorry, what page are you looking at?

Ms WEBB - Oh, I'm looking at page 41, budget paper 2, volume 1.

CHAIR - It's a revenue for appropriation.

Ms WEBB - It's the revenue from appropriation by output, and so 5.1, Safe Homes, Families, and Communities, the output line we're looking at.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. So it was a \$26 million plan, so that's the last year of the third action plan.

Ms WEBB - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Now we've had a 40 per cent increase, which has taken us to the \$12 812 000.

Ms WEBB - So I'm looking for a bit of a breakdown, then, in terms of the allocation for this year, for the \$12.8 million.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So 12-and-a-half million is for the new action plan, but the \$31.2million is actually indexation on top of that.

Ms WEBB - Okay. The new action plan, the \$12.5million going into that, what proportion of that is going to the development of it and then what proportion to actually implement?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I don't think any of it's gone to the development of it.

Ms WEBB - Right.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Because it's a very small team, a team of two.

Ms WEBB - Excellent.

CHAIR - They're slaves.

Ms WEBB - Well, perhaps a breakdown, then.

Mrs PETRUSMA - They're a fantastic team of two.

Ms WEBB - Powerhouse team. But perhaps a breakdown, then, of that \$12.5million in terms of the areas it's directed to and how it adds up.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So we'll be launching our action plan in July. In July it'll have a breakdown of what is part of that \$ 12.5million. What I can commit to is that \$4.1million of it is the increased core which would be recurrent around - 'cause it's going to be a five-year action plan. No year of the action plan will be any less than the \$12.5 million that we committed to, the core of the action plan. But \$4.1million of that with indexation going forward will be the

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additional recurrent core that goes onto the existing core for the nine specialist and family violence services. But other ones we'll announce in July.

CHAIR - That'll show up in DPAC next time?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, it'll be in DPAC.

Ms WEBB - The \$12.5million, is there some element of that that goes to the multi-disciplinary centres, or is that not a part of that at all?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, the sexual violence services are receiving additional core funding and the family violence services - the family violence counsel and support service is receiving extra funding, but they're also receiving an additional position through the MDC.

Ms WEBB - So there is additional funding through the MDC isn't -

Mrs PETRUSMA - So the one position that's going to be based at the MDC is coming from the police budget, but the extra funding -

Ms WEBB - Not from the funding here in this line?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No. But they are getting extra additional funding out of the -

Ms WEBB - 30 per cent, 7 per cent bump.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

Ms WEBB - Yes, thank you. So we don't get a breakdown until we see the action plan in July, essentially, that is what you're saying to me?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. But the core announcement that I've been allowed to say has been the ongoing \$75 million recurrent core funding for our family and sexual violence services.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. Will be a minimum; the \$12.5million will carry over each of the five years with indexation, presumably?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, yes.

Ms WEBB - Yes, thank you. You can go on to someone else.

Mr DUIGAN - I've got one.

CHAIR - Well, you go, Nick.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes, minister. As has been touched on in some of our discussions to date, this can be a complex area for people coming to navigate, you know, particularly around the number of service providers and now MDCs. I wonder if you could perhaps provide a summation of the work the Government's doing for people in Tasmania having easily

accessible information on family and sexual violence and how they go about interacting with the service if they feel the need to.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's a very great question.

Ms WEBB - I'm surprised.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I'm just trying to go to a show and tell package which I'm going to take out and hand back for the next time so that they don't explode everywhere. But, look, there's been a lot of work in ensuring that Tasmanians experiencing family and sexual violence have access to the services that meet their unique needs and circumstances, and includes people who are at increased risk of experiencing violence or may have experienced additional barriers to seeking support. Especially today I just wanted to focus on what's available for Tasmanians from culturally and linguistically-diverse communities, because we have developed fact sheets and audio recordings available in 10 community language on our Safe from Violence website.

Now, the Safe from Violence website is our one-stop hub of information. If you go on there, if you go to the resources link, you'll be able to see all of these different resources which are available online. The different languages that we have available are in Arabic, Amharic, Burmese, Dari, Farsi, Hakha Chin, Karen, Nepali, Oromo, and Tigrinya. We've also funded workshops for family violence training for interpreters and translators. They're designed to ensure interpreters are adequately equipped to meet the needs of their culturally and linguistically-diverse clients for specialised language services, especially conveying themes of family violence in various settings.

We've also delivered community-based projects, and so I just wanted to table these ones. There we go, that's it. All right. Oh, we don't have the different language ones here, but I can give out the other language ones on coercion and control etc. These are the ones the Safe Families Coordination Unit has done up to in different languages for our seasonal workers. So here's the fact sheet. So the 10 fact sheets are available here in different languages, and I'm happy to table those, Chair.

CHAIR - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Also, the Safe Families Coordination Unit has done ones for seasonal workers, and which are in four languages: Bislama, Samoan, Tetum, and Tongan. So, I'm pleased to table those ones as well as an English version so you can understand those ones. I'm also delighted to table - the Sexual Assault and Family Violence Forensic Services information they have also developed four brochures with specific information for Tasmanians who experience sexual violence and options for victim-survivors, including what is sexual assault, your options following a sexual assault, reporting to police following a sexual assault, and non-fatal strangulation discharge advice. As the Attorney outlined in her second reading speech reply, the Attorney-General outlined a range of resources for those initiatives, too.

CHAIR - I welcome that legislation too.

Mrs PETRUSMA - While I'm doing other resources, we have others on what is coercive control when it comes to things like money, emotional -

CHAIR - Can our offices be provided with these?

Mrs PETRUSMA - You can keep those. Emotional abuse and family violence and verbal abuse - different examples of abuse. You can photocopy those between you?

CHAIR - Yes, we can.

Mrs PETRUSMA - If any member wants them we can provide more copies. I can provide examples of the postcards, too. If you go online there are lots of resources that have been developed. We also developed resources that went on the back of prescription pads.

CHAIR - Yes, you mentioned that earlier.

Mrs PETRUSMA - There's been a lot of work and effort going into providing as much resources as we can, whether it's in the 10 languages, or for seasonal workers, so that people do understand where they can get help.

CHAIR - Yes. Sometimes I've done a radio interview and mentioned things like that, and it's amazing how people disclose stuff to you. It's good to have something to hand to them.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I think this is the only prescription pad I have left, so I'll hold onto that one.

Ms WEBB - To return to the line item on the Budget papers, given you can't give me a breakdown of the \$12.8 million that's allocated this year -

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, the \$312 000 is indexation.

Ms WEBB - Sure, but apart from that. And you've said the \$4.1 million to those additional assessments. Perhaps you could give me a more detailed breakdown from the 2021-22 allocation, the \$8.6 million, so I can understand what the mix was then? That way, when I get the information about this year's, I'll be able to see how that tracks across.

Mrs PETRUSMA - All right.

- Our Watch project officer - \$135 000.
- Family and Sexual Violence website - \$15 000.
- Problem Sexual Behaviours Program - \$666 670.
- Strength and Defendant Health Liaison Service - \$150 000.
- Men's Referral Service - \$180 850.
- Safe Choices - \$1.125 million.
- Safe Home, Safe Families support team - \$707 472.
- Aboriginal family safety workers - \$145 656.
- Counselling for children and young people - \$1.056 million.
- Counselling for adults - \$321 000.
- Rapid rehousing - \$750 000.
- Legal assistance, \$314 000; of that, Women's Legal Services Tasmania got \$208 000, and Legal Aid \$106 000.
- Perpetrator programs, \$450 513; of that, the Men's Referral Service got \$366 513.
- FVOIP - \$84 000.

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- Mandated Behaviour Change Program - \$157 000.
- Forensic medical examination - \$105 000.
- The Safe Families Tasmania Coordination Unit, \$1.934 million; of that, DPFEM received \$1.187 million.
- Department of Health - \$294 000.
- Department of Justice - \$199 000.
- Department of Education - \$254 000.
- Police Prosecution Services - \$428 000.
- Legislative reform - \$77 000.
- Data collecting and reporting - \$50 000.
- Standardised risk assessment - \$199 000.
- Feasibility study - \$50 000.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. Can I also ask about progress on the action plan from 2019-22? The report came out in November last year.

Mrs PETRUSMA - And there will be another report coming out in November this year.

Ms WEBB - Sure. To wrap up this one. With the programs that were directed to young people -like the Problem Sexual Behaviours and Sexually Abusive Behaviours Program for Children and Young People, or the Step Up Adolescent Intervention Program - were they evaluated for their impact?

Mrs PETRUSMA - As part of the funding for Problem Sexual Behaviours, which is being delivered through the Sexual Assault Support Service, I think about \$80,000 has been set aside to evaluate that program.

Ms WEBB - When would that be expected to be completed?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I think it's an ongoing sort of evaluation.

Ms HURWORTH - Through you, minister, Children, Youth and Families is going through the process of acquiring the external provider to do that evaluation at present.

Ms WEBB - Okay. So the evaluation hasn't been done to date?

Ms HURWORTH - No.

Ms WEBB - It's going to come into play -

Ms HURWORTH - Yes, it should start this year.

Mrs PETRUSMA - But they've still got another year of funding to go.

Ms HURWORTH - That's correct, yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So, the evaluation will do the first year, and then it will go on to the second year.

PUBLIC

Ms WEBB - Okay. With the data project - particularly because there's a challenge around data collection across the community-based services and consistency - where is that up to? Is that fully implemented now?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. There's somebody employed to do that work. I was speaking yesterday to Senator Katy Gallagher, the new federal Minister for Women, and it's something they want to work with states on from a federal level as well - because coming from the community sector, as you know, there are so many disparate systems and everyone has different criteria. How do we get those systems to talk across a common platform?

It's about working it out at both the federal level and state level, because we don't want to set up something at a state level and then the federal government goes no, we want you to report at this level. It's something we're working on with the federal government. There's no point us setting up something and they go 'no, everyone's got to use this', and then us having to report twice.

Ms WEBB - Sure. In our action plan that's coming through to now, we had that as a project - implementing the data project. Have we put that in place yet?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. It's in place, and -

Ms WEBB - Okay. So now we're doing a second look with this interaction with the federal government.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. We don't want to go out to services and say, look, all of you use Phoenix, or something like that, and then the feds go no, we want everyone on this. So we're working in conjunction to work out what would be the best - and what's the data we want to collect, because I believe the next action plan is going to have targets, and we need to work out what sort of implementation.

Ms WEBB - Okay. What did the data project deliver, then? Did it provide a consistent platform for reporting from the services? What was delivered with that implementation?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's been looking at the acuity and frequency of presentations to different services. To understand the needs of the sector and client base and their service delivery models has been the biggest driver. And I know they've been doing a lot of work on having a similarity of framework for family violence. This is the MARAM project, isn't it? Courtney, do you want to explain a bit more about the MARAM project?

Ms HURWORTH - Thank you, minister. There's sort of two aspects to the data project. There's the situation we have at the moment where services use different definitions and have different ways of reporting their data, and then there's work around standardised assessments across services. So, those two are working together.

The standardised assessment project has been ongoing for a while and there's now a draft tool for family violence services to use to undertake standardised assessments across government and non-government services. The flow on for the data project of that is that those tools will then have a more consistent level of data to report through to the government. From that, we'll be able to have a series of more rich insights and indicators. So we're sort of -

Ms WEBB - Yes, I understand. So is the tool developed and implemented or just developed to date.

Ms HURWORTH - So the tool's been developed to date. It hasn't yet started to be piloted. That's the next step. There's an agreement amongst the community-based services to start piloting that tool and to get some insights as to whether the tool works. It's loosely based on the MARAM Framework which the minister referred to, which is a Victorian framework.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. Then just one final really quick one. In terms of the part of the plan that's just coming to a close, was it to undertake a feasibility study for a disclosure scheme in Tasmania. Is that something that's occurring and is it occurring in conjunction with the commission of inquiry side of things, or?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Police have been undertaking that, but there's actually a national body of work being undertaken in regard to that. It's through Monash University. Yes, so Tasmania Police is doing work in regards to that through Monash University because there's other jurisdictions looking as well. It's currently in South Australia but we're looking at doing work to see what is the best model for a disclosure scheme and we are working with the University in regard to that.

Ms WEBB - So that's what constitutes the feasibility study. The work the police are doing to look at those other jurisdictions and see what could fit in.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's right. Some jurisdictions have brought it in then stopped and others, you know, make a change in their model. So we want to look at it and work it out.

Ms WEBB - Good to learn. Yes. Thank you.

CHAIR - Thanks, minister. We've used up all our allocated time for this portfolio area so we do thank your team. I know that the police have to come back and we do apologise, but it was not our doing; that was your side of the table.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I know.

CHAIR - So Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner all can have a longer tea break, out in the antechamber there and the rest of us will come back at a quarter past 11. If we can stop the broadcast. Thanks.

The Committee suspended from 11.02 a.m. to 11.18 a.m.

DIVISION 9

(Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania)

CHAIR - Welcome back, minister for Parks, which also includes some interesting line items we've got now, land titles and evaluations. I'll get you to introduce your members at the table and then invite you to make some opening remarks to cover parks as these two.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thanks, Chair, and it gives me great pleasure to introduce at the table Stuart Fletcher, Acting Deputy Secretary, Parks and Wildlife Service from NRE Tas. As well as Mr Michael Giudici, the Acting General Manager of Land Tasmania, NRE Tasmania.

Before I commence, I would like to acknowledge and pay respects to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land on which we gather today and acknowledge elders past and present.

I would also like to acknowledge and provide my deep appreciation and grateful thanks to the outstanding work by the staff in the Parks and the Lands portfolio, whether here today or who are across Tasmania delivering world class services. Including in our parks and reserves, which includes the restoration of tracks, roads and bridges impacted by the 2018-19 bushfires, including works at Lake Judd, the Mount Anne Circuit, and the soon to be reopened Eastern Arthur Range Traverse.

The Parks and Wildlife Service is also the state's biggest campground operator, with infrastructure investment a key priority. This has seen the delivery of the stage 1 upgrade at Cockle Creek, improvements at Trousers Point, Flinders Island, as well as Swimcart Beach, Diana's Basin, north Moulting Bay, Dora Point, Grants Lagoon, Little Beach, Stumpys Bay, and Shelly Point all on the north-east, with all works either now complete or scheduled for completion this month. Other projects soon to be delivered include the \$7.5 million Dove Lake viewing shelter, stage 1 of the Freycinet National Park wastewater management, and the first stage of a shared-use track from the visitors' centre through to the Wineglass Bay lookout carpark.

At Ben Lomond we've delivered new tracks to the summit, a new carpark at the base of Jacob's Ladder, a new toilet facility, and groundworks are underway to replace the visitors' shelter as well as a snow-making feasibility study. At beautiful Maria Island we'll also see improved wastewater treatment facilities, a new solar and battery hybrid power system, while upgrades at the Tasman Arch Devil's Kitchen will see the delivery of a second disability-accessible toilet. We're also continuing to deliver on our \$10 million commitment in the APCA, and we've employed additional staff at Arthur River to increase the management enforcement of regulations, as well as the engagement of Inspiring Place to deliver the West Coast Off-Road Vehicle Strategy.

As part of this year's fire season, our firefighters worked hard alongside the Tasmanian Fire Service to protect the Tullah and Sisters Beach communities, along with working with the Aboriginal Lands Council of Tasmania to successfully manage the Olegas Bluff fire. This is in addition to the delivery of the successful 2021-22 planned burn season across approximately 21 reserves. It helps keep our communities and our natural values safe in the coming years.

As part of our joint commitment to developing and delivering successful joint land management outcomes, I'm delighted that our Aboriginal cultural burning program will continue building on the success of our pilot program last year. To protect and care for our globally significant Tasmanian wilderness world heritage area, we are funding the implementation of the TWAFI security strategy 2021-31, and we've also delivered TWAFI management plan. Our staff within the Land Titles Office are also delivering important projects, including the implementation of the National Electronic Conveyancing System in Tasmania, with \$1 million in the budget to support this very important project.

In conclusion, Chair, this Government is very committed to delivering a range of important projects as well as the environmentally-sustainable and culturally-sensitive

management of Tasmania's parks and reserves to ensure that our wild places are passed on to future generations in even better condition than what they are today. Thank you, Chair.

Output Group 1 - Land Tasmania

1.1 Land Titles, Survey and Mapping Services

CHAIR - Thank you. So, minister, we'll move to 1.1, Land Titles, Survey and Mapping Services. Nick's got the lead on this one, too. So he's going to learn about what happens in this area, too.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Chair. It's an interesting space, no doubt. The minister just touched briefly on Tasmania's progress toward the Electronic Conveyancing System. I wonder if you could provide some insights into what the benefit of that will be for Tasmania.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I thank the member for his question and for his interest regarding the implementation of the National Electronic Conveyancing in Tasmania. As part of our commitment as a signatory to the COAG intergovernmental agreement for an electronic conveyancing national law, the 2022-23 budget includes \$1 million for Lands Tasmania to enable Tasmania to actively participate in the regulation, development, and implementation of a single National Electronic Conveyancing System.

The COAG agreement stated that there should be a new electronic system for the settling of property transactions in all Australian states and territories as a convenient electronic way for legal practitioners, conveyancers, financial institutions, and mortgage processors to prepare dealings and related instruments to register changes in land ownership and interest; to settle financial transactions, including the ability to pay disbursements, duties, and tax; to comply with state or territory revenue office requirements; to lodge their dealings and instruments with the relevant state or territory land registry; and to receive confirmation of the lodgement of dealings and instruments.

Tasmania continues to actively participate in the regulation and development of a National Electronic Conveyancing, and implementing this system is a significant project for the Lands Titles Office. It will deliver improvements more broadly to government, industry professions, and the wider community with interoperability the key to supporting a competitive electronic conveyancing market. Once implemented, this will allow Tasmania's property market participants to engage in efficient electronic transactions by authorising the preparation and lodgement of land dealings and settlement of financial transactions online.

Now, this is a significant improvement for industry as this will remove the current requirements to deal with these matters in person, and the key benefits of implementing this system include operating efficiencies for all parties with reduced administration, mail, finance, and system processing times; its consistency for parties who operate across multiple jurisdictions. What is really important is reducing the potential for fraudulent conveyancing transactions and simpler processes for amending small clerical errors in land dealings through an easy online editing ability and the elimination of the need for physical meetings and travel to attend to settlements and lodgements.

So electronic conveyancing transactions is part of the national system to be carried out in Australia by what are called ELNOs or Electronic Lodgement Network Operators. There are currently two ELNOs engaged as part of this process, being Property Exchange Australia

Ltd and Simply. So a bill's already been passed in May by the New South Wales parliament to amend legislation, and section 4 of this Act, therefore, through the national recognition of law, that means that it's now recognised in Tasmania as well.

Mr DUIGAN - Thanks, minister. Does anyone have any follow-up on conveyancing?

CHAIR - Well, just on follow-up from that. You talked about some of the benefits, there, minister, about avoiding or reducing the risk of fraudulent conveyancing. Do we have any information about how often that occurs in Tasmania? Obviously this is a nation-wide approach, I accept that. I'm just interested in how often that occurs in Tasmania.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Electronic conveyancing?

CHAIR - No, fraudulent conveyancing.

Mr GIUDICI - Through you, minister. It's very rare, but the possibility exists at the moment in particular because it's a paper-based system. In conjunction with this transformation that the minister's been talking about, some parallel processes to improve paper-based transactions in a whole business transformation cycle within the LTO. We have the Deputy Recorder of Titles here who may have an answer to the specific question about how often, but I know it's very rare, yes.

CHAIR - Okay. So in terms of the other benefits, I guess, if you like, so this means there'll be a shorter turnaround for the issuing of titles and that sort of thing? That is part of the process?

Mr GIUDICI - Through you, minister. The benefit, really, is the time taken to settle property settlements. So it's not so much the issue of titles as the settlement of property. So at the moment, as you'd know, people sit around a table and exchange cheques, proof of who they are, et cetera, in a physical environment, whereas electronic conveyancing will allow all this to be done in an online environment. So the banks, the conveyancing people, the lawyers, and the customer and their agents will all be able to do this in an electronic transaction. So it'll be a very big gain in efficiency and convenience.

CHAIR - Yes, okay. Yes, you want to go again? Yes.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes, no. This is away from conveyancing but more in relation to the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements. If the minister could provide some information what the work Land Tasmania is doing to fit in with those recommendations.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, thank you for your question and for your interest in this important matter. The Tasmanian Government is providing over \$4.9 million over the next three years to deliver against the prior recommendations from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements. Implementing these recommendations will enhance resilience, build capacity, and improve outcomes for Tasmanian communities following natural disasters.

A number of Tasmanian Government agencies are working together across government to deliver these results, with funding to be shared across the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, the Department of

Health and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. This additional funding builds on activities which are already underway across the Tasmanian Government as part of our ongoing commitment to advancing location intelligence.

The emergency services GIS unit, which is part of Land Tasmania within NRE Tas, has had the responsibility of providing critical, all-hazard, whole-of-government emergency-related spatial data management, including the development of in-field capture, data capture tools, spatial data analysis, and incident response mapping, which is critical to providing situational awareness in support of decision-making across the emergency management planning, response, and recovery phases. For example, this unit is responsible for producing updated daily maps issued to every firefighter deployed on a fireground and providing a web-based mapping platform for the tracking of our resources, people, vehicles, and aircraft.

So this means in real time we will see aircraft deployment for waterbombing during bushfire events, as was the case earlier this year with the Olegas fire in the south-west. This unit has supported the state government response to many varied emergencies including fire, flood, severe storm, biosecurity incursion, and most recently as well the COVID-19 pandemic. So there's now unprecedented amounts of spatial data being captured with the development of new applications and technology accelerating.

What the Land Information System Tasmania, or the LIST, is it is becoming a very important source of coordinated and authority of spatial data across government and industry. Especially because it provides a wide array of specialized data layers including infrastructure, utilities, people, society, climate, environment, plants and animals. All members should do is have a look in detail for the list, so I encourage you to go in and just have a - spend an afternoon having a play, because I think you'll be amazed at what it does actually offer you. There's a lot of different systems which are coming onboard that - and I think it'd be interesting for you to see what the social, demographic, and environmental data, and geospatial information systems is all about on the list.

CHAIR - Having spent some time there, not a whole afternoon I must admit, but it is interesting to see the additional layers of data that seem to be added. So are we at that point where it's basically got all we need, or is this still a work in progress?

Mrs PETRUSMA - They're still adding more, and more, and more onto it. But it's - yes.

CHAIR - So what are we looking at for the future?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I think there's a list of what we're heading on - so the datasets - well it's increased by - so there's now 2950 datasets available, which is an increase of 219 from the 2731 datasets available in 2021. The emergency services ones are restricted datasets because they are there for us to know where police are at the time with emergencies going on so that we can locate them. Yes, it's growing. The new ones that were added during 2021-22, there's 19. There's Tas veg, soil drainage, permeability, routing depth, and alkalinity, acidity, balance data, vessel sewerage, discharge data, land use for TasWater, sewer systems network, Tasmania Planning Commission, Tasmania Planning Schemes, multiple local government area extents, Sustainable Timbers Tasmania.

They've now got up there emergency meeting points. There's 138 new land related datasets including secured data bases to support pandemic operations, active cases, contacts,

G2G arrivals, GP clinic locations, vaccination drive time, health conditions distributed by peoples' age, aerial photography layers to support new aerial photo viewer, Commonwealth marine parks, animal roadkill, lobster, scallop, giant crab fishing blocks and sub-blocks. Lighter base tree canopy height datasets, PW, planned burns, statuses, and Tasmanian planning schemes. So it's getting more and more and more.

CHAIR - Comprehensive, yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, but it's a great - - -

CHAIR - Just on that. There's a couple of matters that have been raised with me through constituents. The one regarding the Tas vegetation overlay or dataset, this obviously can be used to detect illegal clearing of vegetation I assume?

Mr GUIDICI - Through you, minister. It can be when it's compared to, for example, up to date aerial photography. So the vegetation layer is updated on a periodic basis. Every year we fly new aerial photography. We coordinate that with local government, and that mosaic is kept constantly up to date on an annual basis. So it's not like a month by month changes, but on an annual basis changes can be detected, yes.

CHAIR - Okay, which is interesting because a constituent of mine got a rather unpleasant letter from an authority about land clearing. He cleared land without a forest practices permit. However it was actually storm damage that had actually blown down the trees, he hadn't cleared them, and he cleared up the mess. Yes. So, he got a pretty threatening letter.

Mrs PETRUSMA - From what, SDT?

CHAIR - From the Forest Practice Authority.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Right.

CHAIR - Yes. I assume there are proper checks and balances that are utilised in relation to this data, because that's - I'm informed that that was the process that was used to identify this. Then it was all sorted out in the end, but it was pretty traumatic for an older farmer might I say.

Mr GUIDICI - Through you, minister. So, yes, there's aerial photography, there's satellite imagery. There are a variety of tools that can be used to assess land clearing and other forms of clearing, but obviously then there's the interpretation of what you're seeing that needs some other analysis.

CHAIR - Need a person to get on board, perhaps have a look?

Mr GUIDICI - Yes, perhaps.

CHAIR - Perhaps. Could have prevented that. Anyway.

Mr GUIDICI - So it's an indication that something has happened, but the circumstances have to be independently assessed, yes.

PUBLIC

CHAIR - Considered as to what caused it. Yes, okay.

Mr DUIGAN - Is there potentially, you know a role for that with the Tasmanian Spatial Information Council? What is the role of that?

Mr GUIDICI - Through you minister.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The Tasmanian Spatial Information Council, they play a very important role. It's to maximise opportunities for government, industry, and community through the efficient and effective development, maintenance, and use of Tasmania's spatial data services and infrastructure. The composition of the council is key starting with an independent chair with representation from local and state government, academia, the private sector, and professional associations who all bring a wide wealth of experience to issues under consideration. So they play a key role in promoting the use and helping users take advantage of the potential for special information services to improve productivity in the Tasmanian industry. And to support the delivery of government services, including emergency response in Tasmania.

The future for the spatial industry in Tasmania is rapidly evolving but also full of opportunity. They're undertaking a significant body of work as we can tell at the moment, so I look very much forward to working with the department and TASSIC as this exciting work progresses, and I commend them all for their outstanding efforts.

Mr DUIGAN - Great, thank you.

CHAIR - Let's just go back to the additional datasets. You talked about the sewer system network. Does that include TasWater assets that are water as well?

Mrs PETRUSMA - On the network? On the TASSIC, the list? Yes.

Mr GUIDICI - TasWater is listed. Yes, it is. Through you, minister.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That was one of the new ones I read out, that was right.

Mr GUIDICI - Yes, that's right. Yes. Sewer and water.

CHAIR - And water, right. The reason I raise that is that obviously that is only contemporary as to the available information that can be fed into it. Because recently a public accounts committee was looked at which has been published, the report of that. About a review of a public works committee report that identified that there was additional cost associated with discovering water and sewerage assets that weren't known about.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I've had that happen to a constituent.

CHAIR - Yes, that's right. So I mean because some of these are quite old and have been put down before records, so what measures are being taken as to try and get as much data relevant to the location of particularly water and sewerage assets to ensure that the information on the list and that the data that sits within it is accurate?

PUBLIC

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well I'll just make one comment before I go to Mr Guidici, but the TasWater sewer system network only went on this year, so it was opened after the data. Mr Guidici.

Mr GUIDICI - Yes. Through you, minister. As TasWater took over the other authorities they have spent many years now determining the location of their underground assets. They came from a variety of different sources. Well, 29 councils, and then into three authorities, and now into TasWater. So they all sat on different systems at different levels of maturity, different levels of spatially known accuracy. That's essentially been assembled now into this dataset that's been made available. So that's one part of underground services, but there's also stormwater. Stormwater has the same challenges but it still remains within the province of councils. So we have - or NRE Tas has service level agreements with TasWater for example which specify the frequency of updates and so forth.

That will - to your question about frequency, they will be updated on the cycle that's specified in that service level agreement. We continue to work with councils but local councils at this stage have a variety of levels of knowledge about where their underground services are, because they're very old often. In days gone by of course they were combined systems between sewer and stormwater, and that's something that councils work at continuously to understand. But at this stage that information's not available through a list.

CHAIR - Okay. The intention, minister, is though that once that information is available it will be provided through to be added?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well if they're provided to us to add, yes.

CHAIR - That's what I mean, yes. Yes.

Mr GUIDICI - Yes, that's right. It's in the province of council to do that, and obviously some of this information can be captured through Dial Before You Dig, but not all of it. Underground services generally are a challenge for projects as you've mentioned. They have to be discovered before digging starts and it's a significant cost to the project. So underground services generally are a challenge for capturing and displaying accurately - unless they're captured at the time that they're put in.

CHAIR - Yes, which you'd hope would happen now.

Mr GUIDICI - Well it does sometimes.

CHAIR - But not always.

Mr GUIDICI - Not always.

CHAIR - That makes it challenging, doesn't it. Maybe there's a coordination piece there. Whose responsibility would it be for that sort of coordination between various entities, or individuals even, and the Land Titles Office, to make sure - and for the updating of the list - that it's done in a way that is contemporary.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The agencies all very much know about the list, like the EGIS that I talked about before - that was something they definitely came and used. During COVID, a

lot of agencies were coming to the list to put data on there to enable them to do their work. So, it is normal for agencies to approach us when they're ready to.

Mr GIUDICI - Yes, the challenge is that there's not one entity. Each authority has its own legislation under which it operates. For example, when the NBN was conceived, I happen to know that the Institution of Surveyors, for example, wrote to the government suggesting that when NBN services were put in the ground they should be located at that time and coordinated. That didn't happen. And so we have this other set of information under the ground.

CHAIR - It could've been why we had the internet outage when I was at the airport trying to get on that plane. They dug up both sides.

Mr GIUDICI - Yes. This happened in Tasmania and Victoria at the same time, which was an example of not knowing properly where those services were.

CHAIR - And they were both Dial Before You Dig issues, weren't they? Or failing to dial before you dig.

Mr GUIDICI - The exception is gas. Gas was very well documented on the north, south, east, west 20 years ago when the main gas lines were put in. Every joint on those has been surveyed in location and documented - so you can be confident that when you find out about gas, it's in the right place.

CHAIR - That's good news.

Mr GUIDICI - Yes, and that's obviously something you don't want to hit. To go to your question, the challenge with underground services is the variety of entities that have their own kind of imprimatur to place services under the ground, and no obligation necessarily to coordinate with other parties.

CHAIR - Minister, while we're talking about the work that this office does, the appropriation for 2022-23 is \$705 000. That's on page 209. How many staff are employed in the office to deliver these services?

Mr GUIDICI - I can answer that if you like.

Mrs PETRUSMA - You can answer that, yes.

Mr GUIDICI - In the Titles Office, there's approximately 30 to 35 staff, but they're not the people who look after the list. The list is serviced within Land Tasmania. At Land Tasmania there are about 60 staff in the location services branch, which looks after all these spatial elements. That consists of the Office of the Surveyor General, with about 12 people in that office. With the list services and the people who look after the foundation spatial data that goes on lists - and curate that data and project it - there's about 12 to 25 people in those groups.

Mrs PETRUSMA - For the land titles survey and mapping services, there's 79.29 FTEs. In valuation services, there's 32.11. Making a total for Output group 1, 111.4.

CHAIR - Do we have a gender breakdown of the workforce? The next question is, what's the breakdown at senior levels?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I think they've got that across agency with the gender level.

CHAIR - You might need to introduce Mr Jacobi.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorry, I'll introduce to the table Mr Jason Jacobi, Acting Secretary, Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania.

CHAIR - Thank you.

Mr JACOBI - Thank you, minister, and my apologies for being late today. We had a few overlaps. Business unit by gender. In Lands Tasmania - and this figure is from March 2022 - we had 36 female and 84 male. I think your second question, Madam Chair, was in relation to senior executives. Is that correct?

CHAIR - Yes, it is.

Mr JACOBI - Across the employment categories of head of agency prescribed officer and senior executive, in March 2022, we had 13 female, 10 male - a total of 23. I might just add for the record that currently 57 per cent of our SES officers are women compared to 32 per cent in previous years, and our female representation has increased from 47 per cent to 50 per cent from 2020-21 and 2021-22. So, we're making very positive gains in representation of women in our senior executive in NRE Tas.

