Tuesday, 12 November 1996

The PRESIDENT (Hon. B. A. Chamberlain) took the chair at 2.32 p.m. and read the prayer.

ROYAL ASSENT

Message read advising royal assent to:

6 November 1996

Legal Practice Act

Professional Boxing and Martial Arts Act

Road Safety (Amendment) Act

Shop Trading Reform Act

12 November 1996

Building (Amendment) Act

Farm Produce Wholesale (Amendment) Act

Gaming Machine Control (Amendment) Act

State Taxation (Further Omnibus Amendment) Act

COURTS AND TRIBUNALS (GENERAL AMENDMENT) BILL

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time on motion of Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business).

CRIMES (FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION) BILL

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time on motion of Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business).

EDUCATION (AMENDMENT) BILL

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time on motion of Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health).

SMALL BUSINESS VICTORIA (REPEAL) BILL

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time on motion of Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business).

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Industrial relations: reform

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) — I refer the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology to yesterday's announcement to give the Victorian industrial relations system to the federal government. What will be the cost to Victorian taxpayers of closing the Employee Relations Commission of Victoria and will the government pay out the 10-year contract of the president of the commission, which has more than six years left to run?

Hon. R. J. H. Wells — Is that the best you can do?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — Unfortunately, the answer is yes.

I am delighted the government is able to bring about a reform that has universal and historic support.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — Rubbish.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — I am pleased that Mr Theophanous's comment is on the record. This is the most important micro-economic reform the state has brought in. The government welcomes the fact that it has been embraced not only by, and with the full cooperation of the federal coalition, but also the federal Labor Party.

The overwhelming response from editorials and other commentators today is that this reform should have occurred decades ago. As a result of the changes announced yesterday by the Premier and the federal Minister for Industrial Relations, Peter Reith, we will introduce — —

Hon. M. M. Gould — Are you going to pay out the cost of the contract?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — Don't pick on me, because I have never done it to you!

The legislation to be introduced in the other place probably this week will involve the abolition of the Employee Relations Act and an ending of the functions of the Employee Relations Commission of Victoria.

As a result of that we will be having discussions with the commissioners of the ERCV, whom I commend on their work and their enormous contribution during the term of this government.

I am pleased to echo the words of the Premier in his announcement yesterday of the support we have for the work that has been done by the president and the commissioners of the ERCV.

I immediately briefed the president yesterday about our proposed change and I have asked that she organise that I be able to meet with the commissioners to talk this matter through with them.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — What about her job?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — And to talk with her, of course. We look forward to doing this in a professional manner, as would be expected of a group of parties who respect each other.

Employment: multilingual information

Hon. BILL FORWOOD (Templestowe) — Will the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology advise the house of steps taken by the government to assist people from other than English language backgrounds in the process of seeking employment opportunities?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — I thank Mr Forwood and a number of government members of Parliament for their involvement in the very important announcement of a campaign that the government launched last week.

The multilingual employment information campaign is a $1 million initiative aimed at helping job seekers from non-English-speaking backgrounds. It is a timely and welcome initiative and is symbolic of the unique partnership that has been forged between the state government and Victoria's multicultural community.

I welcome the fact that later today we will have the opportunity to discuss in a bipartisan manner the importance of the multicultural community to Victoria. It was extremely important and quite moving for members of this house who were at the launch of the campaign to see the very strong support from members of the multicultural communities who came for the launch of the initiative and, perhaps more importantly, for a statement of support for multiculturalism. Clearly there was a sense of unease in that audience about whether there was continuing support for multiculturalism. I was pleased on behalf of the state government of Victoria to indicate that there was. I know that is agreed to by all political parties, including the ALP.

We hope that through the new employment initiative for people from non-English-speaking backgrounds we will be able to provide the information needed that is the link between their getting the job they deserve and meeting up with the employer they need to have dialogue with.

Through specialised job-seeker kits and enhanced employment counsellor training the campaign will seek for the first time to capitalise on migrant skills and experience for the benefit of Victoria's growth.

The initiative seeks to ensure that Victorians of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are made fully aware of the marketability of their skills and have access to the best information available regarding suitable positions in the work force. We know that a number of newcomers to Australia are often frustrated in their efforts to match their skills to suitable positions. In many instances this type of frustration can be avoided with culturally attuned advice and enhanced information access.

The campaign, I am pleased to say, centres around a simple-to-use job-seeker kit which is being printed in 13 languages. It will ensure that job seekers have

easy access to vital information about how to practically find suitable work. Importantly, each of these kits has been workshopped with senior members of the multicultural communities involved, so that the kits actually work and are not merely translations of an English language booklet.

A free-call 1800 number, including access to multilingual staff, has been made available for job seekers wanting more information.

The multilingual employment information campaign is clearly a reaffirmation of the Victorian government's belief that the state's cultural diversity is one of our major assets. We look forward to ensuring that we can get greater employment growth among this important sector of the Victorian community.

Industrial relations: reform

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) — I refer the Minister for Finance to the Premier's announcement yesterday that the state industrial relations system will be handed over to the commonwealth and I ask: when will the Victorian employees who are on state agreements get back their 17.5 per cent annual leave loading entitlement; and secondly, has the government budgeted for the return of the 17.5 per cent leave loading to the Victorian public sector?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — I am happy to get the question. In fact the issue of the 17.5 per cent annual leave loading to the remainder of the public service in the state is being determined before the Australian Industrial Relations Commission this day and the state's representative was directed to concede on the issue of the 17.5 per cent, consistent with the decision taken yesterday.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — How much money did you spend fighting it? How many millions of dollars have you spent already?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM — How many questions do you want? That was consistent with the momentous decision taken yesterday to transfer responsibility for industrial relations to the federal government. I do acknowledge that in terms of the impact on the public purse there will be some cost and of course, as the honourable member would expect, that has been costed.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — How much? Do you know?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM — Yes, I do know. Let me make this point: compared with the enormous gains in efficiency through having a unitary industrial relations system in this state the cost of the leave loading is marginal. We think the new system will become a model for the other states as it unfolds because it brings enormous benefits through the attraction of investment and so on. I make the point — and I am happy to have this on the record — that in terms of net outcome this is a very big and a very good decision and one that will produce benefits far greater than the cost of the immediate decision regarding leave loading.

Partnering in Health and Safety program

Hon. W. A. N. HARTIGAN (Geelong) — Will the Minister for Finance, who is responsible for Workcover, describe to the house the objectives of the Partnering in Health and Safety program launched last week?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — I am pleased to report to the house that last week I had the opportunity to launch the latest initiative by the Victorian Workcover Authority entitled 'Partnering in Health and Safety', which I believe will turn out to be a very important initiative in terms of its national implications.

The launch took place at the premises of Kemcor Australia Pty Ltd at Altona. I thank the managing director of Kemcor, Warwick Bisley, and all his staff for hosting the launch and for providing very generous hospitality.

I want to acknowledge also the involvement of the Plastics and Chemical Industry Association, which adopted the role of brokering the initial partnerships. Last week's gathering was a *Who's Who* of the chemical and associated industries. I was impressed with the support that was provided for the concept in the industry.

In the world of business, partnering is not a new concept. It is certainly not complex. It is one which I well recall using to great advantage in my previous life. As the manager of a country business, I enjoyed sharing experience with those who had similar businesses but were far enough away to not have to worry about the impact of competition, and I

remember very well the enormous advantage that association brought.

In terms of health and safety, partnering is a new initiative and in my view a real breakthrough. It is simply bringing people together in an environment that is conducive to them sharing their experiences. I make the point I made at the opening, that in terms of health and safety management it is not a one-way street. Even if the partnership is between a big firm and a small firm, you cannot expect that all the expertise will run one way.

I repeat what I said at the opening: no-one has a mortgage on wisdom in respect of health and safety. The agenda is likely to include hazard identification, design improvements, training methods and maybe simply where you go to get the best advice about a particular problem. The objective is to improve health and safety awareness across the industry and I am delighted that the peak organisations have totally supported the concept.

The partnering program is flexible. The criteria can be based on an industry group or a geographic location; they might be based on a health and safety management system, but in any event, the scheme will bring enormous benefits.

The philosophy is based on companies in the industry being good corporate citizens — and we have plenty of them in this state — and taking on the responsibility for workplace health and safety without relying on a government of whatever colour to either spoonfeed or dictate to them unnecessarily.

I make the point, as I did at the launch, that if we are to get the best outcome in terms of health and safety it must be driven by the objectives engendered in industry rather than by some government representative wielding a big waddy.

The success of the pilot scheme within the chemical industry has already made it a launching pad. We have pilot projects in Ballarat and Geelong that have been based on that incentive. This concept of partnership within health and safety is a win-win situation for all the stakeholders. It deserves the full support of honourable members, and I commend it to the house.

Industrial relations: reform

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — I refer the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology to the Premier's announcement that the state industrial relations system will be ceded to the commonwealth. Is it not a fact that almost 400 000 Victorian employees will continue to be trapped under state agreements until the employers agree to federal awards or Australian workplace agreements?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — No-one is trapped when they make agreements. That is what these people have done, and we know that is why it galls you. We know that it galls the Trades Hall Council and upsets some unions. Agreements between employers and employees that do not involve unions are still agreements.

You know very well that if somebody chooses with an open mind to enter into an agreement between an employer and an employee — as many did after the Kennett government's reforms were introduced in 1992 and set the pace for having agreements between employers and employees — we should support it even if the Trades Hall Council has some difficulty about it.

The great and welcome aspect of the changes is not only the fact that they have been endorsed by the federal ALP or that they are going to be cemented because of the cooperation between the state and federal coalition governments; it is because it is commonsense: you will have the choice under the system. You can be under a federal award or agreement, as is the current right; if not, you will be under a state agreement that is continuing or under an informal arrangement where there is a safety net, and the safety net will be in place.

The logic of all that is that we can have a transition from the state to the federal system with seamless harmony as publicly announced along the lines of ensuring we can get people to go into the federal system from Victoria, and to keep that going.

To enable Labor Party members to understand, I suggest they read the details of the announcements, not the mutterings of the THC. The dinosaur is almost dead!

Palliative care

Hon. P. R. HALL (Gippsland) — Will the Minister for Health advise the house of recent developments in the provision of palliative care services in Victoria?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — As honourable members know, palliative care has been an area of priority for this government. Not long after coming to government I established a task force under the chairmanship of my colleague the honourable member for Bayswater in the other place, Gordon Ashley, which recommended a 10-year vision for the further development of palliative care.

In the past decade or so we have seen a substantial increase in the number of community-based palliative care services around the state. We have used commonwealth funding together with some state funding in the past few years to achieve an equitable distribution of palliative care services among the regions so that at the end of this financial year we will have an equitable distribution of the resources on a per capita basis.

We have taken a number of other initiatives, including establishing two chairs of palliative care and putting out a great deal of educational material about how generic services can embrace the principles of palliative care and incorporate them in their service delivery.

Last week I released three additional documents, including the results of a case-funding survey conducted by Ian and Rob Hyderman of Spice Management Consulting Services that looked at the actual experience of acute hospitals and through that examination established that palliative care-type patients occupy about 4.5 per cent of all hospital bed days. That is a significant component and a sufficiently large number to ensure that we further develop the specialist services for hospitals that are treating those patients in acute beds and that they are being remunerated under the case-mix funding formula which does not have specialist DRG — diagnostic related group — palliative care models, although we are in the process of developing them.

Dr Roger Woodruff, Ms Lorraine Jordan and Ms Lisa Lovett have also conducted a feasibility study on the establishment of palliative care medicine in acute hospitals. This is quite a detailed exercise which will be of value to hospitals as they look at how they can better respond to the needs of palliative care patients.

Hon. D. A. Nardella — Which hospitals?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES — One was the Austin hospital, I think; I am happy to give Mr Nardella a copy of the case study. In addition, after the task force reported I established a steering committee comprising leaders in the palliative care field to look at ways of implementing some of the more challenging recommendations of the 10-year vision. As a result of the work of the department and that steering committee I have released a document entitled *Palliative Care in Victoria — The Way Forward* which looks at how we get linkages between community-based palliative care services, specialist in-patient palliative care services and the general hospital system. It is important how we get the linkage because people with terminal illness will often need access to all three stages at different times in the ongoing development of their illnesses.

We now have about 160 specialist in-patient palliative care services. Almost all are in the metropolitan area and are not well distributed. Using the British planning model of 50 beds per 1 million head of population, Victoria would require something like 225 specialist palliative care beds. We are looking at providing those over the next few years and placing them strategically around the state so they become more accessible.

We are looking over that period essentially at establishing mainstream palliative care and making the point that support and care for people with terminal illnesses is a mainstream health issue. *Palliative Care in Victoria — The Way Forward* talks about the strategic approach we are taking in planning, linkages, the further development of the community-based and bed-based services and the linkages between those and the generic health services.

This document is another significant step in the ongoing development of palliative care services. Victoria is acknowledged as leading Australia in the way it is developing those services. This government is committed to ensuring that we maintain that momentum.

City Link: traffic flow

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA (Melbourne North) — I refer the Minister for Roads and Ports to yesterday's traffic chaos caused by contractors to the City Link consortium, and also to the Premier's comments that motorists can expect delays in getting to the city. Does the minister agree with the Premier's comments and, if so, what steps will he take to address this chaotic situation?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — I quote from this morning's 3AW news at 7 o'clock:

> Melbourne city commuters are travelling freely along Batman Avenue this morning.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — Which way?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE — There is only one way Mr Theophanous is going — out that way. He is on a one-way street at the moment, heading backwards. Mr Theophanous will not have to worry about Batman Avenue; he will be walking because Mr Power will have his car.

There will always be traffic congestion during roadworks, but it is a lot different now from the way it used to be. In the past there were always detours around roadworks, but today we can construct roads without a lot of interference to the orderly movement of cars. To understand that, one has only to look at the development of technology that allows intersections to be built without great disruption to traffic. Nevertheless, there will be some disruption during any road project in any state, as there has been for many years. It is up to us to ensure that we manage that traffic congestion to the best of our ability, and we certainly did on this occasion.

Calder Highway

Hon. R. A. BEST (North Western) — Will the Minister for Roads and Ports inform the house of yesterday's joint federal-state government announcement about the Calder Highway upgrade?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — I am pleased to inform the house of yesterday's announcement concerning the Calder Highway. I place on record the significant input of local members over the years in championing the upgrade of the Calder Highway, including the Honourables Ron Best, Barry Bishop and Michael John, and even former members Mr Max Turner and Mr Bruce Reid. Without their support, effort and campaigning the situation with the Calder Highway could have remained as it was in 1993-94 when Neil O'Keefe, then the federal parliamentary secretary, failed to campaign effectively, which resulted in the federal Labor government withdrawing funding for the highway. That left Victoria with sole responsibility for the continuing improvement and upgrading of the highway.