CHAIR - You are. That's very commendable, minister. Has that been a deliberate targeted approach?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It has been for a few years. Under both the Acting Secretary and the previous secretary, a deliberate effort was made. They put out a whole strategy and did a lot of work in ensuring that women were recognised and elevated to senior positions.

CHAIR - It shows what can be done, when you still hear that women aren't available in this area. You had a question on this line item, Sarah?

Ms LOVELL - I do, yes. Minister, I wanted to ask some questions on land conservation covenants. Is that within Land Titles?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It'd be Parks, wouldn't it?

Mr JACOBI - That's a question for the environment minister. It sits under that output group, under minister Jaensch's portfolio.

Ms LOVELL - Okay. I can ask those tomorrow.

1.2 Valuation Services

Mr GAFFNEY - Minister, it was pretty self-explanatory that there's been a \$330 000 increase from last year to this year, but it was explained that the valuation was pushed out by a year because of COVID or getting valuers from the mainland. Is that correct?

PUBLIC

Mr GUIDICI - Through you, minister. Yes, the previous year we couldn't get valuation contractors in time to be able to deliver the program, so we got consent from the minister at the time to push that out by a year.

Mr GAFFNEY - By a year. That's still going to fall within the seven-year contract, or whatever?

Mr GUIDICI - That's right, for most councils - except for West Tamar Council, which was already out of sync by one year, and that was extended an additional year through the appropriate process.

Mr GAFFNEY - That's not going to be an issue?

Mr GUIDICI - No, it's all been capped in this year's program.

Mr GAFFNEY - Last year it mentioned there was a new market analysis module being exported to the VISTAS.

Mr GUIDICI - Yes, that's the VISTAS system?

Mr GAFFNEY - Yes. Could you explain that to us, and how successful it has been?

Mr GUIDICI - Minister, it might be useful to bring the Valuer General to the table for some of these specifics.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Chair, I'd like to invite to the table Tim Grant, Valuer General, Office of the Valuer General.

Mr GRANT - Thank you, minister. Yes, the module we spoke of last year was the market analysis module. We're still in the final throes of having that developed at the moment. It's just being tested, so it'll be utilised in the system very shortly.

Mr GAFFNEY - That was a local company that was interested to do that?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Geometry Pty Limited, isn't it?

Mr GRANT - Correct, yes. Geometry Pty Limited did the initial development of the VISTAS system, and this was an additional module to the system which was developed after it went live.

Mr GAFFNEY - Okay. Would this be a good time to ask how many FTEs you have?

Mr GRANT - Yes, it is around 30. I don't have exact number here.

CHAIR - They did give the breakdown earlier.

Mrs PETRUSMA - In valuation services, there's 32.11.

Mr GAFFNEY - And male and female gender balance there?

PUBLIC

Mrs PETRUSMA - In Lands Tasmania, it's 36 females and 84 males.

CHAIR - They were in the figures we got?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, the figures that were read out before.

Mr GAFFNEY - Thank you. We've heard some areas, for example OPC, have had difficulty attracting staff. Is that a difficulty for your area, or is it a fairly stable workforce?

Mr GRANT - Through you, minister, we have issues at times. The real estate market determines the availability or need for valuers. When the market has been very strong, the private industry is very strong and looking for valuers as well.

A couple of years ago when the market wasn't quite as strong we were attracting some very good applicants for positions. More recently we've advertised and we've had very few applications in some cases. Our workforce is reasonably stable. We don't have too many changes in the workforce.

Mr GAFFNEY - I note that with local councils sometimes your office would do the valuing, but sometimes you tender that out. If a tender group comes in - say there are six councils - do they do one local council area at a time or do you have the same group come and do the whole lot? How does that work?

Mr GRANT - Thank you. Through you, minister, each municipality is tendered individually because there is a separate contract between the council and the contractor and the government to do that work. In the cycle just completed one company obtained Devonport, Kentish, Latrobe, Central Highlands and West Coast. Another company got Kingborough, Huon Valley, Hobart, Southern Midlands and West Tamar.

The company that did the north west coast ones would probably interest you, Mr Gaffney. It was done together, effectively. It also allows an opportunity if there's amalgamation of councils in the future to have a similar evaluation base across those three areas. That was not a consideration, but the tender committee were certainly of that when looking at the tenders put in for those municipalities.

Mr GAFFNEY - Is there a question I haven't asked you that I should have?

CHAIR - I'm not sure that's quite legitimate.

Mr GAFFNEY - It was a question.

CHAIR - I'll just overrule that one.

Mr GAFFNEY - Damn it. Okay, that's all, thanks.

CHAIR - Good try. Following the review of valuations, how many of those have had to be adjusted in the last 12 months?

Mr GRANT - In the last 12 months? That gets back to objections, which was a very small number. So 22 properties requested a review and were reviewed on that basis. That

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could be for a variety of reasons as well as just values. It could be with respect to improvements that were not there and might have been overlooked. There are a number of reasons why people can lodge an objection.

CHAIR - Were any of those 22 adjusted following that objection?

Mr GRANT - Yes there were.

CHAIR - Just the percentage of that, I mean, it's such small numbers, I know.

Mr GRANT - Yes, I had that number there, sorry. Where's that gone?

Mrs PETRUSMA - As at 31 March there were four objections received with three allowed, resulting in amended valuations. One objection was disallowed.

Mr GRANT - Apologies. The 22 was incorrect. If I can, minister, the objections we're receiving now are to the supplementary valuations that were undertaken, which are backdated valuations anyway. It's off-cycle for the fresh valuation cycle. So we're about to issue fresh valuations for 100 000 properties.

CHAIR - So which locations are those?

Mr GRANT - We're about to issue Hobart, Kingborough, Huon Valley, Southern Midlands, Central Highlands, West Tamar, Devonport, Kentish, Latrobe and West Coast.

CHAIR - I'd be interested to see what West Coast does. There's probably a value increase down there. As there is around the state.

Mr GRANT - It is a very interesting time. It was pointed out earlier that the cycle was put back one year because of COVID. So it is a seven-year gap when it's normally a six-year gap. The highlights of the changes are in Hobart, where the average increase of land is about 114 per cent. West Coast land is about 85 per cent.

CHAIR - Which is quite extraordinary for West Coast.

Mr GRANT - We've seen a considerable change in that period, and that's post COVID-19.

CHAIR - Minister, we know that with interest rates rising, the heat may come out of the market a little bit. When the valuations are conducted does that take into account prevailing conditions and those circumstances, or is it just on the day this is what it is? If it doesn't you may find there'll be a lot more objections eventually.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well the Valuer-General provides his information to Finance which then makes all the other determinations in the local governments themselves.

Mr GRANT - Through you, minister, the valuation date for the re-evaluation in municipalities was as at 1 July last year.

CHAIR - All right. So backdated to then?

Mr GRANT - So the contractors are undertaking that work. They start the valuations prior to that period. The purpose of the date is so that the market is assessed all at the same point, so we're not doing additional properties at a different date.

Every property in Hobart is assessed on the basis of the sales that were in force as at 1 July 2021. Within the next couple of weeks they'll be issued to the Hobart ratepayers and the other property owners.

CHAIR - It will be interesting to see what the outcome of it was. Only West Coast I have to worry about for complaints. You southern-based members have a job on your hands, potentially.

Any other questions on Land Tasmania? Otherwise we'll move to parks, 4.2.

Output Group 4 - Parks

4.2 Parks

Ms LOVELL - Minister, it's been brought to my attention that there are two field officer jobs advertised on the Tasmanian Government jobs website at the moment. Both are located at Arthur River. One is an identified Aboriginal position field officer, and one is not identified. I understand that's a fixed-term position.

Can you explain the discrepancy in pay for those positions? The non-identified position is a band three and the identified position is band two. When looking at those two ads they look to have very similar, if not identical, duties and requirements.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Before I hand over to the acting secretary, I'll say that as part of the \$10 million that we are spending in the APCA we are providing funding for new positions in the area to help protect the area and ensure Aboriginal cultural values up there are protected. We are employing more staff as part of that \$10 million. As to the different positions and the reasons for the pay discrepancies, I'll ask the acting secretary.

Mr JACOBI - Through the minister, thank you member for the question. I won't go into the details of the two positions, but the two positions are different. They are different in terms of the qualifications required for each position. We have tried on a number of occasions to recruit to an identified Aboriginal position in the Arthur River. It was previously a Band 3 level position and it failed to attract any suitable applicants, which is very unfortunate.

We had an independent panel and a number of representatives who recommended that we should actually make that position at a lower classification to provide a greater opportunity for Aboriginal people in the North West to successfully be recruited to that role, and that's a decision that I have made based on that advice. I'm very hopeful that through this recruitment process we will actually attract an Aboriginal person from the North West who can then grow and develop in that role in country and on country.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So the ads themselves have no difference in requirements, essential or desirable requirements. In fact, there are more requirements for the identified position than there are for the non-identified position. The essential requirements for the non-identified

position are only around vaccination, and desirable requirements are for a trade certificate in a discipline relevant to the duties. That's the same qualification.

Looking at the identified position, the desirable requirements are actually - there are four: knowledge of local conditions and community issues; a workplace Level 2 First Aid certificate; a trade certificate in a discipline relevant to the duties, or equivalent experience; and a current motor bike - motor vehicle driver's licence. There's also an essential requirement obviously of Aboriginality. What are the qualifications that are required for the non-identified Band 3 position that don't appear when you look at that job ad?

Mr JACOBI - I suspect it's in the actual statement of duties, but I might have to defer and see if I can get some information on that specific position and hopefully provide advice through the minister to you before the end of the session.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thank you. That would be appreciated.

Ms LOVELL - Can we get that as a question on notice?

CHAIR - Yes. If we can't get it before the end of the session, we'll take it on notice and write to you. Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Okay.

Ms LOVELL - Can I also ask how many identified Aboriginal field officer positions are there across the state?

Mr JACOBI - Yes, through the minister. If you'd just give me a minute, I will see if I can find that information for you.

Ms LOVELL - Yes, thank you. I'd also like the number of non-identified field officer positions.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We also have to keep in mind that some people do not want to be identified as Tasmanian Aboriginals as well. I know when I release the government's Tasmanian Aboriginal Employment Policy, as part of that policy it was very clear that some do want to be identified, and some make the personal choice not to. We can have more people working in an agency who are Tasmanian Aboriginal people but who do not want to be specifically identified as such. We need to bear that in mind too.

Ms LOVELL - Yes. I understand the limitations around that information, but that's why we're looking at specifically those identified positions.

Mr JACOBI - Through the Chair, if I can make a start to this question and then if you could maybe clarify whether I haven't answered it.

Ms LOVELL - Sure.

Mr JACOBI - What additional information do you need. Employment category, I have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the entire department. I might be able to find some information specifically to park soon. As of March 2022, we had 56 people who

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identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, which represents 3.64 per cent of the workforce.

Mrs PETRUSMA - As it does say here, "The database may not be complete as providing this information is voluntary."

Mr JACOBI - Your second question was specifically about field officer and ranger positions?

Ms LOVELL - Yes. How many identified field officer or ranger positions are there around the state?

Mr JACOBI - I don't believe I have that information readily at hand, so again if I could take that question on notice.

Ms LOVELL - Do you have the number of non-identified field officer or ranger positions across the state?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I think it's about 453 rangers that we have in total at the moment. Staff-wise. Across the whole Parks portfolio there's 453 positions.

Ms LOVELL - So what I would be seeking is a breakdown of how many of those positions are paid at Band 2 and how many are paid at Band 3 for the Aboriginal identified positions and generally, the field officer positions across the state.

Mr JACOBI - Great. Thank you. We'll take that on notice.

Ms LOVELL - Thank you. Do you have your retention rate within the Department for Aboriginal employees in - and specifically identified positions, but also, if you have the information gathered for those employees who have voluntarily identified as Aboriginal in non-identified positions?

Mr JACOBI - No, again I'm sorry, we'd have to take that on notice. That gets down to a level of detail I just don't have available at this point in time.

Ms LOVELL - Minister, do you know how many complaints regarding racism have been made by Parks staff this financial year?

Mr JACOBI - Through the minister. I am not aware of any formal complaints being provided to me in relation to racism.

Ms LOVELL - What about the previous financial year?

Mr JACOBI - I'm not aware of any. Certainly, I wasn't the Acting Secretary at that time, but as the Deputy Secretary of Parks, no. No formal complaints were made to me in relation to racism.

Ms LOVELL - Do all formal complaints come to you as the Acting Secretary?

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Mr JACOBI - I would decide ultimately on any allegations of racism through the ED5 process.

Ms LOVELL - Would that include complaints of racism from staff about members of the public? Would those complaints come to you?

Mr JACOBI - We do receive, through our Workplace Health and Safety reporting system, incidents of aggressive behaviour with clients. Part of Border Security staff and also the PWS employees are on occasion exposed to aggressive clients. They are reported through our Workplace Health reporting system and that is provided to me on a monthly basis.

Ms LOVELL - I guess, is that broken down to the level of detail around the aggressive behaviour generally, or specifically racist behaviour, specifically sexist behaviour, other types of discriminatory behaviour, or?

Mr JACOBI - On occasion, it will get down to a level of detail. It depends on the nature of the interaction. Often it is as simple as a telephone call where the client has become irate, but not necessarily made any aggressive assertions about race or the person on the other end of the phone. However, there are occasions where the specifics of the incident are recorded. They are recorded through our Workplace Health and Safety system, and naturally, if it is a case that warrants further action, I would take that on the basis of the information that's provided to me.

Ms LOVELL - What would be a case that would warrant further action?

Mr JACOBI - Assault absolutely would constitute an action, by a third party that I would act on.

Ms LOVELL - It would need to be assault for it to be -

Mr JACOBI - Look, it depends on the - there has been instances I think in the past where there has been a verbal interaction and I have intervened with both the employee and the third party. But again, it relates to the evidence that's provided at the time, whether there were any corroborating witnesses, what was said, what was the context in which that incident occurred. So again, all of these cases are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Does the Department have workplace respect standards which they do have to abide by. Does the member have a specific example which has occurred that a correct action hasn't been taken, I'm very happy for you to raise them with me and I can raise them up further. It's very hard to indulge in hypotheticals if we don't know exactly - you know, and I appreciate you mightn't be able to give an actual example, but if we're providing examples. If it's verbal abuse, that can be assault too, and if it's emotional abuse, that can be assault as well.

Ms LOVELL - No, I don't have specific examples. What I do have is feedback from workers that they consider this to be a problem that's not being addressed. So that's why I was asking what data you've got around that and whether you - what effort has gone into identifying that as a problem and addressing it.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. But across the State Service, they're doing a whole body of work in regard to making work a better workplace.

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Mr JACOBI - I take this type of allegations very seriously. I have a zero-tolerance approach to assault or aggressive behaviour against any of the staff across the Department. If a matter is brought to me, I would act on it immediately.

Ms LOVELL - I would hope that would be consistent across all the secretaries of all departments frankly, but thank you for that clarification. Minister, can you provide for the Committee the number of employees across the Department by head count and FTE? Across Parks.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Just for Parks, it's the 453.

Mr FLETCHER - To explain the figure the minister gave before; the 453 staff are in the Park Service . In output group 4.1. In terms of staff numbers in parks, in output group 4, we've got FTE figures for the Parks and Wildlife Service as at March 2022, 387.05 FTE. For output group 4.2, which is probably in services 12.47. So, the parks in total are 408.52 FTE.

Ms LOVELL - 408.52 and do you have a head count?

Mr FLETCHER - The head count as at March, it was 453 staff in the Park Service. In terms of property services, I would have to confirm that number. I don't think I've got that in terms of actual head count.

Ms LOVELL - Thank you. Minister, how many staff are on fixed term contracts?

Mr FLETCHER - In terms of Property Services numbers?

Ms LOVELL - Well, I think if we work with the parks numbers of the 453 staff in the parks, how many of those staff would be permanent and how many are on fixed term contracts.

Mr FLETCHER - I think we have only got fixed term - as a whole - contracts as a component of the workforce.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Is it 31 March 2022, there were 34 people employed on fixed term minimum 50-hour contracts in the PWS?

Ms LOVELL - Thirty-four people on minimum 50 hour. And that's 50 hour a year.

Mr JACOBI - That is correct, yes. That is minimum 50-hour contracts.

Ms LOVELL - Fifty hours a year?

Mr JACOBI - Yes, that's correct.

Ms LOVELL - Of those 34, do you have a breakdown of the average hours those employees are working?

Mr JACOBI - Through the minister. No, we don't have that information at hand but that would take some time to -

Mrs PETRUSMA - I can tell what the positions were. There was a visitor service officer providing information to visitors and administering the sale of parks passes. There were relief host rangers for Three Capes Track, they were used to just provide relief when necessary. There were discovery rangers which we normally employed just over the summer months, including Aboriginal discovery rangers. There were track and wilderness rangers which, again, we only hire over the summer months. Administrative assistance and reception officer providing administration and receptionist to visitor centres for relief. They're mainly short-term contracts during our peak seasons.

Ms LOVELL - Yes, I understand that. This has been something that we've looked at over estimates for a number of years now. So, is any monitoring done? I mean, I understand you might not have it here at the table, but the question is whether a 50-hour-a-year contract is a fair instrument of employment for somebody. Understanding it's seasonal work. What efforts are being made to find work in low seasons, in perhaps other areas within parks or even within the State Service. Is there any effort being made into exploring maybe some more flexible arrangement within parks or between departments whereby people might be able to have a more permanent job or a job that they can rely on more than 50 hours a year minimum?

Mr JACOBI - Yes, through the minister, thank you very much for the question. We are always reviewing all of our positions to determine what's the best fit for the organisation. Fifty-hour contracts have been very suited to much of the work that we deliver where it's short-term, ad-hoc in different locations across the state and that's particularly why we use the afore positions like the Discovery Ranger Program or other short-term seasonal roles. We absolutely do review those positions regularly to ascertain whether in fact a 50-hour contract is the right fit or whether it should be permanent part-time or whether it should be made a permanent position. A good example recently, our seasonal firefighters, we converted seven positions to permanent part-time in recognition of the fact that, whilst they had been seasonal, they were able to be deployed across the whole year.

Ms LOVELL - So, on that, I heard you say that you review this regularly to see if it's an appropriate fit for the organisation and for the work that needs to be done. Is there any review being done from the perspective of the workforce, to see whether that's an appropriate instrument for the workforce and an appropriate work arrangement?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, we have to remember that a lot of the people who seek these sort of arrangements, it suits them too. They only want to have 50 hours contract because it allows them to earn a little bit - some amount of money that they can use. I was up at Cradle Mountain for the 50th anniversary, and I talked to one of the workers up there, and they only wanted to do some seasonal work over the busy time up there because then they go off and they do travel through the down times. So, they rely on that 50 hours, which suits them, and they can go off and do other things. So, there are people who want to take up these jobs too.

Ms LOVELL - That's one of the 34 that you've spoken to, minister. How many others of the 34?

Mrs PETRUSMA - There's actually a few of them up there. So, there was more than 34.

Ms LOVELL - There's 34 staff on a minimum 50-hour-a-year contract.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

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Ms LOVELL - You're saying a number of them like them and they prefer that arrangement and you spoke to one at Cradle Mountain. My question is how many others have you spoken to or is there some other mechanism to determine that they prefer that arrangement?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, I'm sure if they're taking the 50 hours, they want to do the 50 hours. For some people, just having a 50-hour contract suits their lifestyle and suits their work. As the Acting Secretary has outlined, we are also offering permanent positions. The seven firefighters that we have now employed on permanency, that suits them. So, some people want flexibility in their life. They want to just work the 50 hours and work no more.

Ms LOVELL - I understand that some people like flexibility but I view that a number of those people probably prefer job security.

Mrs PETRUSMA - When we advertise the positions, we get people applying for them. So, if they don't want them, they wouldn't apply for the position when they are advertised.

Ms LOVELL - I know that there are many people who are seeking 50 hours a year but anyway, you can take that as a comment. I'm happy to move on.

Mrs PETRUSMA - If they are applying for the position, it means that is what suits them.

Ms WEBB - Just that it was a really straightforward question. Actually, have you consulted with that group as a group broadly? All of them on it? That was the question.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I have spoken to people but I'm sure that the department -

Ms LOVELL - But how many people?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Quite a few. Because they're very grateful for the department and these are usually people who are more senior, they just want to do some sort of short-term work, and 50 hours suits their lifestyle. For some people it is very attractive. You've got a job for 50 hours.

Ms LOVELL - Look, I'm not arguing that it is not attractive for some people but when you're arguing that it's attractive.

CHAIR - I think we might have to change topics.

Mrs PETRUSMA - But if we have specific examples. Again, we're talking about hypotheticals. If you have got specific examples of people who are unhappy, it's better for us to actually know about them and for them to raise their concerns up.

CHAIR - Can we just go to the question that was asked? Has direct engagement with all of these people been undertaken?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's an operational matter. So, not by myself as minister, it's the ones I meet when I'm out and about going about but I'm sure that the Secretary would have more to say.

Mr JACOBI - Through the minister. I regularly meet with our discovery rangers, our wilderness rangers when these staff commence the season and I often meet with them when they finish the season. We talk and review about what's been good or bad about the program. Yes, it is an issue that gets raised. Some of the employees will say, 'I would like to be on a longer contract'. The reality is that these contracts suit and are fit for purpose for the business that we need to deliver.

We do, however, provide an enormous amount of other employment opportunities for staff. So, we are advertising every week. You only have to go to the news every week to see a job in the Parks and Wildlife Service either for a fixed term contract or for a permanent role and we are advertising those all across the state whenever we can. So, there is no shortage of opportunities for people, in my view, to apply for and be successful in these roles.

These seasonal fixed-term short contracts are almost the birthing ground for our future rangers. A lot of people come in, test the water and see whether they like working in very remote, difficult conditions. When they do and they discover it's a career that they want to fulfill, they then apply for the longer-term roles. They often win those longer-term roles on the back of having done a short-term fixed, you know, 50-hour contract or a 100-hour contract.

Ms LOVELL - One final question on this. Minister, would you commit to a proactive consultation process with those 34 employees around some of those job opportunities so that people don't have to seek those out and apply for them again themselves? Would there be opportunities where people might be able to be appointed to those positions or work across more than one role, so they can be provided with -

Mrs PETRUSMA - The secretary's already outlined that they do meet with them at the end of the season and talk to them.

Ms LOVELL - It's specifically about this issue I'm asking you to commit to, the consultation.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, but you're trying to make it sound like none of them actually see 50 hours as something that they'd want to do. It's usually seasonal, it's usually over the summer season, which suits their life.

Ms LOVELL - That's not what I said at all.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The department speaks to them at the end of the season. Jobs are advertised and they have the opportunity, because they've worked for the department, they have a foot in the door to know about other opportunities.

Ms LOVELL - I'll take that as a 'no' then.

Mrs PETRUSMA - You're making it sound like these people are being forced to do jobs that they don't want to do.

Ms LOVELL - I disagree with that.

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CHAIR - All right, let's just move on. Can I follow that up with the number of vacancies there are across the Parks portfolio at the moment? We didn't get that, did we? How many vacancies?

Ms LOVELL - No.

CHAIR - No. The vacancies in full-time, part-time, short-term contracts broken down?

Mr JACOBI - Through the minister, just bear with me. I'll just see if I can find that information. I do have it at an agency.

Mrs PETRUSMA - They're recruiting for four ranger positions as at 31 March.

CHAIR - Are they the only vacancies that are being recruited?

Mrs PETRUSMA - According to this report.

Mr JACOBI - We'd have to take that question on notice. I have figures for the whole department, but I don't have figures just for Parks.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. This is under the ranger and frontline staffing numbers.

CHAIR - If we could look at that, because I'd be interested to know how many vacancies there are, and what level of full-time and part-time or fixed-term contract, and what jobs they are.

Mr JACOBI - So you're looking for all positions across the whole Parks service?

CHAIR - Yes. The four park rangers will be picked up in that data obviously.

Mr JACOBI - Are you looking for positions that have nobody in them? Many of our positions would be being backfilled. They would have a person acting in the role, or are you looking for a position that is completely empty or vacant at this time?

CHAIR - We'll look at the staff you're trying to recruit at the moment.

Mr JACOBI - All right. So there'll be a number of positions.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We're recruiting for four ranger positions at the moment.

CHAIR - Are they full-time positions?

Mr JACOBI - I'd have to get that detail for you, it's just not clear in the -

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well it must be, because it's to take it back up to the full number, the full FTE requirement. So, yes.

Mr JACOBI - We'd have to get back to you. For the whole of the Parks service I'd have to provide a more detailed breakdown.

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CHAIR - Yes. If you could break it down and we could see where the park ranger positions and other positions are.

Mr FLETCHER - Those four positions were, I think, as at 31 March when we report on our ranger numbers. So they've quite possibly already been recruited.

CHAIR - Okay. Well if we can get as current as possible. Can you say where the vacant positions are located, in which part of the state? Unless they are statewide positions. Meg?

Ms WEBB - Yes. Thank you. To move onto some other bits and bobs. Looking at page 209 in the Budget Papers, the table 8.13 'Revenue from appropriation', I note that it doesn't compare directly with last year's budget. It has some new item parts because output group 8 was abolished. I think it's now reflected in this group for Parks line.

Can you advise if this item in the Budget still reflects funding for wildlife management and the rationale for why that change happened?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Wildlife management didn't come under this output anyway. Wildlife management comes under the minister for Environment and minister for Primary Industries.

Ms WEBB - Okay.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That was part of the reason it was removed. Parks and Wildlife Service is a well-established and loved brand, so that continues on. Because people thought that Parks was responsible for wildlife management the name was changed, because wildlife management comes under two other ministers.

Ms WEBB - Thanks for clarifying that. Looking at the allocations made there and the fact that the footnote over the page says, 'Increase in 2022-23 reflects new funding like the implementation of the TWWHA Fire Security Strategy, cultural burning supports and reserve activity assessment reforms, project initiatives'. Can you give us a breakdown of that allocation for 2022-23 across the different functions?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. They're named in the new initiatives.

Ms WEBB - Yes. I mean those new initiatives but also the existing breakdown as well, so we understand what makes up the amount?

Mrs PETRUSMA - So you want the breakdown of the entire \$40 524?

Ms WEBB - Can you do it in a broad categories sort of way, or in a way that will just help us understand?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No. The entire breakdown is the \$40 524.

Ms WEBB - Because those specific initiatives are listed earlier in the chapter, so how does the remainder break up across your categories of funding?

Mrs PETRUSMA - We have a really good Budget, one that breaks it down, but -

Ms WEBB - I'm looking to the description on page 192 where it describes Output group 4.1 Parks and describes the responsibilities: maintenance of appropriate infrastructure, high quality visitor experience and culture that promotes visitor safety, significant biodiversity restoration, development implementation of enhanced biosecurity measures. I'd like to understand how the funding breaks down into those different areas?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I can give you the Budget overview for Parks. Cultural burning support is \$330 000, implementation national electronic conveyancing is \$500 000, implementation of TWWHA fire security strategies is \$870 000, maintaining frontline rangers is \$2 million, reserve activity assessment reform projects is \$1.974 million, RTBG is \$450 000, Wellington Park Management Trust is \$250 000.

Ms WEBB - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That doesn't explain the other \$20 million.

Ms WEBB - No, that's right. I can see those ones in the papers. That's all right. Perhaps if that's not available readily it's something that I could get from you on notice.

Mr JACOBI - So through the minister, can I just clarify exactly what breakdown you're seeking? Is it for those three initiatives?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, it's for the \$40 million.

Ms WEBB - No, this figure of \$40.544 million. Some of that will be those initiatives.

CHAIR - Some of the staff costs?

Ms WEBB - That's right. I'm just wanting a broad categorisation of where that money is allocated. Obviously, for the ones that are listed here as new initiatives we can see the figures, but -

CHAIR - Just to clarify is this all operating expenses or is there capex in that number as well?

Mrs PETRUSMA - We'll take it on notice.

Ms WEBB - Thank you.

CHAIR - Just as long as we're clear about the level of detail that's expected here, because we don't want the whole set of management accounts.

Ms WEBB - That's right.

CHAIR - I think you need to be clear about what you're actually after.

Ms WEBB - Well, I'm trying to understand how the allocation essentially goes across these responsibility areas that the line item lists in the Budget papers as its focus.

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CHAIR - Is that something that is easily extractable from the financial reporting?

Mr JACOBI - We'll do our best to get them before the end of the session, if we can.

CHAIR - Sure, okay.

Ms WEBB - If it's not, it's fine. It's just to better understand it, that's all.

CHAIR - That's all right, just trying to clarify what we're asking for so it makes it achievable for the department.

Ms WEBB - Minister, the public consultation period for the draft fire management plan for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area closed in October last year. Is the draft plan still in the development stage 5, which involved reviewing submissions and compiling a report on that feedback and finalising it, and if so, when can we expect the summary report of that public consultation and the release of the final plan?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I am delighted to table the final fire management plan, and I thank you for your interest in this matter.

Ms WEBB - Thank you.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The fire management plan, as you outline, has undergone a thorough consultation process because it was important that we did get it right. The TWHWA covers almost a quarter of the land of Tasmania and possesses outstanding universal value. It's the world's largest temperate wilderness area. and a precious cultural landscape for Tasmanian Aboriginal people for over 40 000 years.

Currently, the Australian government provides us \$5.1 million in annual funding for the TWHWA, which the Tasmanian Government more than matches through our contribution in kind.

Today I'm happy to table the final TWHWA fire management plan, which has been shaped and informed by community consultation, in addition to vegetation mapping and climate modelling to understand where the risks will likely increase over time.

It outlines the deputy management framework that will be utilised to modify fuel characteristics and behaviour, and to protect our fire-sensitive natural, cultural and historical assets that form an important part of our cultural landscape. It'll guide ongoing fire management practices within the TWHWA, and importantly it points out that fire not only reduces fuel load, but is also an important ecological tool for a healthy ecosystem.

It's delivered as a result of the plan being identified as a need within the TWHWA management plan 2016, and also in the TWHWA bushfire and climate change research project that was led by Dr Tony Press. So, it's a strategic and comprehensive framework, and I'm delighted to provide a copy for the committee today. It's also online as well.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. To move on to another topic - unless anyone has a follow-up?

CHAIR - That's all right, you go.

Ms WEBB - Today is World Oceans Day, and the theme for World Oceans Day today - revitalisation and collective action for the ocean - highlights the need to create a new balance with the ocean that no longer depletes its bounty, but instead restores its vibrancy and brings it new life.

On World Oceans Day, does the Government have any plans to add to our current marine reserves?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It seems like it's a few different days today. It's also First Responders Day.

Ms WEBB - There are only 365 in the year. I guess sometimes there's double-ups.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Exactly right. Look, we're very committed to the effective management of our marine parks reserve system, which already comprises 21 marine reserves and marine conservation areas that protect and conserve species and habitats across a number of bio-regions. This is why we do have a combination of policies and legislation that contribute to the conservation and protection of marine species and habitats. Collectively, these provide strong measures and controls for conservation management and sustainable resource extraction.

We work collaboratively with the Commonwealth through Parks Australia to share information and to undertake different measures. We recognise the conservation contribution that our existing marine parks and reserves provide, and at this stage we do not have a plan to extend our marine protected areas, because our existing system is extensive and complementary. They protect many hundreds of thousands of square kilometres of picturesque coastline and biodiversity, from shallow to deep water.

For example, the Tasman Fracture Marine Park is 42 500 square kilometres and complements the state-managed Port Davey Marine Reserve, and extends from Port Davey in Bathurst Harbour to several hundred kilometres towards Antarctica. We have Freycinet Marine Park, which is 57 900 square kilometres, and also the Macquarie Island Nature Reserve, which is 75 000 hectares. Another reserve is Macquarie Island Marine Reserve, which is 162 000 square kilometres. So, we do currently have an extensive network of marine reserves.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. And no plans to add, I heard that. The second question is, what resources, including personnel, are allocated to monitoring and maintenance of the no-take marine nature reserves?

Mrs PETRUSMA - We have 453 staff employed by the Parks and Wildlife services, most of whom can participate in works supporting marine area management. For example, parks staff regularly participate in marine wildlife rescue work, strandings, compliance and visitor activities as part of the reserved areas of Tasmania's marine environment. Marine resources conservation and management is delivered at NRE Tas through multiple divisions, including the Natural Cultural Heritage Division, Marine Resources, Biosecurity Tasmania, as well as the Parks and Wildlife Service.

In addition, while independent of NRE Tas, the Environment Protection Authority also plays a vital important role in marine conservation and management. And marine conservation

is provided through output group 3 and through the portfolio responsibility of the environment minister.

Ms WEBB - Those no-take marine nature reserves might not be your area, and just let me know if it isn't - have there been any instances of breaches occurring over the last, say, five years? Of, say, fishing in those no-take reserves?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I'll have a look. But I know that in my police portfolio, the police work very closely in those areas. I do know that the police have actually been -

Ms WEBB - Had some activity?

CHAIR - We could ask that this afternoon, perhaps, Fisheries Security.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We might ask police. I know they have caught some marine offenders.

Ms WEBB - Sure. We'll follow it up in Fisheries if you're ready this afternoon.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

Ms WEBB - What used to be the Climate Change Office, which has now relocated to ReCFIT, published an analysis which states: 'Climate change is expected to have a significant impact on Tasmania's ocean environment, particularly on the east coast. Sea temperatures are rising, currents are changing, and the impacts are already being seen in species composition in ecosystems.'

They've also warned that these changes will result in a range of flow-on effects, including the introduction of marine pest species.

Is Parks undertaking any work monitoring the marine temperature and any potential impacts on the endemic marine wildlife in those marine nature reserves and conservation areas they are there to protect - including, perhaps, any management plans to deal with pest species moving in as the waters warm?

Mr JACOBI - Thank you. Through the minister to the member, no, Parks is not undertaking any specific monitoring work. However, monitoring work and the impacts of climate change are being dealt with in other output portfolio parts of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania.

Ms WEBB - Okay, so that sort of monitoring would be done by somebody else, are you suggesting?

Mr JACOBI - Yeah.

Mrs PETRUSMA - As I said before, marine conservation is provided through output group 3 and through the portfolio responsibility of the environment minister.

Ms WEBB - I'll follow that up. Minister, this is in relation to a matter we discussed yesterday with the Premier - the seeking of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community to have an

Aboriginal-owned Kooparoona Niara National Park, requested by the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania.

I know in relation to that land area, the future protected production forest land area in the vicinity of Great Western Tiers, there was a consultation undertaken in April last year. Looking at the submissions provided to that consultation that are available on the Parks website, around 97 per cent of them were in support of that PPF land area becoming a national park. How was the determination made that this wouldn't be considered?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I'd like to bring Andrew Crane to the table please. He's done extensive work in this regard. He is the Branch Manager Natural Value Services NRE Tas. In regard to the work, there was a whole large body of work that Andrew will be able to explain that went into looking at the natural and cultural values of the area. There was a lot of past land use practices in the area that - there was areas that were determined to be values of national park. There were areas that were determined to be of conservation area standard. There were other areas that were determined to be - only worthy of regional reserve quality. The department did a lot of work in ensuring that the areas were classified according to the values that they contained, but I'll ask Andrew to share further information.

Mr CRANE - Thank you, minister. I'll elaborate on what the minister has said, but that is essentially the reasons and the process which has been gone through. Just a little history, perhaps, about these particular areas. They were identified through a process associated with the Tasmanian Forest Agreement back in 2013. The intention was at the time that they were identified as actually being a buffer to the existing world heritage area. That in part was because they exist between primary production areas and the TWWHA, and have a history of primary production in some of those but not all of those areas. So work was undertaken in 2013 as part of that process. Ultimately those areas were determined in 2013 to be included within the TWWHA area.

The work that was done at that time undertook natural values assessments of those areas. Those natural values assessments - and this is all publicly available information on the NRE Tas website. The National Values Assessments identified that there were a number of natural values associated with those various parcels of land, but there was also a land use history - post European land use history indicating that there were some impacts on those values. Not in all areas, and not consistently through those areas, but that evidence was there. Subsequently more work has been done, and that was published in 2020 - sorry, 2021, which reiterated those findings and went through in greater detail. Particularly in the Western Tiers area, and identified that those areas showed considerable - some of those parcels show considerable impact from post European history, particularly forestry activity.

There was some areas of weed invasion for example. The Nature Conservation Act provides for the reservation of land based on its natural values, but also provides its reservation based on any contiguous reserved areas. So a process of recommendations were made based on the combination of those two things. There are management advantages in having areas that are consolidated in larger areas. But noting that all of these areas are within the World Heritage area and subject to the World Heritage area management plan.

Ms WEBB - The TWWHA management plan has provisions for rehabilitation of disturbed areas, so presumably post European disturbance through land use, but that still was precluded from having that become - be considered for a national park then, yes?

Mr CRANE - Well there's a process which needs to be gone through. There's a process that needs to be gone through in the evaluation of those areas as they are at the time as well as their potential. All areas will change, we know that these areas will change as a result of the effects of a changing climate as well. Consideration has been given to that. If I can, so there's as second phase to this process which looks at PTPZL land.

It's also within the TWWHA which has previously been plantation. And in looking at that we have to consider what the values of that land are now, what they potentially could be, but we have to see evidence of rehabilitation and that those areas are actually heading towards a particular category, or the values associated with that category. There's nothing in this process that precludes future changes in reservation status.

Ms WEBB - Yes, I understand there's nothing that precludes it necessarily. Minister, were you aware that the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania had made a claim - a formal land claim to the premier in relation to areas that they had identified as being appropriate for an Aboriginal owned national park? In that Kooparoona Niara?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I've been on country in Kooparoona Niara, and I've been there with different members of the Aboriginal community. Because there's various Aboriginal community organisations that are very interested in this. It's been very interesting conversations that have been held because if you make an area a national park there are activities that Aboriginal people may want to conduct on land that will actually restrict their practices. So what we're doing is working with different Aboriginal organisations to see what an overlay or class, or whatever changes may need to be made. But whatever changes need to be made, then you need to come under the - they will require legislative change. Now that we've removed a classification of FPPFL it allows us to then look at what can happen with that area of land in the future.

But removing the classification of FPPFL was a necessary first step that doesn't preclude any future consideration of land return to Tasmanian Aboriginal people, or an Aboriginal protected area, or Indigenous land. Just a classification of whatever is determined that will allow them to do traditional practices, whether it's hunting or wood gathering or culture burning. Because there's lots of things that a natural park may actually prevent them from doing. So there is different views in the Aboriginal community.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. No one else? Okay. Onto another side of things. Can you advise, Minister, how many commercial operators are currently delivering services within the national parks in the state?

Mrs PETRUSMA - As in tourism providers? I think it's 350.

Ms WEBB - No, it's okay. I don't have a follow up to that, sorry.

CHAIR - Ask to follow up just while they're confirming if you like.

Ms WEBB - No, I don't have a follow up I said.

CHAIR - You don't. Okay. Have you got another - yes.

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Mrs PETRUSMA - I think it's 350 nature tourism providers.

Ms WEBB - So, of those, while you're looking for the number I will put a follow up. How many have sort of a physical presence, as in a structure or some sort of footprint that's not just going in and going out?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorry, what was that question?

Ms WEBB - The second question was, of whatever that total number is, how many have a physical presence within a park rather than just going in or going out? Do any of them have an actual structure or a physical presence?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I think of those operators, like some can be tours, some can be just doing kayaking, and everything else.

Ms WEBB - Yes, that's what I'm trying to understand.

Mr JACOBI - Through the minister. I thank the member for the question. It's a very difficult question to answer. The only operators that would have a continuous presence would be those that have a lease - a lease within the national park or the reserve. There are a significant number of licensed operators that do everything from provide a guided walk. Some of those are overnight, so the operator's camping overnight. Some of them are just taking people on a very short two hour day work.

Ms WEBB - Yes, I appreciate that.

Mr JACOBI - Some of those are just travelling in a bus through the park.

Ms WEBB - Yes. So the two questions are, what's the total number that are allowed or authorised to operate within the parks for any of those various models, and then how many of them I guess - thank you for clarifying - how many of them would have a lease to have a physical presence?

Mr JACOBI - So the first answer to that question is it's 350 nature-based tourism agreements or licenses.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I was right on the 350, yes.

Mr JACOBI - So the minister was close. The second question is to exactly how many of those are leased, and we'll just have to get that number for you. Can I just confirm, you are talking specifically about leases for tourism activities? No other -

Ms WEBB - Well what other activities would there be? Could you describe some others for me?

Mr JACOBI - All right. Telecommunications, infrastructure, radio telemetry networks.

Ms WEBB - I'm interested in the tourist infrastructure or other profit generating I guess - not necessarily infrastructure for telecommunications and those sort of functions.

PUBLIC

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well the Wukalina Walk for example is an example of one of those 350. Yes, so they -

Ms WEBB - Yes, I'm not necessarily looking for detail of each of them, I'm here for the number.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, so they are an example.

Ms WEBB - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - They are an example of an Aboriginal based walking product that has - they have their standing camps. Other operators include bushwalking, day, multi-day, abseiling, caving, horse trail rides, mountain biking, kayaking, canoeing, white water rafting, fishing, fossicking, helicopter sightseeing, day and overnight cruises, lighthouse tours, surfing, photography workshop, and walking tours.

So these are often family owned and operated businesses that have been there for a long time and take pride in presenting and protecting our natural and cultural experiences because that's how they attract visitors from across the globe to come and take part in these experiences.

Ms WEBB - Absolutely, and what was the - we're still looking for the number on the leases.

Mrs PETRUSMA - On the leases?

Ms WEBB - On how many of them have leases to have a physical presence.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Out of that 350 who have -

CHAIR - So it like a lease to occupy the land? Or some other -

Mr JACOBI - I think that's what's being asked, yes.

CHAIR - Yes.

Mr JACOBI - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So of the 350, I don't have how many are leases and licences.

Mr JACOBI - If you just give me one moment, I'll see if I've got a breakdown.

Ms WEBB - Perhaps I could ask another while you're looking for the number. In terms of those leases, are those leases managed through Parks?

Mr JACOBI - Yes, all the leases on reserved land - through the minister, sorry. All of the leases on reserved land are managed through the Parks and Wildlife Service. There are approximately 40 nature-based tours and operators that are leased or licenced to operate in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. That includes everybody from, for example, the Waterfalls Café at Mount Field, to Pumphouse Point, to rafting guides and cruise operators that operate on the Franklin River, to operators like Par Avion that deliver walkers to the South

PUBLIC

Coast Track and they have a standing camp down at Melaleuca as well. So the figure that I think that you're looking for is approximately 40.

Ms WEBB - What would the value of those leases be to the state?

CHAIR - Or how much do they charge to have the lease?

Ms WEBB - Indeed. Better to put it that way. How much do we collect for the state from those leases?

CHAIR - Because you can measure value in a couple of ways.

Mr JACOBI - If you just bear with us, I think we might have that figure available.

Ms WEBB - The other thing I'd be interested to know is, of the 40, how many are Tasmanian-owned businesses?

Mr JACOBI - We'd have to take that question on notice. That would require - we wouldn't be able to provide that within the timeframe. That would require an interrogation of every single lease operator to determine what is the status of their -

Ms WEBB - Ownership.

Mr JACOBI - Ownership, yes. It would be a complex exercise to work through, and I'm not sure that we would be able to actually determine.

CHAIR - You'd have to go to ASIC.

Mr JACOBI - I'm not actually sure how we would be able to do it, or whether it would be commercial-in-confidence, or whether it would be available.

Mrs PETRUSMA - But the thing about these operators is that they buy local, they employ local, and they're generating income for regional economies that really depend on these operators. So they're a major tourism driver in this state and a major economic and rural - especially rural, and economic employer and driver.

Ms WEBB - You understand, minister, that asking a question doesn't constitute a criticism, so there's no need to - I'm not having a go at these operators in asking questions around the arrangements and the nature of them.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

Ms WEBB - It's just information in the public domain more than anything.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's a fair call. But we welcome Tasmanian-based tourism operators and it's good that many are trying to get their businesses going. So we were trying to - you know, especially with Tasmanian Aboriginal people that I'm meeting with, it's about how we can get more Tasmanian tourism opportunities going in Tasmania, because I think there's a big market there waiting to be tapped.

PUBLIC

Ms WEBB - It's certainly an expanding market, for sure, and I agree. It's a good market to be offering.

Mr JACOBI - Can I just clarify the question about revenue from these operators? Were you seeking to include revenue that the Parks and Wildlife Service gathers from its business enterprises, like the Three Capes Track and the Overland Track?

Ms WEBB - That would be a separate amount. What I was mostly interested in was the revenue from the leases.

CHAIR - I don't imagine you've got that level of detail in the budget papers, otherwise we could find it ourselves.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The revenue from leases and licences is \$2.63 million.

Ms WEBB - Thank you.

CHAIR - Can I just go to another area for a moment, if that's all right? Minister, we talked about the TWWHA Fire Management Plan; can you talk to us more about the biodiversity plan for - not the biodiversity. Biosecurity, sorry. There's a bit of biodiversity down there; I know that.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The biosecurity will help maintain our biodiversity.

CHAIR - Yes, that's right, exactly. So I'm interested in how that's going to play out.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. Thank you for the question. The Biosecurity Strategy is - we'll actually show and tell. I just happen to have one in my pocket, but I can give a couple to the Committee. It's a key outcome of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Management Plan 2016, the TWWHA Biosecurity Strategy 2021-31, has been developed to respond to the threat of invasive weeds, animals, and diseases. In recognition of this important strategy, funding of \$3.27 million has been provided over four years with \$870 000 for this year to implement the TWWHA Biosecurity Strategy.

The strategy was developed following an extensive risk assessment which considered natural events and management and recreational activities that occur in and around the TWWHA which could spread or introduce invasive organisms, and so the strategy specifically identifies seven goals to address biosecurity risks in the TWWHA, which are the need for a whole-of-government approach. That effective biosecurity should be informed, that prevention is better than cure. Utilising a risk-based approach for management. That biosecurity is a shared responsibility and that understanding that zero biosecurity risk is unattainable, and that a long-term commitment is needed to ensure prevention and mitigation efforts are sustained.

So because the TWWHA is 25 per cent of Tasmania, its climate, topography, and limited access has afforded the area some protection from invasive organisms. However, changing environmental conditions, visitation and management activities are likely to result in increased risk of weeds, pests, and diseases spreading in the TWWHA. So we're committed to taking proactive intervention, early intervention approach and that's why we are investing this \$3.27 million across the forward estimates with work to start this year.

I commend the Department. That document involved a lot of work, and we released it actually last year, but an important part of that work is to actually work collaboratively with Tasmanian Aboriginal people and organisations so we can better understand the biosecurity risks that may impact Aboriginal cultural values in the TWWHA. So there's a lot of work that we've done with the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as well.

CHAIR - Just on that, Minister, I know that the boot washes and things like that before going on a dedicated walk, if you like, sometimes they seem to get a bit worn out and perhaps need more timely maintenance. How is that managed, the maintenance on the tracks? I mean, you can't force someone to wash their boots, I know, but you hope that they would actually - if they don't trip over it, they will actually use it.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. I do a lot of bushwalking, and on our website there's a lot of education, especially on "leave no trace" principles. Our rangers and everything, when they're walking along the track, if they see anyone doing anything, they do a lot of education in a nice way, and it does - if people, when you use the boot washes, if they see one, you can guarantee that everyone else will do it. I have to say that when I've been out bushwalking, if people look around and they see everyone doing it, they're too scared not to do it. Like when I went to Cradle recently, you could see everyone lining up for the bus was using the big wash.

I think people are now getting used to it, that I think, to be quite honest, COVID-19, COVID-19 safe behaviours, and if you explain to them, this is like biosecurity safe behaviours, people are willing to go that extra because I think they're starting to appreciate how much we need to protect our TWWHA, just as much as we need to protect our own physical and mental health. So I think it's just a part of educating, educating, and educating.

CHAIR - How often are they maintained? The boot washes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - How are they maintained?

CHAIR - How often?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Our rangers, our track rangers, they're out and about in all weather. I've seen some of the photos that they've been posting.

Mr JACOBI - Through the minister. That would be part of the routine maintenance scheduled, so the replacement of the wash, the cleaning of the stations would be normally documented in a routine maintenance schedule. Those schedules obviously are disrupted from time to time; responding to wildfires, whale strandings, there's always things that come up. But yes, it would be a routine cyclical activity.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Chair, I've got an answer to one of the questions.

CHAIR - Sure.

Mrs PETRUSMA - This is in regard to Ms Lovell's question between the differences between the identified and non-identified roles at Arthur River. Whilst the objective of both of these positions is the same - albeit one focused on the management and appreciation of Aboriginal heritage on reserve land - the level of work undertaken by these roles differs between the positions. As an example, the band 2 will carry out minor construction work,

while the B3 plans and implements construction and maintenance. Likewise, the B3 role has responsibility for on-the-job control of employees and volunteers while the B2 doesn't. The detail around the difference with these roles is in the statement of duties.

CHAIR - Thank you. Anything else on parks? No.

4.2 Crown Land Services

CHAIR - Minister, are there any significant land parcels of Crown land considered for sale at the moment?

Mrs PETRUSMA - As at 24 May, sales for 10 Crown land properties have now been settled. A further five properties are currently under contract. Two properties are on the market for at least \$85 000, and a further eight will be going for market soon. Thirteen properties assessed as suitable for sale value at approximately \$3.4 million have been identified and set aside for other government agency projects, including ambulance and police stations, as well as affordable housing, with seven of the 13 accounting for \$1.8 million worth of the \$3.4 million identified for the Department of Communities Tasmania.

The Crown land sales are focused on isolated parcels that often occur within townships and residential settlements. These parcels are longstanding parcels deemed suitable for sale. They are not large tracts of bush, but rather often vacant blocks in town. For example, the ones at Weymouth were right beside other vacant blocks that were suitable for a house to go on, not for any other purpose. Same at Waratah, Branxholm and Queenstown. So, they are isolated, bit of green grass. Probably it's just easier for people to buy these for affordable housing.

CHAIR - How much of the land that's been sold is for affordable housing or for housing, and any other purposes you've identified?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Eight went to Communities Tas for social affordable housing. Three blocks went to different councils for council use, two blocks went to a fire station, and one for an ambulance station.

CHAIR - The description here says it 'provides specialist Crown land property-related advice to government and private sector'. What sort of advice is sought through this in relation to Crown land? Was it the use of the land?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sometimes people are butting up against Crown land and inquire whether they can use it to make an adjustment to their land.

Mr FLETCHER - Through you, minister. We'd also give advice to other agencies as well - other portfolio agencies that have -

CHAIR - Government businesses that own land?

Mr FLETCHER - Yes, government business advice, but also the government agencies - the Department of State Growth manages land, Education managed land. We work with those agencies as well, particularly on sales matters. Property Services have a role in the sale of those portfolio land properties if they have been put up for sale, but we also provide those other agencies with advice on Crown land management.

CHAIR - Any other questions, members? If not, we will go to Improving Crown Lands Transaction Turnaround Time. This is a COVID-related bucket of money.

Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery
90.5 Improving Crown Lands Transaction Turnaround Time

CHAIR - What improvements have been made for the turnaround time - and if it has worked, will we continue the same approaches?

Mrs PETRUSMA - In recent years, there has been a significant increase in applications to Property Services, including for leases, licences, sales transfers, works, landowner consents and events. For example, a request for landowner consent has increased by over 150 per cent in the past eight years. There used to be about 20 a month; there are now 50 on average, and in some months as high as 60. To help address that, we did the Crown Lands Transaction Turnaround Time to employ six additional people, so we can improve the assessment time frames.

The need for this was identified by the Premier's economic and social advisory councils as an important way to support economic activity. The transactions can be quite complex, can involve multiple tenures and may result in a lease, a licence or work consents with DAs that require landowner consent. It's quite extensive and quite involved.

CHAIR - As I understand from what you said, that was more about increasing the staff to deal with the higher numbers of cases. So, is the level of requirement for staff expected to continue, or is it expected to drop away a bit? Because if it's not going to be maintained, then maybe you don't need the extra staff into the future - but if you do, that should continue. I know there's money. It may be subsumed into future budgets, I'm not sure, but there's \$650 000 for this coming Budget year and then nothing. The positions, will they go?

Mrs PETRUSMA - The staff are in place to reduce the average turnaround time. It's to make it quicker and faster. Because the PWS administers and manages quite a few agreements, there's usually about 1400 requests per year for these sorts of works. They are funded for this use. I'm assuming a review will be conducted to see what is needed going on for the future.

Mr FLETCHER - Minister, I can elaborate on that. There's a couple of dimensions to this. We're also doing work as part of this project on identifying improvements to the Crown land management system, which is the system we manage all of our leases and licences and other transactions through. That would be a key component for Property Services to improve transaction turnaround and make our work more efficient, once work on that system is complete.

CHAIR - And that's under this line?

Mr FLETCHER - Yes, I think there was \$300 000 to commence work on improvements to the Crown land system. We have funding for this year. We will reassess it at the end of this year, as part of normal budgetary processes, as to whether this funding will continue or not. It's really going to come down to transactions and what that's looking like at any point in time.

PUBLIC

CHAIR - The headline figure for Crown Land Services doesn't assume ongoing funding for that. I would have expected it would be subsumed into that in future budgets, if it is.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, it's funded for this year, but a review will be undertaken to see if it has achieved its aim, or what we need to do.

CHAIR - Anything else? We'll move on to Grants and Subsidies.

Grants and Subsidies

CHAIR - Any questions on Wellington Park? No? We'll move to Capital Investment.

Capital Investment Program

Mr DUIGAN - Minister, I wonder if you could update the committee on the progress of the next iconic walk, considering that -

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's in my electorate.

Mr DUIGAN - Well, yes, and some other members are about to go and brave the cold.

Mrs PETRUSMA - You can come with me for the first walk through. Well, the good thing if you did the next iconic walk in the future, if you walk on the eastern side, it's not as windy. But the next iconic walk is very exciting. It's going to be a \$40 million walk. The department has undertaken a whole raft of work. As Ms Forrest will know as it's in her electorate. She'll know the west coast is rich in natural geological and heritage experiences. This will take in all of those elements. It will build on the success of the Overland Track and the Three Capes Walk. We know that people who come to Tasmania to do, say, the Three Capes Walk, want to do another iconic walk, have different experience. This will enable that. The proposed route, which I've had the pleasure of looking at, is magnificent. It's a mix of heritage, mining, spectacular landscapes and waterfalls, including the Lake Margaret Power Station and its wooden pipeline. I don't know if you've ever seen the pipeline?

CHAIR - I've walked along it a number of times, while we were still allowed to. At risk of my own death, but there you go. That's what Hydro told me the next day. Then they closed it.

Mrs PETRUSMA - You'll be allowed to as part of the walk in the future. It's impressive. When you see the different lakes and tarns and everything else, it's gorgeous. The most important thing about this walk is that it's going to be a major economic driver for Queenstown and the surrounding areas. The return on investment is huge. It's going to generate 139 jobs during construction and will deliver a positive cost benefit ratio of 12.71 for the west coast for every dollar spent. The department's undertaking track works. They've already convened visitor-experience-designed workshops and they've recently engaged JAWS Architects to undertake the infrastructure design. They have a strong track record on similar projects because they did the impressive hut designs on the Three Capes tracks that you'd be staying in.

CHAIR - The guy who built our place in Wynyard did those too.

PUBLIC

Mrs PETRUSMA - When you do the Three Capes, you've got the nice huts. These are probably a bit nicer again. They're going to be a bit more modern.

CHAIR - Better for the west coast.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We're looking at 2028-29 for it to be operating. The Three Cape Track took over 10 years from concept. You can't build 365 days a year in that location. We are only going to have certain times of the year where we can build.

CHAIR - You can't chopper things every day either.

Mrs PETRUSMA - No. It'll be built as we can stage it and build it. The good thing is, once it's finally built, you will be able to walk it. There are going to be different elements along the track. One hour away, there are going to be different other safety locations. It's very well thought through. I want to commend the department. There's a lot of work going on in there. The good thing is, it's not in the TWHWA. It's outside the TWHWA.

CHAIR - That's right, no, it's not in the TWHWA. Do you have the proposed route?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorry?

CHAIR - Do you have the proposed route?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, I can show you a picture.

CHAIR - Are you able to provide that to the committee?

Mrs PETRUSMA - If I can get a copy back, that'd be fine. We have to also pay tribute to Bob Brown. When we were looking at different walks in the area - a few different walks were proposed. One was the Philosopher's Trail, which is the yellow walk. Bob Brown Foundation put in the red walk. We've looked at it and our walk will follow closely along them but taking in the most spectacular views and natural values. We're sticking to the eastern side. If you're walking the other side, it's really windy. We also wanted to stay away from alpine vegetation. Going on this side, you're sheltered, you're seeing lakes all the way around and they are just magnificent and spectacular. The colours of the rocks are just beautiful and you come out at Lake Margaret Power Station. We're thinking about having like a spa or a hot tub experience after all that walking.

CHAIR - That's been talked about by Travis Tiddy for some time.

Mrs PETRUSMA - There are a lot of concepts going at the lakes, whether people can have a kayak and go on the lake or whatever. Different experiences just to make it a bit more special.

CHAIR - I'll grab that and get the copy for you.

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's pretty speccky. It's not cheap. For the west coast, it's going to be a gamechanger for that whole area. An economic driver.

CHAIR - Well it'll complement the mountain bike trail. They're a frightening concept.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, Mount Owen.

CHAIR - It's horrifying.

Mrs PETRUSMA - You just look at Mount Owen this way and you go, it's this big, you're going to fall off the edge.

CHAIR - I know. If you do go, you'll be gone.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We have the Horsetail Falls walk that we've done there too. We're going to connect that up. They are very exciting changes.

CHAIR - That's great. While we're in my electorate, how is the the Edge of the World revitalisation progressing?

Mrs PETRUSMA - A lot of consultation has to be undertaken with the Edge of the World, especially with the Aboriginal community, to get that right. The funding is in the Budget across the forward Estimates but there's a lot of planning work. The consultation process will be taking up a lot of the time. We're very committed to doing it. At the moment, we're consulting with the local community and working alongside the Tasmanian Aboriginal people. We also have to do a reserve activity assessment. It might require going through the federal Government Environment Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act and a cultural value assessment. A lot of work.

CHAIR - Do you have a time frame?

Mrs PETRUSMA - We want to have the whole thing delivered by 2026-27. The preliminary work is going to take up most of the time. That's what we're planning on doing these next two years, getting all those ticked off with the federal Government, state and local government natural values and then we're going for it. It will be built over three years because of the location. As you know, it's very windy in winter up there.

CHAIR - Fairly remote.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Very remote. So you can only have short building seasons up there.

CHAIR - Same as building the roads up there. We're out of time and I've completely focused on my electorate.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorry, in answer to Ms Lovell's questions. There are 22 identified positions in total.

Ms LOVELL - Thank you.

Mrs PETRUSMA - There are a few more questions here. There are four Aboriginal field officers, three are band two and one is band three. There are 22 identified positions in total.

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CHAIR - That's all you have to share at the minute. We'll close off and write to you about the rest.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Can I provide them in Police, or you don't want them provided then?

CHAIR - We can. Before the end of the day we can still accept them, yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - All right. Hopefully we can get them to you by the end of the day.

CHAIR - That's all right. Makes it less for us to chase up.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The pressure's on.

CHAIR - All right, well, thanks, minister, and your team for that portfolio. We'll have you back at 2.15 p.m. to start with Police, Fire and Emergency Management.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thank you all. Any portfolio issues, I think everyone has my mobile phone number. Please, anything to do with Parks or Crown land or Lands or anything else, 51 per cent of Tasmania, I'm sure that we can help out somehow.

CHAIR - A lot in my electorate. All right, thank you. We'll stop the broadcast.

The Committee suspended from 1.18 p.m. to 2.17 p.m.

CHAIR - Welcome back, minister. We will commence our scrutiny of your portfolio as Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management. So if you'd like to reintroduce the members at the table and then any others that you need to, and then we invite you to make an opening statement.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thanks, Chair. I'm delighted to welcome at the table Commissioner Darren Hine, who's also the secretary of the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management. Deputy Commissioner of Police Donna Adams, and Deputy Secretary Mandy Clarke.

Before I commence I'd like to acknowledge and pay my respects to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional, original and continuing custodians of the land on which we gather today and acknowledge elders past and present.

As today is also Thank a First Responder Day, I'd also like to acknowledge and show my deep appreciation and respect for the outstanding work by the members of Tasmania Police, Tasmania Fire Service, the State Emergency Service, career and volunteer personnel, as well as the State Service employees who support us in keeping us all safe. So thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for what you do every day.

It is indeed a great honour to have this portfolio of responsibilities. I am constantly inspired by emergency services workers who are always there when we need them most. This has been highlighted again this week with the severe weather events which we're seeing across our state now, and this is what we'll be seeing over the next few days.

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I know our emergency services work night and day to respond to events such as these, and to help coordinate response to these and other emergencies. It was a pleasure to take part in the official opening of our new \$6.5million State Operations and Control Centre last Friday with both the Commissioner for Police and the Chief Officer.

This government is committed to rebuilding its police force and we're recruiting 329 additional police officers, or an extra 31 per cent, since coming to government in 2014. We are on track to have the highest ever establishment of police by July 2026 of 1449 police officers. To accommodate our growing police numbers and to provide our police officers and the community with modern, accessible and fit for purpose facilities, we continue to invest in upgrading our police stations.

This year I've had the honour of attending the opening of two new police stations at New Norfolk and Longford, as well as the Northern Special Operations Group facility. Significant investments have also been provided to upgrade other police stations, including \$12.5 million for Bridgewater Police Station, \$7 million for Launceston Police Station, \$7.5 million for St Helens Police Station, and \$1 million for Rosebery Police Station. We are also investing \$12 million for the new Sorrel Emergency Services Hub and \$420 000 to operationalise the hub for the SES, which will open early next year, and \$3.6 million for a new southern Special Operations Group facility that will be finished later this year.

This, along with the 67 police houses that are being upgraded at the moment with an investment of \$21.7 million ensures that our police service has access to modern, contemporary facilities. We're also committed to ensuring our emergency services have the right tools for the job, and this Budget provides \$760 000 to upgrade the Glock pistol replacement, \$500 000 to scope the upgrade of alerting messaging systems, and \$6.2 million to upgrade the automated vehicle location technology. We also understand that Tasmania is facing increasing climate-related threats and challenges, and this is why this budget provides over \$121 million across the forward estimates for bushfire and flood prevention and safety, including new funding for sandbagging machines, our volunteer grants and equipment programs, and a dedicated team to recruit and support our volunteers across the state, and continuing our investment in our remote area teams.

We are also delivering our nation-leading health and wellbeing program through our wellbeing support unit, which is providing support services for our career and volunteer emergency services personnel as well as their families in recognition of the challenging, confronting roles they experience. In conclusion, Chair, the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management has a proven record of delivering on a wide range of policy commitments in key areas of emergency management, and we look forward to answering the committee's questions this afternoon. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR - Thanks, minister. On behalf of the whole committee, we also acknowledge the first responders today and appreciate the efforts that they all put in. I would also like to acknowledge absolutely the service of the Commissioner at the table, Darren Hine, who's a good north-west coast lad born the same year as me, I understand. It must've been a really good year up there.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Not long ago, then.

CHAIR - Not long ago; quite recently, in fact. Sorry, I've embarrassed him, now.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I don't know why he's retiring, then.

CHAIR - Yes, I don't know why he's retiring. But I think -

Comm HINE - That was the last century.

CHAIR - Anyway, we won't go there. I really would like to thank the Commissioner - I'm sure you would agree, minister - on his service to Tasmania and the huge body of work he's done, particularly around the areas of family violence, and that's what he's given, and also to the LGBTIQ+ community. I know Darren's done an enormous amount of work there, so thank you, Darren.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

CHAIR - I'm really sad you're retiring, and I think there are probably others who are as well.