Yesterday the federal Minister for Transport and Regional Development, Mr John Sharp, and I agreed to declare the Calder Highway a road of national importance. Implicit in that is the agreement to provide additional funding to upgrade the highway. The Victorian government will match the federal government's funding dollar-for-dollar and will continue to meet the funding commitments it has already made.

In May this year the construction of a 9-kilometre dual carriageway between Digger's Rest and Gisborne was completed. That project was funded by the state at a cost of $32 million. Currently the government is funding the 6-kilometre dual carriageway between Millett Road and Gisborne at a cost of $31 million.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — Which government?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE — The state government is funding the 6-kilometre Millett Road section. The recognition of the Calder Highway as a road of national importance reflects the strategic value of the Calder corridor between Melbourne and Bendigo and its particular value to communities located in the Sunraysia region, up to Mildura. Priority funding will also be allocated to the Black Forest section of the Calder Highway between Gisborne and Kyneton. I place on record the support given to this important upgrade by the honourable member for Gisborne in another place, the Minister for Sport.

Honourable members who travel the Calder will know that the duplication of the new alignment through this section will address the severe accident problems caused by black ice. Another welcome feature is the upgrade of the Bulla-Digger's Rest road interchange. I also place on record the support of Bernie Finn for the upgrade of that interchange. This $4 million project will provide an overpass and full access on and off the highway. It is anticipated

that the roadworks for that section will commence in February next year.

Tourism is vital in this region and the economic growth of such an important rural area is dependent on the Calder Highway. The 560-kilometre highway not only services rural Victoria but also provides access to South Australia and New South Wales. The coalition government is pleased that its federal counterpart has recognised and responded to the need for funding in order to continue the development of this vitally and strategically important area.

Rail crossings

Hon. PAT POWER (Jika Jika) — Is the Minister for Roads and Ports aware of the number of railway crossings that do not have electronically activated alarms that operate when a train is approaching? Also, will the minister assure the house that he will take steps to ensure that appropriate departments undertake whatever work is necessary to clear trees and long grass in the vicinity of these crossings to provide the best possible vision for the drivers of approaching vehicles?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The question of the Honourable Pat Power, the Leader of the Opposition — sorry, that is next week.

The PRESIDENT — Order! On the question.

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE — When Mr Power asked a similar question about level crossings I advised him that this state is spending $600 000 a year on upgrading visibility and railway crossings. The government is doing a lot about this matter, unlike the former Labor government, which allocated no resources at all to upgrade level crossings.

The government has conducted an audit of the Public Transport Corporation and Vicroads — the first of its kind — to assess the work that needs to be done at each level crossing. It has put together a program, and if he is interested I am willing to provide the honourable member with a list of those priorities so that he can see some of the things the government is doing to upgrade level crossings and improve safety.

Small Business Deregulation Task Force

Hon. PHILIP DAVIS (Gippsland) — Will the Minister for Small Business advise the house of the implications to Victoria arising from the release of the report of the federal government's Small Business Deregulation Task Force?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — I thank the honourable member for his question and his ongoing interest in getting off the back of small business. The Small Business Deregulation Task Force report entitled *Time for Business* was released by the federal government on 1 November. The terms of reference of the Small Business Deregulation Task Force were largely to look at compliance and paperwork burdens imposed on small business. The chairman of the task force was Mr Charlie Bell and the Victorian representative was Mr Mark Kuperholz.

The terms of reference also called for the assessment of interaction between local, state and federal governments regarding regulation and compliance requirements. In all, 366 submissions were taken and examined and 62 recommendations were made by the Small Business Deregulation Task Force.

The key area of reform identified by the task force was obviously taxation — it was identified by small business as the most important issue — and that, of course, will be the subject of ongoing discussions between the states and the commonwealth.

There is a specific Victorian impact which was singled out by the task force report, particularly in the areas of a comprehensive business licence information system, the need for one-stop shops for small business and the call for improvements to the regulatory regime for small business. In all of these three areas I am pleased to advise the house that Victoria is performing particularly well.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — That is not what the Auditor-General said.

Hon. LOUISE ASHER — The Auditor-General has not made a comment on BLIS — the business licence information system. Why don't you do your homework? I have done mine. I have announced an upgrade to the BLIS system to the tune of $220 000 to enable it to expand. It currently covers commonwealth and state regulations and will now cover local government regulations also.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — You failed to reach the targets. That is what the Auditor-General said.

Hon. LOUISE ASHER — Why don't you read the report?

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — I have.

Hon. LOUISE ASHER — If you have read it, it is even more embarrassing. The Auditor-General made a series of comments on the licensing reduction program. I am talking about the licence information system, a completely different system. I suggest you go and do some homework or not only will you be shunted down, you will be shunted back.

As regards one-shop stops, Victoria has performed very well with expansion into outer urban areas and country Victoria. With regard to the regulatory regime, we are working to introduce a regulatory alert to advise business of regulations sunsetting in advance rather than in arrears. We have set up a system that is widely regarded across Australia as a comprehensive regulatory system. We are well placed in terms of our response to the national Small Business Deregulation Task Force.

I look forward to further discussions on this matter with other small business ministers and with the commonwealth minister in December.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Suspension of standing orders

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — By leave, I move:

> That so much of the standing orders as require answers to questions on notice to be delivered verbally in the house be suspended for the sitting of the Council this day and that the answers enumerated be incorporated in *Hansard*.

I have answers to questions on notice 244, 267, 268, 343, 344, 345, 354, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 377, 378, 380, 383, 385, 390 and 391.

Motion agreed to.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) — I desire to make a personal explanation in relation to two matters. The first relates to a chart depicting Rowan Garden Pty Ltd shareholders as at October 1996 which was tabled by me on 30 October 1996. In tabling the chart I made the following statement:

> On the basis of information available to the opposition I believe the chart is correct. However, as with all these things, one can never be certain, and I have already included a qualifier — that is, the ASC records are not updated until January 1997.

During debate a chart was also tabled by the government that purported to show the current structure of the Gribbles Pathology Pty Ltd group. Later that day during the adjournment debate Mr Forwood raised an issue with the President in relation to the chart I had tabled based on a company search he had conducted on one of the companies named in the chart. I undertook to report to the house at its next day of meeting following further checking.

I now wish to inform the house of the following facts. The chart [*see page 380 on 30 October 1996*] tabled by the opposition inadvertently listed previous shareholders in The Eighteenth Enterprises Pty Ltd, namely BLM Holdings Pty Ltd and Sarbo Securities Pty Ltd, instead of the current listed shareholders, namely Brujedo Holdings Pty Ltd and Jam Hotel Management Pty Ltd. This means the section of the chart below The Eighteenth Enterprises Pty Ltd is not accurate as at October 1996.

Brujedo Holdings Pty Ltd and Jam Hotel Management Pty Ltd are controlled by the Mathieson family, which was a central aspect of the opposition's argument. However, I also recognise that the company structure of the Gribbles group tabled by the government, which is obviously based on information other than that publicly available through Australian Securities Commission records, shows that Bruce Mathieson has divested himself of his holdings in the Gribbles group to a Malaysian listed company.

Unfortunately, despite having complied with the President's request to report to the house on the next day of meeting I have been advised by Hansard that it is now not possible to remove or correct that section of the chart tabled by the opposition except by way of this statement.

The second matter I wish to deal with relates to correspondence which the President sent to me on

1 August 1996 and 6 November 1996 concerning a Mr Alistair Fraser, who had written to the President, and I quote from the President's letter to me of 1 August 1996:

> I have received a letter from Mr Alistair Fraser, chairman of commissioners of the Shire of Melton, in relation to your statement in the Legislative Council on 7 June 1995, that he is a member of either the Liberal Party or the National Party.
>
> Mr Fraser has indicated to me that he is not now nor has he ever been a member of either political party.

In the debate on 7 June 1995 I pointed out, based on information provided to the opposition, that of the 77 new local councils established by the government, 45 had at least one commissioner who was a member of either the Liberal Party or the National Party. I proceeded to name a large number of these commissioners, in many cases also quoting their Liberal Party membership numbers. Mr Fraser, commissioner for the Shire of Melton, was one of those I named. I note that Mr Fraser has stated that he is not now, nor has he ever been, a member of either political party.

As I have no access to current Liberal or National Party records I am unable to confirm this claim, but I accept that it is appropriate for his denial to be put on the public record.

The PRESIDENT — Order! In relation to the second matter I would like to thank the Leader of the Opposition for responding to the request which I put to him on behalf of Mr Fraser. He was under no obligation to do so, but I believe it is a good precedent in this matter.

CLASSIFICATION OF FILMS AND VIDEOTAPES

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) presented *Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Videotapes (Amendment) (No. 1)*, 11 September 1996.

Laid on table.

PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

Hon. P. R. HALL (Gippsland) presented report of the acting secretary on the operations of the Department of the House Committee for the year 1995-96.

Laid on table.

SCRUTINY OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Alert Digest No. 8

Hon. P. A. KATSAMBANIS (Monash) presented *Alert Digest* No. 8 of 1996, together with an appendix.

Laid on table.

Ordered to be printed.

PAPERS

Laid on table by Clerk:

Adult, Community and Further Education Board — Report, 1995-96.

Adult Parole Board — Report, 1995-96.

Anti-Cancer Council — Report, 1995-96 (two papers).

Arts Centre Trust — Report, 1995-96.

Auditor-General's Office — Report, 1995-96.

Australian Food Industry Science Centre — Report, 1995-96.

Bacchus Marsh and Melton Memorial Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Ballarat Base Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Barwon Region Water Authority — Report, 1995-96.

Bethlehem Hospital Incorporated — Report, 1995-96 (two papers).

Board of Studies — Report, 1995-96.

Central Highlands Region Water Authority — Report, 1995-96.

Central Wellington Health Service — Report, 1995-96.

Channels Authority — Report, 1 January 1996 to 30 June 1996.

Coal Miners Workers' Pensions Tribunal — Report, 1995-96.

Coleraine and District Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Dairy Industry Authority — Report, 1995-96.

Daratech Pty Ltd — Report, 1995-96.

Dental Health Services — Report, 1995-96.

Docklands Authority — Report, 1995-96.

Donald District Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 — Documents required to be tabled pursuant to section 12H of the Act:

Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Drugs and Poisons, No. 11 — Amendment No. 3.

Notice regarding the amendment, commencement and availability of the Poisons Code.

Dunmunkle Health Services — Report, 1995-96.

Eastern Health Care Network — Report, 1995-96.

Echuca Regional Health — Report, 1995-96.

Edenhope and District Memorial Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Education Department — Report, 1995-96.

Electoral Commission — Report, 1995-96.

Electricity Industry Superannuation Fund — Report, 1995-96.

Energy Brix Australia Corporation — Report, 1 July 1995 to 14 July 1996.

Far East Gippsland Health and Support Service — Report, 1995-96.

Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 — Order in Council of 29 October 1996 adding items to Schedule 2 — List of Taxa and Communities of Flora and Fauna which are Threatened; adding items to Schedule 3 — List of Potentially Threatening Processes; and repealing an item in Schedule 2.

Forensic Medicine Institute — Report, 1995-96.

Gas and Fuel Superannuation Fund — Report, 1995-96.

Geelong Hospital — Report, 1995-96 (two papers).

Geelong Performing Arts Centre Trust — Report, 1995-96.

Generation Victoria — Report, 1995-96.

Gippsland Southern Health Service — Report, 1995-96.

Health Computing Services — Victoria Limited — Report, 1995-96.

Health Promotion Foundation — Report, 1995-96.

Housing Guarantee Fund Limited — Report, 1995-96.

Human Services Department — Report, 1995-96.

Infrastructure Department — Report, 1995-96.

Inglewood and Districts Health Service — Report, 1 January 1996 to 30 June 1996.

Inglewood Hospital — Report, 1 July 1995 to 31 December 1995.

Institute of Sport — Minister for Sport's report of receipt of 1995-96 Annual Report.

Judicial Remuneration Tribunal — Report on Judicial Salary and Allowances, 23 September 1996.

Justice Department — Report, 1995-96, together with the following Appendices:

Appendix A: Equal Opportunity Commission — Report, 1995-96;

Appendix B: Guardianship and Administration Board — Report, 1995-96; and

Appendix C: Public Advocate Office — Report, 1995-96.

Kyabram and District Memorial Community Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Kyneton District Health Service — Report, 1995-96.

Latrobe Regional Hospital — Report, 1995-96 (two papers).

Legal Aid — Report, 1995-96.

Libraries Board — Report, 1995-96.

Local Authorities Superannuation Board — Report, 1995-96.

Lower Murray Region Water Authority — Report, 1995-96.

Marine Board — Report, 1995-96.

Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust — Report, 1995-96.

Melbourne City Link Act 1995 — Order in Council of 22 October 1996, increasing and decreasing the Project area, pursuant to section 8(4) of the Act.

Melbourne City Link Authority — Report, 1995-96.

Melbourne Exhibition Centre Trust — Report, 1995-96.

Melbourne Market Authority — Report, 1995-96 (two papers).

Murray Valley Citrus Marketing Board — Report, 1995-96.

Murray Valley Wine Grape Industry Negotiating Committee — Report, 1995-96.

Museum Council — Report, 1995-96.

National Gallery Council — Report, 1995-96.

National Parks Advisory Council — Report, 1995-96.

Natural Resources and Environment Department — Report, 1995-96 (two papers).

Optometrists Registration Board — Report, 1995-96.

Overseas Projects Corporation Limited — Report, 1995-96.

Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Fund — Report, 1995-96.

Planning and Environment Act 1987 — Notices of Approval of the following amendments to planning schemes —

Bacchus Marsh Planning Scheme — Amendments L47 and L51.

Bairnsdale (Shire) Planning Scheme — Amendment L51.

Banyule Planning Scheme — Amendment L5.

Bendigo — Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme — Amendments AMA2 and L43.

Cranbourne Planning Scheme — Amendment L193.

Euroa Planning Scheme — Amendment L27.

Frankston Planning Scheme — Amendment L79.

Geelong — Greater Geelong Planning Scheme — Amendments L163 and L166.

Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme — Amendment AMA1.

Maffra Planning Scheme — Amendment L31.

Maroondah Planning Scheme — Amendments L5 and L6.

Melbourne Planning Scheme — Amendment L225.

Melton Planning Scheme — Amendment L62.

Milawa Planning Scheme — Amendment L8.

Mitchell Planning Scheme — Amendment L5.

Moira Planning Scheme — Amendments L10, L14 and L17.

Orbost Planning Scheme — Amendment L27.

Port of Melbourne Planning Scheme — Amendment L17.

Port Phillip Planning Scheme — Amendments L33 and L34.

Warragul Planning Scheme — Amendment L53.

Warrnambool Planning Scheme — Amendment L8.

Werribee Planning Scheme — Amendments L102 to L106.

Wodonga Rural (City) Planning Scheme — Amendment L18.

Yarra Planning Scheme — Amendment L20.

Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme — Amendments L2 and L12 Part 1.

Police — Chief Commissioner's Office — Report, 1995-96.

Police Board — Report, 1995-96.

Public Record Office — Report, 1995-96.

Public Service Commissioner's Office — Report, 1995-96.

Public Transport Corporation — Report, 1995-96.

Queen Victoria Women's Centre Trust — Report, 1995-96.

Radiation Advisory Committee — Report, year ended 30 September 1996.

Ripon Peace Memorial Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Roads Corporation — Report, 1995-96.

Rochester and Elmore District Health Service — Report, 1995-96.

Royal Botanic Gardens Board — Report, 1995-96.

Skipton and District Memorial Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Southern Health Care Network — Report, 1995-96.

Southern Hydro Limited — Report, 1995-96.

Stamps Act 1958 — Minister's report of 18 October 1996 of approved exemptions and partial exemptions and refunds made on corporate reconstructions for 1995-96.

State Development Department — Report, 1995-96.

State Electricity Commission — Report, 1995-96.

State Training Board — Report, 1995-96.

Stawell District Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Sunraysia Rural Water Authority — Report, 1995-96.

Superannuation Board — Report, 1995-96.

Tawonga District General Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Telvic Limited — Report, 1995-96.

Tomato Industry Negotiating Committee — Report, 1995-96.

Transport Accident Commission — Report, 1995-96.

Transport Act 983 — Minister's Order of 28 October 1996 transferring certain assets and liabilities from the Public Transport Corporation to the Roads Corporation.

Treasury and Finance Department — Report, 1995-96.

Trust for Nature — Report, 1995-96.

Tweddle Child and Family Health Service — Report, 1995-96 (two papers).

Veterinary Board — Report, 1995.

Victorian Relief Committee — Report, 1995-96.

Wangaratta District Base Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Warracknabeal District Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

Waste Management Council — Report, 1995-96.

Western Health Care Network — Report, 1995-96.

Western Highlands Health Service — Report, 1995-96.

West Gippsland Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

West Wimmera Health Service — Report, 1995-96.

Wimmera Health Care Group — Report, 1995-96.

Women's and Children's Healthcare Network — Report, 1995-96.

Wonthaggi and District Hospital — Report, 1995-96.

WorkCover Authority — Report, 1995-96.

Yarra Bend Park Trust — Report, 1995-96.

Yarram and District Health Service — Minister for Health's report of receipt of 1995-96 Annual Report.

Proclamations of His Excellency the Governor in Council fixing operative dates in respect of the following Acts:

Gaming Acts (Amendment) Act 1996 — Part 5 — 1 November 1996 (*Gazette No. G43*, 31 October 1996).

Westpac and Bank of Melbourne (Challenge Bank) Act 1996 — Section 36 — 1 November 1996 (*Gazette No. G43*, 31 October 1996).

RACIAL TOLERANCE

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — By leave, I move:

That this house —

(a) reaffirms its commitment to the right of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect regardless of race, colour, creed or origin;

(b) reaffirms its commitment to maintaining an immigration policy wholly non-discriminatory on grounds of race, colour, creed or origin;

(c) reaffirms its commitment to the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in the context of redressing their profound social and economic disadvantage;

(d) reaffirms its commitment to maintaining Australia as a culturally diverse, tolerant and open society, united by an overriding commitment to our nation and its democratic institutions and values; and

(e) denounces racial intolerance in any form as incompatible with the kind of society we are and want to be.

I believe I speak on behalf of all members of Parliament in saying that issues that are crucial to the future of Victoria and Australia revolve around the need for tolerance, harmony and good international relations. Unfortunately, in recent times this has gone from a debate the average member of the public would regard as being bipartisan to a more strident, less representative, hurtful and in many cases threatening voice than has previously been heard on the topic.

Although we all support freedom of speech — and I think it should be said we must defend that right to freedom of speech — we also want to ensure it is unequivocally understood by all members of the community that our overwhelming support is for a tolerant and open society, one where individuals can operate without fear of intimidation and where their qualities and attributes are measured without fear of prejudice or racist behaviour.

The motion is unique. It was moved by leave with the support of all parties in a spirit of common feeling and at a time when, unfortunately, certain things need to be said. As I mentioned in question time, I was struck by some of the concerns expressed by members of our multicultural community during a major government launch last week at which statements I had made in support of multiculturalism, which only six months ago may have been regarded as truisms, were seen by the recipients of those messages as being important and seminal statements of government policy.

They are important. They are seminal. Perhaps the only issue we have to be aware of is that we do not take them for granted. We as individuals and public leaders have a responsibility to cement good, close relations with all members of our community. We have an equal responsibility to cement good, close relations within our Asia-Pacific region. Indeed, in an international sense our relations with regional leaders and decision makers in government and business are integral to our future. But so, too, is it necessary for us to build goodwill and understanding between individuals, not just with governments or government bodies, to actually protect and build the social framework of our community.

For many years we have seen in Australia the harmony that is part of our very cosmopolitan country. It is undeniably one of our great strengths and serves as an example to the rest of the world. But tragically some people overseas would be hearing a discordant note that will make them think twice about Australia's perspective on multiculturalism.

Let this debate send a clear message that there is no discordant note about multiculturalism within our ranks and that people from overseas or those of overseas origin are equally as important as any other members of our community and should be treated as equals and that they are not in any way threatened. This nation, this state and this capital city have all welcomed migrants from the United Kingdom, Europe, America and Asia. They have been involved in the greatest eras of growth in Australia, and they are very much part of the diverse Australian family.

Some 23 per cent of our population was born overseas. The profile of our migrant communities continues to be strongly of a United Kingdom and European base. Almost 7 per cent of Australians were born in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Some 6.4 per cent were born in Europe and 4.8 per cent were born in Asia. If current immigration trends continue, the proportion of people born overseas will decline to 19.4 per cent of our population by the

year 2021. By that time people born in Europe, the United Kingdom and Ireland will comprise 7.8 per cent of Australians and 7.1 per cent of the population will be Asian born.

What can we distil from our understanding of how multiculturalism has improved life in this country? Victoria has a broadly bipartisan policy to promote the diversity of its community and ensure equal opportunity and access — and we stand proudly on our achievement of this multicultural mix. It has been a policy that has weathered all governments and all political parties, and I am pleased that it is one on which we have a common view.

It is important, too, to recognise in this debate that we are also committed to reconciliation with our Aboriginal community as the basis of our endeavour to promote the economic independence of Aborigines and to preserve their unique heritage and cultural tradition.

The government wants to make it abundantly clear that we regard the multicultural nature of Victoria's society as being at the centre of this state's success in future decades. We seek through our actions now and in the future to reinforce our commitment to the values of a mature, cohesive, harmonious state.

Unfortunately the inflammatory and racially divisive comments which have been made in recent times and which have been taken up so wholeheartedly by certain sections of the media place at risk Australia's international standing and potentially risk its security. I am pleased that none of those comments derived from Victoria, and I hope none ever will.

Even though the comments have come from New South Wales or Queensland, they pollute this state and cut across the values at the heart of our society. They seek to undermine the vibrancy of our society and the enormous goodwill that exists between people of different cultures who now simply call themselves Australians. As a consequence, I have moved this motion today in the knowledge that it has the support of both the Australian Labor Party and my own coalition colleagues.

It is critical that we are resolute in providing leadership to the community in a debate on such potentially damaging matters and that we also send a clear signal to the rest of world that the comments that have appeared in some newspapers and on some TV stations are wrong, unrepresentative, invalid and, more importantly, morally repugnant. Surely these days no-one would choose someone on the basis of their colour, creed, race or religion. Surely no-one would put forward a point of view that cast aspersions on any individual simply because he or she was a member of a certain community group. I should have hoped we had rid ourselves of that kind of blind prejudice in the 1960s and 1970s, or even in the 1980s.

We all support freedom of speech. We have an equal responsibility to support the liberty of the individual to operate in a tolerant society. I commend the motion to the house. I trust the views of the community as a whole will be represented by the views of this chamber.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) — The opposition wholeheartedly supports the motion. As a person who was not born in Australia but came to this country from Cyprus at a very early age, became an Australian and made Australia home, one of the things that makes people such as me proud to be Australian is that it is possible to achieve bipartisan commitment to a motion such as this.

It seems to me that mainstream Australian society acknowledges the enormous contribution of migrants and the children of migrants to this country because, in the end, we are all the children of migrants or the children of the children of migrants, and so on. Not only are those contributions recognised, the right of those people to be treated as equals and with equal respect is also recognised, and that is what the motion is about.

The motion also signifies something about the changing nature of Australian society. Notwithstanding the hiccup of the general debate and some of the views that have been expressed, I do not believe Australians will ever go back to a narrow, monocultural, ethnocentric view of the world and their place in it. The motion represents confidence in ourselves. To me it represents confidence in oneself to say that one recognises the equal value of another, despite the fact that we may be different culturally.

I find it appalling that people like Bruce Ruxton, who are so keen to highlight how Australians fought against fascism, do not seem to be able to grasp that what we fought against was precisely the racism, oppression, scapegoating of minorities and the

notion of superiority that fascism represents. He should be at the forefront of those condemning the likes of Pauline Hanson and the sorts of views she has expressed.

The construction of a multicultural society has had enormous benefits for Australia. In economic terms, Australia's engagement with Asia has been so successful that today three quarters of our trade is in the Asian region. None of that could have occurred under the old assimilationist and xenophobic policies and practices of the past. In cultural terms Australia has been enriched immeasurably. I remember growing up under the assimilationist policies of the 1960s and 1970s. I remember hiding my school lunch because my mother used to sometimes give me things like eggplant sandwiches or moussaka or, God forbid, olives to eat, and I did not want my friends to see me eating them. I think we have come a long way since those times.

Hon. Louise Asher interjected.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — They are even planting them in their back gardens! Most Australians now not only eat and enjoy food from other nations, they export many of those foods back to the countries where they are traditional foods. Victorians, and Melburnians in particular, have the unbelievable good fortune of being able to partake in the cuisines of many nations. Those of us who work in Parliament House can choose to eat at nearby restaurants serving food from a host of cuisines, including Italian, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Greek, Mexican, Japanese and Chinese.

Hon. W. R. Baxter — A Moroccan restaurant is opening down the street next week.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — As Mr Baxter interjects, we can even sample Moroccan food. The availability of so many cuisines is testament to the way Australians have embraced multiculturalism, not only recognising its benefits but actually experiencing those benefits in their daily lives. I sometimes wonder if people such as Ms Hanson, Bruce Ruxton and Graham Campbell were here today which of those various cuisines they would want to enjoy. I am sure each of them would choose one and enjoy it without thinking about the culture from which it came or how it came to be in Australia.

The saddest thing about the current debate is that the comments of Ms Hanson and some of the people who have jumped on her bandwagon are not only an insult to Australians who happen to have been born overseas or who come from non-English-speaking backgrounds, they are also an insult to Australians who were born in Australia and who do not come from non-English-speaking backgrounds because they are saying to Australians: deep down you are a racist — you are prejudiced. I think most Australians would reject and be insulted by that fairly crude attempt to simply pit one Australian against another Australian in the most base of ways. I do not accept the notion that we are dealing with free speech in this debate. I concur with the Leader of the Government in that regard: this is not a debate about free speech.

It is not such a debate because as everyone knows Ms Hanson and her supporters are capable of putting their views across. The debate has never been about the number of people immigrating to Australia. We can have a debate about numbers, but we ought not get into a debate that has a subtext associated with it, and is about the type of people coming to Australia and the people who have already settled in Australia — the Asians, the non-Asian or those from other backgrounds.

In the past, the debate was often based on that subtext, but the way to overcome that is to have the debate in a relatively honest way by putting forward the issues. If people believe there are deleterious effects to the economy by having migrants come into the country, then let them show it. I do not believe it is the case. I believe Australia is enriched culturally and economically as a community. I do not believe the contrary case has ever been put.

The Labor Party rejects the notion that this is an issue of free speech. I was disappointed that the federal government did not say earlier than it did that we are not all opposed to free speech and we do not care what people like Ms Hanson say, but that it is well understood in the community, particularly in the Asian region, that her views are not representative of the rest of Australia. That is the important point to be made.

The development of a multicultural policy began in the early 1970s when the Whitlam government realised the value of other cultures and encapsulated it in the notion that you can have unity and diversity. That commitment to multiculturalism was supported by the Fraser government, the Cain government in Victoria and now the Kennett

government. The multicultural policy of those governments recognised the reality that we are in a multicultural society; that we have people of varying backgrounds who are valuable and worth keeping.

I am pleased to support the motion and initiatives that involve multiculturalism in Australia and in Victoria. Every child should learn to speak a language other than English by the time they complete their education. Many of us try to do that with our children and have the perspective that communicating in a different language is a gift we can give our children. The research shows that English skills are improved by learning a language other than English.

The Premier is a strong supporter of multiculturalism, but should be careful in his meeting with Ms Hanson because we would not want the meeting to be interpreted by her supporters as being a message of support. I am sure the Premier does not intend it to be taken in that way. Nevertheless, some people may want to know what the Premier is seeking to achieve by having a meeting with Ms Hanson.

The Labor Party supports the motion and multiculturalism. I personally have fought for diversity and against prejudice and racism my entire life and I will continue to do so. I support anyone who stands on the side of this motion because it is about respect for others and about us rejoicing in our multicultural society.

Hon. W. R. BAXTER (North Eastern) — In some respects it is unfortunate that we are debating this motion today, despite the fact that I endorse and support it. It is self-evident that Australia is the most racially diverse nation in the world because in its relatively short history it has attracted to its shores people from virtually every race in the world. Even if one goes back to the early settlement of the country by the Europeans, apart from the first and second fleets, European migration was not limited to Anglo-Saxons. It included many Europeans, such as Germans, Prussians and so on. Early in the 18th century many people from Asia, particularly from China, came to our shores. Who can overlook the tremendous contribution to this country of the Chinese, especially in areas represented by my colleague Mr Best such as Bendigo and Beechworth in my own electorate?