Ms WEBB - Hear, hear.

Comm HINE - Thank you for those compliments.

CHAIR - Yes.

Ms WEBB - Hear, hear.

CHAIR - Okay. We'll move on with some questions, minister. Just starting with the appropriation for this line item, support to the community, there is -

Mrs PETRUSMA - What page are you on?

Ms WEBB - I had an overview, Chair.

CHAIR - Sorry?

Ms WEBB - I had an overview question, if that's all right, before we move into line items.

CHAIR - Oh, okay. All right, yeah.

Ms WEBB - It was just a broad one that I've asked in relation to departments - some other departments, so I'll ask it for this department too, if that's all right.

CHAIR - Sure.

Ms WEBB - It goes to this department's preparation to implement gender-responsive budgeting processes and the broader gender analysis framework scaffolding that's being looked ahead to and what's in train for that presently or what you're anticipating putting in place for that over the next year.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, I know that the commissioner, for example, has been doing a lot of body of work and elevating - well, ensuring gender diversity across the whole police force, you know, especially during our recruit numbers, as well as increasing our cultural diversity as well as our LGBTIQ+ diversity as well. It's a proud employer and supporter of people from a diverse range of backgrounds and is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace where all employees feel welcome and safe.

So they have a diversity inclusion coordinator who sits within the People and Culture Business Unit who's supported by a network of diversity and inclusion contact officers across the state. They're committed to creating a culture that values and embraces the contribution of not only employees and volunteers but all people within the Tasmanian people who come from different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. So along with the Tasmanian Government's diversity and inclusion planning documents, DPFEM has their diversity and inclusion steering committee, which develops and oversees the DPFEM Diversity Inclusion Action framework.

There's a variety of committees, including the disability - the LGBTIQ+ internal support network and external liaison offices, Disability Working Group, Pregnancy and Early Childhood Working Group, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Offices, and Multicultural Liaison Offices. The Commissioner of Police also chairs the Emergency Services LGBTIQ+ Strategic Working Group, which is made up of representatives from Tasmania police, Ambulance Tasmania, TFS, and the State Emergency Services.

We also have the Multicultural Issues in Emergency Management Strategic Working Group, which comprises of representatives from Tasmania police, Tasmania fire service, the State Emergency Service, and DPFEM, as well as the University of Tasmania, Department of Communities, the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Migrant Resource Centre, Ambulance Tas, Multicultural Council of Tasmania, Department of Home Affairs, Catholic Care, and the Australian Red Cross Migration Support Program. I've got pages. I could keep on going, if you like.

Ms WEBB - Yes. Much as it's lovely to hear about all those things which I'm very pleased to hear about, it wasn't the nub of my question. It was to do with preparations for gender-responsive budgeting processes and a broader gender analysis framework for the department. It might be that we're in the early stages of that, so is not active work into that space at the moment. It was just an opportunity to identify whether there was any.

Mrs PETRUSMA - You know, it's something that they're looking at across the department. But in the SES, they acknowledge that their uniforms, for example, weren't really designed around females, so they've now brought in new PPE that are designed for women. Then when I first became minister in this portfolio, we had a new chief officer. I found that there wasn't a maternity policy in the Tasmanian Fire Service, so we've now got a maternity policy out.

We're looking at things through a different lens. The chief officer, for example, acknowledges the fact that only about 6 per cent of his workforce and firefighters are women, so he's now doing a whole body of work around increasing gender diversity in the TFS as well. We're doing a lot of work about looking at things through a different line. Including, like, the family violence and sexual violence that we talked about this morning, so there's a raft of work going on. Commissioner, do you have anything else?

Comm HINE - I get your question. Seeing as it's a new process from a budgeting point of view, we need to understand that and then pull - and we have such a diverse range of policies, procedures, steering groups to address those various issues together. From a budgeting point of view, the Dep Sec of Business Executive Services is looking to see how we can actually pull it in from that budgeting point of view, as you mentioned.

Ms WEBB - Thank you, I appreciate that.

CHAIR - Okay, all right. Just go back to -

Ms WEBB - Can I clarify where, which line item - if I want to ask about the review of the Emergency Management Act, where would we address that? Did I get into the right spot or is that an overview?

CHAIR - You asked that of the Premier.

Comm HINE - It does sit with our organisation.

Ms WEBB - It sits with this department. So is that in overview, or would it come under a different line item?

Comm HINE - Support for the Judicial Services, maybe?

Ms WEBB - That's fine. I'll be guided by the Commissioner's suggestion.

CHAIR - Which one, Darren?

Comm HINE - Support for the Judicial Services, maybe, as in for legislation?

CHAIR - Well, otherwise under output group 4, Emergency Management Statements, yes.

Comm HINE - Yes, that could go in either of those.

Ms WEBB - So there?

CHAIR - Yes.

Ms WEBB - No problem. Thank you for that guidance.

Output Group 1 - Public Safety

1.1 Support to the Community

CHAIR - Okay. Just with regard to the appropriation, back to that -

Mrs PETRUSMA - So what page are we on?

CHAIR - We're on page 236. There's a footnote regarding Support to the Community, 1.1. There's a significant increase in funding there. It says that 'The variation in this item in

2023 affects the more accurate estimates based on the 20' - sorry, '30 June 2021 actuals.' So have we got an estimated outcome for this line item to see what that is expected to be? Otherwise, it's a bit hard to judge where we're going with this. It wouldn't be in the budget papers. It's the estimated outcome for this line item for this year. I know we're not at the end of the financial year yet and you won't have financial reports until the end.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Okay. The increase in support to the community in 2022-23 reflects additional funding for the new enterprise bargaining agreement, police emergency dispatching messaging and learning project, Glock pistol replacement, and COVID-19 Coordination Centre, whilst the decrease in 2024-25 reflects the conclusion of the pilot funding for the multidisciplinary centres.

CHAIR - Can I just take you to budget paper no.1? This is on page 183, Budget Paper No. 1. There's an estimated outcome for the overall area, now Health itself doesn't include just health, it includes health services provided by others, general public services and public - there's public order and safety. So if I could ask, does public order and safety cover all of police, or are there other aspects of police in this that will give us the high level budget information? I don't know if we have finance people here for the department, do we? In terms of reporting?

Ms CLARKE - Through you, minister. I'll just try to get the answer to that question, because we haven't got that paper with us currently, so.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Right. I've read out the answer to their support to the community, but it's to whether under table 81.16 on p103, public order and safety is to do with police.

CHAIR - It is to do with police, but does it encompass all of police?

Comm HINE - Yes. So the output group is across all the policing services. So it's not just those in uniform, it's about the support to all the output group. Sorry. Yes, so it's across all the output groups across all the policing services, including the support services. So is that question you asked? I'm just trying to - sorry, Chair.

CHAIR - Does that encompass all of them? Like in Health it picks up health service delivery from other areas, not the Department of Health necessarily.

Comm HINE - Okay. So, no, I'd have to get advice on that one, just so I can understand the budgeting and the output group, and how that's made up.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, it's a different by purpose. Yes. But look, under public order and safety I would've thought in regards to that some of it would've been like the chopper service - the helicopter services that are provided by Health I would've thought come up. Because it's a title that is used by the Australian Government and by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, so it's a different accounting measure.

CHAIR - That's right, yes, it's a different measure.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So it's not on our accounting measures. It's more than our budget. So, public and safety. So, yes, it's more than that - so we'd have to find out what it's in.

CHAIR - Okay.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So, Mandy, you need to find out on p183 of the Budget.

CHAIR - I'm not so concerned about it. I'm just interested to get the estimated outcome for these line items, but this current year we're in. Which again comes to your financial reporting. So just to go back to your comment, minister, to understand what you were saying about the programs that are starting and finishing, all of that.

Well, the reason I asked was it said that this variation from this current year we're in \$193.864 million budget. And the jump up to \$214.868 million. Then it goes up to \$239.118 million, and then down to \$236.619million, and down. I mean some of that's related to the programs that you referred to, not the MC centres and that sort of thing. The comment relates I think to the change between 2021-2022 suggesting that there's an - the increase in 2022-23 better reflects the estimated outcome for 2021-22.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, under 1.1 the reason why it does go up is because it requires - it's the new enterprise bargaining agreement, which I think is about \$7 million. So that's why the \$2.14 become \$2.21. Then the Police Emergency Dispatching Messaging Alert Project, that's another \$500 000. The Glock pistol replacements, there's extra funding there. The COVID-19 coordination centre, I think that was an extra three. Then the decrease in 2024-25 is the multidisciplinary centres. So that's why the uplift and then the decrease.

CHAIR - Yes, I think you're looking at the expense summary numbers probably. Anyway, if it's impossible to get that we will just give some clarity. So can we have the breakdown for the number of employees under all line items within Police and Emergency Management if you like now, or we could do it at each line, whichever is easiest.

Mrs PETRUSMA - You wanted all across the whole service though, didn't you? Or just police?

CHAIR - Police, yes, to start with.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Just police. So police establishment as at 4 April 2022 is 1324.

CHAIR - Are they broken down -

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's 35 per cent female, and 65 per cent male.

CHAIR - Is that head count or FTE, minister?

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's actual FTE.

CHAIR - Thank you. So that's across output groups 1, 2, and 3? Yes, do you have it broken down by the various output groups, or not? You don't?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No.

CHAIR - Okay. You talked about the extra police officers.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Recruitment.

CHAIR - Yes. What was it last year, the total FTE? Have you got that?

Mrs PETRUSMA - When we came to government I think it was 1208 or something.

CHAIR - That's a few years ago now though.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Just coming to the table is Assistant Commissioner Adrian Bodnar, who might be able to help with the numbers.

Asst Comm BODNAR - Yes, thanks, minister, if I may. So as the minister's just alluded to, our strength at the moment is 1324, but that doesn't include the recruits that we have in our training environment as well. So when you take those numbers into account as well our total strength is 1390. Now, I think the important thing to note is that next Friday we'll have a graduation, so we'll have 24 recruits graduate from the academy at Rokeby, and that'll take that I suppose operational strength up to 1348. But there's also two recruits that we have in the radio room. So effectively you can run with 1350, and that will still leave 40 recruits in the training environment which gives you the 1390.

Now out of the 40 that we have in the training environment that includes that northern satellite course which as a pilot program we're running this year. We have 17 trainees in that program, and another 23 in the academy. So our overall target this year for 30 June was 1368. Now noting the numbers that we have in our training school we've achieved that, because we have 1390 if that makes sense thus far.

Ultimately as we move into the next financial year we'll need to be recruiting additional numbers for the MDCs, and I think the minister spoke this morning about the \$15 million. So there's another 15 members there we'll need to recruit, along with 6 for the PACER team as well. The Police and Ambulance Clinical Emergency Response. There's some SOG numbers in there as well. So next year will be quite challenging for us, but overall it's pleasing to see that we've exceeded that 1368 number that we're aiming for. But I do note that includes our recruits as well.

I think importantly when we look at recruiting as well, if I can say it, is that we've got another recruit course which commences on 1 August this year. That'll see another 26 recruits come through the door at the academy. In addition to that on the 27th - sorry 22 August this year we'll also have another accelerated training program which will see another nine recruits come through the door. What we're doing at the moment is certainly revisiting our recruiting strategy to make sure that we're keeping up to speed with where we ought to be with our numbers. We're shifting our strategy as we go along. An important thing we've looked at as well is our attrition rate, noting the unemployment rate. Because as the unemployment rate falls in the community, our attrition rate increases. So we're being flexible with our recruiting strategy at the moment, to make sure we're at the numbers we ought to be.

CHAIR - So in terms of the staffing, minister, for the multidisciplinary centres, as I understand from our discussion earlier today, they will be specially skilled officers? They're not going to be new recruits. So what are the challenges posed to the police service in making sure they have those necessary skills?

Mrs PETRUSMA - So as I outlined this morning they're going to be doing a Special Investigative Skills course with -

Asst Comm BODNAR - If I may through the minister, what will occur is I suppose we work through the process, is that we will be engaging police officers with relevant experience to move into those MDCs. It certainly won't be the case where we put new graduates straight into a role like that. That's a critical role, as we all appreciate, to set out and achieve the objectives we want to, to make sure we are demonstrating a victim-centric approach and making sure that our people have got the necessary skills we want them to have to work with those victims.

It certainly won't be new graduates that we put into those roles. We will be increasing our recruiting and some of our more experienced members - potentially through our CIBs - would be recruited into that MDC both north and south.

Comm HINE - Through the minister, as you quite rightly pointed out, it does take 12 months to actually recruit, if not longer, so we are planning for increasing the recruiting. And as the Assistant Commissioner says we do have a challenge in relation to today's environment.

So far we're doing really well with recruiting, but we will move those experienced people with the right training into those areas whilst we're recruiting to replace them, and we've already got that planned. It's a challenging environment for recruiting, and Mr Bodnar keeps reminding me how challenging it is. At least we do have that allocation from the government to be able to replace them once we've put those experienced people in.

CHAIR - So just on this, minister, I'm interested in the attrition rate for the police and how many have left or are on long-term leave, perhaps, because of psychological injury or physical injury.

Comm HINE - So through the minister, before I go to Adrian in relation to our attrition rate, and then to Andy for our long-term sick and worker's comp area, because they're two different things. It's probably the highest attrition rate we have seen for quite some time, it's nearly 6 per cent. Normally we are between 2 and 4 per cent.

But as Mr Bodnar said before we have had - you know, with the lowering of the unemployment rate - we are competing for a unique skillset and some people are leaving us to take other opportunities which is straight. So 5.9 per cent I think it is at the moment.

Then we have - in relation to those people who are off on Worker's Compensation, is that the question?

CHAIR - Yes, and the breakdown for physical and psychological injuries.

Comm HINE - Yes. We've certainly got those figures and - Mandy, have you got those in front of you?

Ms CLARKE - Yes, through you, Minister. As at 31 March this year we had a total of 139 open worker's compensation claims for police officers. 88 of those related to psychological injury, and 59 of that 139 claims people were currently not at work. In response to your

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question over the extent of period of time in terms of long-term, we don't have the breakdown of that data, of time, duration of each of those 139 claims.

Ms LOVELL - Thank you, Chair. Minister, do you have those same figures for the last few years? I was hoping to get the last four years, but what do you have for previous years?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Would you like the PTSD claims?

Ms LOVELL - Yes. Well what I was after was the state statistics that we've just had for 31 March. So open worker's compensation claims, number of psychological claims and number not at work for previous years.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I've just got the number of premiums per year. Because I've got the number of premiums and the PTSD claims, so that's -

CHAIR - It would be helpful to have the PTSD claims, but if we need to take the rest of that on notice we can do that.

Ms CLARKE - If you're happy to take that on notice, minister, I can send it through.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So what's the actual question, just so we can try and get it for you?

Ms LOVELL - So the question is the number of open worker's compensation claims, the number of worker's compensation claims for psychological injuries, and the number of people - actually I won't ask that because it would be too hard to do for a point in time - for the financial years 2020-21, 2019-20, and 2018-19. I'll send that through, I'll send that on notice.

CHAIR - Can I just go back to the budget? I note that this, the funding allocation, you respond to the new police enterprise bargaining agreement. When did that start, and are all the new recruits and everyone factored into this?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. So it's across the - Mandy, it's factored in across the forward estimates as well, isn't it? The \$7 million for the worker's compensation?

Ms CLARKE - Yes, that's correct.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. So the EBA.

Ms CLARKE - So through you minister, you actually see on table 9.1 under 'Clear deliverables' it gives reference to the enterprise bargaining agreement across the forward estimates. Each of those amounts would be actually the additional amounts that have been allocated in response to the increase.

CHAIR - The expected recruits?

Ms CLARKE - I'm sorry -

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's the expected recruits, because Treasury are very well aware that we're recruiting 329 across the forward estimates, so that's why there's - it increases across the forward estimates.

CHAIR - Sure, okay. So if you go to the performance information on table 9.3, p227, the public place assaults have gone up in 2020-21. When we've got a target of less than three year average, it's a bit hard to know what that is, data, what the three year average is. So I'm just interested what the three year average is, to see how we're tracking against it.

Comm HINE - Through you, minister. The three year average for - the target for 2021 was 836, so it was above the three year average.

CHAIR - Okay. And being as this was a year when notionally people weren't out and about quite as much, this would have been part of -

Comm HINE - It's really interesting and we can talk about the public place assaults and also the number that have occurred. We are seeing an increase of public place incidents, and it's almost like people are enjoying being out and that freedom as well.

CHAIR - So they behave badly because they're allowed out now?

Comm HINE - Yes, there is some of that involved with it as well. We have seen certainly an uptick in some of the public place assaults and matters. I think it is about that people want to go out and enjoy themselves as well.

The three year average over this period of time has been very difficult to actually try and get a handle on, for a three year average, because it has been such an unusual year. For example our total offences are down by 13 per cent last financial year. They are going up about 5.9 per cent this financial year because we did have lockdown situations and all those things. So we are seeing such a movement and we're actually looking at a five-year average to try and get normalisation of some of those statistics, to see what are some of the things which are influencing, and the one that we're really concerned about is some of the traffic issues as well.

CHAIR - We'll come to that, yes.

Comm HINE - I know we'll come to that as well. It is a bit unusual to see what's occurring, and the three-year average, yes, it is above the three-year average because we've got such highs and lows in that three years.

CHAIR - Now to public order incidents, which is the next line item. What is the three-year average, does that include breaches of the stay-at-home orders and things like that, when they were in place?

Comm HINE - Yes, and we didn't have a lot of those, as in there wasn't a lot. The three-year average is 15 786. The percentage increase, if you took 2017-18, we were up to 17 284 was the number, but the three-year average is 15 000, and then you -

CHAIR - So we're already well above it.

Comm HINE - Yes, and so it was above a couple of years ago, now the average is averaging out because we've got about 17 847. We're hitting the three-year average on that because there's been such an up and down with - if you look at the 2018-19 year and 2019-20 year, we had 14 000 and then 15 000 because of our various lockdown situations. It has been

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really up and down and that's where the three-year averages haven't worked that well for us. We're starting to measure it across a five-year timeframe, just to try and get normalisation. As you know, we've all been through the various lockdowns and various situations, but in relation to breaches of public health orders, there weren't a lot to actually affect those numbers to any great degree.

CHAIR - Speaking about the five-year average, to have what a five-year average would be for these two measures?

Comm HINE - Yes, we actually do have that, and while I'm talking, someone will be able to drag those out. Mr Higgins will drag those out on our current statistics, and if I'm really quick, I might be able to get to it myself. No, I haven't got the five-year average on that one at the moment. I've only got 2020-21.

CHAIR - Maybe we can come back to that and Mr Higgins can find it.

Comm HINE - Yes. Just to have a look at that five year timeframe and trying to average it. We have got some where we have the five-year averages, and we're just trying to change that data in our public records. We'll just have a look at what the five-year average is.

CHAIR - In some respects, like when you keep going down the performance data here regarding public order - perceptions of safety in public places during the day and during the night, and safety at home, home alone during the night, they've actually gone up, whereas the instance of public order incidences come out to positive, going up.

Comm HINE - Yes.

CHAIR - Yes, I'm just interested in -

Comm HINE - Sorry, Madam Chair. Through you, minister. It's in relation to those - the various reporting in government services statistics. We do really well in, if not all categories, we're actually above the national average. The only one we don't do so well is on public transport at night. Public transport at night, which we don't have a lot of people travelling around at night. We do have someone on buses.

CHAIR - So a couple of incidences on that could skew your figures.

Comm HINE - Yes. But in relation to perceptions of police performance, safety at home of a day and night time, safety in public places, we are normally - it's on most indicators, and I've got them here - above the national average.

CHAIR - Ninety-two is pretty high, I would've thought. 92 per cent feeling safe during the day.

Comm HINE - Where the national average was 89. We do really well on that. The ones that I'm really interested in is - not only from a community perception, but also the community perception about how police do their job - those indicators in the professionalism of police we're always above the national average on most of them. I always like to use those as a measure, because we can have the best crime figures, as in the lowest crime figures, but if we're not keeping the perception of the community safety, then we're not doing the job.

CHAIR - I go then, minister, to the family violence incidents. It would be helpful to know the five-year - or three-year average, but also a five-year average, because we know that during lockdown particularly that there were less reports of family violence, probably because people weren't in a safe position to report in many cases.

Mrs PETRUSMA - But they have gone up since.

CHAIR - Yes, they've gone up since.

Mr JACOBI - The three-year average - sorry, Chair.

CHAIR - Yes, I'm just trying to understand what the three-year average is and whether we're actually getting - is it just more people feeling compelled to report, or is there a problem?

Mrs PETRUSMA - So we've had a decrease in high-risk incidents and medium-risk incidents, but we've had a major increase in - a 66 per cent increase in low-risk incidents being reported, which is a good thing because it means that people now feel there's an environment where they can come forward and report an incident or an argument, and so that has led to the increase.

We're not getting the high-risk increase it has come down about 50 per cent, our medium-risk by about 18 per cent, but our low-risk is increasing. It's good, because neighbours are feeling more comfortable that they can ring up the police and report, and somebody sees it in the street, they'll report, and so I think that's a positive. That's a positive.

CHAIR - How do you classify - what's a medium, low-risk, and high-risk incident?

Mrs PETRUSMA - According to the RAST. Assistant Commissioner Bodnar is the expert at the RAST.

Asst Comm BODNAR - Thanks, minister. In relation to the categorisation of our family violence incidents, there are three ratings. There's low, there's medium, and there's high, and it's all based on the Risk Screening Assessment Tool we use, which is - it's an indicator of an escalation of violence or a continuation of violence. A low score is between zero and 13 on the Risk Assessment Screening Tool. Medium is between 14 and 27, and a high-risk screening is 28 or above.

So generally, with those ones 28 and above that's where we would detain a person for court and we'd be making an application for a family violence order to a magistrate. 27 and below, as a general rule, if family violence has been committed, we'd be issuing a police family violence order, which can be issued by a sergeant of police or an authorised person. They're the three different categories and that provides us, as in our members, guidance as to how we proceed with a family violence incident when it comes to the PFEOs or the FEOs.

CHAIR - Are all police officers are trained in that? In administering that process?

Asst Comm BODNAR - Yes, they are. That starts at that recruit training level which is a base level for us, and then it's scaffolded through some of our promotional development courses as well. Family violence for us is one of our core policing activities.

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's also one area which is very highly supervised, so if a perpetrator is brought in, there's - I think its sergeant or inspector level or above has to review the situation.

Asst Comm BODNAR - Yes. The minister is quite right. Family violence for us is one of the most scrutinised areas of policing we go through. That starts right at the attendance at the initial incident where our members attend a scene. They're required, prior to finishing work, to submit a family violence report, whether it's a family violence incident or an argument, and there are differences.

From there, that report has to be validated by a supervisor as soon as possible within a period of 12 hours. So that's to make sure that we're adhering to our policy, which is a pro-intervention policy. We're adhering to the legislation and we're affording that safety and protection to vulnerable women and children where we need to. As we all know, it is predominantly vulnerable children and women which need the protection.

From there, we obviously have an extra layer of protection as well, because each district family violence sergeant from the family violence units will review every single family violence incident that's occurred within the district. So that's northern, southern, and western. In addition to that, another layer comes in through the Safe Families Coordination Unit where they will also review all of those incidents. In addition to that, through the Safe at Home framework as well, is the integrated case coordination meetings which occur every week. There is a number of layers of protection there to make sure that we're adhering to that pro-intervention policy and providing the support where we need to.

Comm HINE - In relation to our training, the minister held a focus group earlier this year in relation to some of the training issues for police, and some of that was - so there was concern by some of the stakeholders about the continuation of training. I'm not sure if you saw that parliamentary report that was supervised by Ms Haddad through here about coercive control. In that, it actually mentioned what the UK were doing, specifically the Scottish Police.

So we've reached out to SafeLives who run their program on behalf of The College of Policing in the UK. And so we've got a a rundown on what they've done, and I'm not sure you've seen the evaluation report about all 14 000 Scottish Police officers have been in that retraining, to make sure whether you go to Smithton or you go to Hobart everyone has the same level of training.

I've reached out and spoken personally to the Chief Constable of the Scottish Police and their Assistant Commissioner. We're looking at forming a strategic partnership with them to learn from what they are doing, and the Safe Lives have actually trained over 21 000 UK police officers and it's also in a number of UK police services now.

By this year and hopefully in the next half of this year, we're arranging to train all our police officers about not only the rights about coercive control, because we know that is difficult. So using this evaluation that the Scottish Police and Safe Lives have used is really encouraging about growing that expertise.

We know it's not just online training as well. There's a lot of other face-to-face training. We know it's got to be from the Commissioner down for this training, we know it has to be recorded properly, coercive control training as well. There's a lot and I could talk about that

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for a long time, but it's really exciting to be able to assist the community with this additional training. We do it well now, but as we know we've got to continue to make sure we keep up to date -

CHAIR - An early intervention in these things can prevent escalation, obviously.

Ms WEBB - Yes, exactly.

CHAIR - Have you got the three year average, just going back to that question?

Mrs PETRUSMA - On family violence?

CHAIR - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I can give you the five year average for family violence incidents is 3553.6.

Ms WEBB - The three year average was 3595.

CHAIR - All right. So there's not much difference.

Ms WEBB - So it's very close.

CHAIR - That'd be pre- and during and sort of post.

Ms WEBB - So in relation to the COVID-19 and lockdown we didn't see a lot of change. We thought we may see a change, but there wasn't a lot of change.

CHAIR - So it didn't drop away much?

Ms WEBB - No.

CHAIR - Oh, okay.

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, it was actually a 3 per cent overall increase during 2019-20. There's been about an 6 per cent increase since then. It's been in the low-risk incidents where it's increased. That is good because it means people are actually reaching out for help. That's what we're seeing through the Hearing Lived Experience survey too. So people are reaching out for family and sexual violence counselling services and supports.

The more we keep on raising awareness people realise that it's unacceptable and that they don't have to put with it. Neighbours are now reporting - people see it in the street - they're reporting which never used to happen before, because it used to be hidden in silence.

CHAIR - The bystander awareness is really important too.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's right.

CHAIR - Meg, did you have a question on this?

Comm HINE - From another part of the table, but not on that particular -

CHAIR - That's all right. It's just if you guys wanted the family violence numbers? Thank you for working that out, yes.

Comm HINE - Forgive me if I missed when you covered this earlier. The cost of policing per capita, did we cover those figures?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Cost of policing?

Comm HINE - Cost of policing per capita. So just looking at the figures there going up a little in 2021.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We can give you what the RoGS figures were.

Comm HINE - I think that's probably what it is, by the look of the -

CHAIR - It is the RoGS figures.

Comm HINE - It is the RoGS figures, from the footnote. I wondered whether you'd like to provide some commentary around the rise there, and what that looks like over the five year average, and also what it looks like compared to other jurisdictions.

Particularly, I guess, similar jurisdictions to us. There's no point necessarily in comparing us to New South Wales or Victoria. Probably compared to South Australia or NT. Not even, NT actually, very different. South Australia is probably the best comparison.

Ms WEBB - Minister, are you happy for me to - Mandy will have the variations, but I can make a general comment -

Mrs PETRUSMA - So the current expenditure - so the RoGS figures in 2016-17 expenditure was \$473, 2017-18 is \$511, 2018-19 \$488, 2019-20 \$496, and 2020-21 was \$523. It doesn't actually say - oh, national real expenditure including user cost to capital less revenue is \$550 per person in 2021.

Comm HINE - Is there some commentary you can provide around those figures or a comparison to a similar jurisdiction?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No.

Ms WEBB - Minister, if you're happy for me to answer? So we always look at changing our enterprise bargaining processes to try and compare apples with apples, but it's really hard.

Other jurisdictions have supports for police officers or protective services officers which we don't have, every other jurisdiction has, but we don't. We are going down a two-tiered to make sure that we have appropriately trained people but not fully-fledged police officers.

So every time we look at how we compare on the costs of services it is really difficult. I would like to say 'yes, we're similar to South Australia'. But when I look at some of their

models and what they include in some of their figures it's hard, because they have a protective service workforce as well, which we don't have.

Mrs PETRUSMA - However if we look at another RoGS figure, the national police staff levels per 100 000 is only 311. Tasmania Police actually records far higher at 338 per 100 000 people. So we have more police per 100 000 people than the national average.

Comm HINE - Which would add into a higher cost per capita.

Ms WEBB - Yes.

Comm HINE - The fact that there's a bit of a rise there and, from the last five years' figures, 2020-21 was the highest figure, are we still on an upward trajectory on track this year for what the likely figure is?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well because this government's recruiting 329 extra police officers that will keep on going up.

CHAIR - Unless we have a massive increase in the population.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So it's a 31 per cent increase in police numbers. When we came to government it was 1100. So we're up to 1324, and we've still got a - Assistant Commissioner Bodnar and I talk about this every week, and he's -

CHAIR - Are the police happy with those staffing levels, minister, yet.

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, it's more a case of keeping the minister happy, I think.

CHAIR - Well is the minister happy with the staffing levels?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Oh, give me more, give me more. No, they're doing an excellent job. They're going out and recruiting, and they're focusing on Year 12 students as well. They're doing a good campaign with recruitment days there.

Four times a year they will invite students in Year 12 to come and try out being a police officer for four days and do camps. And it's, you know, just to try and get it out. We've been advertising in regional areas, radio, and they've got different police officers in different roles promoting it on TV. We're doing everything we can to recruit and recruit the best.

Including from interstate. We have people from interstate to our accelerated training programs, which are police officers that are deciding that Tasmania is a better state to come and live in. They come down and do a shortened recruit course, because they're already a trained police officer from another jurisdiction. They're coming down as well.

CHAIR - So that would be predominately about updating with our legislation they're going on adopting, I imagine.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's right. So that's why it's, you know, a shortened course, but I think it's 11 weeks?

Ms WEBB - Correct.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. It's an 11-week course versus 31, which more recruits go for. But it is a career of choice so we're very happy to hear from anyone if they would like to join.

Ms WEBB - Can I just clarify a little bit further on that number then, in terms of that uptick, is it attributable to the staffing increase? Are you able to give me figures on that? Or is it attributable to increasing costs on non-staffing elements as well? Are they both rising, or is the staffing rising, that's what's bringing it up?

Mrs PETRUSMA - So it's expenditure on police, so it includes user cost of capital, less revenue from our own sources and payroll tax. That's what that parameter is about. So it's real current expenditure on police services, so it's per person.

Ms WEBB - Yes. So, in terms of that I was just trying to understand - given that mix of things that feed into it - is it the cost of staffing that has brought it up somewhat in that 2020-21 year?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well the elements are the user costs of capital, less from own sources and payroll tax. So I reckon payroll tax - so the numbers of police officers would be the main reason it's going up.

Ms WEBB - That's fine, thank you.

CHAIR - This output group also is part of the provision of high visibility target patrols. I assume this means marked cars? I don't imagine this would be sensitive information but I'd be interested to know how many marked cars there are and how many unmarked cars there are.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I know we do have the answer to that question somewhere.

CHAIR - Well it's not just the marked ones you've got to worry about.

Comm HINE - Well Mandy with the answer and, minister, if you were happy for me to lead off? High visibility policing is really important to us, and then whether it's a police officer walking down the street in uniform or if it's a high visibility car, really important. Also, that fear of getting caught on the road thus there is a need for unmarked operational cars as well, not only in the Criminal Investigation Branch but also the traffic branch. Getting that right means to make sure we've got marked and unmarked cars, and then we've got specialist vehicles as well.

CHAIR - Sure.

Comm HINE - Mandy might have the actual number breakdown of how many vehicles marked and unmarked. Have you got that in front of you?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I've got it here. We have 11 high-visibility vehicles, 16 high-visibility half-marked vehicles, 28 divisional bands, 153 marked vehicles - so that's a difference between that and the high-visibility - 14 motorcycles, and 8 marine services tow vehicles.

CHAIR - What was that last one?

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Mrs PETRUSMA - Marine services tow vehicles. There is 230 vehicles in total marked. Then in unmarked cars we have operational, which, you know, covert. There's 159, and non-operational - as in they have no lights or sirens - is 15. So the operational will have covert lights, sirens and no markings. So there's 174 operational.

CHAIR - So they have lights and sirens that they use when they're needed as opposed to being -

Mrs PETRUSMA - For the operational, but the non-operational - so there's only 15 that have no lights or sirens.

CHAIR - Okay.

Comm HINE - Through you, minister, they are specialised that it's not appropriate to have lights or sirens. For all of us who have got cars as part of our contracts, we've all got lights and sirens on our cars. So, if we're required to pull over or go to a scene then we are operational as well.

Mrs PETRUSMA - In addition there are 16 motorbikes, four buses, two caravans, nine quad bikes, 100 trailers, zero trucks, and four others.

CHAIR - What are they? Hovercrafts?

Comm HINE - For example, our BearCat. A very heavy vehicle.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's one of the other.

CHAIR - Okay. Any other questions on public safety and support to the community?

Ms LOVELL - Yes. I just wanted to go back to the worker's compensation numbers which we were talking about earlier. Minister, the winter review into the effectiveness of the worker's compensation systems, are you willing to table a copy of that review?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Commissioner?

Comm HINE - No, because we're still discussing it and looking through the recommendations as well. We will have to consult with our Police Association as well. So not at this stage. There is sensitive material in there and it would actually affect a number of people if it was generally released. We are sensitive to that as well.

Through that we want to improve the way that we deliver our worker's comp services, but we also don't want to give angst or further stress to some of the people that are involved in that report as well. So the short answer is, no we won't be making it publicly available.

Ms LOVELL - At all, at any stage?

Comm HINE - No.

Ms LOVELL - Okay. There were, I think, 23 recommendations, is that right?

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's right.

Ms LOVELL - How many of those recommendations have been fully implemented?

Comm HINE - Deputy Commissioner Adams, if the minister's happy for Donna to come to the table, she's actually been given the responsibility of working through with the various stakeholders and the recommendations. There are some that we most likely won't fully implement.

Deputy Comm ADAMS - So thank you, minister, I'll just get the actual brief which identifies those which we have completed. Three recommendations have been completed and six are in progress and 14 are yet to be progressed.

Ms LOVELL - Are you able to elaborate on which ones have been implemented?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Through you, minister, we've integrated our injury management and advisory service into our wellbeing support team. That is one of the key recommendations that came out of the review. We've established a new governance arrangement in terms managing our long-term worker's compensation matters.

As you'd appreciate there is some legislative frameworks that obviously sit alongside how we manage long-term worker's compensation arrangements. What we've tried to do is improve our governance by bringing in key people so that we can have a greater level of scrutiny over the decision making to try and move those particular long-term matters to at least a position where they can be negotiated to settlement.

There have been - the good practice guide is another important recommendation that will actually be, I guess, a bible which will indicate to any member that's going through the worker's compensation process, our union, but also our members that manage the claims on what's the expectations of how we manage it.

We'll get the union obviously to participate in the completion of that particular good practice guide so that there's a clear understanding and agreement, that when a claim's made this is the process that will actually -

Ms LOVELL - Can be known to people?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Yes.

Ms LOVELL - How many were underway, minister, you said? Was it 14? Six underway? That would leave 14 to be commenced?

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's right.

Ms LOVELL - There was a recommendation - I believe it was Recommendation 10 - which was to allow local management to backfill positions which have been vacant for more than two weeks. Is that recommendation being adopted?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Minister, through you? No, that recommendation will not be adopted. I think that anyone who runs a business, who actually has to think about absences of two weeks to include leave, sick leave, paternity and leave and having a requirement to backfill absences of two weeks is extremely difficult.

So that's been a recommendation that we've been very upfront with in saying that is, you know, very, very challenging for the department to actually implement straight away. We will certainly work through the process of those recommendations.

One really key issue in terms of the recommendations is we'll actually be having a workshop with the various unions to work through them. We've already immediately attended to some of the recommendations where we have the opportunity to make those administrative changes.

It's really important that we prioritise our recommendations and identify what should be receiving the right priority with the unions. That's happening - I think it's within the next four weeks that we've got an independent facilitator who will facilitate that conversation. We will then group the recommendations and prioritise their completion from there.

CHAIR - Fantastic.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Also that was to have it done locally. To have, you know, one police station do it locally when it's - you know, you need to go to - it really needs to be done centrally.

Ms LOVELL - Just also on the numbers that we were discussing before about claims, and in particular the incapacitation rate. 59 staff not at work currently, how does that compare with other jurisdictions in Australia? Do you have that data at all? Do you do that comparison?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - No. Sorry, through you again, minister. With the winter review we did seek to do a comparison with other police jurisdictions and that was proved to be very difficult. Legislation is very different. A number of other jurisdictions immediately moved to step down provisions and manage their worker's compensation in a completely different legislative framework.

To actually look at that it didn't provide us any benefits in how we might manage and improve our claims management.

Ms LOVELL - Yes, okay, thank you. How many people are on restricted duties rather than being on a worker's compensation claim?

Deputy Comm ADAMS - We don't actually table publicly those that are actually receiving support from wellbeing support. Because most of those officers are actually at work, and they require some support, whether it be from a psychological expert or a mental health plan to obviously support them with a whole range of issues that can converge, whether they be from work, obviously from family, and other stresses.

But we prioritise the wellbeing of our staff, and we want to ensure that we actually provide the services that we can to help a person, one of our employees to work through those particular issues. We don't keep the statistics in terms of, more broadly, members that are receiving wellbeing support.

We don't want to create a stigma, as you can appreciate. We want people to come forward and feel that they are going to be treated with respect and confidentiality, and the important thing for us is to ensure that we provide the right support so we can get them back to work.

Ms LOVELL - Great. Okay, thank you.

Deputy Comm ADAMS - But if it assists the Committee DPFM has a total of 139 open worker's compensation claims for police officers. Out of these it's 59 people who are currently not at work.

Ms LOVELL - Yes. We have the same figures, I think.

CHAIR - Yes. Nick?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Chair. Yes, minister. My question follows on a little bit from that around the health and wellbeing program. Could provide a little bit more detail about what that program is delivering and if there is indeed funding for it?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thank you, and I thank the member for his question. The Tasmanian government is committed to supporting the physical and mental health of our Tasmanian Emergency Services responders both career and volunteer members.

Apart from recruiting the additional 329 police officers - because this will help to ensure an appropriate work/life balance for our police officers so that they are supported more to do their job safely, because we do know that Emergency Services workers are susceptible more to post-traumatic stress disorders and other mental health illnesses. This is why we've introduced nation-leading presumptive PTSD legislation and removed step-down provisions for our police officers.

We also want our police officers to come forward and get their help that they need. This is why we've invested strongly in our nation-leading health and wellbeing program. In 2017-18 we first committed \$1.5 million to a ground breaking and award-winning health and wellbeing program which has now increased to \$3 million per year for our Emergency Services personnel and workers and volunteers.

This commitment is in addition to the government funding \$250 000 in the 2020-21 budget for health and wellbeing services for the volunteer workers in the TFS and SES. I'm glad to see that this new \$3 million per annum is providing additional services for our Emergency Service workers, including a Health and Wellbeing Team of 23 staff, including an increased number of Wellbeing Support Officers, psychologists and critical incident stress management support roles.

The strategies for our Emergency Services to support mental health, including a Wellbeing Support Unit that operates 24/7 with access to psychologists, Wellbeing Support Officers, and wellbeing training for managers and supervisors; a proactive wellness program called Ready for Response; mental health-first first aid training; and an online intervention support hub called MyPulse.

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But the unit - it's outstanding - and it's being led by Inspector Matt Richmond, and the feedback I get from our volunteers - be they TFS and SES across the state, as well as our career firefighters and SES workers, as well as Tasmania Police officers has been highly supportive. All of them have said that they're outstanding, and they really stand up in times of crisis to support our Emergency Service workers.

CHAIR - Do you need a therapy dog?

Mrs PETRUSMA - A therapy dog? We do have -

CHAIR - Yes. You've got one dog in Launceston, haven't you?

Comm HINE - Through you, minister. Through our wellbeing area they are trialling a wellbeing dog, and as the minister says, we've got Ambulance Tasmania in our program as well. We're learning from each other.

The story I do tell of the wellbeing dogs' having a positive effect - and I think I mentioned it to you, Chair, that when we actually talk to other countries about our wellbeing program - we're not only nation-leading, but internationally as well, recognised about what we do.

There was a situation where the FBI was using a support dog, and the positive impact after a traumatic event was amazing. So, we've learnt from those issues as well. After talking to you and those people going out just to see the dog, pat the dog, it just gives a lift to everyone.

They're really well trained, the handlers. Because if they see the person is not a dog person, obviously they don't want to cause trauma and they move away. But just the positive impact in our ready room is positive. We had it brought along to one of our meetings, so it's really positive.

That's just one small part of a well-funded program - and we'd like to say national, but it's also comparing it to what, in the US, and we recently had discussion of the UK. We are well, well-placed in relation to what we do.

We've still got a lot of work to do, because, you know, people are our main resources as well. It is encouraging to see the team are reacting in relation to the Hillcrest tragedy. To support all those people up there was just amazing as well. There was lots of people and lots of ongoing effort as well to support those people, and it's -

CHAIR - It must have been extraordinarily hard for the first responders there.

Comm HINE - It was extremely hard. I have to say the Welfare and Wellbeing Team through Inspector Matt Richmond, or the director, Matt Richmond, was just amazing. It's been commented on to myself, and when the minister visited as well there was comment about that support. It's ongoing as well, you know, a tragic incident like that takes some time to recover from.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The support's provided for families too. Families can go and do the MyPulse and everything else. Then if they do, you know, go in the amber or red zone, they then get - you know, a lot of support is then offered to come onboard, whether it's access to

psychologists and counsellors and everything else. It's a wraparound support for everyone involved and the feedback's been outstanding.

Comm HINE - It's one of those things as, you know, when we're going through Hillcrest or whatever we're going through, I get offered the same service. And I'm quite vocal, yes, I've used those services as of course we're all vulnerable.

It's important to let everyone know that yes, we use it. Whether we need it or not, but we use the service and to make sure we get that support. We try and take that stigma away, so that it's okay not to be okay, you know.

CHAIR - An early-intervention is occurring.

Comm HINE - It is, absolutely the case.

CHAIR - Got another question?

Ms WEBB - Yes. This is probably just another nice way to highlight some things that you're doing, noting that in the description of this output, that 1.1, support to the community, talks about establishment of partnerships with community organisations.

Could you explain the investment into that area, what that looks like, how it's planned, and probably how it's evaluated for impact would be useful to hear.

Comm HINE - Thank you for that. Through the minister, and I before I hand it to either Donna or Mandy, but support to the - well partnership with the community goes back to the Peelian Principles. The police are the community and the community are the police.

If we didn't have partnerships and work with other organisations we could not do the job we actually do. It is really important to us and we've got a lot of partnerships. Some we've got MOUs with, some we've got a letter of exchange, and sometimes we just work with another organisation.

So, you know, we do a lot. Then State Community Policing provides support to Neighbourhood House, Neighbourhood Watch, Crime Stoppers, and I'm on the board of Crime Stoppers as well.

You know, the crime prevention material, the National Cyber Start Smart Detective Program, the ThinkUKnow Program - and we know that's an issue, provision of support for Multicultural Communities and Humanities Settlement Network, liaising with veteran and veteran's families' counselling services, state-wide coordination and administration of charitable collection permits. Support and liaising with the Crime Stoppers, as I said, which I'm a member of as well.

So they are just some of the more formalised - but I have to say that the informal ones that we have liaised with is just amazing and we've got to continue to work with the community to form those really strong partnerships, to make sure we're providing the service that we should be providing. And to allow those other organisations to do their job.

For example we spoke to Speak Up Stay Chatty the other day with Mitch, and that organisation does an amazing job. So that's very informal at the moment. We've had a meeting, we've done - unfortunately I did a bit of promotional material in shorts and things. But again it's such a great organisation that we've put him in contact with our education and training area to see what we can deliver together to our people as well.

They are some of the examples that we're doing all the time in supporting various organisations. Whether it's in the family violence space, LGBTIQ+ space, multicultural space, all those informal ones which we can't put a dollar around, but we have got lots and lots. Individual police officers have a lot of those things they do themselves, which is on a voluntary basis.

So whilst this is costed, those uncostered ones would be worth absolutely millions of dollars.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We do a lot with Crime Stoppers as well and we're providing them \$25 000 a year over, you know, four years for that program. We've got the Officer Next Door program, the Rotary Youth Driver Awareness program, Adopt a Cop.

We've also got Bush Watch and 36 neighbourhood watch groups that we help participate in and conduct police station tours for schools and community groups, and it's delivering the ThinkUKnow program and, as the Commissioner outlined, migrant resource centres and regularly liaison. We employ dedicated liaison officers. Each district has a community police officer that responds to locally based community issues as well as dedicated liaison officers for specific populations groups. So it's just the aboriginal and the multicultural communities as well. So there's a lot done though the community policing. A lot of effort.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. Then picking up on that. Is there a structural kind of approach to that as in how it's planned and how you decide what things you're going to get involved in or what areas you'll pursue? Is there some evaluation or assessment of outcomes from some of those things?

Comm HINE - Through you, minister. We do have a centralised, through Mr Bodnar's area, operations support community policing unit. We do centralise it through that area and we make an assessment through there of who we're going to support. We can't support everyone, as you well know, but we support a lot as well. Some have got more formalised evaluations.

For example, Crime Stoppers report on the money that the government provides. So they provide a report back to me who then report to the minister about the evaluation of the programs that they're running in relation to that money. Some are not very formalised at all, as well. Each district has their own district community police officer as well. They do it on a very community base way which is not centralised.

We've got a very centralised and then the very decentralised process of assessments through the district community police officers as well. Some are definitely more formalised evaluations than others. Some are just, you know, you see them in the community like SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY do an absolutely amazing job. We give up some of our own time to be able to support them and see what we can do with them. If we're going to partner them, obviously we need some more formal evaluation. Does that answer your question?

Ms WEBB - Yes, that's fine. I didn't have an expectation that they would all be evaluated by any means but it's useful to get it, some are and some aren't. What I imagine is that if there was some sort of picture or assessment made about the value of all those things, it would be a really high value and a very positive part of what's being delivered by the police force.

Comm HINE - Yes. Thank you.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well if you go to the electorate of Huon and you speak to the community policing officer who's based there at the PCYC and the work that he's been doing with Ant Edler and everyone there in regards to the bike program that he's doing there to get up with disenfranchised youth. The police officer there is very, very much involved with disenfranchised youth in the area and is bringing them there, working with them, their working on bikes together, riding bikes together. It's really community policing at a different level - and also working closely with the high school. It's been wonderful just to see the genesis of some of these kids how they've gone and then gone on to get jobs and now rebuilding bikes and selling them, and turning it into their own business. That's just through the efforts of one police officer in a small community, which is outstanding to see.

Ms WEBB - Absolutely.

CHAIR - Okay, move to Nick. That was the last one in this Output group so we can move on if that's all right.

Output Group 2 Crime

2.1 Investigation of Crime -

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you. The crackdown on antisocial driving, you know, hooning obviously is an issue that impacts plenty -

CHAIR - Do it in traffic policing, we should do that one? Yes, let's leave that one until traffic policing.

Mr DUIGAN - Well there's an output for it here, the crack down on antisocial driving.

Ms WEBB - Is that traffic policing?

CHAIR - Yes, I would have thought it came under traffic policing.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, we can wait for that too.

Mr DUIGAN - Right.

CHAIR - I'll come back to you.

Mr DUIGAN - Move it on.

2.1 Investigation of Crime

CHAIR - We'll move now to 2.1 Investigation of Crime and the performance information again around this, again, is the three-year average. I wonder if you could give us the three-year averages and some commentary around how we're actually tracking. It looks like totals are down but it's still relevant to what the average is. Are you also going to do five-year averages for these ones as well, minister?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Which indicators did you want again, sorry, Chair?

CHAIR - The investigations of crime.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Just the ones just going down the order.

CHAIR - It's on page 229. Mr Higgins looks like he might have some information. You might have to introduce him though.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Okay, so total offences to 31 March is 19 218. We should have a performance measures on that one. We should have performance measures that goes through the different performance measures in the brief.

Comm HINE - Minister, if you're happy, I can just give a bit of an overview and then Jonathan will have some more detail. Are you comfortable with that?

CHAIR - Minister, did you also want to introduce Jonathan at the table, for Hansard.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Higgins.

CHAIR - Thank you. Are you happy for the Commissioner to start or did you want to say more?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorry?

CHAIR - Are you happy for the Commissioner to say anything?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

CHAIR - Sure.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Thanks, Chair. We have on our indicators a change over to a five-year average, and without going through those various indicators, but total offences, as I said, the last financial year we had a 13 per cent decrease and we've got a 5.8 per cent increase on this year. If we go year-to-date, 2021-22, we're 24 000. If we look at the five-year average year-to-date, we're 25 000.

So we are, as I said, below where we are from a five-year average. But we're 5.8 per cent up on last year. But last year was an eight year low for total offences. If you look at serious crime. If you look at where we are now, we're up by 133 offences from last year. But the five-year average, was 536 year-to-date, and we're up 772 as of today's date as well. So we keep all those figures and we do publish some of these annually, obviously, in our crimes supplement as well,

CHAIR - Do you attribute that to anything in particular?

Comm HINE - There's a lot of different things that actually come into it. We have dedicated task forces that look at various crimes and Launceston was a bit of an issue - and I have to say the commander in the Launceston district had a number of different task forces to address some of those various crimes and those volume crimes. He did a really good job of apprehending a number of people. So various districts, when we actually see our statistics start to grow, and obviously there's a number of factors, that might be some offenders that suddenly give a high offending period. Then once you call them to account and take them off the street then, obviously, sometimes it drops. So Mr Higgins, that's his portfolio, is the operations portfolio. I might, if you're comfortable, minister, or if -

Mrs PETRUSMA - I've got the measures, so. In regard to total offences, Chair, it's up to 31 March, it's 19 281. That, if it's compared to the same time in March last year, it is less because last year was 19 914. So we have had a decrease in total offences. In total offences clearance rate, last year it was greater than or equal to 49 per cent. This year, I'm pleased to report that it's now increased to 50 per cent. Serious crime, there has been an increase in serious crime. It is now at 632 versus less than or equal to 474 last year. Serious crime clearance rate though is 79 per cent for both 2021-22 and - sorry, I compared against targets. Sorry.

Comm HINE - Yes, they are the targets so it's -

Mrs PETRUSMA - They're the targets. So the total offences - but we are below targets, which is good for total offences and total offences clearance rates, where serious crime is 632 versus our target of 474. Serious crime clearance rate is 79 per cent which equals our target of 79 per cent. Offences against property, we're 14 257 which is less than our target of 15 397, which is a good thing. And our offences against property clearance rate, it's 39 per cent which is better than our target of only clearing 38 per cent. Serious drug offenders, we're 159 versus our target for 31 March to be 229. And number of poppy crop interferences per 1000-hectare zone is zero and marine offenders is 829, and state charges, prosecutors, 39 115.

CHAIR - Okay. If I can just ask some broader questions about crime generally: is there generally an observable trend when more people are struggling to make ends meet? Because we're likely to see this happening with cost of living pressures rising. Would we expect to see a rise in these areas?

Comm HINE - Through the minister and before I hand to Mr Higgins, over the last 10 years, some of the economic indicators when we've had a downturn, and crime has been pretty steady. If we go back 15 years ago, we were having about 60 000 crimes and/or offences. We're down to about 24 000, and we've had ups and downs in relation to economic situations. It has been a factor, but it's not the only factor as well. So, yes, you certainly see some. For example, there's stealing of fuel.

CHAIR - Yeah.

Comm HINE - Even though we haven't had a huge increase in the reporting of stealing of fuel. You'd think there would, but it hasn't had a huge impact. So, Mr Higgins, if you want to -

CHAIR - Much harder to steal energy.

Comm HINE - Yes, yes.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Thank you. Through the minister, perhaps some general observations. So, with COVID-19 over the last two years, yes, it has had an impact on most of our output groups, in part because of the lockdown areas and the directions we had in place. Oh, thank you, I do need those. Also, some of the stimulus packages, whether they were state or federal, has had an impact. Right around the country it's done that as well.

We've seen changes in behaviours, particularly as you've noted earlier in the public place assaults and alcohol-fuelled violence, I guess, and public order incidents. As a general trend, the old-fashioned home burglary, business burglary categories and motor vehicle burglaries has been trending down for a fair while now. It used to be an area that we put most of our efforts into because of the house being the castle and so forth, but it's just not the same anymore.

People that offend don't look at a house as being a target, so to speak, which is why we probably see more into - especially with businesses reopening and so forth - shoplifting and shop stealing, more into that space. They get new things. But also, most of these categories are driven by alcohol and drugs. You can see the trends more so through those offences. Not in the serious drug offenders and the detections there, but in the behaviours that are happening in the community. We see that.

CHAIR - So what about cyber-crime, minister? I mean, rather going after the family home, you might go after the bank account. It's a little bit easier to stop that if you, you know, set up alerts on your bank account. But what's happening in that area with police?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I know the police have been doing a lot of work in regard to cyber-crime. Yes, I'll hand over, Assistant Commissioner.

Asst Com HIGGINS - Through the minister, cyber-crimes are an interesting one. So locally, not so much offending, certainly nationally. Internationally, we have individuals and businesses that are targeted through that, particularly through emails. Whether that's through business email compromise where they essentially are - by just clicking on some inconspicuous thing, emails are taken over and people transferring into bank accounts where they think they're paying a particular bill, it won't be the actual destination because it's changed with someone taking control of it. But also with cyber-enabled crime into particularly stalking, so particularly with all the social media platforms that are there, dating - I was going to call them sites, but apps and things.

CHAIR - Apps, yes.

Asst Com HIGGINS - It has certainly opened it up to all age groups now that are using those, which is why nationally through the Assistant Commissioners we invest so much time into suggesting programs and initiatives that can be used in that space to combat things that may not be driven internally within Tasmania, but we're exposed to it through the national and international platform that cyber is.

CHAIR - It's interesting, I think, too - another thing that COVID-19 perhaps taught us was that older people can take up mobile phone technology and use it well, and it made it much easier for checking in, for example, things like that. I've also noticed in my electorate particularly older people being the target of, like, all sorts of text messages, like, even false positive COVID-19 results, for a start, but, you know, much worse than that. They often are not that tech-savvy. They've lifted themselves up enough to be able to manage those sort of essential things. I don't know whether this is the police's area, really, minister. But I'm just interested in how we support people like that to ensure that, whilst we encourage them to take up this technology for all the right reasons, but it also makes them more vulnerable.

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, that's right. The eSafety Commissioner's doing a whole body of work around that too and Scamwatch and quite a few things.

Comm HINE - So maybe if I could just lead off before Mr Higgins. You're exactly right, and we're still getting - no doubt around this table we're still getting those emails.

CHAIR - Yes.

Comm HINE - We're still getting those text messages and we're still getting those phone calls. We've all experienced it, so therefore they are still - they're only doing it because they're actually getting those people that are willing to inadvertently click on the wrong link or make a phone call back to the people. The more sophisticated these are getting, the more people they're actually catching.

CHAIR - The more realistic they look in terms of, like, coming from a government department or whatever.

Comm HINE - Yes. Many, many people who you would think would be a little bit savvy, yet, you know, you've got to stop and think and say, 'Oh, okay, do I click on this or don't I click on this?' We all have to play a part. As the minister said, from the national point of view with the AFP and cyber security and banks and all those things, we're doing a lot of education. Schools are doing a lot of education as well.

Because education is going to be the key to this as well, because some of our kids, also, you know, there are various scams going around, 'Please send me a picture,' you know, pretending to be something else. Then they send a picture, inappropriate picture, and then they say, 'Well, if you don't pay this money, I will then publish it.'

CHAIR - They'll publish it, yeah.

Comm HINE - And of course, kids get caught with this and it can actually end in tragic circumstances, and then older people as well. So there's a lot of work being done nationally through the government and through us. We play a part about education, because if we can actually educate people not to do it, as we said before, prevention is much better than trying to catch at the other end.

The thing that makes it really hard from policing, a lot of these actors are overseas. Of course, jurisdictions only go so far and it's very easy to be anonymous overseas. So I'm not sure if Mr Higgins wanted to add some more on that.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Yes, through the minister. So, sadly, the business model, I suppose, of this type of crime is that there'll be thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of emails, text messages, phone calls that'll be done. With that business model, they only need a few people to reply. Not a few, maybe hundreds that reply. They're taking advantage of it. They'll go all around the world.

There'll be tailored ones for Australia - not necessarily for Tasmania, for Australia. There'll be slight variances in email addresses that'll look like something from a telco, for example, that we all may use, but it'll be a slight variation in the actual email address. It doesn't actually mean necessarily transferring money. It's as simple as replying or clicking on a link within it just without understanding, 'cause it might actually look like it's from your thing. I've had an experience with that recently with a family member that did just that. So it does happen to everyone, no matter how much you talk to staff in that place.

Report Cyber is our national site. We have online reporting and for Tasmania Police, that feeds into our Serious Financial Crime unit, and they then filter out there. It tends to be, though, as the Commissioner said, the offence, the offender will be elsewhere, either in Australia or internationally. We still need to wrap around the victim to support them and move forward.

Financial institutions are very forward-leaning in this space, which is very good to be able to do that. But it's the education process. So through the eSafety Commissioner, through our own staff that go around and do presentations to community groups, we're getting the message and far and wide as we possibly can.'

CHAIR - Sure. Nick, do you have a question for him under crime or not?

Mr DUIGAN - No, I don't think I do.

CHAIR - No. Any other questions on the investigation of crime? If not, we'll move to Poppy Security, and that'll be Mike.

2.2 Poppy Security

Mr GAFFNEY - Minister, I am interested to know of the four line items under crime, this one doesn't receive the most funding. So I suppose that's a good thing. I want to delve into that a little bit. It's for the prevention of poppy crop interferences and the curtailing of offenders. What is the relationship between the police and the Poppy Advisory Control Board because one of their mandates I suppose is to oversee security matters. They have a role to play. In the investigation of any breach of security is that's where I suppose the police come into it. Could just give us a bit of an explanation run down on how that works?

Mrs PETRUSMA - So as you indicated, the Tasmanian opium poppy industry is managed through the Poppy Advisory and Control Board, which is overseen by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. Tasmania Police does work very closely with the PACB during the growing season, but plays a limited role in poppy security. The PACB is responsible for determining security measures to be employed by growers, and they're the one who also issues the licenses to grow alkaloid poppy material, such as morphine, codeine, and thebaine. I can give you the number of licenses that they've issued.

Mr GAFFNEY - No, I've got that information. That's fine.

Mrs PETRUSMA - You've got that, do you. So it's - yes. But, yes, we do work closely together.

Mr GAFFNEY - I suppose the question might be, if you look at the four line groups, it's all about total offences or marine offenders, or prosecutors in the judicial. The word 'interferences' in the poppy sphere. So if a person steps over into a paddock to take a photo they've interfered, but they might not be taking away a capsule. Might be having a photo. So they might be trespassing. If they take a capsule that's theft, so therefore it would be up to the farm - if that person was caught, it's the police that would investigate, and the poppy board just alert the police to that situation? What's the relationship there?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Yes. Through the minister. Yes, that's the case. So we have a detective inspector on the Poppy Advisory Board. They have their representatives in all the regions, and they've got a close relationship with not only the drug squads in each region but the local country police as well. So in relation to interferences, we look at interferences being capsules taken, not - I suppose incursion I guess - onto a paddock to do a photo or otherwise, because as you know in the north-west there, there are lots of crops. People do think the -

CHAIR - Very conveniently placed beside the highway.

Asst Com HIGGINS - Well, yes, the flowers there can be very pretty. There's no lack of understanding there of what that actually means. We've only in the 2021 - last season, 2021-2022, only had eight poppy interferences in that case. So quite a small number in relation to the -

CHAIR - That's because the tourists weren't here. Yes, it is, the international tourists. They're the ones.

Mr GAFFNEY - It's also the fact that there was only 8000 hectares and not 15 000 is the licence. But the other question about that -

Mrs PETRUSMA - I hope they don't take them.

Mr GAFFNEY - -is that I went back over that. It seems to be there could be a missing - I'm not sure if its missing or it was just a good year for capsules not being stolen. But in 2016-17 there were 12 200, in the next year there were 1430, then the following year there were 124 capsules. In the next year there was 1957 then 5245. So I find that number either a mistake or it was a very poor year for - or good year for not stealing capsules. The interesting thing is that of the 5245 capsules stolen you've reported that you recovered 2286. I suppose that's good because it's about 50 per cent. If you don't seize anything you don't discover anything, does that mean you've done no searches? Do you know what I mean? Like is it relevant to the amount of times you get notified that there could be criminal offence or you're worried about an area?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Through the minister. Look, it's a very interesting point. So detections of interferences can be done by the field reps, the farmers, by police during a search, not necessarily the paddock, normally done at harvesting is where their detections are picked up, and it's picked up by the header driver that's actually looking down and seeing that there

might be a bit missing. It doesn't tend to be on the side, so if you think of the example there with tourists, they tend to be on the sides. They're not walking into great large bouquets of poppies. But somebody that's actually taking them will probably walk in further and do somewhere undetected. As far as seizures go, it's a particular type of drug offender that does this. Because they actually can't do anything with them.

When we changed many years ago from morphine crops to thebaine crops, they can't process them to the point to actually use them in a meaningful way without causing serious harm to themselves. So where the detections and the - there were more detected - more recovered than there were stolen is because that's probably what's been reported as taken in the paddock from one of those scenes I described. But a search may have been undertaken of a known drug dealer through information or otherwise and actually ceased. Now we actually had that case in the last financial year where we seized again more than we'd actually done, and the capsules are actually very old. So weren't current season, they were obviously very old and broken down because they actually did not do anything with them.

Mr GAFFNEY - My last question, minister. Through a funding I kind of gather this line item is there with a million plus, going up 25 000 every year. But it just depends on the demand for the police to investigate if a capsule, or if there's been an area so and so. Some years it might be much more than the - the time allocated might be more than a million dollars, other years it might be \$600 000 of police time. But it doesn't matter, it's just sort of a straight-line affect.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Look we provide the funding and we provide the police numbers and the commissioner determines on the need and - he perceives the needs at the time as to how he determines where in the state and in what roles that people are assigned to.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Yes, through you, minister. Yes, and of course whilst we investigate thefts - sorry - we actually do security patrols too to make sure we're preventing as well as detecting. Also, in relation to the control board that's represented by the southern drug inspector on that control board as well. So, whilst the line item is going up we still have to maintain our patrols to make sure there's poppy security, make sure that we're keeping an eye out for offenders. Then when there is an investigation then we investigate. It is a fairly consistent line item because we've got those resources allocated to provide that security and then investigate if we need to.

Mr GAFFNEY - Okay, thank you. The last question is, I noticed that one year - might've been last year on the one just gone, there tend to be a lot more capsules from say the south that year. So therefore, would the police target that area. There's been less instances or incursions, or interferences in the north-west then the north that -

Asst Comm HIGGINS - It's very hard to predict, and obviously it's about the acreages of poppies in various areas. Large acreages increase the chance of theft. Sometimes, you know, we know criminals travel to undertake these thefts. There's no rhyme or reason that we can discern, but wherever the theft occurs that's obviously when the resources go into a patrol, to prevent theft, and then detect and investigate if we need to.

Mr GAFFNEY - Thank you, minister. Thanks Chair.

Ms LOVELL - Can I ask a silly question?

CHAIR - Sure. I don't know. It might not be silly.

Ms LOVELL - You said one capsule. One capsule, one flower, is that?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Yes.

CHAIR - She's not a farmer, you can tell. Girl from the city. Okay, no other question. We'll move to 2.3, and that'd be - I reckon that's Nick because he's the fisherman.

2.3 Fisheries Security

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Chair. Not so much these days.