I was interested in Mr Theophanous's remark about the assimilation policy. It is a truism that you learn something every day. I had not thought about the policy known as assimilation having quite the same meaning it has for Mr Theophanous — perhaps I was wrong. I never thought it suggested that we should all attend school with vegemite sandwiches instead of some having eggplant sandwiches. I thought of it as an inclusive policy, of all of us being members of one society and not being separated into different cultures. Maybe it had the effect alluded to by Mr Theophanous or perhaps that is how it was seen by some migrants in Australia. If that is so, I regret it, and maybe that was what the policy was designed to do, but it was not how I interpreted it as a schoolboy and a young person.

Australia had waves of people coming to its shores from other nations at various times — after the First World War Italians, Germans and Turks; after the Second World War, when it opened its doors to the dispossessed and displaced, thousands of Poles, Slavs, Greeks and others came, especially from the war-ravaged areas of the world. More recently we have had Laotians, Vietnamese and Cambodians coming to Australia in large numbers, some of whom are represented in this Parliament. In recent years we have had — perhaps only a trickle but at least some — people from Somalia, Eritrea and East Timor, and, I am sure, from other countries.

It has been suggested at least in the media that country people sometimes display a more rednecked attitude than city people and express racist views more widely. That is true of some country people as it is of some city people. But I think in general the opposite is true and that country people have had a far greater opportunity to mix on a day-to-day basis with people who have migrated to this country because so many migrants went to country areas, particularly those who were connected with primary production. We can well recall the influence of the Italians in the tobacco and fruit industries; the Dutch in flower growing and dairying; the Turks and Lebanese in the canned fruit industry in the Goulburn Valley; and the Greeks in growing vegetables and other businesses. There has been a great opportunity to mix in country districts. In small areas you tend to know everyone in your district at least by sight if not by name, whereas we all know that in the great suburban sprawl you often do not know the people who live next door let alone in the next block or further afield. Country people, of course, had a greater opportunity to get to know the

people who ran the small businesses, the corner store, the fish and chip shop and the like, which were so often operated by people who had come to Australia more recently. You got to know them on first-name terms rather more easily than seems to be the case in the suburbs. Country people acknowledge the great success stories of first and second generation migrant families who have become very prosperous through dint of hard work and good management and in many cases then made extraordinary contributions to their local communities, whether through local government, church and sporting organisations or the like. There are many instances throughout Victoria, and I am sure throughout Australia, where those families are now pillars of society whose communities have benefited greatly from their presence and commitment.

I want to make a comment or two about paragraph (c) of the motion, which deals with reconciliation with Aboriginal people. I am quite distressed by the divisions that seem to have emerged in recent times between many Australians and our Aboriginal colleagues. I think it has got worse than it used to be. I don't know whether that is true or whether it is just that we talk about it more openly. As one who went to school with members of the Aboriginal community and considered them no different from us — we played the same games in the school yard and sat side by side in the same desks — and who has worked alongside Aboriginal people, particularly in shearing sheds, and has employed Aboriginal people, I am concerned that we now have what appear to be deep divisions that seem to be worsening.

I do not believe reconciliation will be achieved by some cargo cult mentality, by throwing more money at the problem, although I readily acknowledge the social, economic and employment disadvantages Aboriginal people have to contend with. I think the solution is to become much more inclusive, to reach out to Aboriginal people and include them as equals in our society. There are many ways of doing that. We should continue to promote role models, as we do, whether they are footballers, people like Pastor Doug Nicholls on the national scene, or individuals in local communities.

I always held up the late Harold Bux in Nathalia as someone who was a leader in his community, part of the general society and a tremendous role model for young Aboriginal people. Unfortunately he didn't live to a great age to enable him to continue that good work.

Sometimes you hear a speech by a politician which moves the earth. It doesn't happen very often, but it does on occasion. Last Friday and Saturday I attended the federal conference of the National Party in Canberra. At 11 o'clock on Saturday, John Anderson, the Deputy Leader of the federal National Party, the Minister for Primary Industries and Energy and the honourable member for Gwydir, addressed the conference. It was one of the most powerful speeches I have heard in my life. He dealt with a lot of things in his portfolio responsibility, as you would expect. The Gwydir electorate includes, as was mentioned on Saturday, what might be called some of the more notorious localities where there is division between Aboriginals and whites, Walgett and Brewarrina. On Saturday, John Anderson set out a program for reconciliation which I believe took a lot of guts and had a lot of substance. I do not know whether his speech was in printed form or whether he delivered it by heart, but it certainly came from the heart. I hope it is in written form, and I commend it to honourable members to read. It was a turning point in acknowledging what we have to do. There was a room full of 200 or 300 people, many from country areas of Queensland and northern New South Wales, where we may think these problems exist most widely. His speech was supported and endorsed unanimously by the people at that conference. I took that as a tremendously good sign.

We need to acknowledge the cultural differences that exist between the races. We need to celebrate and enjoy them. Like Mr Theophanous, last night I enjoyed pasta over the road; 15 years ago I probably would have been having roast beef or eggs and bacon. Coincidentally, today at the lunch table we were talking with the Minister for Agriculture and Resources about the wine industry. He referred to a function he attended a week or two ago at which there was discussion about the fact that in 1966, only 30 years ago, Victoria had only 17 wineries and produced mainly fortified wines and very little table wine. Look how that has turned around in 30 years, and you would have to say that migration has had a tremendous amount to do with that turnaround.

Let us also isolate the thugs and the bigots. There are some out there — and we know that. Let us not give the League of Rights another peg to hang its conspiracy theories on and get a fresh lease on life.

The League of Rights is on the floor, so to speak — it has nearly had it; let us not give it an opportunity to rise again. We need to educate the ill informed in our community — and there are some, for various reasons. Some of the best debunking of the comments made by the federal member for Oxley has been in cartoons in the papers. They have succinctly exposed some of the contradictions and inconsistencies in that lady's remarks.

All in this house and this Parliament would commit to an inclusive society. Many of us have never considered anything else, anyway. That is what we want and what we work for. This motion goes some way towards demonstrating to the community at large that that is indeed our intent and aim.

Hon. T. E. EREN (Doutta Galla) — I congratulate the government on moving this motion and I congratulate the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology on his contribution to the debate. Mr Theophanous put the case clearly. I, too, came from another country, Turkey, at a young age and made Australia my home. I also congratulate Mr Baxter on the fine comments he made in his contribution to the debate.

This motion re-emphasises the Australian commitment to a fair go and our respect for freedom, tolerance and understanding which are basic to the Australian way of life. As a society Australia has always been at the forefront in establishing human rights and opposing senseless denial of rights around the globe. This is a chance to show our true commitment and lead by example at home. Multiculturalism, with the knowledge, expertise, experience and money brought to Australia by a huge cross-section of immigrants from all parts of the world, has been a driving factor in Australia's growth and development.

Australia is unparalleled in its record of non-violent racial harmony and co-existence; it is probably the envy of most other countries. Part of the reason for that is the magnificence of our great country and the friendly hand Australians so willingly extend to each other.

Another major factor is that our immigration policy is based on fairness and equity. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, skin colour, religion or place of origin. This policy has brought us the peace and harmony of a diverse society where people from throughout the world contribute to the development and enrichment of Australian life. It is essential that this attitude continue. There is nothing wrong with our policy: it has been a solid, reliable and effective working approach for many years and has had great results. However, a few people out there make comments without thinking about the harm they might do to our nation in both the long and short term.

Paragraph (d) of the motion is a summary of the success of our non-discriminatory policy. It describes the way our multiculturalism has developed. We are proudly a culturally diverse, tolerant and open society united by an overriding commitment to our nation and its democratic institutions and values and our commitment to the principles of a fair go. Tolerance and non-discrimination are at the very core of its development; that is what has made Australia what it is today.

That is why our immigration policy enjoys the support of all major political parties throughout Australia. Despite our obvious political differences and disagreements over the best way to achieve tolerance, at heart most of us enter the political arena to try to make a difference, to bring about a better Australia where something works and delivers the best results.

It is the duty of all to maintain and support the system, as other honourable members have said during this debate and as others will say. The opposition supports the motion. It gives us the chance to stand up and be counted and to show the world that our principles, standards and morals have not been eroded despite some well-publicised comments from somebody who should know better — that is, the honourable member for Oxley in the federal Parliament. I congratulate the federal Leader of the Opposition, Kim Beazley; the Victorian Leader of the Opposition, John Brumby; the Premier, Mr Kennett; the party leaders in this chamber and other honourable members in this place.

Hon. W. I. SMITH (Silvan) — I welcome this motion to reaffirm Victoria's support for an Australian non-discriminatory immigration policy and commitment to Australia's cultural diversity. I congratulate the Premier on initiating this timely debate in the Victorian Parliament.

One of Australia's great strengths has been our cultural diversity and we are one of the few nations

that has achieved racial and religious harmony peacefully. We have not had to legislate for racial or religious tolerance nor introduce policies for racial harmony.

Much is said about Australia being a young country, but I believe a sign of Australia's maturity and growth is the way we live together, accepting the many different races and religions that make up Australian society.

Australia, since 1788 has been settled by people migrating from the homes of their birth. In fact, unless we are of Aboriginal descent we are all descended from those who were migrants at one stage. There is even a widely held theory that the first Aborigines migrated over many centuries from a much larger continent by walking down to what is now known as Australia.

Patterns of European migration to Australia are well-known: people came in search for either religious or political freedoms or economic opportunities. Australia gives us all equality of opportunities and free speech in an open and tolerant society.

The great famine which started in 1846 and swept Europe for many years caused waves of immigration to Australia. In my case, my paternal forebears left Denmark to come to South Australia. The famine destroyed their family business and they left Roskilde in the north of Denmark to settle in Hahndorf. They came as a young family without knowing a word of English. My great-grandmother, Anna, was four years of age and my daughter was named after her.

They first settled in the Adelaide Hills in a small village originally built as a replica of one in Eastern Germany. Many of the other immigrants living in Hahndorf had fled from religious persecution in Germany and came to a place similar in topography to what they had left behind. That wave of immigration from Europe also came to other parts of Australia: to Victoria where the topography, such as in my electorate of Silvan, was similar to what they had left behind. Early German and Dutch immigrants settled in the Dandenong Ranges, and later many Italians migrated to Silvan.

Racial tolerance has always been one of Australia's greatest features and debate on our immigration policy is highly damaging to our reputation. The short-term effect of such debate has already caused several Asian newspapers such as the *Straits Times* in Singapore and the English paper, the *South China Morning Post*, in Hong Kong to run front-page stories for several weeks. Such publicity will affect tourism, but the long-term effects will be more damaging.

It takes many years to be accepted as trusted friends and to overcome cultural differences, to build relations and trade with other countries. We live in the Asia Pacific region and must continue the ties of friendship and trust with our neighbours.

Today's motion is important as it sends a strong signal that Victoria is committed to a non-discriminatory immigration policy. Asians give political leaders great respect and will value this message as it has been initiated by the Premier of Victoria.

I am proud to support this motion and to know that my children are growing up in a country where the values of modern Australian society reflect those values of our early pioneers: the values of courage, tolerance, cultural diversity and the democracy in which we live.

Hon. S. M. NGUYEN (Melbourne West) — It gives me pleasure to support this bipartisan motion about racial tolerance. I congratulate the previous speakers who have supported the motion, which follows the federal Parliament's resolution resulting from the moving of a motion similar to the one we are now debating.

The motion is an indication of the deeply felt attitudes of the vast majority of the Australian population to immigrants.

Members of Parliament represent the people. Recently, only 2 of the 148 members of the House of Representatives failed to support a motion similar to the one before us now. The federal member for Oxley was absent, and the federal member for Kalgoorlie opposed the motion. What a wonderful result, one that will be repeated in both houses of our Parliament today!

If we need any reminder of how far our community has come in accepting the contributions of migrants to Australian society, we have it in the recent election of five members from Greek, Italian, Turkish, Vietnamese and Cambodian backgrounds.

We join other long-serving members from Greek, Italian, Maltese, and Croatian backgrounds. Our election would probably have been unthinkable 10 years ago.

My share of the vote in the province of Melbourne West, which covers the culturally diverse areas of Footscray, Williamstown, Altona and Werribee, is no different from that achieved by my lower house colleagues. In other words, I am an Australian citizen, and I have been accepted as such by the electorate at large.

Today's press says that the level of racial intolerance is showing signs of increasing. Unthinking people have been encouraged to vent their frustration on Asian migrants as a result of the ill-timed and ill-advised comments of the federal member for Oxley. Her remarks have also fuelled unfortunate and misleading rumours that Vietnamese people have gained free loans and free housing courtesy of the government. Like other Australians, we have to pay for what we receive.

In his speech last night at the University of New South Wales I was very pleased to hear the former Prime Minister, Mr Paul Keating, powerfully make the point that immigration has made Australia a culturally richer, more varied and more interesting country. The great thing from my point of view is that this country has given me the opportunity to make a contribution to its development. I came to this country as a refugee from Vietnam exactly 19 years ago on 12 November 1977.

Hon. W. R. Baxter — A big anniversary!

Hon. S. M. NGUYEN — I was elected to Richmond City Council in 1988. I was re-elected unopposed in 1991 and was the mayor in 1991-92 — and now I am a member of Parliament.

Hundreds of Asian immigrants both in my electorate and across Australia are contributing to the development of our nation in many diverse ways as lawyers, doctors, teachers and small business owners. In Footscray, Asian small business owners have already made a huge contribution to revitalising the economy of a city that had been going through difficult times.

Australia is a role model for the rest of the world, showing how multiculturalism can contribute to the development and growth not only of a nation's economy but also of its health and wellbeing. Australia is also a role model in showing that people from diverse backgrounds can live and work together harmoniously. We are safe to walk down our streets and into public places without having to worry about the backgrounds, races and religions of the people we meet every day. Unlike people in other nations, we have no need to carry weapons to protect ourselves.

However, recently I have noticed some disturbing events. In the past few months many Asians have been bashed and abused just because they are Asians or migrants. That must not be allowed to continue. Recently, I have been asked by many potential tourists and business people from Asia whether it is okay to visit Australia, to send their children to study here, to invest money here and even to speak to Australians. The answer to those questions must be yes. The racists have to be silenced and made to disappear. I am proud to be an Australian and the vast majority of Asian and migrant Australians are proud to be Australian.