Minister, I notice the government is investing strongly adding capacity to the police force which includes in this budget \$10.3 million allocated for Large Vessel Replacement Program. I wonder if you can give some detail around that, I assume it's the mighty *Van Dieman* is going -

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's a mighty big boat, and unfortunately you won't be able to go out fishing on it.

Mr DUIGAN - They come and look at me from time to time.

Mrs PETRUSMA - You might be able to come out and have a look at it, and never walk on it when we do the grand opening. But look our marine police officers undertake very important roles in policing commercial and recreational marine activities on a state wide basis, and this is why this government has provided \$24.6 million for the Large Vessel Replacement Program since 2014.

Vessels that make up DPFEMs large vessel fleet are bespoke vessels as they must be custom built to meet Tasmania Police's highly technical specification including their construction, layout, and specific technical equipment requirements that make up a state of the art fit for the purpose of an operational vessel. This program's already delivered the replacement of the PV *Fortescue* with the 8.6 million PV *Cape Wickham* in August 2017. This vessel was a \$23.95 million aluminium monohull offshore police patrol vessel capable of patrolling 200 nautical miles of the Tasmanian coast in the Southern Ocean and Bass Strait with a patrol distance of 1000 nautical miles. The latest vessel to join the Tasmania Police Fleet is the brand new PV *Dauntless*. On 18 February this year Tasmania Police launched the new \$3.6 million PV *Dauntless*, which is a 11.9 fiberglass monohull vessel fitted with state of the art equipment. This includes a forward-looking infrared search camera which enhances search capability during water search and rescue operations and is a diesel powered, jet-propelled craft with a top speed of more than 40 knots.

On 20 May Tasmania Police advised that the contract for our newest offshore patrol vessel has been awarded and will replace the PV *Van Diemen*. This vessel is expected to arrive in Tasmania in early 2024. This will be a 23.95 metre monohull offshore patrol vessel capable of 30 knots and the ability to travel 200 nautical miles from our shores.

What's exciting about this new vessel is that it incorporates strategic innovation and design with world-class state of the art search and rescue technology, including a long-range

digital forward-looking infrared camera, sonar and sea-floor search and 3D mapping capability. It has a high-speed whole inflatable which can also be launched quickly and retrieved from the vessel which allows even greater access to the coastline.

It also has enhanced occupational health and safety features, which includes a commercial gyroscopic stabiliser which is a first for policing vessels in Australia. No other police vessel has one of these, which reduces fatigue and increases crew comfort and safety by providing a more stable environment, especially if we do consider that sometimes our Special Operations Group members might need to be on these for incidents where there is quite risky and adverse domestic terrorism situations for example.

These vessels are a significantly important investment in our marine police, so that they are able to undertake their duties to keep our water safe, and to enforce our marine and fisheries legislation.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you. I do have a follow-up question regarding staffing and officers. How many officers do we have allocated to fisheries securities? What roles do those officers typically undertake?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. There's 32 police officers attached to Marine and Rescue Services, and they perform their marine enforcement duties state-wide. They protect Tasmania's immensely valuable maritime resources by enforcing the provisions of the Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995.

In respect to the large vessels this involves frequent five-day patrols of all fishing areas on a state-wide basis to ensure compliance. Marine officers also ensure appropriate safety equipment is carried and is used by both recreational and professional fishers alike.

When not on patrol the vessels are berthed at high bund George Town to ensure Tasmania Police can fulfill its obligations under the Tasmanian Marine Search and Rescue Act 1971, to ensure police can quickly respond to any marine search and rescue incident. The vessels generally work in unison with the Police Westpac Search and Rescue Helicopter. In some adverse weather conditions helicopters cannot be utilised, so the marine vehicles are the only means of rescue.

So being an island state Tasmania police large vessel capability is justifiably equivalent to any other state, and I'm advised that our capability is highly regarded on a national basis. Especially that we have our new vessel coming that has nation-leading equipment on it.

Mr DUIGAN - Great. Thank you.

CHAIR - One quick one and then we'll have our 4 o'clock break.

Mr GAFFNEY - Just a follow-up to that. I'm interested to know, I think you said 32 staff or 33?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thirty-two.

Mr GAFFNEY - Do the police rotate around? So they might have four years on that, and then 'oh I want to have dry feet for a while, so I'll' -

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well some of them I've met have been in marine for quite a few years.

Mr GAFFNEY - It's a choice then?

Mrs PETRUSMA - If you get to go on one of the boats, I think they're highly attractive. So the Commissioner might want to provide more information.

Comm HINE - Through you, minister. We have highly specialised police officers in that area. For example, our boat captains, you know, they have to have very high qualifications. The captains of the various vessels stay there a long time which we certainly want to use their skills. The other people within there, they do transfer around. They've got ability to transfer out, so whether it be promotion or for a break, but we do need those highly specialised well experienced officers to stay there. Whether it's investigative skills, fishery skills and obviously our boat captain. It's like any other area. People transfer in and out, but we do need to have a core of highly specialised people there to perform that role.

Mr GAFFNEY - Do you identify those people through your training program? So if you've got a young cadet that comes in that's had obviously maritime experience do you say 'here's a career path' or is that too early?

Comm HINE - Obviously if we can attract people of that nature with those various skills and recognised prior learning, obviously we encourage them to look at various areas and maybe going into that area as well. But it's up to the individual too.

Normally in the marine area you have to have your boat ticket and certainly specialised skills as well and training. So some people will actually leave an industry - for example the captain of a boat or a marine - to get out of it and they don't want to go back in there. But we do work with each individual police officer to make sure we can match those skills with their prior learnings.

Mr GAFFNEY - Okay, thank you.

CHAIR - That's it? Okay, we'll have a 15-minute break, minister. We'll come back just before 20 past. There's tea in the antechamber if you'd like.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thank you.

CHAIR - Thank you. Can you stop the broadcast?

The Committee suspended from 4.05 p.m. to 4.23 p.m.

CHAIR - Thanks for coming back. I understand you've got some answers.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thank you, Chair. So if we just go back to Parks in regard to the question on notice to table 813, revenue by appropriation by output, which is page 209 in budget paper no. 2, volume 1, there is a figure of \$40.54 million for output group 4.1, Parks.

PUBLIC

I can provide the following answer: revenue by appropriation represents approximately half of the funding for output group 4.1. The remaining funding is generated through retained revenues from parks. In 2022-23, the Parks and Wildlife Service receives revenue from appropriation of \$40.54 million. \$22.25 million, or approximately 50 per cent, of this appropriation contributes to the funding of regional Parks and Wildlife Service operations, \$2.7 million contributes to fire management activities, and \$5.17 million relates to the following new 2022-23 Budget initiatives, including the reserve activity assessment reforms project, \$1.974 million; maintaining frontline ranges, continuation of \$2 million; cultural burning support, \$330 000; and implementation of TWWHA biosecurity strategy, \$870 000.

A further \$526 000 funds the following continuing budget initiatives; bushfire winch insertion of \$486 000, and the Ben Lomond ski patrol of \$40 000. The remaining appropriation funds other parks activities such as policy, visitor experience and engagement, along with the corporate overheads associated with the delivery of activities under this output.

Then, Chair, your question on notice in regard to page 183, table A1.16, Public Order and Safety. It's valued at \$724.3 million, reflects expenditure related to DPFEM, justice, and the State Fire Commission. It also includes minor expenditure relating to the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, primarily in the Lands Tasmania space is in my part of Parks. Also, Disability and Community Services Tasmania, primarily Safe Homes, Safe Families. It's also Finance General, it's the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the office of the ombudsman, as well as the Integrity Commission.

CHAIR - Sure. And you didn't get the estimated outcomes for the line items? No. We've put it on notice, that's all right.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So the -

CHAIR - Yes, that was the breakdown of that. I was asking for the estimated outcomes for each of the line items in the police and emergency management.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Oh, because there was a question in regard to public order safety, yes.

CHAIR - Yes, that's what it included.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Right.

CHAIR - Yes, but I was also asking -

Mrs PETRUSMA - You wanted to know in regard to the - it relates to all the expenditure in DPFEM. So all the expenditure in DPFEM -

CHAIR - Plus all those other things.

Mrs PETRUSMA - then justice, then the State Fire Commission.

CHAIR - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Because it's \$800 million.

CHAIR - Yes, I accept that, minister. It's not comparable, because it includes all those other things.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. All of police's budget is part of that \$800 million.

CHAIR - Yes, I understand that. I'm asking for the estimated outcome by appropriation for the line items across DPFEM. I think the question's understood, so it's all right. We'll write and get that.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Okay.

CHAIR - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Right.

Comm HINE - We'll work with Treasury and our accounts department to get that for you, minister.

CHAIR - Yes, okay. We'll move on then to 2.4, Support to Judicial Services, and Dean.

2.4 Support to Judicial Services

Mr HARRISS - Minister, are you able to provide details of diversionary programs and how many people they reach, together with how successful the programs are considered to have been?

Mrs PETRUSMA - So in regard to diversionary programs, Tasmania Police continues to seek improvement in its response to youth crime and diversion programs by focusing on prevention and engagement to reduce reoffending by children and young people. Youth crime intervention units are across all three policing districts which engage directly with young people actively seeking opportunities for diversion or rehabilitation.

The Youth Justice Act 1997 directs and supports the administration of youth justice with an emphasis on providing treatment and rehabilitation, and if necessary appropriate sanctions. Under the Act, Tasmania Police may only make an arrest if the police officer believes the offence is serious enough to warrant such a response, because the Act really focuses on diverting youths from the court system where appropriate. That's why types of diversions that police do includes informal cautions, formal cautions, and community conferences. Well, is there anything specific that you'd like to know about the diversionary programs?

Mr HARRISS - No, no. Just probably more in general. That's okay, yeah, that's all.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, because if a court sentences a youth to a supervision order, Community Youth Justice, currently within Communities Tasmania, has the mandate to work with the young person to address the underlying causes of their behaviour, and the youth justice workers link young offenders to the support services they need to address their behaviour and to comply with their legal orders. So that's done through case management and networking and other government and community-based services.

CHAIR - I'll go to Meg.

Ms WEBB - I think this is relevant in this line. I'm interested to ask about the situations where defendants have to pay to receive evidence. From my understanding about this is that it doesn't apply to indictable matters for the Supreme Court; it doesn't apply if you're on Legal Aid. We've passed a law to say that it's not going to happen anymore, but we're still in the situation where defendants may have to pay \$53 for a file and there might be more than one file for their case, presumably, at times, so there's an out-of-pocket cost there for defendants to actually get access to evidence files. Can you please advise me how this works as we've had the law change, the legislative change? When will that actually come into effect where we won't see defendants having to pay for evidence files?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I'll get the Deputy Commissioner to answer the question.

Deputy Comm ADAMS - Thank you, and through you, minister. That's a matter that's administered by the Department of Justice.

Ms WEBB - Right.

Deputy Comm ADAMS - That's the magistrate's reform project, and obviously there's an associated piece of legislation that is to advance a number of reforms in the magistrate's bill, and that is tied to that particular project.

Ms WEBB - Okay. I'll follow that up through those channels then. Thank you.

Output Group 3 - Traffic Policing

3.1 Traffic Policing

CHAIR - We'll move on to Traffic Policing.

Ms LOVELL - Minister, can you talk us through the make-up of the road safety task force teams that are funded out of the MAIB? And further to that, their functions or focus?

Comm HINE - I'll start off through the minister and then pass to Mr Higgins, who has responsibility for that. We've had that funding for quite a number of years. A number of police officers are funded through that, and their sole duty is to make our roads safer. And I have to say, they do an absolutely outstanding job, especially throughout COVID as well. It is a critical part of our policing.

As you probably realise, we are changing the way we do traffic policing and road safety as well, and they are part of that program. So, I'll go to Mr Higgins, who would have the breakdown and the cost. He sits on the Road Safety Advisory Council, which helps administer that money and the performance indicators through the Road Safety Advisory Council and the MAIB.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Thank you. The Road Safety Task Force has been in place since 1996. The funding has continued since that point. What it does is fund 16 police positions, and road safety equipment not just for those police, but for police across the state. The actual Road Safety Task Force members as we allocated them are four in the northern district, four in the western district and eight in the southern district.

These will still form part of our new road policing services from July. The equipment they have - which has been different over the years because of their duties more towards drink-and drug-driving and speeding - are specialised vans to do breathalysers and carry the equipment and so forth, all the speed detection devices they need, and the vehicles that are fit for purpose. They will still form our road policing services function going forward, and there will then be 68 people in total, including these 16 people.

Ms LOVELL - Thank you. Just a question about the performance information on page 230. I know the 2021 figures were impacted by COVID, and obviously there was a reduction in some of the traffic policing activities that would normally be underway. The number of random breath tests was down significantly, oral fluid tests was up slightly, but the number of drink and drug driving offenders doesn't seem to have changed very much. Is that an indicator that this number would've been higher if there had been the normal number of random breath tests, or does it indicate that isn't the way those offenders are really being caught? What explains that?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - That's a really interesting observation. With random breath tests, from 2018-19 into the 2019-20 period, we moved from the large, static sites you've traditionally seen in years past, to a model of a more targeted approach, to see if we could have a greater impact on catching. What we've seen is essentially we are catching the same number of people, so whether it's a mass site or whether we're targeting.

We're getting more drug drivers, but legislation change and equipment, technology has contributed to that. COVID had a massive impact on our ability to do random breath tests. In fact, we stopped them for well over a year, because the work health safety protocols we had to put in place were so significant at a site like that. It took so many more people. And we were using staff for COVID duties as well.

The outputs in relation to random breath tests and drug and drink driving are very similar. Over the last 10 years, I would say they have been very similar and almost plateaued with the strategy reviews. This is why we're moving to this dedicated road policing services, to solely dedicate staff to road policing, as opposed to the hybrid we've been doing for the last 10 years now, where they've been doing public order and road policing and COVID over the last two years. To see if we can have a greater impact, particularly with the current road toll in this calendar year, which is horrific.

Ms LOVELL - Fatal and serious injury crashes have gone up quite a bit in 2021. Do you have year-to-date figures for this year?

Comm HINE - Yes, we do. If you take fatal and serious crashes up to this moment, we're actually 13 per cent down, but we're 66 per cent up on fatal crashes. So that's where the discrepancy is. Again, we should all focus on our fatal crashes, because, you know, it's been 28 compared to 11. It is that significant. But if you combine that with serious injury crashes and fatal, we're actually down 13 per cent.

We started our policy work on how we were going to redo our road safety policing back in November. We did a research project, and that's where we're now refocusing, as in a dedicated traffic section, highway patrol. We've stopped doing cautions on offences as well. Minister Ferguson announced the speed cameras as well.

As a suite, we're dedicated to making sure we can reduce our fatal crashes. You probably read just recently that the Coroner released some findings about where drugs have been involved, and inattention has been involved as well, so we need to change the driving attitude of the community. We all play that part, and the better we can educate our community, the better off we're going to be. But we understand that education and law enforcement have a major influence on how we drive.

Ms LOVELL - We had some discussion with the infrastructure minister earlier in the week about this topic, and talked about some of the measures being put in through that department. I'm mindful there might be some sensitive information or some you may not want to share, but could you talk a bit more about the research you've done on those fatal incidents or the rise that we're seeing, and what measures might be changing to start to address those risk factors?

Comm HINE - Through the minister, before I hand over to Mr Higgins - yes, we look through every fatal crash. Mr Higgins gets a detailed report, and we always get a detailed report of what's going on. Obviously, the Coroner is the ultimate authority to determine the cause of that fatal crash, but we look at every one to see what we can do, what we can change.

We know there's the fatal five, and I don't need to name them. We all know drink driving, seat belts, inattention, speeding play a part. How do we combat those? How are we actually making sure our research looks at those issues, and how are we going to change that? That's where we're talking about marked versus unmarked cars - you know, always assume the car behind you is an unmarked police car.

We have an unmarked motorbike that goes around in each area. Sometimes they can't get out of the city area because someone's on their phone, someone's going through a red light, someone's not wearing their seatbelt or whatever. People should always assume that the motorbike beside you is an unmarked police motorbike. So, changing attitudes. If we had a magic bullet.

If we go back into the 1970s, we know seat belts had a massive effect on fatal crashes. Back in the 1970s we used to have about 150 fatal crashes, off the top of my head. When we introduced seat belts, it started to come down. When we introduced 0.08 and then 0.05 and random breath tests, it came down dramatically.

It's starting to plateau. Where's that next silver bullet? We know the technology in motor vehicles is getting better. In another five to 10 years, our vehicles are going to take over from us. We already know they assist us to be safer on our roads, and they are much safer. We know medical technologies are getting better, so what are we going to do in this intervening period while we're plateauing?

We certainly put our heads together and we worked with our districts and our Road Safety Advisory Committee as well, which ex-Deputy Commissioner Scott Tilyard chairs so we've got a good relationship with there. We make sure we are informed by research that we did back in November. So with that Mr Higgins might want to add a few things.

CHAIR - Thank you.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - So certainly the research over the last couple of years with the serious and fatal crashes have been overwhelming, as a third of them have been attributed to speed. Which is why we're concentrating on speed there, and why the cameras are important as an increase in capability as well.

The other components there are drug and alcohol, and traditionally we've been targeting those, and it's getting the balance right. So there is a perception that you won't be caught on the road. It's still reasonably in the surveys to say that you will be caught, but it is coming down, so it's not increasing.

That's part of the reason we're changing what we're doing and we'll be more visible on the road. So changing the balance of our covert/overt and the markings on our car. We're going to install a Highway Patrol with different vehicles we're using different to the fleet. So there'll be VW Passats, we've got a Skoda now being used in Bridgewater, and we're also increasing our Stinger fleet as well just to try to change our fleet around to see if we can do that better and people can actually see that.

One thing we've also done is we've reinstated, with the distribution of our Road Policing Areas - or RPAS as it is now - a traffic inspector. So that inspector will be a coordinator that's able to look at our policy, our deployments, and really intelligence and guide the districts. The districts will still operate their road policing areas in each region, but it's greater coordination and looking at it nationally as well.

The body of work that was done by our project officer was significant, looking right around the country, right around the world what models are there. What we've chosen with our numbers as well - it puts us at 4.9 per cent of our workforce, which is up around the highest in the country dedicated towards road policing.

Which was interesting in that space because every state can do it a little differently. The big states have a much larger footprint, so they can have anything up to 800 or 1000 staff dedicated to this. But they have different functions, they have escorts and all sorts of other things as well. We don't do that, that's done by other areas.

So changing that driver culture is the key. I think we've seen coming out of COVID-19 and some of the other states - and I won't name the states because it's not helpful - have had significant increases in their fatal and serious crashes as well. It is really significant, and they can't explain it either.

Ms LOVELL - I was going to ask that, whether it's a trend that's the same across the country.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Not across the country.

Ms LOVELL - Okay, just in some states?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - But there's three other states particularly where it's skyrocketed. They're looking at how they're doing things, and in some of those states - so we were relatively open in our state. Some of these other states were pretty well closed off, internally as well.

PUBLIC

So we're seeing that the drivers are probably a little bit more bold and it's not a good driving culture. I think we could all think of examples where you're driving and you see people pass you.

CHAIR - You see people doing ridiculous - yeah, just unbelievable.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - We can only - between the Commissioners - flash our lights so many times to try and impact that as well. I met with everyone of our Road Policing people in the last month. They are dedicated, they want to be out there. They know what they need to do, we just need to refocus them so they can solely do that.

Comm HINE - We are talking about that community attitude. Through the Report on Government Services, the survey that they do in relation to some of this attitude side of things still concerns us.

As in we're above the national average in relation to those who are surveyed to drive above the speed limits. You know, 65 per cent of Tasmanians said they did by more than 10 kilometres per hour, where the national average is 59. Why is it up so high?

CHAIR - How many Tasmanians believe they're better than average drivers? That's one of the things they test for, and is that still high?

Comm HINE - I haven't got that one there. When you felt that you might've been over the alcohol limit - you know, 7.6 per cent back in 2021-22 - this financial year - said 'yes they did', where the average is 5.8 across the nation. Without wearing a seat belt, 5.6 per cent of Tasmanians in the survey said they did, and the national average is 4.5 per cent. When you might have been impaired by medication or other drugs, 7.5 per cent of Tasmanians - this is this financial year - said they did, 4.4 per cent nationally.

CHAIR - And this is self-reporting?

Comm HINE - This is self-reporting.

CHAIR - So it's probably higher than that.

Comm HINE - And using the mobile phone it's sadly 36 per cent, but we're actually under the national average that said they'd still use a mobile phone while driving. We're 36 per cent, where the national average 37. So that attitudinal piece still needs to be done, and education to make sure people are getting the message.

But it's one of those things, when we get sick of saying it is when the community start to listen. We have tragic events, and you know if you've ever been to notify a family of a loved one deceased through a crash through one of these factors it is really sad, but we've got to still continue to get that message out there.

CHAIR - Can I just follow up on one little point?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Absolutely, thank you.

CHAIR - We were talking with minister Ferguson about motorcycle overrepresentation in fatalities.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, especially because they have been heavily represented. It's 31 per cent more people killed or seriously injured this year.

CHAIR - Yes. One of the questions that was asked is when a motorcyclist is involved in a serious, and particularly a fatal crash, and they do interact with a barrier of some sort - I'm not talking about a roadside barriers, like wire rope or solid - is that recorded as part of the investigation and is that information available in our motorcycle crashes to say 'yes, the fatalities hit a solid barrier or a wire or a rope or whatever'?

Comm HINE - I'll hand over to Mr Higgins, but when our people go to investigate a fatal crash all those factors come into account. Normally it starts off with the primary causal factor is speed, and then maybe it's - whether you'd call it a contributing factor - if you hit anything at speed is going to cause a fatal crash. So we do record that, we do present that to evidence before the coroner. But, you know, the overwhelming evidence about these warning barriers, saving lives for people not going across the other side, is certainly overwhelming. But Mr Higgins might like to comment on the motorbikes.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Yes, through the minister. This always gets a lot of discussion in the Road Safety Advisory Council because it's well represented by the motorcycle peak body.

And I can tell you that the seven people that have sadly died over this last year, there haven't been any that have run into the wire barrier or the concrete. Which doesn't mean that it's not a consideration when roads are being designed and upgrades are being done.

CHAIR - So it's interactions with other vehicles this year, is that what it's been predominately?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Not predominately, a combination. Yes, there have been crashes into vehicles, there have been going off the side of the road. Not tourists, as everybody thinks, that the tourists are the ones that crash all the time. It tends to be - look, some of the fatalities that we have are medical issues, but that's not determined till the coroner makes a decision later.

But they are looked at, and as the Commissioner says, when they're investigated by our Crash Investigation Service, they take that all into account to provide that evidence to the coroner. If it's not something that goes to the coroner it's recorded to inform road design, deployments for our staff as well into the future.

CHAIR - I've actually been saved by a wire road barrier, I'm sure, in the Midland, when a car lost control on the other side of the road, hit wire rope on the outside, hit wire rope beside us, and we had nowhere to go except over a cliff ourselves. I saw how it worked; I literally saw how it turned the car around and put it back on the road. The woman was upset and we needed to call the ambulance because we were basically first on the scene. Luckily an off-duty ambulance officer and an off-duty cop pulled up, and an off-duty nurse also pulled up. So that was sort of handy.

PUBLIC

Ms LOVELL - It's uncanny the number of times you hear of that happening, an off-duty someone are the first responders. I don't know if it's a Tasmanian thing.

CHAIR - I was trying to stop her hyperventilating, that was what I was trying to do. I couldn't find a paper bag, but anyway. I've personally seen how they work. I know that was a matter we said we'd follow up with police in terms of their investigation.

Ms LOVELL - It was the year to date figure we were -

CHAIR - Yes. We get that, did we?

Ms LOVELL - The Assistant Commissioner might have been getting that.

Mrs PETRUSMA - For?

CHAIR - Serious casualty and crashes including fatalities, and then the breakdown.

Ms LOVELL - Yes, fatal and serious injury crashes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So is it 5 June, the serious casualties is 133, people seriously injured 105, and people killed is 28 as at 5 June.

Ms LOVELL - Thank you.

Mr DUIGAN - Chair, I've got -

CHAIR - Sure. No, I put you off.

Mr DUIGAN - It one that I was derailed on.

CHAIR - Yes.

Mr DUIGAN - Which is around antisocial driving and investments into curbing that and cracking down on hooning and other bits and pieces which are, for people who live in these communities that are badly affected, such a tedious issue. So I'm interested.

CHAIR - The former member for Windermere used to talk about this all the time. It's obviously a problem in Windermere.

Mr DUIGAN - We have our issues in that area, and I'll be pleased to see - I am pleased to see continuing investment in technology that's being used in this area.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thank you, and hooning is an enormous menace to Tasmanians, and at worst, it can have devastating consequences on our roads, and speeding and driving dangerously puts the driver and others at risk of serious injury and death, and the anxiety-inducing sound of the visual impact of high-risk driving behaviour can have an unsettling effect on other drivers and on communities.

Hooning offences and the associated dangers presented to the community are a primary concern for Tasmania Police and the police have advised me that they are continually

undertaking proactive enforcement strategies aimed at combatting hooning problems, including a mixture of high-visibility policing, plainclothes patrols where police and civilian use unmarked vehicles, as well as motorcycles to intercept offenders.

Up to 31 March this year, 458 vehicles had been clamped or confiscated, and police are continuing to explore strategies to safely target hooning offences, including by the use of drone technology. What drone use enables is remote observations of offending and support following up investigations and the prosecution of offenders, and they also assist Tasmania Police in accessing remote areas to pursue offenders.

So Tasmania Police now operate 30 drones. They have 29 trained pilots and they've undertaken 935 aerial operations across the state thanks to the \$400 000 we've already invested. But this budget makes a further investment of \$460 000, which will see an increase in operational demand for drones because they are a valuable and vital resource in our fight against crime, as well as searching for missing people and helping to make our communities safe.

Crash investigators utilise the data from drones in the reconstruction of crash scenes in calculating vehicle speeds, and they're being used to track hooning vehicles. This drone technology recently assisted Tasmanian Police to seize five motorised bikes over a week as part of a targeted crackdown on antisocial and illegal riding in the greater Bridgewater area. They're also undertaking proactive patrols across the state to target hooning and providing information through the media.

The best way to stop hooning in an area is if people actually contact police or Crime Stoppers and let them know the registration number or who is driving. But they can also take footage and upload it now. We've got that capability on our website where people can upload footage, and we've actually had successful prosecutions over the last few weeks from people uploading their Dash Cam footage or other footage that they've taken. So please send it through. We'll use it and prosecute with it.

In regards to the drones, I was at Kingston a couple of weeks ago, Kingston Police Station, and that morning they'd used drone technology to find four offenders in Pelverata who'd actually committed a crime and were hiding in the river and they actually managed to track them in the bush and find them and charge them. Because they've got infrared technology and everything else. So it's really great that they're being used and actually decreasing our crime.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you.

CHAIR - Any other questions on traffic?

Mr GAFFNEY - Just a point of interest; what's the average time for somebody to have their wheels clamped? Is it a month, or is it less than?

Mrs PETRUSMA - De-clamped?

Mr GAFFNEY - Or does it depend?

PUBLIC

Comm HINE - It can be seven days or 28 days. It all depends what offence has been committed, or if we think that the person may reoffend, we'll actually seize the vehicle and put it in a compound.

CHAIR - And crush it. I know you're not allowed that, despite the former member for Windermere's desire.

Mr GAFFNEY - Have you had many come back for a second or third time? Has it been effective with the ones that have had it clamped for a period of time? Do you get many repeat offenders?

Comm HINE - It is absolutely effective. It's time consuming, it's costly for us, but it is effective, and I'm not sure if Mr Higgins has got the second and third offending statistics in front of him, but yes, we do get people come along, and some people, that's quite traumatic for them, to lose their car and not have it for a period of time. So it is a really effective legislation. Mr Higgins, have you got those figures in front of you?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Not for the repeat offenders, but we - the year-to-date for the financial year, we've seized or clamped 458 cars around the state; 713 the year before, so it's significant, the number of cars.

CHAIR - Have you got a regional breakdown on those?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - It can go from seven days at one and 28 days, 190 for the last financial year. 90 days, one car. Three months, 55 cars. Six months, 79.

Comm HINE - But which districts?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Districts, yes. Nine months, 210. 12 months, 17. Indefinite, 147 cars just in that financial year, and automatic forfeiture - so that will be a repeat offender - 13.

CHAIR - Do you have the regional breakdown there, Minister?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, I don't have it.

Mr GAFFNEY - And many that are old, grey-haired ladies? Or just, not really.

CHAIR - Or bald men, perhaps?

Comm HINE - We have had older people that you wouldn't expect, but mostly it is the younger male, I think, anecdotally would be the person that we're clamping the vehicle. If we seize that vehicle and we make reasonable enquiries, that they haven't come and collected it, then we'll sell that vehicle.

Mr GAFFNEY - Thank you.

CHAIR - Minister, did you want to share something?

PUBLIC

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. I've got another answer to a question on notice, Chair, if I can share. Again, it's with the Parks portfolio. In regard to Parks and Wildlife Service, current vacancies as at 8 June 2022 that we are currently recruiting for, there are 49 active recruitment processes currently being undertaken, and they are at various stages of recruitment. Many of these positions are being filled via acting or fixed-term arrangements.

It is also important to know that some of these vacancies are for seasonal or part-time roles, so are for less than one full-time equivalent. So the total active vacancies in the North is 14. In the North West, it's 13. In the South, it's 18. State-wide it's four, and total is 49.

CHAIR - Thank you.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Does that answer all the questions?

CHAIR - I think that's covered everything.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorry, no, I think there's still -

CHAIR - There wasn't a breakdown of whether they're part-time or full-time in that.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I've got permanent. Sorry, I can provide permanent. In the North, there's nine permanent positions. North West, seven positions. South there's six positions. Statewide, two, which is a total of 24. Fixed-term, it's five in the North, six in the North West, 12 in the South, and two statewide, giving a total of 25. The 24 permanent plus the 25 fixed-term makes the 49 total active vacancies. Many of these positions are currently filled by acting or fixed-term arrangements, but they're currently being recruited for.

CHAIR - I think that covers everything.

Ms LOVELL - I think that covered that question. There was still some other questions around the field officer.

CHAIR - Yes.

Ms LOVELL - Yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - And I've already read in those two field officer positions.

Ms LOVELL - No. Also on notice was the number of field officer positions across the state and how many of those were identified Aboriginal positions.

CHAIR - I think you did provide that, didn't you?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I did provide that answer.

CHAIR - No, she did provide that.

Ms LOVELL - Sorry, I might not have written it down. I thought I hadn't got the identified positions.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I'm going to have to -

Ms LOVELL - I don't think I got the total, but I might not have written it down. So if it's been read in, that's fine.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorry, I'm going to have to go back and - 22 identified positions in total. There's four Aboriginal field officers; three are Band 2, one is Band 3. But there's 22 identified positions in total.

Ms LOVELL - Yes. I'd also asked how many field officer non-identified Aboriginal positions there were. So there's four identified positions out of how many field officer positions?

Mrs PETRUSMA - So what we now need is the - how many field positions there are that are non-identified?

Ms LOVELL - Yes. And the breakdown between Band 2 and 3 for all of those field officer positions.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Band 2 and 3. Did we get all that?

Ms LOVELL - We've got it ready to send through if we need to.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thank you.

CHAIR - If there's no more on that, we'll move to State Emergency Services, and do we need to change anyone at the table?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, we will need to.

Output Group 4 - Emergency Management

4.1 State Emergency Services

Mrs PETRUSMA - Right. I welcome to the table Dermot Barry, Chief Officer of the Tasmanian Fire Service, as well as Leon Smith who is the Acting Director of the State Emergency Service.

CHAIR - Sure. Meg, I'll hand straight to you.

Ms LOVELL - Thank you. The first one I think I flagged earlier was actually in relation to the review of the - targeted review of the Emergency Management Act. So there might've been someone different for that one, but.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorry, I'll just bring him back to the table as well. Deputy Secretary Mandy Clarke.

Ms LOVELL - Okay. The targeted review that's been undertaken of the Emergency Management Act including the public consultation period, which closed on 2 April, DPfEM is the agency responsible for delivering the review. The terms of reference of the review states

that it's also that agency and you, Minister, who are responsible for administering the Act. That has the appearance of being reviewers reviewing themselves in that sense, that it's an internal process. Was consideration given to an external review to be done considering some of the elements in the scope of the targeted review outlined in an assessment of internal functioning. Was consideration given to have an external review?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well the government has committed to undertake a targeted review of the Tasmanian Emergency Management Act, applying the lessons learned during the COVID-19 emergency. The review is underway. It's being managed by DPAC but it really is whole of government because Department of Health, DPAC, and every other agency's that's been involved in this is also taking part in this review. So, yes.

Ms WEBB - Can I just pick up on that? I think you just gave me information that was different to what my understanding was. I understood from the terms of reference that it was DPFEM that was the responsible agency. But is it DPAC who's actually responsible for the coverage of the review would you say?

Mrs PETRUSMA - What I'm saying, DPFEM is managing the review, but it's a whole of government review over the different agencies that were involved in the COVID-19 emergency. Ms Clarke might be able to provide further information.

Ms CLARKE - Through you, minister. Yes, so from a whole of government perspective there's a steering committee that's got a much broader representation and that is actually overseeing that review process. The DPFEM lead person does sit inside DPFEM, but of course like other legislative reform projects they can actually work with the steering committee.

Ms WEBB - Right. So consideration wasn't given to it being an external piece of work? So that there was that sort of removed - one step removed from the people who were actually undertaking the functions that are being reviewed? No?

Ms CLARKE - Through you, minister. The actual review itself was quite a targeted review in relation to COVID-19 responses. So inputs into that I suspect have actually come from multiple sources outside of DPFEM who are also interacting. So it was quite a targeted piece of work.

Ms WEBB - In terms of the review, the timeframes which were stated in relation to it, it said that there'd be a final report by mid-2022. Is that still on its way, or do we have a specific time to expect that report? When it comes will it be made public?

Mrs PETRUSMA - DPFEM is still working to deliver the report to government with recommendations by mid-2022.

Ms WEBB - Okay. And in terms of the submission that were received that closed on 2 April, will those submissions be made public on the DPFEM website at some point in the process as per most consultations?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. They will be made public.

PUBLIC

Ms WEBB - Thank you. Are there any proposed legislative amendments that might be - that might eventuate from the review? Will that go through the normal process of being released as an exposure draft for public consultation before coming to parliament?

Mrs PETRUSMA - If it's proposing changes to the bill usually we do release those as consultation draft with the bill. But different agencies are definitely being involved in the review.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. Just wanted to have confirmation of those bits. Unless anyone wants to follow up on questions related to that matter, I can move onto another area. Doesn't look like it. Just to clarify too, in relation to the Sorell Emergency Services Hub, will we deal with that in this line, in the capital investment line, or in the fire commission line?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Nope, we can do it here if you want to. That's fine.

Ms WEBB - What's the preference for people? Here?

Mr DUIGAN - Fire away.

Ms WEBB - Okay. I'll come to that in a moment, then. In the budget papers on this line allocation on page 236, table 9.10 from the revenue - the revenue from the preparation table, Output group 4.1 stated that -

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorry, I missed the pages that's all.

Ms WEBB - Page 236. Where we see the revenue from appropriations across this Budget and the forward estimates. We have a minimal increase this year in 2022-23, and a decrease in 2023-24. The footnote tells us that reflects completion of funding for regional emergency management planning and development. It might be a good opportunity to outline provide more detail about that. Then perhaps be able to give us insight into how the allocation here is broken up in terms of funding the activities that DS is responsible for.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So I'll ask Mr Smith to answer, but I reckon the decrease would be because of the Flood Mapping Project.

Ms WEBB - It said the completion of funding for regional emergency management planning and development.

Mr SMITH - So, thank you. Through you, minister. The Budget there that's forecast does not include a budgetary allocation for the regional emergency management plan as in the - that's during those years.

Ms WEBB - So that's the amount that drops away?

Mr SMITH - Yes.

Ms WEBB - And that's what that full drop there is from 2022-23 to 2023-24, that represents that entire -

Mr SMITH - Yes, that's correct.

Ms WEBB - Okay. The allocation then that's sitting there, this year obviously in 2022-23 we've still got that as part of the mix. The other things that are represented by that allocation, how does that break up into the different functions?

Mr SMITH - That's the establishment and the ongoing funding for the Flood Policy Unit with in-state emergency service which includes the specific budgetary allocation for our community protection planners which is funded in the forward estimates. The Budget there denotes the establishment and the ongoing funding of the Flood Policy Unit from an emergency management perspective, and within that as we've indicated there's a reduction in that funding given no budget moving forward specific to the regional emergency management planners.

Ms WEBB - Okay, thank you. So in terms of the activities that are described here, I'm looking on p230 now, the description of this output group, 4.1. 'Road Crash Rescue, Emergency Risk Management and Disaster Mitigation, preparedness, responsiveness, recovery from emergency events, Development and training of volunteers'. Are all those functions captured within this funding?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Which page are we on again?

Ms WEBB - I was on page 230 where there's the description of this output group 4, State Emergency Services. So those elements described there as 'activities undertaken', are they part of this funding on this line item that I'm looking at on page 236? Or are they in the funding that sits perhaps in the other budget paper in relation to the fire commission?

Mr SMITH - My understanding is they sit within that Budget line item.

Ms WEBB - Within that Budget line item. So those activities are all captured there. Is there a breakdown about how then that funding splits into those different functions, or is that an awkward split to have to provide?

Mr SMITH - No, this is specific funding and allocation in regard to the establishment of the Sorell emergency services hub with ongoing funding -

Ms WEBB - That's not in this line, though. Is that captured in the same line, or is that a different capital -

CHAIR - The operations of it would be in here.

Ms WEBB - The operations but not the capital investment.

Mr SMITH - Not the initial \$420 000.

Ms WEBB - Okay. That's fine. We can move on to that, perhaps. The Sorell Emergency Services Hub has a total cost of \$12 million, and again I'm looking -

CHAIR - Do you want to do that under CIP, as capital investment?

Ms WEBB - Well we can. That's what I asked a moment ago, where will we deal with it, and it was indicated to me here was fine.

CHAIR - We can do it now, if you like.

Ms WEBB - I think it's detailed in budget paper two as a key deliverable on page 118. Operational line, Sorell Emergency Services Hub. There's an allocation in 2022-23 of \$420 000, but I believe the overall cost there is \$12 million. In 2022-23 we have \$3 million; that's the capital part. And then \$5.11 million in 2023-24.

In terms of that full \$12 million, have we already spent some element of that, and therefore what is allocated in this budget paper across these next two years is the remainder of the \$12 million?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. The Sorell Emergency Services Hub is going to be one of those rare developments that'll actually be delivered 18 months ahead of what is across the forward Estimates. They've been doing exemplary work with the construction. It'll be close to being finished at the end of this year, and then fit-out, so we're hoping to open it by first quarter next year. It'll be well and truly done and dusted, and we've had approval to bring forward the funding to finish it off. Myself, the chief officer and Mr Smith have been down there recruiting. In fact, tomorrow night our first 60 recruits are being inducted at the Police Academy. They're getting the training so that when it's ready to go at the end of this year or early next year, they'll be kitted up, ready to go. We have 30 TFS volunteers, we've got SES volunteers. Their vehicles will be there and everything else.

CHAIR - The minister will be there to cut the ribbon.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Don't you worry, I'm going to be there. I've been there for most of it.

Ms WEBB - I was going to ask how the hub was going to be staffed. You've just described 60 new volunteers - 30 TFS, 30 SES.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, 30 TFS and 30 SES.

Ms WEBB - And they're new volunteers specifically to staff the hub?

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's right, the volunteers. And because we've managed to get so many hubs they'll be able to establish a 24/7 roster. These volunteers are all people who live and work in the Sorell area, close by, and it means it will be on a roster basis 24/7, to man for road crash rescue, fires, tsunamis or whatever else that might happen.

Ms WEBB - Will there be a component of career staffing there as well, either from the Fire service or -

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, Police is going in there. The Sorell Police Station was actually built in 1966, so it's quite old. It is an old house that has had add-ons. It is just a very old building, totally not fit for purpose and, because we've been increasing police numbers in the area, it has way expanded out of that facility. We'll have 16 police officers going to the new Sorell Emergency Services Hub.

This is the first hub of its kind in the state. It's purpose-built. We're going to have police, TFS and SES all together in the one building, in recognition of the fact that it's a growing area. Sorell and the southern beaches area has one of the fastest growing populations in Tasmania. Also, the closest SES unit is actually in Mornington, and while there are great fire stations surrounding it - Midway Point, Dodges Ferry, Orielson - Sorell itself didn't have a fire station. So now they have a fire station, they have a SES unit and the police will have another new police station.

Ms WEBB - Was the recruitment and training of those volunteers all included in the \$12 million as set-up costs, and now, going forward, what will the operational costs be?

Mrs PETRUSMA - The operating costs will be met by the DPFEM.

Ms WEBB - And what will those be? Across-the-board estimates, as a figure?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's part of the DPFEM's budget going forwards for the operating costs.

Ms WEBB - Where in the Budget will that sit as a line item? In 4.1 State Emergency Services, for example, or in the Fire Commission?

Ms CLARKE - With the Sorell hub, the \$12 million that you're referring to is capital expenditure only. The operational budget is separate to the \$420 000 that you're also referring to, which is a new initiative that the Government funded.

Ms WEBB - I'm sorry, I'm having trouble hearing you.

Ms CLARKE - The \$420 000 that you also referred to is additional capital investment into that site, to support that site. The operational expenditure I'll leave to Operations to discuss, but it would be normally picked up out of their current arrangements in terms of allocating for a new site. I'll just hand to the operations.

Mr BARRY - Yes, that will be the situation. This for us is a plus-one. We have existing resources around that, and we're establishing a whole new presence. As we move this into 'business as usual', once we've recruited and trained, established the volunteers, put our fleet of vehicles there as well, then the Fire commission will pick that up as we move forward.

The good news is that the cost of the average volunteer brigade is significantly less than if we were to crew it with a day crew or 24 hours.

Ms WEBB - Sure. It's going to be funded for its operations going forward within the existing envelope of things, not pulling out a separate amount to identify that's for that.

CHAIR - Can I just clarify, will there be career fire fighters stationed there?

Mr BARRY - No, certainly not in the immediate short term. We consistently review what we call our 'resource to risk' project. Essentially, we look at the different areas and the changing demographics and the risks associated with that, and then we change our delivery model based on those experiences. At this stage, we're confident there's a sufficient crew of

volunteers there, and their availability will be enough to meet the demands of servicing that community.

Ms WEBB - How does the practicalities of actually managing that team of volunteers work? My understanding is that there'll normally be a couple of career staff in each district, and then multiple volunteer groups, and the career staff have a role in coordinating, training, staying in touch with the volunteer groups. Who are the career staff that deal with this, and where are they located?

Mr BARRY - That will belong to our district officer who operates out of Hobart, but that's a region itself. Each of our districts has its own district officer. We have a dedicated district officer and a field officer who are there to support the volunteers, so they'll be responsible - in fact, they're working with us now on the training and everything else. Once it's established, they'll be the people who roll out on a regular basis, check the volunteers are going all right, address any issues they might raise, and move it forward.

Ms WEBB - Out of the Hobart office?

Mr BARRY - Yes, exactly.

Ms WEBB - Okay. Thank you.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Madam chair, I have some pictures I can show if people are interested. It has been erected from the inside and all the walls will start going around it very soon.

Mr Smith would like to outline some of recruiting strategy on the SES part as well.

Mr SMITH - Thank you. This has been a new initiative. The concept of an emergency services hub, as the minister has indicated, is new for us. Prior to actually commencing the recruiting strategy, we've looked at this holistically and jointly between TFS and SES, as to what it looks like through the lens of a volunteer who has a desire to join our respective organisations.

The Government has contributed significant funds for the establishment of a volunteer strategy unit that comprises both TFS and SES staffers. In conjunction with them, we've undertaken a methodical process going into the Sorell community with targeted recruiting, approaching people who live and work within the community, knowing that the service we provide is 24/7. Whereas, traditionally, we've looked for people within community generally. We see this trend within volunteerism, where we have an acceptable after-hours response, but during business hours it's actually quite difficult.

This is the first iteration of a new strategy whereby we have a targeted approach within community to clearly define our requirements, but also to support the respective volunteer members during their onboarding journey. And tomorrow night, as the minister has indicated, we've got 60 members - 30 from each, which is significant. From an SES perspective, a membership of 30 to critical road rescue services within the Sorell area, where there is currently no presence to do that, is a significant number of people, a very healthy unit for us to sustain.

PUBLIC

Ms WEBB - Can you just provide us with some demographics around that newly recruited group for the TFSN from the SES?

Mr SMITH - Absolutely. So, during the open day, we had up to 64 people attend and we had a number of existing members who had a desire to want to transfer. We'll have 60 members attend tomorrow night with an even split between SES and TFS with a gender mix of 49 to 51 per cent which is fantastic and that is equally shared across both TFS and SES. That was a conscious effort on my behalf to actively encourage that openness for anybody to attend and if people have the luxury of time and something appeals to them to want to join the organisation, we've made every endeavour to accommodate them.

CHAIR - What are their age?

Mr SMITH - No, we don't have a restriction on age. We don't have a restriction on people that may have some type of impairment. We actively encourage people to come along. From an SES perspective, there is a national fitness for role project that's been undertaken, and we have assessments to be able to determine people's ability to be able to undertake certain tasks. So, part of the process to determine suitability for certain tasks is an assessment. We see that as a duty of care to these respective members to determine what they can do and what they can't do. Within the broader organisation, if they can't perform a function such as road crash rescue or storm and flood response, we have incident management units that have been established where they can actually provide oversight in that command and control function during emergency response.

CHAIR - The average age of that 60 people?

Mr SMITH - The average age, it's slightly younger. The average age within the State Emergency Service is 47. We have 575 existing members. It's a slightly younger age. It's about nine years younger in this cohort. That's what we saw on the day. We actually attracted a younger cohort of people.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We went down there and there was two days that we had recruitment days and there was a lot of people coming forward of all ages and all abilities and all interests. On the day, they were showing a clear different workstreams and different units people could undertake. But just because you might not be on the frontline, there is a lot of support work that we need too. It was good to see people who were coming there and just not everyone wants to -

CHAIR - At the frontline or?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It was like - but they're willing to work or do other things behind the scenes. It was clearly explained, there is the different pathways, and this is the different units that you can undertake, and it is fantastic.

Ms WEBB - This is my next question - thank you.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I think this is where we're getting to because we've employed six people to actually support our volunteers right across because we have to remember that the TFS and SES is a volunteer-driven organisation. It has some career over the top, but we've got our 5400 volunteers which are there around the state who help do the work.

So, we've now employed six people to specifically look after the volunteers, whether it is recruitment or retainment or just to work with them and that's why we've also got grant programs to support our volunteers as well. So, we've invested a lot of money and resources into looking after the volunteers for both the TFS and SES, and whether it's a female-cut uniforms for the first time, it's just we're trying to do different things to get new people and more importantly, retain people.

Ms WEBB - Just to go back on that question about location, I understand the rationale you've provided for why the decision was made to locate in Sorell, but the same rationale would certainly apply to a few other areas that come to mind. Kingborough would be one but that would be relevant to me at the end of my electorate. So, declarations aside of electorate interest.

CHAIR - Don't worry, we've had talks about things.

Ms WEBB - You know, Kingborough would have been another prime location to consider for this sort of hub. So, what was the determining factor for the site in Sorell and is there an expectation that this is a pilot that will be replicated in similar locations that have similar leads?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Sorell didn't have a fire station. So, it is a big town with a huge growing population and the whole -

CHAIR - I think you explained earlier.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. The Tasman Peninsula is a growing area, so it didn't have a police station and the nearest SES unit was a long way away. Especially with the causeway, there could be times where an SES unit, if there's an accident on a causeway, it would have had to go all the way through Richmond and everything else and then through Sorell just in time. I'm conscious we've got the member for Rumney here. You know, it can be quite tied up. So, it was a big gap.

Ms WEBB - I'm certainly not quibbling with Sorell's being warranted.

Mrs PETRUSMA - It was the biggest gap we had in the state. Kingborough, I've already had discussions with the department that I want Kingborough on the Strategic Asset Management Plan going forward.

Ms WEBB - Good to hear, minister. Very good to hear.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So it's nothing to do with my Franklin electorate.

Mr BARRY - Minister, if I may, just in relation to Kingborough and obviously an interest of yours, but we have a very healthy volunteer brigade of 60-odd volunteers who actually do roster as well. So, they provide a service 24/7 which is great because often the challenge for volunteers is that day shift, you have Monday to Friday, 9 to 5. They have worked out and recruited locally to make sure that people are available over those 24 hours and the recent storm event provided great support to the SES as well in the Kingborough area. It's certainly an area - we're conscious of the location of the station that we are in now and they are

landlocked in a sense. Suburbia has grown up around what was once a remote area, and it is on our radar.

That doesn't mean necessarily a transition to a different model. I think the volunteering model - certainly what we discussed here - is combined where we recruit specific volunteers who TFS, SES and work together. I think that is the model of the future and especially in those inner urban areas that would work very well, and the intent now is to explore that further as we move forward.

CHAIR - Would be interesting to see if it can work in remote areas like the west coast down to Huon, I know there's challenges down there too.

Mr BARRY - As the Minister touched on, one of the priorities which we are working on now is recruiting and retaining our volunteers. It's an open secret, not only in Tasmania but across Australia - in fact around the world - on the challenges of retaining volunteer numbers that are continuing to slide. So, the government have been pretty generous with us and supporting us to establish a volunteer support group and the intent is to grow that as we move forward as well and make sure that we can grow the pool of volunteers and also retain the existing volunteer pool and then look to recruit younger healthier people as well.

Ms WEBB - That was well anticipated for my next question which was about volunteer recruitment but importantly retention and whether you are seeing any patterns about retention in regard to the length of time that you're having people stay with you and then perhaps move on. There is very valid reasons that people might move on and that's understandable, but what are you seeing in terms of the retention patterns there?

Mr BARRY - Through the minister. Traditionally, we know there's a churn and it can be 15 to 20 per cent in the first two years. So, we will recruit people. They will either turn up, it's not for them, it's not what they thought or for whatever reason. We know if we keep people for more than five years, then generally we will keep them for 15 to 20. That's kind of how the demographic works.

One of the things we are targeting around retention specifically is ensuring we engage with them earlier because sometimes there's an issue where you will join a local brigade, especially the more remote bridges, and initially can't get their training and other bits and pieces and people lose momentum. So, it's really important that we engage them early, give them the training but get them engaged and stimulated, if you like, over those first two years. Then, generally, that's the key.

We hold them that long; they tend to roll through the service and stay with us. It's specifically around the retention piece or, excuse me, about retaining people as our new recruits, that's an important part of it. We also have awards and recognitions for our long serving volunteers as well. There's a 10-year award, a 15-year award and so on, up to 50 years. It's just a great moment when you go to a station and present 50 years' service to people. It's extraordinary.

Ms WEBB - I have seen it with the TFS.

Mr BARRY - Yes. It's amazing the time that people put in.

PUBLIC

Ms WEBB - In relation to that, because there's often a focus around trying to get young people involved and I imagine that your volunteers need to be 18?

Mr BARRY - Yes.

Ms WEBB - Is there consideration about a junior program or something like that?

Mrs PETRUSMA - There is a cadet program. Yes.

Ms WEBB - So you can engage younger teenagers. Because if you get them interested, then I suppose you've got the -

Mrs PETRUSMA - I've been to Rokeby and attended the cadet program there and there was a great-grandfather, a grandfather, a father and a couple of their kids. So, it was fantastic to see. Plus, sisters and mothers, it was a whole family.

CHAIR - My kids used to participate in that, the five championships do the highs and stuff. Used to get blown off my feet almost by the hose. She was so little.

Mrs PETRUSMA - At Cape Barren Island we've also got a cadet program that's going very well there. We are trying in different areas where we see the benefit of running a cadet program. When you go to the firefighting championships, the volunteer firefighting championships in Launceston, you know, there's a lot of juniors that take part in that.

Ms WEBB - They're very motivated.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, it's great to see.

Ms WEBB - Is there anything that you wanted to mention in relation to the impact of COVID-19 and as we're coming out of that period, the impact of that on the volunteer cohort for the services?

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's really had minimal impact. Because we've got so many volunteers, it hasn't had hardly any impact at all. In fact, our volunteers have really stepped up, especially in the SES. Our SES volunteers have been magnificent because they're assisted in a lot of areas, whether it's been delivering RAT tests and doing checks on houses etc. I applaud the great work of our volunteers, 'cause during this time they've stepped up and assisted in so many areas that is not their normal business.

CHAIR - They also run those blood tests from the aged care facility in Penguin and Ulverstone that night to get those results back really quickly.

Mr SMITH - It's fantastic.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. It's because we've got so many volunteers. We've been able to - you know, 'cause some of the older - some in their 70s I've met, they've said, 'Look, you know, darling, I haven't been doing as much as I used to.' That's understandable. But they're still willing to help - they've been offering a lot of moral support and doing other things and what they could.

PUBLIC

Mr SMITH - Minister, if I may. During COVID-19, both from TFS and SES's perspective, we monitored very closely our capability and capacity, and really proud of the fact that we didn't lose a brigade or a unit's capability to roll out to deliver critical services. We did lose numbers due to being COVID-19 positive but also close contacts. Others, given the age demographic, through choice of their own - we supported them in this - chose to just step away for a period of time, given their vulnerabilities to COVID-19.

But, yes, very proudly, we managed to sustain frontline operational service delivery for that period. That's in addition to the support to Tasmania Police for COVID-19 compliance checking, a significant number of hours, which was a great opportunity of collaboration across, you know, DPFEM.

Ms WEBB - I'm going to move on from volunteers now unless people have questions.

CHAIR - No, we need to move on. We've got a few other people with questions as well.

Ms WEBB - Okay. We can move to someone else for a bit, that's okay.

CHAIR - I want to ask about the - obviously there's a wage case with firefighters.

Ms WEBB - Is that in the State Fire Commission? Is that another line? Because we're still in SES?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, it's when we get to the State Fire Commission.

CHAIR - Oh, it'll be under there, all right.

Ms WEBB - We'll get to the Fire Commission.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

CHAIR - Sorry, you had one?

Ms LOVELL - Yes, I've got one about the incident management operation agreement.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That is TFS, is it? State Fire Commission? That's State Fire Commission too, the IMT.

Ms LOVELL - TFS has been in negotiations with the CPSU for around 18 months on the new incident management operation agreement. This agreement is to cover staff who undertake planned burning and staff incident management teams within the TFS. The negotiations have stalled at the moment.

My question is what reasons are there for refusing to extend existing working conditions such as some of those around fatigue management which are available to career firefighters and Parks and Wildlife Service employees to staff working in the incident management teams during fire response and planned burning activities? Given that this workforce is essentially a volunteer workforce, what impact will failure to finalise this agreement have on capabilities for the upcoming fire season?

PUBLIC

Mrs PETRUSMA - You're saying that people - a volunteer workforce -

Ms LOVELL - Well, they're undertaking this work in addition to their substantive role.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Oh, okay, so -

Ms LOVELL - So they're volunteering to do that.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, I'll ask Ms Clarke to answer these questions.

Ms CLARKE - Through you, minister, I can make some comment and then perhaps refer to the Chief. My understanding, having been involved in it as well is that we have progressed to an offer stage. I don't think that we have come to a stall in that sense. We have been working through this process quite actively since late February, early March this year.

That has resulted in quite close work with a team of people both from the department and, of course, the team of people that are involved. It is correct to say that it's voluntary in terms of it's a voluntary signing up for inoperability in the sense when an incident occurs. Our understanding of the status of that work as at today is that DPFEM have made an offer to the employees, and we are just waiting to hear from the CPSU union to settle any outcomes. We understand to the best of our knowledge it has been put to the members. Chief, I'm not sure if you'd like to add any further thing to that.

Mr BARRY - What I would say is that those group of employees are non-operational. Essentially, they're people who do things like our fire analysis and those kinds of things. When we get large fires, they provide invaluable support to us and we value the work they do and it's important to us as we move forward. These people do it on a voluntary basis, so some opt in, some don't, and we try and manage it that way.

We do have an existing agreement and we have written to the CPSU with a new agreement or offering a new agreement. To date, they haven't responded to that. I know they were out at the rally today, and I think - I suspect that they want to continue to negotiate, and we're happy to do that. There're no barriers to that. We're keen to get this over the line to - it's needless to say, I'm sure, but we value all our people, not just those who wear the uniform, but those who support as well. We're keen to get this agreed to and move forward as soon as we can.

Ms LOVELL - Okay. I'm sure they'll be pleased to hear that. Also, a question about funding for the Home Fire Risk program. Is this appropriate?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Home Fire Risk? That'll be State Fire Commission, yes.

CHAIR - Can I, while you're looking, perhaps ask how many road crash rescues you've attended this year?

Mr SMITH - So from a State Emergency Service perspective?

CHAIR - Yes.

Mr SMITH - So as you know, we deliver road crash rescue services from 27 locations in rural areas of the state. Annually, the average attendance is between 4 and 500. As we've heard earlier, the number of motor vehicle accidents has remained quite constant. From an SES perspective this year, it's following that normal trend of attendance, and we expect to hit that 460 mark at the end of the financial year, currently sitting around the 420 to 430 attendances across the state.

CHAIR - How do you check in with your volunteers?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I've got 126.

Mr SMITH - Sorry, just to clarify, that's actually extrications quoted in this, rather than attendance at motor vehicle accidents.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Right.

Mr SMITH - So we'll attend - we attend up to 500 motor vehicle accidents. A number of those, obviously, are extrications as depicted in this.

CHAIR - Yes, right.

Mr SMITH - Yes.

CHAIR - In rural areas, the risk of attending a car crash for someone that a volunteer may know is very real.

Mr SMITH - Yes, yeah, absolutely.

CHAIR - So how do you look after your people to check, firstly, that they have occurred, and secondly, if it has occurred, how do you support those people?

Mr SMITH - Absolutely. We're acutely aware that the membership of our units and brigades, in fact, is made up of people from within the community. Their attendance - it's absolutely inevitable that they are going to attend incidents, and they do, to people that they know within community. It's quite prevalent. In fact, Chair, the incident you mentioned in regard to the wire separation fence, I was the one that pulled up behind you on that day.

CHAIR - Oh, really?

Mr SMITH - I might look like a police officer, but I'm actually - yes. I introduced myself as an emergency services worker, and I think you said you were a nurse, and I said, 'Thank goodness.'

CHAIR - That's right, yes. Small world, isn't it?

Ms WEBB - How Tasmanian is that?

Mr SMITH - Yes, that's right.

CHAIR - So thank you, it was very good to have you there.

Mr SMITH - No, thank you, yes. Actually, that unit which attended were a husband and wife team from southern midlands, from Oatlands.

CHAIR - I hope you looked after the dog as well, it was in the car.

Mr SMITH - Yes, they looked after the dog as well, and the two other members.

The wellbeing program that we've talked about earlier that is - look, it's world-leading. There's been a significant cultural change within the emergency services sector, like, in the recent years to recognise the fact that we're not superhuman. I'm extremely conscious of that, having been in emergency services for over 30 years, and obviously, like, an advocate, personally, of support to our people.

But that care and that level of support extends right into our volunteer cohort. Now, the thing that amazes myself - and the Chief and I often speak about this with our conversations with the minister. We're talking about, you know, nearly 5000 people who volunteer their time to leave their families, leave their jobs, leave their communities to attend instances of a critical nature. And during attendance, is a high proportion of those are exposed to or providing assistance to people that they know.

We mandate, now, intervention in the best interests of the members' care. It's fair to say there's a cultural change that we've undertaken. There was a level of we pull the uniform on and this stuff doesn't worry us, which I think is prevalent right across the world, actually. But we've made a concerted effort in tandem with the other operational arms of the department, and we're very fortunate to have this level of support to change that culture. And we get into unit level and take every opportunity to provide that support.

We actually make a proactive call to Critical Incidents Risk Management. Our regional staff reach out - and I've done it myself in a few instances, given my insight into the circumstances - to ensure they take on this support that's provided. And we continue that support if they're troubled by that. The departmental support program that you've heard about today reaches right into our volunteer cohort and is very much utilised by them.

Mrs PETRUSMA - We started off with the 250 000 initially for volunteers, and then we said we'll take it out to the whole 5400 volunteers, so that health and wellbeing is available to all volunteers as well as their families. Sometimes it can be the families that'll say, 'Look, you might think you're fine, but the impact you're having on the household is not.' And so it might be through a family member reaching out and getting assistance as well. We very much promote it to the volunteer or career and their families.

It is trying to get over that barrier of 'She'll be right mate, I'm all right, I'm tough', and we're finding a bit of an issue. We've announced free blood testing to test for PFAS. We're actually going out trying to get more firefighters to come forward, because we've had 71 come forward and all have been below normal levels. But we're saying we're offering it, we're willing to test. We're trying to encourage people to take up the health and wellbeing program and the free PFAS because the department wants to look after all our employees and the personnel and career and volunteers as well.

Mr BARRY - Minister, just further to that. As another part of that program we have peer supports as well. That gives an opportunity for our people, rather than dealing only with professionals - you know, psychologists or whatever - to actually just talk amongst themselves. We've trained some of our volunteers and key people, so that they can reach out and you have that almost within house. So that's another level of support for them as well.

CHAIR - Makes it safer.

Mr BARRY - Yeah, absolutely, we take it seriously. It's been a cultural shift for the emergency services, but it's a really positive one.

Ms WEBB - Just one final thing. On this line item, 4.1 State Emergency Services, there's no performance information provided in the budget papers. I know it also relates across into the State Fire Commission. But in the budget paper where that is located, there's also no performance information provided, and I wondered why that is.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Statutory authorities don't have performance indication.

Ms WEBB - Okay. And we don't attach any here?

Mrs PETRUSMA - The SES is now underneath the TFS. That's why you'll see for most of the other ones in budget paper volume two there's no performance information, because they're a statutory authority.

Ms WEBB - I presume we regard their annual report as a way of reporting on performance?

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's right.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. That's fine. Do you want to move on?

CHAIR - You done?

Ms WEBB - I can be, because I'm mindful of the time.

4.2 State Security and Rescue Operations

Mr DUIGAN - Minister, recognising that state security is important to all Tasmanians, I'm just seeking an update on how the southern Special Operations Group facility development is progressing.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thank you for your interest in this matter. And for the benefit of the member for Rumney, I'll have to make sure you're invited to the grand opening, because it's in your electorate as well.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is very committed to keeping Tasmanians safe, which is why we're investing \$3.6 million to construct a southern-based Special Operations Group facility. And I'm pleased to inform the committee that work on this project is progressing well, with finalisation of the build due later this year.

Just a couple of weeks ago, Assistant Commissioner Higgins took me for a quick look around the site. It's pretty big and it looks pretty good. This follows the opening of the \$1 million northern Special Operations Group facility in February this year at Longford. This'll be the first time the members of the Special Operations Group will have purpose-built accommodation in both the north and the south.

Our Special Operations Group officers are highly trained and equipped to respond to a wide variety of security situations, and can be deployed during high-risk policing incidents in response to specific security and safety threats, or to support criminal investigations. This accommodation is also necessary because we do have a commitment of an additional 20 Special Operations Group officers over four years, which will move to full-time capability by July 2024. We are also investing \$400 000 into specialist equipment for our Special Operations Group officers, which has allowed for the purchase of tactical weapons and equipment.

We hope we never have to use our Special Operations Group, but they are a critical part of keeping Tasmanians safe, and I want to acknowledge the great work they do in keeping us safe.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you. Noting that the Government has provided \$6.5 million for the new Emergency Services Operation Centre. Can you update the committee on that facility and how it will be used to keep our community safe?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Last Friday, the Commissioner, Chief Officer and Acting Director of the SES and I were at the official opening of the new State Operations control centre. This has been in operation over summer, especially for the bush fire season and for adverse events, and it's also the base for the State Air Desk to coordinate activities in response to bush fire.