I am proud to support the motion at such a critical time in our history.

Hon. M. T. LUCKINS (Waverley) — I am proud to support the motion, which reaffirms this government's commitment to racial tolerance. I cannot abide sectarianism in any form. Some people in our community are proud to call themselves Anglophobes; but often the same people are anti-Asian, anti-European and anti-Jewish, and in my opinion they are also anti-Australian. I fear that this debate, started by the independent member for the federal electorate of Oxley and which seeks to condone hatred and division, has caused irreparable damage to what was, on the whole, a cohesive society.

Ms Hanson may speak for the people of Oxley, but she does not speak for me or for the people of Waverley Province. I grew up in a diverse multicultural area at a time when songs like 'I Am An Aussie, Yes I Am' were taught in schools. They gave a message of acceptance to all those who came to our shores. It was a Liberal government, under the stewardship of Harold Holt, that abolished the White Australia policy. That decision, which was taken two years before I was born, had a great impact on my views on race relations.

In the 1970s, when I was in primary school, a Liberal government under Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser chose to admit tens of thousands of people from Indochina, including Timorese, Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees. They were fleeing situations that we in Australia have never faced and, I pray to God, never will, such as war, communist regimes, genocide and starvation. Many of those immigrants settled around Springvale and Dandenong, where I grew up. I went to school with hundreds of eager new Australians from many backgrounds — Asian, Maltese, Italian, Greek, German and Croatian. As a child I never considered these children to be any different from me. They may have looked different, but so did a redhead or a blond compared with my brunette hair.

The City of Greater Dandenong statistics on the languages other than English that are spoken at home reflect a microcosm of life in Waverley Province. Some 41.4 per cent of the total population as taken in the 1991 census spoke a language other than English at home.

I have been appalled by recent reports of physical and verbal abuse directed at Australians from other backgrounds. Schoolteachers have reported to me that the incidence of racial taunts has increased since this debate was started by the federal member for Oxley's maiden speech. I have had reports saying that Australian-born children of Asian descent were being pelted with fruit on the way to school and that their former best friends, now having learnt bigotry from adults and through the media coverage of this issue, are taking action in the playground and victimising these children.

Children generally treat each other as equals quite naturally, and we can learn a lot from their innocence. As Australians we are part of a democratic and egalitarian society in which everyone has an equal right to life, liberty and opportunity. These rights have attracted most of our immigrants from Europe and the former Soviet bloc countries as well as from Asia.

I will mention some Australians from non-English-speaking backgrounds and highlight their contributions to this country. Mr Carlo Furletti, the honourable member for Templestowe Province, is Italian born. Mr Nick Papas was the first person of Greek descent to be Chief Magistrate in Victoria until he resigned earlier this year. Sir Arvi Parbo was born in Estonia and has been chairman of some of the largest companies and corporations in Australia. Sir James Gobbo, the Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, is also of Italian descent. Mr Nick Greiner was born in Hungary and has also been on the boards of many of the most prominent companies in Australia; he, of course, was the Premier, Treasurer, and Minister for Ethnic and Aboriginal Affairs in New South Wales from 1988 to 1992. Dr Victor Chang, who was unfortunately killed in 1991, was born in China of Australian-born Chinese parents. The Chinese community in particular has made an outstanding contribution to Victoria over the past 150 years. Mr Wellington Lee, a City of Melbourne councillor, has told me that he is still picked as a recent immigrant from China. His family has been here 150 years, as long as mine has! John Farnham came to Australia from Essex in England and has contributed to our music industry for over 30 years. Lastly, Sir Gustav Nossal, born in Austria, has been the deputy director of the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for many years.

I am sure these prominent members of our community suffered some form of discrimination when they first came to Australia, as did my Irish ancestors when they came here in the 1840s. They were among the first immigrants to Australia, and had to tolerate taunts about being unwashed Irish and breeding like rabbits. All of this would have stunned these hardworking people who contributed much to our heritage.

I had hoped that our society had matured in the past 150 years. I am concerned that this kind of bigotry will lead us down the path of the United States where racial tensions are a part of everyday life. I therefore commend the motion to the house.

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — I, like all other honourable members, publicly state the opposition's support for the motion. As has been indicated by previous speakers, I am concerned and disappointed that we have to have this debate at all. Since all major political parties of this state and this country support the terms of the motion, it should not have to come to this house: it should be a given; it should be an acknowledgment, and it should not be necessary. However, unfortunately it is necessary to debate it.

I am proud to support the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition in speaking on this motion. My electorate of Doutta Galla has to be one of the most diverse multicultural electorates in the

state. The principal of one primary school of 250 students told me recently that the school had done a survey and had discovered that more than 62 different languages are spoken at home by the children who attend the school or their parents. That school is an example in one small part of my electorate of the multiculturalism and diversity that makes up the electorate, which in turn makes up this state and this country.

Victorians and Australians have developed as a result of our commitment to non-discriminatory immigration policies. Australia does not and should not ever discriminate on the grounds of colour, creed or religion. We should not allow that to occur.

Victoria is a tolerant society. Victoria and Australia have developed as a result of this country's immigration policy. Everyone in this chamber is a descendant of a migrant from one country or another. Like the previous speaker, I am of Irish descent. My ancestors migrated to Australia from Ireland in the early 1870s and members of my family have been in Australia for over 100 years. As other speakers have said, not only have migrants developed the land, they have also built roads and buildings and farmed market gardens. Without migrants Australia would not be what it is today.

I find it difficult to understand why we are having this debate today. As a parent I do not want my child growing up in a society that condones racial intolerance. That is abhorrent and unacceptable. Australia is one of the few countries in the world that has never been the cause of a war nor had a civil war. Australia is admired by nearly every other country in the world for its tolerance, which is something we should always be proud of. It is because of our tolerance, our immigration policy, and the fact that the major political parties in this country have supported this motion before the federal Parliament and this house today that Australia and Victoria are what they are.

I totally support the motion. I find it unacceptable that we have to put it before the house today, but I am sure all members who have spoken and will speak in the debate will totally support the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition in moving and seconding the motion.

Hon. P. A. KATSAMBANIS (Monash) — It gives me great pleasure and it is an honour to speak on this motion today. Unlike some of the other speakers I actually welcome the opportunity to speak on the motion. I welcome the fact that a motion such as this can be moved and receive universal support because it gives us the opportunity to debunk one of the greatest myths in the tolerant society that we call Australia today. That myth is the supposed silent majority or middle Australia that is antipathetic or opposed to the policies of multiculturalism, cultural diversity, tolerance and equal treatment of people irrespective of their race, colour, creed or origin. That sort of myth has been propagated by a very small number of narrow-minded, bigoted people who have long claimed to speak for the supposed silent majority.

As was earlier outlined to the house, two weeks ago a similar motion in the federal Parliament gained almost universal support. Today in this house and in the other place there has been total support for a motion that supports our ability as Australians to enjoy equal rights and to be treated as equals irrespective of our racial, cultural and religious origins. The motion sends a loud and clear message to those bigoted individuals, those foolish people who claim that this country cannot and does not work as a culturally diverse nation. It sends an unambiguous message that those people are wrong. The clear proof that they are wrong can be seen if you walk outside this building or visit any electorate in the state or the country.

Earlier honourable members commented on the cultural diversity of their electorates. I can tell you that the position is the same in every electorate, not just in the electorates of Miss Gould and Mrs Luckins, because this country has warmly welcomed and embraced immigrants from every nation and every walk of life. Australia has provided a refuge for people fleeing war-torn nations and nations that have been torn apart by racism. Those people have come here seeking to make new lives — lives based on tolerance and respect for every individual. That tolerance and respect include the right to freedom of speech.

It is important that people like the federal member for Oxley, misguided as they are, have the right to express their opinions. It is equally important for the vast majority of Australians who are opposed to that opinion because they know it is based on a falsehood to have the right to freedom of speech. I will always defend the right to freedom of speech. It is that right that lets us get up here today and express our support for a culturally diverse society.

It is that example of middle Australia that sees the Smiths living next to the Papadopouloses, the Blooms and the Nguyens and people from all walks of life. That diversity is borne out in almost every street and suburb in every city and town of this country.

Australia is rightly a model of racial tolerance, a model of multiculturalism, a model of the ability to absorb people from every corner of the globe into a harmonious society. It is not the sort of society I have seen in places like the United States of America where every large or medium-size city has clearly defined black or Hispanic quarters. That is quite disturbing for someone who comes from a city like Melbourne, particularly a person like me who comes from a multicultural background. I was born here. I am probably as dinky-di an Australian as you can get. I like the football, the cricket — my favourite food is steak and chips! However, a dead giveaway of my background is my Greek surname.

My parents, together with hundreds of thousands of other Europeans, migrated to Australia from Greece in the 1960s. Since then many people from places like Asia and Africa have come to this country. In the main those people have settled here and added to the great range of choices and the wonderful cultural diversity we celebrate today.

Australia is a peaceful nation. Although Australians have gone overseas to fight we have not seen much of war in this country, which is why we celebrate our cultural diversity without conflict and division. One day we celebrate the Lygon Street festival, where the Italian community is embraced by all Victorians, next day we celebrate the Greek Antipodes festival, and then the Lunar festivals that are held in Richmond and Footscray. We all celebrate our cultural diversity. Everyone is happy to see people celebrate their cultural heritage, their links to the past, and at the same time come together as Australians. We have not needed in my lifetime to unite as a country in the face of a common enemy in wartime. I hope that is never the case and we are protected from that evil forever.

However, on the sporting fields our cultural heritage is even more obvious. As a nation we again come together. Only a few months ago in the Davis Cup tie in Croatia a Philippoussis and a Stoltenberg represented Australia on the tennis court. In the major European soccer leagues there are wonderful Australian players in various teams with names like Zelic, Bosnich, Lazaridis, Vidmar and Okon. And at the local football level we have people like Jakovich, Koutoufides and Christou. I show my bias by mentioning Saverio and Anthony Rocca, both at Collingwood next season, and one of my favourite players, Peter Daicos. That is where we celebrate our cultural diversity.

We in my lifetime have not needed to face an adversarial situation, but we can celebrate together as Australians from all walks of life. In Monash Province a large number of immigrants have arrived over many generations. Many of the immigrants to this country, particularly after the Second World War, set foot on Australian soil for the first time at Port Melbourne, which is in my electorate. Some of them now comprise the large Greek community in the area. Many of the Hungarian and Polish immigrants were Jews fleeing a horrific enemy in Europe at that time. They set foot on Australian shores in my electorate and settled there. They have added to the wonderful mosaic that is Melbourne and Victoria and Australia today.

When I walk down the streets of Richmond I get an immense pleasure not only from the culinary delights available, which have been described by other speakers today, but also because the recent arrivals in Victoria Street — mainly the Vietnamese and other Asian migrants — remind me of the Prahran area where I grew up in the 1970s, when nearly every second shop was owned by a migrant, either Greek or Italian. In their own way those people are able to take a first step towards achieving the independence they came here to seek — the happy home for themselves, their children and their grandchildren that they could not have in their previous countries. They have come to Australia, have found peace and tranquillity and are able to reside with all other Australians and be treated as equals.

Today we reaffirm the ability of all Australians to live and be seen to live as equals. That is important from a number of perspectives. It is important to send to the newly arrived and those who have been here for a number of generations the message that they are still as welcome as ever in this country. It is also important to send to our trading partners, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, and to potential tourists in those areas the message that Australia is a wonderful home for everybody and that it will welcome tourists and opportunities to do business with the Asia-Pacific and all other regions.

It is also important to celebrate our cultural diversity because it gives us that wonderful ability in a global marketplace to use many competitive advantages. It gives us Australians who quite clearly understand the culture and traditions of potential trading partners all over the world, whether it be in South-East Asia, the Americas, Europe or Africa. We cannot underestimate that advantage. As the world becomes a smaller place and our reliance on international trade expands we will need every advantage we can get.

The wonderful benefits of having Australians who can speak the languages of and who know the cultures and traditions of our trading partners will stand us in good stead in the future and ensure we maximise economic opportunities and continue to live in harmony.

Paragraph (c) of the motion concerns reconciliation with Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. I concur with the sentiments expressed by other members, including Mr Baxter, that it is unfortunate that the social and economic disadvantage referred to in the motion does not seem to have been addressed in a way that has achieved any significant result. We must continue to fight and should not shy away from that battle. Reconciliation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be a priority of all Australians. However, reconciliation will not happen because of some sort of decree, but because Australians embrace the reconciliation process in the way they have embraced the notion of a culturally diverse Australia.

I thank the house for the opportunity of speaking on the motion. I congratulate the Prime Minister of Australia, who moved this motion in the federal Parliament, the Premier of this state, and all honourable members in this and the other place who have spoken already or will speak in the debate. Most of all, I congratulate the vast silent majority of Australians who throughout the debate on cultural diversity, multiculturalism and Australia's racial mix have clearly demonstrated they support and will continue to support a multiracial, multicultural and diverse Australia.

Hon. JEAN McLEAN (Melbourne West) — I am pleased to speak in support of the motion. I suffered racial intolerance as a child, as did my whole family. I am well aware of the hurt that it causes children at schools and the destructive effect it can have on the whole community. The level of racism was so high in the 1950s and 1960s that many migrants anglicised their names to try to minimise attacks on them and their children.

Australian society has become much more tolerant since then, but at times when unemployment and fears about the loss of jobs are some of the most pressing problems many people face, such as now, it becomes easier for people such as Pauline Hanson and her puppeteer, John Pasquarelli, to whip up racist arguments against immigration and suggest that Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders — the indigenous Australians who comprise the most discriminated against and deprived section of our community — should not get a share of our abundant wealth and land. We started to count Aborigines in the census only in 1967, and we have a long way to go if we wish to give them any sort of an equal chance. Although the Mabo legislation was a start, the claims are almost impossibly hard to argue in the courts. The chance of the Mabo legislation actually providing any sort of land justice to Aboriginal people in either the near or distant futures is pretty remote.

Apart from the indigenous population, all Australians originate from other places. The motion reminds the Australian people that the state and federal governments are committed to seeing that everyone is treated equally, which is the only true basis of a democratic society. Over the years I have had the privilege of travelling widely, and I have visited many of the countries from which Australians have come — the UK, Europe, South America, Africa and Asia. In the past, and in some cases in the present, many migrants have come here to escape fascist dictatorships, poverty or other deprivations. I have visited Chile, El Salvador and South Africa — all countries from which in recent times refugees from dictatorships have come to live in Australia.

All people who have migrated Australia over the past 200 years have made valuable contributions to the culture and identity of the country, and to our relationship with their countries of origin. It is often said that Australia is part of Asia. We must remember that it is the people of our nearest neighbours we have an affinity with, not the often despotic and corrupt governments that control those countries at any given time. The federal coalition government, as did the Labor government before it, stresses that Asia is our top trading and foreign affairs policy priority. It has been pointed out that

Australian exports to the Asian region totalled $40 billion last year and imports amounted to $28 billion, giving us a net surplus of $12 billion. We also want our Asian neighbours to send their children here to study, and that is also very important to our relationships in the region.

However, to be a truly multicultural society it is as important to look at how human rights and social issues affect people in our neighbouring countries, as well as people at home. I particularly mention East Timor, West Papua and Burma in that context. The people of East Timor, our close neighbours, are being killed and their human rights are being trampled on by the Indonesia junta that invaded their country in 1975. Unfortunately, part of our trade surplus is made up of military hardware and army training provided to Indonesia. For fear of offending our trading partners the current federal government is willing, as was the previous Labor government, to turn a blind eye to what is happening in East Timor, and in many cases what is happening to direct relatives of Australians from East Timor. The same economic imperative is stopping the federal government from taking a principled stand against the SLORC dictatorship in Burma. That military junta is building its economic miracle on slave labour. I mention those problems because trust and good relations with our neighbours must be based on fairness for all.

The debate on multiculturalism is healthy, but the level of the present debate is not. A former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser said recently of Ms Hanson that she is just plain wrong in ways that can lead to great evil. I agree with the comments and I am pleased that this bipartisan statement is being made in our Parliament. I congratulate the government for moving the motion and I wholeheartedly support it.

Hon. C. A. FURLETTI (Templestowe) — I congratulate all speakers for the manner in which they have supported the motion and the bipartisan way they have expressed that endorsement. Like some other speakers I, too, was born overseas. My family arrived from Italy in 1949, immediately after the Second World War, when the conditions were different to what they are today, but in those times of adversity there was enormous warmth. We were called new Australians, even though migration had been going on in this great country of Australia for almost 200 years. There was a suggestion that an Italian was on Captain Cook's ship, but we can be sure that someone called Carbone had something to do with the Eureka Stockade.

I relate strongly to the motion, because although we find it easy to talk about the contribution of migrants in terms of food, cars, clothes and other consumable items, we should remember that migrant contribution in this country to culture, arts, sports and other activities span all areas of our life and existence, as my colleague Mr Katsambanis said.

The growth, development and maturity of Australia is a great thing which we must continue because this country is still accepting the children of the world. The level of cultural diversity in this country and in this state is evidenced by the representatives of the Parliament itself. At least 26 members were born or are the children of parents born in 14 different countries, and in that number I include Mrs Powell who was born in the United Kingdom.

I was initially surprised at the need to debate the motion because I had taken the view that the speech made by the Independent federal member for Oxley was delivered stillborn and should have been buried. It was only an irresponsible media hungry for news at the time which gave comfort to some who held her views. It is my view that the self-aggrandisement of the Independent member and the grasping of those issues by a small number of people have led to the debate, which in that sense is a silver lining that should otherwise be seriously denounced.

I am pleased to speak on this issue partly because I can speak from a personal perspective due to my involvement prior to coming to this place as a commissioner for the then Ethnic Affairs Commission. The issues that should have been raised do not reveal themselves in terms of conduct at this level. Migrants from 140 nations speaking myriad languages live in Victoria. In my memory only one major issue has arisen between people from different nations but that was a racial issue rather than racism — I stress the difference because we all recognise our racial heritage — and it was dealt with very quickly. To hate, despise or envy are different issues, and to be intolerant is the worst of all.

The motion is divided into five significant parts. Most people would find it difficult to dispute the fact that we are all equal; that countries have the right to select their own immigration policies — in Australia's case we say those policies should not be

discriminatory; and that we should redress the social and economic disadvantages of our indigenous people. Of particular interest to Australians is the reaffirmation of the commitment we have to maintain this country as a culturally diverse nation. It is important to denounce as strongly as we possibly can racial intolerance in any form because it is totally incompatible with the direction Australia is taking.

The passing of the motion by this house will endorse the actions by the federal government and the Prime Minister's comments when he declared that the motion would confirm this country's unambiguous and clear commitment to multiculturalism.

Victoria is representative of our country. We have heard about various and diverse electorates, and Templestowe Province is no different. Victoria is now leading the country in economic growth after a decade of disastrous management by the former Labor government, but more importantly it is leading the country in cultural and demographic issues. Victoria is unparalleled in Australia in its cultural diversity and the origins of its people. It is home to people from more than 140 countries who speak myriad languages and it has the stability that not many other states have. The Premier has held the multicultural affairs portfolio as minister and shadow minister for almost 20 years on behalf of the Liberal Party and I congratulate him on his stance on this issue.

Isolated racial incidents have occurred and will continue to occur, but they are personal incidents. As a state and a nation we are obliged to make it clear to those who perpetrate acts of racism that they are a distinct minority. The majority of Australians support the concept of accepting people for who they are, not for their colour, creed or where they were born. I believe statements such as those made by the Independent federal member for Oxley and those who support her are generational. The time will come shortly when we will accept the fact that we must recognise the birthright of all people in this great country of ours in its multiculturalism. I congratulate the Leader of the Government for moving the motion and give it my wholehearted support.

Hon. C. J. HOGG (Melbourne North) — I congratulate all speakers who have preceded me in the debate on their different contributions. The debate is timely and it would be significant if the topic were debated in each house of every Parliament across Australia as it is a real opportunity for members of Parliament to say no to racism and yes to racial tolerance. It is an opportunity to affirm and reaffirm the diversity of our country.

Over the past six or eight weeks at citizenship ceremonies in Melbourne North Province, which I am privileged to represent and which is a most diverse area, I have noticed that people have listened much more closely to the comments made by the mayor and by members of Parliament than they ever did in the past. The truth is that at citizenship ceremonies, as at most other functions, the eyes tend to glaze over a bit as people get to their feet. That has not been the case in the past couple of months. People have wanted to hear what we had to say that might be germane to the debate, which is important to the everyday lives of people taking out Australian citizenship. It is most timely that the people we represent know that members of both houses of this Parliament have seen fit to have this debate and that we are in strong agreement on these questions.

It is important to our constituents and therefore it is important in a domestic sense, but, as many contributors to the debate today have said, this debate is important to our place in the world as well. We do not want to be thought of as a racist country, a place where it is unpleasant to visit or do business, where it is bad to send your kids or frightening because there is the potential that harm will be done to you. It is most important that that impression be firmly corrected. Perhaps more important than our reputation overseas is our integrity as a nation. We have to know that we are not represented by the views of the federal member for Oxley and the few people who have joined her camp and her campaign.

It has also been very important for us in the past 30 years and increasingly in the past 10 years to somehow begin to set right the record with Aboriginal people in this country. That is also important for our place in the world. Many people in other countries have looked at Australia and wondered at our right to criticise their policies when our own were not always perhaps in harmony with the sentiments we were expressing to others.

A very important part of the motion is that which reaffirms our commitment to reconciliation, and it is important that we note that there is a lot to be done. Many things that were done in line with the public

policies of the day and in a spirit of goodwill which today we would call most unenlightened goodwill still have to be settled. There are issues between the Aboriginal communities and the non-Aboriginal mainstream of Australians that have to be settled and put right. I am very pleased that this motion addresses this range of issues: the migrant multicultural issues and the Aboriginal issues. Often when there is a debate with a racist spin in this country, it is Aboriginal Australians who actually cop the worst of it and often get the worst part of the deal in the debate further down the line.

Although many things have changed for Aboriginal people, and attitudes have changed — certainly we have had debates in this house that have been good symbols of that change, such as the Mabo debate several years ago — nonetheless, a great deal of work has to be done to achieve the reconciliation we have spoken about over the past few years.

The Melbourne Festival, which finished a few days ago, was an enormous success. Perhaps the greatest success — because it was so unexpected and such a surprise — was an Aboriginal production called *Corrugation Road* that came from the town of Broome. A number of us from Parliament went to see that play. As we saw the sorrow and the misery and yet the joy that transcended it all, I would say there was hardly a dry eye in the house. The feeling of transcendence came from that aspect of Aboriginal culture being shared with the audience.

There is an enormous amount in this motion. I suppose each of us is interested in different parts of it as well as the whole. Between us we are saying that it is a very good thing that this motion has been brought on for debate today. We needed to correct the position. If anybody in this country thought there were people in this Parliament who supported what Ms Hanson was on about, they were wrong. If anybody in this country thought there were people in this Parliament who were backing away from the concept of reconciliation, they were wrong. It has been a great pleasure, with my colleagues, to be able to say this this afternoon, and I welcome the opportunity that the government has presented to all of us.

Hon. W. A. N. HARTIGAN (Geelong) — I rise to speak briefly in support of this motion. I am, like everybody here, a unique person and therefore in a slightly different position from everybody else in terms of my life experience. I have lived a bit longer than most of them and have probably travelled more widely than anyone else sitting here.

More importantly, I started off as a young boy in primary school learning history which ignored any part of the world that was not painted pink on the map — that is, that did not form part of the commonwealth. It was not that we objected to France and Germany; we were indifferent. China was somewhere up there. It was not that anybody said that it was to be dismissed; more importantly, it was to be ignored as largely irrelevant.

A great Frenchman, or a Roman perhaps, said, 'Cogito, ergo sum', which means 'I think, therefore I am'. Every one of the genus homo sapiens distinguishes himself or herself from the animals by his or her capacity to think and therefore to plan. No matter what the fold of your eye or the colour of your skin, that particular spark of genius exists in every one of us. For anyone to come to the conclusion that those negligible differences have any bearing on somebody's capacity or somebody's moral position or somebody's attitude to the law or hard work or children is to reveal their ignorance. Consequently a lot of what we hear and see in racism is a sign of ignorance or lack of care.

It is true, however, that racism is an issue of long standing. Again, I can remember the Latin tag people used when talking about the Roman Empire at its height. It was said that a person could walk anywhere in the Roman Empire and say, 'Civis Romanus sum' — that is, 'I am a Roman citizen' — and that was sufficient to place that person above all the subject races. I recollect the Nazis talking about Übermenschen — that is, supermen — Untermenschen — that is, subhumans — and the Aryan race. Even the word 'China' is a rough corruption of the word 'Zhongguo', the Middle Kingdom, and it defines the position of the Chinese as being between heaven and the barbarians. You do not have to have a lot of imagination to pick who the barbarians are.

It is instructive to wander through the various countries and find they have all shown a certain level of racism. It is generally expressed in terms such as, 'We are better than the rest of the world; we are morally better even if we're corrupt and don't have a proper administration'. I always think taking the attitude that a country is better than the rest of the world is merely an effort to make up for its inadequacies in every other area.

The thing that reminds us about the problems and difficulties of racism is that racist societies are in some way another measure of an absence of democracy and personal freedom. The more that is lacking, the more you are likely to find racism — no matter whether it is in a dictatorship of the left or the right, or in history. When you look at the Byzantine Empire or the clash between the Orthodox Church, Roman Catholics and Muslims in the Balkans over the past 1500 years you realise that many of the troubles we see today are the results of a thousand years of people seeing their sole virtue as lying in their differences.

We do not have that situation in this country. I remember working in the then Department of Immigration at a time when the way we determined whom we wanted as migrants was to ask them to take a dictation test. We would say, 'Where do you come from?'. If they came from, say, Kenya we would say, 'How does Icelandic sound?' They would say, 'Beg your pardon?' and we would say, 'You are going to take a dictation test of 100 words in Icelandic; get one wrong and you are excluded'.

We were captives of our history. I remember growing up with the first wave of middle European migrants from Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. I remember people wearing socks with sandals, which struck me as being the most outrageous demonstration of being aliens. Imagine wearing socks with sandals and carrying a briefcase! They were the same people we thought were barely capable of digging holes in the Snowy Mountains. They did not even want to play cricket — they wanted to play soccer! We thought of them as very curious people.

I remember an old lady from Italy — I suppose she was 35 at that time — with her six-year-old child who was speaking broad Australian and interpreting for her mother. I thought the kids were smart and the mothers weren't too bright. Then I grew older and realised kids are smart.

Things have changed. I can talk about things that have changed for the better, about the impact migrants have had on this country's culture, food and work. I recall the car industry, from which I came here. If it were not for the migrants we would not have a car industry or, frankly, any secondary industry. It was almost as though native-born Australians had decided to work in the public service and left the hard work to migrants.

We benefited from migration. There are no good grounds for racism. All grounds for racism are bad. Anybody who thinks seriously about the issue cannot but conclude anything other than that racism is nonsense. So far as the process of reconciliation is concerned, if there is any criticism of the Aboriginal situation it is the failure of successive governments spanning 200 years to deal adequately with the problem. I only wish I could put to the house a simple, brilliant solution to the issue, but the solutions are not simple. It is important that we understand the Aborigines are not the cause of the problem. If we start with that belief in mind, we have a chance of dealing with the problem.

I am happy to join with all honourable members in supporting the motion. As either Mrs McLean or Mrs Hogg said, it is important to declare our hand and give some leadership. Racism is a sign of ignorance, stupidity and an inferiority complex. We are all entitled to have a bit of those, but not in such large order, and we are not entitled to blame everybody else for our problems.

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA (Melbourne North) — I support other honourable members on this important motion. This Parliament is working at its best in debating the motion because it concerns the vast majority of people in Australia. This debate is an opportunity for us to express a clear and bipartisan view in an extremely strong way — that we are against the types of views many people within the community have expressed. Those expressions are absolutely bad; they are things my family and I have experienced. Many people in my electorate and in the wider community have had similar experiences over a long time.

I was interested to hear the experiences of other honourable members because, to a large degree, they are shared experiences of a most destructive nature which we as a nation must ensure later generations do not share. That problem is being worked through. We have come a long way in the past couple of decades towards dispelling many of the myths that had been created over a long time. I will not go into the historical aspects of those myths but will simply say that during the 1970s, 1980s and certainly the 1990s they have been stripped away and we have created a better society for everyone.