The Emergency Services Operation Centre allows for whole-of-government coordination and management of the preparation, response and recovery phases of major statewide emergencies and critical events. This new purpose-built site, I have to say, is pretty magnificent. It's on a few different levels, and it has break-out rooms and media facilities and you can see locations statewide. It's using the latest technology.

It'll primarily be used in Tasmania for fire and floods, but it can be used for pandemics, terrorism incidents and any state emergency. Over the last bush fire season, the TFS responded to 819 vegetation fires, and also coordinated aircraft response to several bushfires, including the Olegas Bluff, Sisters Beach and Tullah bushfires. Having the State Air Desk located there to coordinate and dispatch aircraft was essential during this time, especially to enable what we call 'rapid weight of attack', where we can get as much water on these fires as quickly as possible.

There's also funding of \$900 000 over the forward Estimates for a permanent multi-hazard intelligence team to work permanently out of the state control centre, so that they can plan and provide rapid advice to any incident response, and they will be housed in this facility.

We do face increasing climate-related threats and challenges, so it's great to have this new facility ready, especially for bush fires, but for all other emergencies, using latest technology and cutting-edge technology as well.

CHAIR - Is this where the whole-of-government radio network sits?

Mrs PETRUSMA - No. That \$567 million is all around the state. That allows the Parks and Wildlife Service and STT and Hydro -

CHAIR - Yes, just the funding and the operation that was handed over to DPFEM, so-

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's part of our Budget. But the State Operation Centre is - we'll be utilising the TasGRN network, but this is just to be a hub where everyone can be based and coordinated during an emergency, as well as with the federal government if need be and other agencies.

Ms WEBB - Minister, I'm looking at the performance information for this output group on page 231, table 9.6. There's quite an increase in the number of search and rescue operations described between 2019-20 and 2020-21 - it's about a 25 per cent jump. I thought 2019-20 might've been a low number on trend because of COVID-19. Now it is a moot point whether we are actually seeing a bump in search and rescue operations that it looks like from those two years, or whether that's less of a bump than it looks when you look at it over a longer period?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Might I ask the Assistant Commissioner.

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Yes, certainly. Thanks, minister. It's a very good question, and it's a little bit difficult to answer because there's a number of variables in there. The committee would be aware that as an organisation we encourage people when they're out bush walking and things of that nature to let somebody know where they're going, to make sure that they've got appropriate clothing, they've got appropriate food. They're experienced enough to go into the terrain they're going in. Unfortunately, sometimes mistakes happen and people brake ankles and might get stuck in the snow, or they might get a snake bite.

There are a number of variables, part of it's to do with the person's preparation. Part of it's environmental as well. It's a bit hard to put one finger on it to say it's increased because of this, or it's going to be increased in the next financial year because of this factor.

Ms WEBB - I appreciate that. My question was more around, can you look back for a couple of years prior to 2019-20 so I can understand whether 1920 as it's represented there, 260, was a low year, and so therefore the increase in 2021 is actually just a return to normal, or whether there was actually a bump there?

Asst Comm HIGGINS - Again, I'll just have to have a look at some figures of that a little bit later on if that's okay.

Ms WEBB - Okay. That's fine, it's not urgent. I was just trying to understand are we actually - what trajectory are we on with those.

Comm HINES - Through the minister. I think it's fair to say we are on an upward trajectory. Before COVID-19 there was quite a number of people coming into the state, using our great state to wander around and do various bush walks. We did see that during the tourist months and the holidays that our search rescue was going up. It's fair to say that is probably a trajectory, but we can have a look at those five-year figures compared to that - to see that - but we are seeing definitely an upward trajectory, the helicopter is being used more. Our search

and rescue people are being used more. A lot of it before COVID-19 was certainly in relation to -

Ms WEBB - Tourism.

Comm HINES - people coming in and using the state, or our local people using it as well.

Ms WEBB - Would it be fair to say that the more we have activity tourism we have the more we're likely to see that potentially continue because of needing to assist people who are undertaking wonderful, exciting activities while they're here?

Comm HINES - I think that would be a logical conclusion to make. The more people we get into our state, there's obviously more people on the roads, there's more people going into the wilderness, and so therefore it would be logical to think that would increase our search and rescue. The mountain bikes for example.

Ms WEBB - That's what I was thinking on.

Comm HINES - The boom that it's had for our state, that does have search and rescue challenges as well.

Ms WEBB - Thank you.

CHAIR - That it?

Ms WEBB - Yes.

CHAIR - Yes. With regard to the - excuse me - the helicopter hours, do we have hours to date?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, 853. Did you get the number of search and rescue operations today?

CHAIR - Not yet.

Mrs PETRUSMA - All right. The number of search and -

Ms WEBB - That's what I was asking about just now.

CHAIR - Did she get that? Did you get the number?

Ms WEBB - No, I didn't get that number. Sorry.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Okay. The number of search and rescue operations to 31 March is 251. The total helicopter hours are 853. With the 251, if you portion it out it's going to be close to the 326 of 20 if it keeps on that same sort of trajectory for the year, so.

Ms WEBB - Yes, I wonder. Yes, that's why I was interested to look - I was interested to look back a bit further to see what the leading was, but.

CHAIR - I imagine the search for the - I've forgotten the little girl's name. That would've used a few helicopter hours too I imagine.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So it's 853 now. It's 1029 in 2021, so.

Comm HINES - Through the minister. That was a really good example of everyone working together. Police led the search and rescue component, but the support of SES was amazing. Also, the support of our Victorian counterparts, get specialist helicopters across, tracker dogs as well. It's one of those things, there is - we put everything we possibly can into this.

CHAIR - It was a remarkable achievement because - yes.

Comm HINES - But it's also one of those satisfying outcomes. But then we actually see about - you were talking about the volunteers for Sorell for SES. That just drives the volunteerism as well, which is excellent. It was harrowing, it was no doubt traumatic for everyone involved, and the family, but it was a great outcome. It was a really good example of everyone working together for that outcome.

CHAIR - Sure. Meg, did you have another question on that?

Ms WEBB - No, that's okay.

CHAIR - Anyone else on that one?

Mr DUIGAN - No, thank you.

CHAIR - Okay. We might move to Capital Investments next, isn't it? Yes, CIP.

Capital Investment Program

CHAIR - Minister, I might just ask about an upgrade of the Rosebery Police Station. It's a bit of a sad looking building. What can you do with a million dollars there that will make it nice?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well it might be - it mightn't be very pretty on the outside, but it is definitely going to help occupational health and safety on the inside. It's going to - yes. It's definitely a building that, as you said, it's not very pretty. But yes, the million dollars is going to address a lot of occupational health and safety issues within the building itself, so. So that we can use it as a police station.

CHAIR - Is there accommodation upstairs in that one?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes there is.

CHAIR - So that will also be upgraded?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. Is that apartment being upgraded, the accommodation upstairs?

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Comm HINES - Through the minister, we are looking at what we can do with that million dollars. Obviously sounds a lot, we all understand the challenges of upgrading a building, but we think it'll be able to update that accommodation as well which is needed. We're really pleased to get that million dollars. It'll certainly bring it back into a higher operational standard, where it should be, and last us well into the future.

CHAIR - So has the lack of a suitable facility for accommodation as well as the station itself been a barrier to recruitment?

Comm HINES - Sorry, through the minister. Police housing, as the government invested significantly in relation to police housing right across the state, and we have found that obviously a barrier has been - it's about the quality of housing for police officers going into rural areas. We have had a really good program, and we are seeing that people are willing now to go into these areas because of the housing investment by the government.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, we have provided a new house in Rosebery already separate to this police station.

CHAIR - So will that be -

Mrs PETRUSMA - So out of the \$21.7 million we've already provided a new one in Rosebery.

CHAIR - So would that still be used once this other one's updated?

Mrs PETRUSMA - There's more than one police officer based in Rosebery so the more accommodation you have in the area, because - and we've also done one in Zeehan, so it's - Strahan. So actually, we provided three in Rosebery I can see now. We've done two already in Rosebery, and we've got another one to upgrade, which I reckon would be the police station upgrade, happening at the moment. So, yes.

Comm HINES - It's removing a barrier. Attracting people to the west coast, as in the investment to do Queenstown, for example, was an absolute windfall for the department and to remove that housing barrier. We can see the houses right around the state have been upgraded to something that you would expect a police officer or anyone working in that area to expect. It's been good.

CHAIR - How many houses have you got in Queenstown now?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Eight. We provided eight new ones in Queenstown.

CHAIR - Does that include the accommodation upstairs at the police station there?

Comm HINES - No, there's eight, that doesn't include that one.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Throughout the state we've done - well there's 57 residences already upgraded, and there's 10 that are in various stages of progress at the moment. It'll be 67 altogether that we have upgraded, because it's a \$21.7 million commitment. We understand if

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you want families to live there, and my sister and my brother-in-law did live at the Rosebery Police Station for quite a few years.

CHAIR - On top of the -

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes. You definitely want to have them living in nice accommodation.

CHAIR - This is only up the road from the RSL, but anyway. I'm not sure that's what police should be doing. Sarah, do you have a question on this?

Ms LOVELL - I do, on a different - yes. Look it might - I mean it may or may not be in this line but I'm going to ask it anyway.

CHAIR - See how we go.

Ms LOVELL - See how we go. The Lachlan Volunteer Fire Station secured - or the brigade secured a grant from the Mercury I understand through a grants program to fund or part fund an extension of their station. I understand they need some additional funding support. It doesn't appear that they've secured that additional funding support. Could you give an update on the TFS position with that fire station. I guess there's some concern that that extensions not supported by the TFS, or that there's -

Mrs PETRUSMA - That'd be under the State Fire Commission section, but we'll have to - the chief will be the one to - because the State Fire Commission is run very separately to the department.

Ms LOVELL - Yes, I'll it then.

CHAIR - Just going back to police stations. The member for Launceston was very scathing in her reply to the debate about the state of the Launceston Police Station, and said that \$7 million won't even touch the sides. How do you respond to that, minister?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well, it's touching the insides.

CHAIR - So what does the member for Launceston hoping to see as a result of this \$7 million spent on the Launceston Police Station?

Mrs PETRUSMA - So in the Launceston Police Station, works underway include sealing of roof leaks, removal of rooftop asbestos, upgrades to the electrical substation. There were a few other things in here as well. I knew they have been putting in a new charging suite and a few other - lift replacement.

CHAIR - Interview rooms. That's one thing that she had concerns around, was interview rooms.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Is that one for Jonathan to come forward?

Comm HINE - Yes. What it's basically doing is replacing and upgrading the interior, as in the framework around the building which will allow then other things to be done into the

future. It's the charging suites, the bathrooms, the mechanical services. Whilst on the outside, as the Minister said, it doesn't look like a lot, but it actually is changing a lot of all the expensive internals as well. It gives an opportunity to actually extend the life of that building. Otherwise, it would cost hundreds of millions of dollars maybe, so it's welcomed up in Launceston and it's quite exciting to get those things changed, and also make the life of the police officers in there a little bit better, because it does upgrade some of the interior facilities.

CHAIR - Thank you. Is there anything else on capital investment?

Mr GAFFNEY - Just one thing. I'd just like to say I'm really impressed with how diverse the nature of the projects is across the state. I take heart in the fact that it's just not the squeaky wheel that gets the result, because if you don't say anything, it's not fairly communicated. I'm quite impressed with how much money has been outlaid and what it's for, so I just hope whoever is doing all the planning gets congratulated for what they're doing, because I think it's important that that parochialism of stays out of it.

CHAIR - I'll take that as a comment.

Mr GAFFNEY - It was.

Mr DUIGAN - I would like to ask about the volunteer equipment upgrades which I think are really welcome in a lot of small volunteer brigades.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Volunteer equipment upgrades, it's a \$2 million program that we've been providing to our 5400 volunteers, SES and - the SES. It's just providing them with different things that probably aren't really provided through the State Fire Commission. Like specialist equipment to keep them safe and to protect their community and also to provide them with the next generation bushfire fighting ensembles.

For example, at the moment we're completing the BR9 bush helmet rollout to volunteer members. We're continuing the Rosenbauer structural helmet rollout with 700 firefighting helmets already distributed to volunteers. There're 270 complete sets of Gemini structural firefighting personal protective clothing have been ordered to deliver for volunteer urban firefighting qualified members, and new road crash rescue overalls have now been rolled out to all our rescue trained personnel improving safety for our volunteers.

But as I said before, the SES have - I've got a show and tell here, I see. Believe it or not, our SES women were wearing the male uniform and they are now excited that they finally have a female cut. I did go to an SES unit -

CHAIR - So their trousers now stay up.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

CHAIR - That's really good.

Mrs PETRUSMA - The trousers stay up. But I visited the Huonville SES unit recently, and one of the females there, her coat was past her knees, and the trousers and everything - and so, believe or not, this makes a huge difference, because we do want to attract more women to - and I think they're attached. Yes, the two of them are attached. It's just the little things that

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we can do to try and make a difference to recruiting more women. To make a difference to recruiting more members where they're wearing clothing that can be fitted for the right shape and size.

CHAIR - It's like me visiting a mine site and can't get a Hi Vis vest that's anywhere near my size.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's exactly right. The TFS and SES are both working with their volunteers to make sure they have contemporary safety equipment, and it goes with the coordinator roles that I talked about earlier, about the - because we've now got six people in different roles, whether it's coordinator, volunteer strategy, volunteer engagement officers, support and executive officers, and yes, just to make sure that our volunteers are supported going forwards. Thank you.

CHAIR - Before we move off onto State Fire Commission, I'd like to ask the Commissioner a question, if I might?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes.

CHAIR - What date do you retire, Commissioner?

Comm HINE - 10 October is my last day in this wonderful organisation.

CHAIR - Are you retiring?

Comm HINE - I'm leaving this organisation.

CHAIR - No bingo here. We certainly wish you all the best in your leaving the organisation, whatever it is called.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Hear, hear.

CHAIR - Again, thank you for your service.

Comm HINE - Thank you for your words.

CHAIR - We'll move on to State Fire Commission.

State Fire Commission

Mrs PETRUSMA - Chair, I also welcome to the table Alan Garcia, who is the Chair of the State Fire Commission.

CHAIR - Revolving round a few doors, yes.

Mr GARCIA - Only one door.

CHAIR - Only one door.

Mr GARCIA - Only one door.

CHAIR - Thanks, minister. If I could just re-put that question around the pay claim for firefighters that is on foot, where that's at and how it's going.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I might hand to the -

CHAIR - I hear from firefighters that they, in Tasmania, are the lowest paid in the nation.

Mr BARRY - I'm happy to start through you, Commissioner. Obviously, we're a large service. We have 5500 volunteers and 350 odd paid firefighters as well, and we value them all. They're important and they do a great job. Tassie are rightly proud of the work that they do. We are in ongoing negotiations with the United Firefighters Union. We've put, over the course of the last six months, essentially five offers, or six; one verbal and five written to resolve the industrial issue. I guess it's a stand-off at the moment.

We continue to negotiate with them, so we haven't shut it down. There was a point of time where they walked away from the table, but we've worked with them, we've brought them back to the table. In fact, myself and the Deputy Secretary met with them last week to agree the process moving forward now. We're keen to resolve it, and I don't think it's in anybody's interest to have a protracted dispute and it's really just a matter now of us coming back to the table, agreeing the best foot forward, and starting to work through some of the issues.

CHAIR - So how do their salaries, wages, or rates of pay, whichever way you want to describe, compare with other jurisdictions around Australia?

Mr BARRY - It's pretty tough - through you again, minister. It's tough to line them up, so I know there's claims about different disparities and all that. Different states do different things, so you have specialist allowances. Some states will pay - if you're road crashed trained, you get extra money. Our career staff are generalists, so they tend to multi-task and multi-skill. It's always difficult to know, when you're trying - you're not necessarily comparing apples with apples.

We have different terms as well. A commander in one service could be the equivalent of say a senior station officer in our service. When you say, yes, commanders are paid different, that could be true, but it just depends on what they're doing and how the responsibilities that go with that position. It's really hard to put a direct line and say this is exactly the difference between.

I think they deserve a pay rise. I think the government have made a number of offers now, so clearly the government supports that as well. It's just a matter of now - I guess it's the quantum and that's the ongoing debate.

CHAIR - In light of the inflation rate and another decision by the Reserve Bank yesterday, there are a lot of pressures on people. Is there a willingness to consider those factors in this, minister? I guess that's a matter for you, to some degree.

Mrs PETRUSMA - As you know very well, these negotiations are handled at arm's length from ministers. I want to put it on the record, I'm very grateful for all the work and efforts that our hardworking firefighters do in keeping us safe. To me firefighting is one of the

most challenging and important roles that our Majesty's services can undertake. I'm just very thankful that they are here for us in our most vulnerable moments.

This has been managed in accordance with advice from Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Public Sector Industrial Relations Committee and the State Service Management Office. Like the Chief Officer, I, too, would like them to get a pay rise.

CHAIR - So are there any real sticking points, or do you believe that there's going to be some movement here and we're going to see them come to an agreement in a reasonable timeframe?

Mrs PETRUSMA - I think if they contact you this week, and you met last week and they're coming back to the table now, aren't they?

Mr BARRY - They are. I get the sense that they're keen as well, of course, and everyone wants to get the right mix. I'm sure that, through the ongoing discussions, I'm confident - optimistic anyway - we're not that far from resolving something.

It's always you have the escalation and the standoff, and then I think we'll get back to the table, we'll have some serious discussions about where are the issues that we disagree on, everyone is working in good faith. I think we'll go a long way to resolving it soon.

Ms LOVELL - So understanding the difficulty with comparing, I guess, role-to-role between Tasmania and other jurisdictions, has there been any analysis of similar roles? They might not be called the same thing, you know, you might have to add allowances in, that sort of thing.

But a comparison of what a firefighter undertaking the duties they undertake here in Tasmania would earn if they were in that same role - or as close to it as possible - in another jurisdiction or in other jurisdictions. Has there been any work done around that?

Mr BARRY - There's been some work, but the challenge is too that it changes almost - because depending on where you are in the enterprise agreement cycle, they're moving all the time.

So if we step back and say that the two offers that we put to the union at the start of this was a 2.35 and 2.5 in the second year. Now had they taken that, come December, they would have a 5 per cent increase.

It's hard to line up those gaps and recognising that each state is in an enterprise agreement, and they're also going through the increments of that as well. There's constant shuffling of who's being paid what, depending on what state, depending on what part of their cycle they are in. It's really hard to say, with hand on heart, 'yep, that's the difference' and 'that's why they're paid x or y'.

Ms LOVELL - Okay. The question, I suppose, for the minister is would you like Tasmanian firefighters to be paid comparably with their mainland counterparts.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Look, I want them to get a pay rise. If they'd taken their 2.35 per cent in December last year, which is what other public servants did take, it would have

been able then to take the 2.35 per cent and then to start working on the next agreement just about straight away.

So they would have already had a 2.35 pay rise last year, then they could have started up the negotiations again now for the next pay rise.

Ms LOVELL - Yes, I understand that. But my question was would you like them to be paid the same or comparably with their mainland counterparts?

Mrs PETRUSMA - As outlined, it sounds like you can't really compare apples with apples here because there's different agreements in place with a different mix of what is in or out of different agreements that have been made.

But I know that Ms Clarke is the lead negotiator for the department on it, so she might be able to add some further information here.

Ms CLARKE - Through you, minister. The only points that I would add from the Chief is I actually think we are, in terms of the department and our career firefighters, in terms of the UFU representative, actually do have a really good working relationship.

I think that we're all really confident that we'll come back together at the table with a full understanding. Often discovery work gets done how we fully understand each other's views in terms of understanding what various members might want, what drives that.

Jurisdictional analysis is always part of those considerations in terms of trying to drill and understand details. There are always variations of course across all jurisdictions across all sectors, and that will be the same for career fire fighters as well we would assume. We have allocated some additional resources to actually do some more research work which I can contribute and also be helpful in ongoing discussions.

Ms WEBB - I was going to start by asking about the programs that are described in the table on p121 of Budget Paper no. 2, volume 2, which is the 'Statement of comprehensive income of the Fire Commission'.

The line there around grants is a footnote that talks about cessation of fixed-term funding arrangements from previous budget initiatives for this 2022-23 year, explaining the reduction in that amount.

So I was interested to understand were those budget initiatives, previous budget initiatives, things that were funded as a result of that review of the 2018-19 bushfires, amongst them being those remote area teams and the fuel reduction programs.

Are they coming to an end with their funding, just that specific funding, or are they coming to an end in some more concrete way?

Ms CLARKE - So can I just ask a supplementary question? When you're talking about 'comprehensive income' are you talking about all the revenue sources that are listed.

Ms WEBB - Yes. I'm looking at this table, table 27.2.

Ms CLARKE - 27.2, yes. So there are movements obviously in relation to grants in terms of ebbs and flows that come in and out, that is correct. Of course from a consolidated point of view of that revenue there are movements in and out across all those things that subsequently flow on.

Ms WEBB - Yes. I'm just trying to understand - I've got some questions about the different movements in the table there so I can understand some of those ebbs and flows.

So because of the footnote in relation to grants talks about the decreasing grants being the cessation of fixed-term funding arrangements for previous budget initiatives, I'm looking for which budget initiatives are ceasing.

Ms CLARKE - Yes.

Ms WEBB - Then things that have been funded, is that activity going to be continuing in some way under more general funding, I suppose, rather than the initiatives that have been identified previously.

Ms CLARKE - Minister?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Well they're currently funded at the moment. Usually for initiatives if you'd want to know if you're going to continue or not you usually announce it in, like, the 2023-24 budget as to whether they're going to be continued. You don't usually announce them, like, a year in advance to continue them.

Ms WEBB - Sure. So in 2022-23, in this table, that grants figure is down from the previous year, and the explanation is the cessation of fixed-term funding arrangements for previous budget initiatives. So I'm just asking about what initiatives they are.

I'm imagining they were ones that were relating to remote area teams for fuel reduction - maybe the red-hot tops, because they were the things that the review -

Mrs PETRUSMA - No, that's ongoing funding.

Ms WEBB - Well that's what I'm trying to tease out.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, the fuel reduction one. I don't know whether it was a federal government one.

Ms CLARKE - Are you happy for me to answer that? So through you, minister, and I'm sure that the Chief will make some commentary to it. But one of the major changes is Australian Fire Danger Rating System actually coming to a conclusion. I'll leave that for the Chief to chat a little bit about.

There are movements in some of the others which you've talked about too. The Multi-Hazard Intelligence Team, the Fire and Emergency Volunteer Recruitment Secretariat. There are movements that do contribute to the differential between the current financial year and the next one. Some of that's also been some ongoing appropriation to the State Fire Commission.

Ms WEBB - Okay. So you can't point me to the previous budget initiatives specifically that are ceasing as represented in that figure?

Mr BARRY - So one of the things which is coming to an end now is the Australian Fire Danger Rating System, and the Australian Warning System as well. Both of those were outcomes of the Royal Commission, and they have been - we are in the process of finalising the implementation.

They have been part-funded by the federal government, part funded by the state government, in a combined way to deliver it. As those programs now cease or as we introduce or complete that body of work, then that money drops off the budget.

So I think specifically around those two things, that's certainly some of it.

Ms WEBB - That's what I was referring to? Okay.

Mrs PETRUSMA - It looks like some of it was actually money for flood projects as well.

Ms WEBB - Right.

Mrs PETRUSMA - So there's money for the Kentish Flood Mitigation Project, and the SES. So different substantial amount of fundings for those different initiatives in 2021-22. There was \$7.1 million and stuff like that. It's decreases in other grant funding that looks like it's incorporated in that one. That's the decrease. That's now been given to the relevant local government, which is why it's decreased.

CHAIR - I want to try to wrap this up by 6.30.

Ms WEBB - Some other movements in that table. The taxation line beneath that shows a decent bump in what's been collected through the fire service contribution, the insurance fire levy, motor vehicle fire levy. Is there any particular explanation for that increase or is that just something we see sometimes that that figure goes up, or is it on an upward trajectory?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Last year, during COVID-19, the Government provided extra revenue so that it wasn't such an impost on homes. This year we've gone back to the usual 5.5 per cent that we routinely do. Last year the Government didn't -

Ms WEBB - Collect as much through that levy.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Didn't collect as much money. That's just going back to normal.

Ms WEBB - Okay. That explains that entire bump?

Mr BARRY - A significant part of it. Part of that money is made up of insurance premiums as well. There's a levy on when you insure your property. We've seen the increase in the property prices in Tasmania, so there's a commensurate rise in that as well.

Ms WEBB - Mindful of time, I'm happy to go to others to share it around.

CHAIR - I was going to ask about the fuel reduction burns. What measures do you take to contact winegrowers that may be impacted by a burn?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Myself and when it was under Mr Barnett's portfolio, TFS, Parks, STT, we all came together with Sheralee Davies and everything else to work out what could be done. There's an MOU with winegrowers in place and a lot of work was done, especially in May because of that very important picking time. Quite a few fuel reduction burns were cancelled or put on hold until it was the right conditions, because if the wind was going to be blowing on the crops -

CHAIR - Yes, I understand that. Wine Tasmania doesn't represent all growers and you're probably aware of one I intervened in.

Mrs PETRUSMA - But like Parks, for example, they go on the list, they see where winegrowers are and if they're going to do a burn, they will contact them and say we're going to do a burn, is it all right if we do a burn in your area? They get permission from the winegrowers, even if they're not a member of Wine Tas.

Mr BARRY - There are two parts to that. The burns that we do, as an agency or through our burns program, we coordinate that way. We have a geospatial overlay of where different wineries are and we contact them. During the permit season, people will ring up and seek permission to do burns or permits. Again, working with Wine Tasmania, we have a brochure we provide all our permit offices which is about smoke taint and the risk.

If you were to ring up and say I live at X, when our people are working on your permit, they'll look and see there are a number of wineries within the area and they'll give you the contact details for them as well. When we're dealing with private citizens, we can't mandate but we say to them it would be really good, depending on the time of year and the heightened tension, around smoke taint. We're conscious of that. We've worked really hard with Wine Tasmania. I recognise they're not representative of everyone, but we've made a real effort here to take that anxiety out of the burns program.

CHAIR - We did have a good outcome on that one, I might add.

Mr BARRY - I agree, yes.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Can I just give a further update to one of my previous answers, please?

CHAIR - Sure.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Getting back to Ms Webb's question. Just in regards to the grants. The reason it was \$1499 was because the Government provided \$4 million for COVID-19 that went in the grants and taxation went down by just about the corresponding amount. We eased the pressure off households. So the \$1499 [\$14.99 million?] was because that extra \$4 million that would have come from the fire service levy would have made that taxation nearly \$90 million. So the cessation of the \$4 million that we provide has led to it going down to 10 [\$10 million?] and that's why there's the uplift of the taxation.

Ms WEBB - Nearly all of it, but, yes. The rest would be increased through insurance, as you explained.

Mrs PETRUSMA - That's right, so that's the major reason for it.

Ms WEBB - Can I move on to some other things?

CHAIR - Yes.

Ms WEBB - Regarding climate change risk, the State Fire Commission Corporate Plan 2019-20 and 2022-23, despite detailing risks doesn't really discuss or mention climate change as a risk warranting forward planning, from what I could see. Is the commission evaluating and modelling potential risk of climate change and extreme weather events on the fire risk for the state as well as operational and logistical challenges that would present? Is that documented somewhere?

Mrs PETRUSMA - The fuel reduction program is where TFS and PWS and STT come together to look at climate change. They produce maps like this. They look at potential and in 2014 what the areas are and what could happen now in 2022. I'll let the Chief Officer explain more.

Mr BARRY - In relation to climate change specifically, it's front and centre in our thinking. The reality is we've seen the impacts of that, even in my time, even over the last 10 years we've seen a commensurate rise in the demands on our services. We've seen the greater impacts not only in Tasmania but across all of Australia we've seen impacts of fire, flood and all those other things.

As a cohort, there's the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Commission, which is a group of all the chiefs and commissioners from around Australia. I chair. On the commission, we have panel members and then we have a subcommittee focused purely on climate change and the impacts of that. Not only for flooding but fire and all the other risks the emergency services take on. I'm the sponsor of that group.

You may have seen books by Greg Mullins and other people, retired fire chiefs, but emergency services are cognisant of those impacts. We build it into our thinking almost every day about how we move forward. One of the things we are doing now, and the minister touched on it earlier, is about our rapid weight of attack. So traditionally, we'd wait, see smoke in the sky, someone would ring Triple 0, then we'd drive some fire trucks out and we'd start to call up the cavalry.

Nowadays, with the provision of modern aircraft and other things, we hit them as hard as we can and try to keep them as small as we can. What we know is that they spread faster than they ever have and we get those super fires and all the other impacts that are driven by, well, we suspect, climate change. It's a new environment, it's a new world and we're changing the ways we operate. We're thinking all the time about what comes next.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. I'm not surprised that that is occurring. It's just interesting. I can't see that documented as an explicit statement in your plan.

PUBLIC

Mr BARRY - It's probably an oversight. I'm happy to own that. It's something we should call up because it's front and centre in our thinking, even around our resource to risks and the way that we look at future volunteer models.

Ms WEBB - That's almost an educative function, if it is part of what's visible in terms of your planning and what's in the public domain, it helps others to understand.

CHAIR - Any other questions?

Ms WEBB - No. Thank you for that explanation.

CHAIR - I've just quick one from Sarah. I'll see if we've got time to come back to me.

Ms LOVELL - Thanks, Chair. Minister, just back to the question about the Lachlan Volunteer Fire Station. Do you need me to re-put the question?

Mrs PETRUSMA - Yes, please.

Ms LOVELL - I understand that they've secured a grant from the *Mercury*, from a community grants program, for \$50 000, but they need additional funding for their extension. They haven't been able to secure that, as far as I'm aware. Are the TFS or the State Fire Commission committed to that extension and the continued future of that volunteer station?

Mr BARRY - Through you, minister, you're right, they do have a grant and they have approached us. We have a strategic asset management program where we look at the life of our different units and stations and we have a program of how we continue to maintain those, or build new ones. Under our exiting program, that's not in there because it wasn't on our radar.

Now, we're aware they have that grant and they have approached us for some money, we're in the process of reviewing our strategic asset management program and they're in the mix. I'm not going to say here that, yes, we're about to provide that funding. Bless volunteers, but they're great at going out and getting small grants and then saying, 'How about you stump up the rest'? They can almost pervert the course of what we're planning to do in a structured process because they all just start running out and getting bits. We're cognisant of trying to keep our strategic asset management program alive and be disciplined around that, but recognising when they do get a significant grant, if we can support them somehow, there's probably a commonality there, but we just need to be careful how we manage that.

Mr GARCIA - Can I add to that? We've visited Lachlan and they are enthusiastic. There are many of them. I've got a property just down the road, I love them. We are very cognisant of the fact that having secured \$50 000 applies some pressure in terms of saying, we want to get this fixed. We're aware of that, but we have to have a process. I think Michael mentioned before that it has to be a process where we actually are giving our money out in a way in which we see fit in terms of orders of priority and what they are.

No-one's saying we don't want to help out Lachlan. We do want to help out Lachlan, but there is a process. If it came to the crunch that this money looked like being lost, we'd find a way, but at the end of the day, we do want to be able to deal with it in a sensible way that's of value to everybody across the board.

PUBLIC

Ms LOVELL - I think the brigade will be reassured to hear that, thank you.

CHAIR - Do you have one quick one to finish, Meg?

Ms WEBB - I have others but they're not urgent. I don't think we need to hold people up.

CHAIR - Thank you, minister, and your team. Been a long day.

Mrs PETRUSMA - It's been a good day, though.

CHAIR - Thanks very much, we appreciate your time. Any unanswered questions we'll send through in writing to you. But thanks for the information provided during the day.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Thank you everyone. As I said, my door's always open, so for anything at all, please email or contact me. It's been a pleasure, thank you.

CHAIR - Thanks, all done.

The Committee adjourned at 6.31 p.m.