It disturbs me that a number of people in the minority who happen to be in responsible positions in our society have been espousing extremely

destructive views in the particular forums to which they have had access. In her maiden speech on 10 September 1996 the honourable member for Oxley in the federal Parliament, Pauline Hanson, said:

> I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians. Between 1984 and 1995, 40 per cent of all migrants coming into this country were of Asian origin. They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate. Of course, I will be called racist but, if I can invite whom I want into my home, then I should have the right to have a say in who comes into my country.

Those words should not be tolerated within our society; the member for Oxley is talking about real people. What she said hurts real people: people in responsible positions should not be on about such matters. They should not be on about the further disintegration of a structure that holds society and the community together. Those words are destructive, although they do not break bones, as the rhyme says. Australian society must go into the next century being the envy of the world and not shooting our neighbours because of the intolerance, prejudices and bigotry that have been created in other countries.

We are proud to live in our society. We can all live together; we do not live in fear of being picked out, isolated and picked on either physically or non-physically. Those ways should be gone because they are the old ways — the ways that our society abandoned many years ago.

We cannot justify those views being held in our society. As responsible politicians in the community we are responsible for ensuring that the intolerant views, bigotry, racism and hatred espoused by Pauline Hanson and others do not continue. Those elements must not be further perpetrated within our society. The stakes are too high. The personal destruction that it causes in our society — the hurt it causes people, whether they are Asians or Aboriginals or others of whatever creed or race — cannot be allowed to continue.

I applaud the motion and I applaud all those honourable members who have spoken on it today. It is important to make our views known, just as it is important to continue to fight those intolerant views, which threaten to change a tolerant, far-sighted and progressive society into one that is heading towards barbarism.

The PRESIDENT — Order! As honourable members will be aware, the Chair does not have a vote on these matters. However, I wish to be associated with the motion.

Motion agreed to.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I declare the motion carried unanimously.

UPPER YARRA VALLEY AND DANDENONG RANGES REGIONAL STRATEGY PLAN

For **Hon. R. M. HALLAM** (Minister for Finance), Hon. R. I. Knowles (Minister for Health) — I move:

> That pursuant to section 46D(1)(C) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, amendments nos 91, 92, 93, 94 and 95 to the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan be approved.
>
> That pursuant to section 46(1)(c) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, amendment no. 96 to the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan be approved.

I also move:

> That both motions be debated concurrently.

The PRESIDENT — Order! To shorten the process, we will treat the first motion as having been amended to include a reference to amendment no. 96.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES — With your wise counsel, Mr President, I move:

> That the first motion be amended by the inclusion of the expression '96'.

Amendment agreed to.

Hon. PAT POWER (Jika Jika) — I thank Mr Knowles for his assistance. The opposition has no difficulty with the approval of amendments 91, 92 and 96, but it opposes the approval of amendments 93, 94 and 95.

Amendment no. 93 applies to lot 9, Como Parade, Lilydale, and allows for the subdivision of the land into two lots, the additional lot to be used for a dwelling. The site is 1.6 hectares in area. At present, the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan does not allow the land to be subdivided. The land is in a Landscape Living 3 policy area, which is intended to provide an attractive, low-density environment and to maintain and enhance the quality of the landscape, environmental values and water courses.

The owner seeks to subdivide the land because maintaining it is becoming difficult. The Minister for Planning and Local Government has decided to support the landowner's request. The opposition is concerned about the amendment. As I said, the site has an area of only 1.6 hectares, yet the current strategy plan requires that the minimum lot size be 4 hectares. More alarming is the landowner's reason for seeking the subdivision — that is, the land is too difficult to maintain.

Such a proposed subdivision is inappropriate and ought to have been rejected. The Minister for Planning and Local Government has made an inappropriate decision. He has established what will no doubt be seen by many people across Victoria as an unfortunate or, depending on their circumstances, fortunate precedent. It ought to be obvious that an area of 1.6 hectares is well outside the current minimum lot size of 4 hectares. If we consider requests for subdivision on the basis that the land is difficult to maintain, we will invite a range of people to consider the benefits that may flow to them if they are able to convince the minister of the need to subdivide their land.

Amendment 94 applies to land at Lot 4, Brandt Road, Lysterfield, and proposes to allow the subdivision of the land into four lots. It is important to understand that the provisions of the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan do not allow subdivision of the land. The land has an area of 15.02 hectares and is in a landscape protection policy area, which is intended to provide a range of farming uses and activities compatible with land suitability, capability and subdivision patterns, to protect and maintain the remaining native vegetation, wildlife and water quality and to maintain and enhance landscape quality and character. The minimum average lot size is 16 hectares.

The owner, as the opposition understands, seeks to subdivide the land to provide three lots for himself. The Minister for Planning and Local Government has decided to support the request of the landowner. Again, the opposition argues that the proposal ought to have been rejected at each step available to the applicant.

Amendment 95 applies to land at Lot 3, Wandin East Road, Wandin. The amendment proposes to allow the subdivision of the land into two lots. There are currently two dwellings on the land. The provisions of the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan do not allow the subdivision of the land. The land has an area of 5.2 hectares and is in an intensive agriculture 1 policy area, which is intended to protect, maintain and enhance the productive resources of the red soil areas and to encourage their use for intensive agricultural purposes. The minimum lot size is 8 hectares.

The owner seeks to subdivide the land and sell off the existing older house to raise capital to buy more land for agriculture. The Minister for Planning and Local Government has decided to support the request of the landowner. This request stands out clearly as one that should have been rejected at every point in the process available to the applicant. There are some unfortunate and unwise messages involved in the Minister for Planning and Local Government agreeing to subdivide land so that capital can be raised to buy more land for agriculture.

It needs to be understood that there are currently two dwellings on the land and that the government is sending messages to people in similar situations that if they can put forward an application based on the argument that they intend to subdivide and sell one of the older houses in order to raise capital to buy more land for agriculture, that request will be approved by this government and by this minister.

The Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan indicates that it intends to protect, maintain and enhance the productive resources of the red soil areas and to encourage the use of the land for intensive agricultural purposes in an agriculture 1 policy area. We are talking not about expansive agriculture purposes but about intensive agricultural purposes.

Having outlined the opposition's concerns about amendments 93, 94 and 95, I formally move:

That the expression ', 93, 94 and 95' be omitted.

I oppose the motion and support the amendment.

There is widespread community support for the concerns the opposition is putting forward. The Upper Yarra and Dandenongs Environmental Council is made up of 17 conservation groups, including the Bend of Islands Conservation Association, the Dandenong Ranges Southern Foothills Association, the Friends of Castella and Toolangi, the Friends of Picnic Hill, the Montrose Environment Group, the Mount Evelyn Environmental Protection and Progress Association, the Round the Bend Cooperative, the Save the Dandenongs League, the Stop the Assault on the Yarra Valley Environment, the Society for Growing Australian Plants, the Upwey Regional Action Group for the Environment, the Yarra Valley Winegrowers Association and the Yarra Valley Tree Group.

I refer to the Upper Yarra and Dandenongs Environmental Council because its president, Dr Malcolm Calder, has issued a statement headed 'Yarra Valley and Dandenongs carve-up continues'. I quote from the statement:

> Dr Malcolm Calder, President of the Upper Yarra and Dandenongs Environmental Council, said that the government was returning to the worst days of the 1950s in constantly resubdividing land into smaller lots.
>
> ... 'But with the attitude of the present government there is little long-term hope for the entire region'.
>
> Dr Calder accused the planning minister, Mr Maclellan, of breaking government promises to protect the region's integrity.
>
> ... Dr Calder said that the government made it clear that debate on the Planning Authorities Repeal Act that it would 'ensure that protection of the area continued ... (through legislation) ... which entrenched the strategy and put it under parliamentary control'.

In November 1994 the government introduced the Planning Authorities Repeal Bill which, among other things, disbanded the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority. This authority was responsible for regional planning in the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges; it was one of the more far-sighted planning initiatives introduced by the former Hamer Liberal government in the mid-1970s and was supported fully by Labor. Until the election of a Liberal-National Party coalition government in 1992 there had been bipartisan support for the protection of this region for almost 20 years.

The government has now reversed its previous support for this protection. In particular, the Minister for Planning and Local Government has initiated or supported a series of subdivisions that contradict the regional strategy plan and local council planning schemes. These are so extensive and blatantly contradictory to the direction of previous planning that they seem indicative of a personal crusade by the minister motivated by his contempt for proper process in planning and his hatred of the former Shire of Sherbrooke's planning policies in particular.

The Planning Authorities Repeal Act also provided that an amendment to the strategy plan approved by the minister could come into operation only on approval by both houses of Parliament. The government made clear its intention in the debate on the bill. The former Minister for Energy and Minerals stated that the 'government's intention is to ensure that the protection of that area continues'. The Minister for Planning and Local Government stated that the strategy plan introduced by the bill 'recognises the incredible sensitivity and the pressures for outward expansion of Melbourne into these areas'. He stated several times that the bill proposed to entrench the regional strategy plan in legislation and remove control by the minister of the day. I emphasise the words 'remove control by the minister of the day'. Indeed he boasted that the government 'introduced a bill that entrenches the strategy and puts it under parliamentary control'.

In accordance with any ordinary understanding of language, this terminology and the very existence of the act was taken by people in that region to mean that the government intended to support the provisions of the regional strategy plan and resist the constant pressure for incremental development that gradually lessened the plan's effectiveness. People in the region hoped and expected that these assurances and the act would see an end to this minister's arbitrary flouting of the strategy plan and council planning schemes.

The Labor Party was under no illusions about the legislation and opposed it on three main grounds. In the other house the Deputy Leader of the Opposition

pointed out that the requirement that both houses of Parliament must approve any amendment to the strategy plan was a spurious safeguard that provided no real protection. The bill would not prevent inappropriate development:

> ... because the government currently controls both houses ... it is possible for a government decision to be bulldozed in this house and the other place ... In reality, and in practice, what difference is there between what the government is proposing for the strategy plan to come to Parliament ... and the process for planning scheme amendments that are required to be tabled in Parliament and can be revoked by either house within 10 days?

In the other place the opposition also argued that repeal of the regional planning authority would remove an important level of protection and further concentrate power in the hands of the minister. The opposition pointed out that no explanation was provided of why the planning appeals bill was introduced shortly before this government abolished democracy in local government and appointed commissioners. It is clear that this government is frightened by local democracy because it may lead to expressions of opposition to the impact of government actions on local communities. The minister did not want regional planning authorities because he wants to make all the decisions. He has established rule by imperial decree as befitting an emperor who loathes local decision making.

The opposition in the other place also pointed out that the passing of the bill would erode the impact of local planning schemes, which under the operation of the regional authority were able to introduce stricter planning controls at a local level than those introduced at a more regional level by the strategy plan. The regional plan provided the minimum standards, but the government's actions would inevitably provide the maximum standards and devalue local controls. All these and other objections to the government's way of proceeding were placed on record for future reference. The opposition's concerns at that time are now shown to be legitimate.

The government has introduced six amendments to the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan — amendments 91 to 96. In general they illustrate that the existence of the Planning Authorities Repeal Act has made not the slightest difference to this government's and this minister's business-as-usual approach and contempt for proper process and is not worth the paper it is written on. In all cases the planning authority for the amendment is the Minister for Planning and Local Government, and in most cases there appears to have been no consultation or inadequate consultation with the responsible authority, the Shire of Yarra Ranges.

Amendment 93 would allow subdivision of a 1.6-hectare lot into two lots in a landscape living 3 policy area, which provides for a minimum lot size of 4 hectares. The justification of this proposal in the explanatory report is that maintenance of the land is becoming difficult. I advised the house that this was a dangerous precedent. Many thousands of lots in this region are larger than 1.6 hectares. Is this minister seriously proposing that anyone who can make out a similar case ought to be allowed to subdivide? I imagine many people will believe the answer to that is yes. This minister is known around Victoria and indeed throughout his own department as a sucker for a sob story. Many larger lots can create maintenance problems — that is not disputed — but using that as a justification for subdivision creates a serious precedent that can erode the intent and impact of proper planning. The minister has shown repeatedly that he has no conception of the principle of fairness under which like is treated with like. The fact that one property is one of many with similar or the same characteristics in a zone in a planning scheme that was approved only after consideration of public submissions appears to be irrelevant to this minister. He continues to make exceptions and provide individuals with advantages on his whim.

Amendment 94 allows for the subdivision of lot 4 in Brandt Road, Lysterfield, into four lots. Lot 4 is 15.02 hectares and, from available records, is one of four lots varying between 11.2 hectares and 15.02 hectares created when the original 48.64-hectare property was subdivided in the early 1980s. The proposed new subdivision is a particularly worrying trend. If approved it would be a subdivision of a relatively recent subdivision. This type of incremental carve-up is exactly what planning in the Dandenong Ranges is designed to prevent. This kind of proposal by the Minister for Planning and Local Government will lead inexorably back to the kinds of mistakes made in the 1950s and 1960s that governments have been trying to remedy and prevent for more than 20 years.

A subdivision made initially in the 1980s is to be resubdivided in the 1990s. It seems absurd. The Brandt Road proposal is also typical of the inevitable result of the minister's ad hoc approach to planning.

The minister treats every application made to him on a case-by-case basis without regard to the wider ramifications or the precedents his decisions may create. The minister is well aware of the area surrounding Brandt Road because he used to own property in the locality and has made a habit of amending the strategy plan and the local council planning scheme in the area. For example, he amended both in 1993 in relation to two properties in Ryans Road.

One property was owned by a Mr Kopoelis, which he purchased after the approval of controls specifying a minimum 40-hectare subdivision control on the land. In that case the minister approved the creation of seven lots, most of them small. He also approved another small subdivision on land formerly owned by Boral and situated in the same road and coming within the same conservation zone. Honourable members would be aware that those notorious cases outraged the local community and inevitably aroused or contributed to expectations for further subdivision by some landowners in the area. The opposition cannot emphasise too strongly that it is concerned about the precedents that have been established, the signals they will send and the way they will be interpreted by people who may see them as being in their favour.

The Brandt Road property is located in a landscape protection policy area specifying a minimum subdivision of 16 hectares, an appropriate zone for a 15.02-hectare lot. However, the owner of the lot sought to create 57 lots of between 4000 and 8000 square metres each during consideration of the new Shire of Sherbrooke planning scheme L61. Subsequently the owners of other properties in Brandt Road collectively sought a 26-lot subdivision.

In this way the Minister for Planning and Local Government has contributed to development expectations in the Dandenong Ranges and Upper Yarra Valley instead of consistently and fairly upholding the application of general planning provisions. It is common knowledge among solicitors and planning professionals all over the state that the way to gain development approvals is to sell a hard-luck story direct to the minister. They are advising their clients to bypass councils and deal directly with the minister by appealing to his considerable ego, with results that are all too readily apparent.

The amendment also proposes to transfer one lot to Vicroads for incorporation into a future road reserve, without cost. Elsewhere in the locality the minister has used the technique of approving inappropriate subdivisions contrary to all planning requirements on the pretext that a small amount of land must be provided for public purposes. This approach to planning should not be used generally, and certainly should not be used in the case of the Brandt Road property.

Amendment 95 proposes to subdivide a property in East Wandin Road, Wandin, into two lots. The proposal, which has clearly been presented to the minister as another hardship case, will inevitably lead to the construction of an additional house, contrary to the regional strategy plan. My earlier comments on the need for the consistent and fair application of zone provisions and on the creation of precedents in cases such as this also apply here.

The minister delayed proclamation of the Planning Authorities Repeal Act for almost 15 months after it was passed. The record shows that during that time there was an unprecedented rush by developers to gain development approvals from the minister, contrary to the regional strategy plan and council planning schemes. The passage of the act simply alerted developers to the need to obtain approvals before it was too late. Local community and conservation interests hoped the government's lofty pronouncements would be at last be put into practice when the act was proclaimed.

However, it is clear that the existence of the act, whether it is proclaimed or not, will change nothing. It will be a policy of business as usual for the minister and the government in the Dandenong Ranges and the Upper Yarra Valley based on advantaging a few over the interests of many and a continuation of the development-at-all-costs attitude that is steadily destroying the region.

It is not appropriate that amendments 93, 94 and 95 should proceed. Consideration of all amendments that are not subject to the normal planning process, including exhibition and the establishment of a panel, should be deferred until the conclusion of those processes.

I conclude by reminding honourable members again of some of the issues that are raised in the amendments. I indicated earlier that in amendment 93 the owner seeks to subdivide the land because the maintenance of the land is becoming difficult. I suspect there are few people in this chamber who could not say that from time to time the maintenance of their land is difficult. It is a worrying precedent that the Minister for Planning and Local Government should be prepared to approve a demonstrably inappropriate subdivision on the basis that it will provide relief to the owner in respect of land maintenance. If the owner is finding it difficult to maintain the land perhaps that person should consider whether he or she is an appropriate person to be its caretaker.

There are two dwellings on the land that is the subject of amendment 95. The owner is seeking to subdivide the land and sell off the existing older house to raise capital to buy more land for agriculture. Honourable members need to understand that the intensive Agriculture 1 policy area is intended to encourage the use of land for intensive agricultural purposes, not for expansive agricultural purposes.

Finally, 17 conservation groups in the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges area have argued that, if it is passed, the motion we are debating will return Victoria to the worst days of the 1950s, when land was constantly subdivided and resubdivided into smaller and smaller lots.

I remind the house that the government's election promise regarding this very important region of Victoria was that it would protect the region's integrity.

The opposition has already expressed its concern about decisions taken by the government regarding the creation of the Shire of Yarra Ranges. At that time it argued that the planning and environmental issues that were particular to the Dandenong hills were different from those that apply to the Yarra Valley. The opposition also argued that the incredible potential that exists for intensive farming demands sound planning in the Yarra Valley and the way inappropriate planning could quite easily harm, if not destroy, the very nature of the Dandenongs. It also said that the municipal structure was inappropriate.

I have no difficulty arguing that the opposition's amendment to omit amendment nos 93, 94 and 95 from the amended motion ought to be supported.

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

I seek the indulgence of the house to adjourn debate on the motion and the amendment proposed by Mr Power until later this day, given that Mr Power has raised a number of issues on which I shall need to seek advice.

Motion agreed to and debate adjourned.

Debate adjourned until later this day.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Sessional orders

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

That so much of the sessional orders be suspended as would prevent new business being taken after 10.00 p.m. during the sitting of the Council this day.

Motion agreed to.

EDUCATION (AMENDMENT) BILL

Second reading

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Bill has two main purposes. The first is to widen the range of persons from overseas who may attend state schools on a fee-paying basis, and to allow the charging of application fees to overseas students applying to enrol in state schools. The second is to allow arrangements between principals and employers by which senior secondary school students may attend workplaces for extended periods to fulfil the requirements of a course of study within the VCE curriculum framework. I shall deal firstly with the provisions of the bill dealing with overseas students.

The definition of overseas student

Overseas students currently attend state schools, paying fees set by the Minister for Education by ministerial order under section 25A of the Education Act 1958. However, the act's definition of overseas student is restricted to persons holding a specific category of visa called a student visa.

At the time the definition was inserted in the act, only holders of a student visa were permitted by the commonwealth Department of Immigration to study in Australian schools.

This restriction has now been lifted, and some holders of visitors' visas are permitted to attend short education courses in Australia. Such persons cannot be charged fees to attend courses at Victorian state schools under the present definition of overseas student in the Education Act.

The bill will amend the definition of 'overseas student' in the Education Act 1958 to mean any person holding a visa that permits the holder to attend education courses in Australia.

Exemptions from payment of fees

The Minister for Education will have the power to exempt some overseas students from paying the fees. The Minister for Education will exempt by ministerial order most persons on temporary resident permits from paying fees. Such persons already attend state schools without charge. Most students on temporary resident permits are dependants of non-student temporary residents, including dependants of diplomats on official duty in Australia. These students are exempted from paying fees under a commonwealth/state agreement.

The commonwealth includes those students in the count for general recurrent grants to the states. The exemption categories will be maintained to comply with the existing agreement.

The benefit of the proposed amendments

The proposed amendments will enable Victoria to take advantage of the growing and competitive international market in providing education to overseas students.

Other Australian states already accept the full range of overseas students into their state schools on a fee-paying basis. Independent schools in Victoria are also able to offer school places to all overseas students.

Victorian state schools are prevented from accepting the full range of overseas students simply because of the narrow definition of overseas student in the Education Act.

This bill remedies the problem. The amendments proposed in this bill should bring Victoria at least $600 000 per annum.

The effect on Victorian students

I want to address any concerns Victorians may have that this bill will result in Victorian children losing school places to fee-paying overseas students. The new categories of overseas students who will be able to attend state schools under the proposed amendments are permitted to study for only up to three months. They are not entitled to complete formal Victorian qualifications such as VCE. Further, existing departmental policy allows enrolment of overseas students in state schools only where the school has places not required by Victorian students. Victorian students will not be competing with overseas students for school enrolment.

The provision to allow the charging of application fees to overseas students is designed to recoup the administrative costs involved in processing applications for enrolment in state schools from overseas students.

I now turn to the provisions of the bill dealing with work placement.

The move to work-based learning for senior secondary school pupils

In 1974 Parliament inserted new provisions in the Education Act providing for arrangements between employers and school principals under which students could attend a workplace during school hours to experience the work environment. Well known as 'work experience', these arrangements have now been very popular for over 20 years. Since 1974, however, the school and work interface has significantly changed.

Although work experience as it traditionally operates receives widespread support and is an important aspect of the school curriculum, the work experience provisions of the Education Act are now seen to be limiting the development of new and productive relationships between schools, students and enterprises. There is a rising demand for students to obtain increased access to work-based skills and learning within a VCE curriculum framework.

There is also a need for more flexible relationships between the student and employer than are permitted by the work experience provisions.

The following are the influences on this changing environment:

the support given by education ministers throughout Australia in September of 1994 for secondary schools to have a role in delivering the Australian vocational training system;

the present federal government policy commitment to giving secondary schools a delivery role in the proposed modern Australian apprentice and traineeship system;

the establishment in 1993 of a Victorian joint ministerial position on a dual-recognition policy for the VCE. The Victorian government recognises the benefit to young people of integrating vocational preparation into secondary curriculum. This policy effectively allows secondary school students to incorporate a full vocational education and training certificate into their VCE;

a joint ministerial statement in August of 1996 on vocational education and training in schools which outlined the broad policy base for the delivery of vocational education and training by secondary schools;

the establishment of the Australian Student Traineeship Foundation in 1994 to provide seed funding on a national basis to promote workplace learning partnerships between schools and enterprises; and

national policy initiatives to increase retention rates at secondary schools in recognition of the skill demand from employers for entry level occupations and the relationship between early school leaving and long-term youth unemployment.

In response to these influences schools are establishing a range of relationships with enterprises and TAFE institutes which go beyond the concept of work experience.

The recently announced federal and state funding initiatives for vocational education and training by schools will also increase this demand for a more flexible approach to student placements.

With this active promotion of and participation in workplace learning for year 11 and 12 students, work placement has emerged as a concept distinct from that of work experience. Work placement involves extended on-the-job learning which is related to a structured training curriculum.

The Victorian government recognises that to meet the interests of young people and enhance their career opportunities a need arises to strengthen the links between school and the workplace through involving industry in course development and course delivery by extended work placement. Further, this bill encourages the proper use of training resources by schools in conjunction with TAFE institutions and industry, thus avoiding wasteful duplication.

An increasing number of enterprises are also seeking to extend their relationships with schools to take advantage of the entry level skills training and potential recruitment benefits which dual recognition and other vocational education and training programs offer. Consultations have indicated support for the direction and spirit of the bill.

The proposed work placement amendments

The bill provides for work placements to be made where such placements are associated with courses of study accredited by the Victorian Board of Studies or the State Training Board.

A school pupil over the age of 15 years who is undertaking such a course of study may be placed with an employer for training if the principal, the employer and the pupil — and if the pupil is under 18 years the parent — enter into a work placement arrangement.

The arrangement must be in writing. It must also specify the course of study for which the work placement is made, the duration, the name of the employer and the skills and competencies that the pupil is expected to obtain.

The Minister for Education may make orders relating to work placements, specifying such matters as the maximum number of days a pupil may be employed on work placement, the hours of the day a pupil may work on work placement, the maximum number of pupils who can be employed by an employer and the minimum rates of payment. The ministerial order will also provide for the obligations of a principal of a school before a work placement arrangement can be entered.

Pupils employed under work placement arrangements will be covered by Workcover, under the Accident Compensation Act 1985. Pupils on work experience presently have such cover. The bill also proposes to extend Workcover to pupils undertaking work placement with self-insurers, and to employer-conducted non-profit training or skill centres.

The bill enables the Minister for Education, if satisfied, to waive the requirement of a minimum payment to a pupil placed in a training or skill centre conducted by an employer on a non-profit basis.

As with a work experience arrangement the bill provides for work placement reciprocity between Victoria and other states or territories so that Victorian pupils may go on work placement interstate and interstate pupils may come to Victoria for work placement.

Victoria will recognise another state or territory for reciprocal work placement purposes only if the other state or territory has satisfactory work placement and accident compensation arrangements that will apply to Victorian pupils.

The bill provides the principal or head teacher of the school with a discretion, within guidelines to be prescribed in a ministerial order, to make an arrangement with a non-Victorian employer in another state or territory where that state or territory is not declared by order of the Governor in Council, to be a reciprocating state or territory. Pupils undertaking such an arrangement would not be covered by the Victorian Workcover provisions and would be expected to organise their own insurance.

After consulting and agreeing with the Victorian Workcover Authority a number of consequential changes will be made to the Accident Compensation Act 1985 and the Accident Compensation (WorkCover Insurance) Act 1993 to:

> provide Workcover for those pupils entering arrangements with an employer who is a self insurer within the meaning of the Accident Compensation Act 1985; and
>
> extend the Workcover provisions applying to work experience arrangements to work placement arrangements.

A broad range of organisations has been consulted on the proposals, including the Victorian Association of Secondary School Principals, the Association of School Councils in Victoria, the Victorian Board of Studies, the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Australian Chamber of Manufactures, the Association of Independent Schools of Victoria, the Victorian Workcover Authority and the Catholic Education Office.

Safeguards have been provided in the bill to ensure that work placement arrangements have no impact on part-time employment or the exploitation of students. Clause 7, which inserts new section 64LC, provides that any work placement is part of an accredited course of study, and proposed new section 64LD enables the Minister for Education by order to regulate work placement arrangements. The principal of a school, by ministerial order, will be obliged to ensure prior to the placing of a pupil on a work placement arrangement that the placement is appropriate to the needs of a pupil and the requirements of the accredited course of study.

The proposed work placement scheme is designed to expand the range of courses of study open to senior secondary pupils and in particular VCE pupils. The scheme will allow those pupils to focus their studies towards their eventual career path at an earlier stage than has been previously possible.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned for Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) on motion of Hon. C. J. Hogg.

Debate adjourned until next day.

COURTS AND TRIBUNALS (GENERAL AMENDMENT) BILL

Second reading

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill contains a number of amendments which will improve the operation of the courts and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

Jurisdiction

The bill increases the jurisdictional limits in the Magistrates Court. The jurisdictional limit for personal injuries matters is raised from $5000 to $40 000. The jurisdiction is raised from $25 000 to $40 000 for general civil matters.

The increase in jurisdiction generally reflects increases in wages and the cost of living in the seven years since the jurisdictional limit was last set. Although the amendment raises the jurisdictional limit to a level that is slightly ahead of the rise in wages and cost of living over the past seven years, this is appropriate as jurisdictional limits are not adjusted annually.

The increase in the court's jurisdiction is consistent with the jurisdictional limits in other states and with the Workcover jurisdiction, which was increased to $40 000 this year. The increase gives recognition to the growing professionalism of the magistracy and will have the anticipated benefit of reducing waiting times in the County Court as well as providing an avenue for the cheaper resolution of disputes by enabling more proceedings to be issued in the Magistrates Court.

Proper venue

Criminal proceedings in the Magistrates Court are commenced by filing a charge at the proper venue. The proper venue is defined as the mention court closest to where the alleged offence occurred or to where the accused lives. The police determine which court is the proper venue when filing the charge, but sometimes mistakes are inadvertently made.

The amendment to the Magistrates Court Act 1989 will prevent cases from being dismissed on the technical ground that a proceeding has been commenced in a court that is not the proper venue. If a proceeding has been commenced at a venue which is not the proper venue the court must adjourn the matter to the proper venue; strike the matter out if there has been an abuse of process; or, if the defendant does not object, hear and determine the matter.

The bill amends the Magistrates Court Act 1989 to enable the Chief Magistrate to nominate courts as mention courts for certain classes of proceedings. This amendment will enable smaller courts in regional areas to be opened as mention courts. The workload of these courts can be controlled by nominating them as mention courts for offences prosecuted by certain local police stations. The amendment will increase accessibility to the courts.

Scales of costs in criminal matters

Since the High Court decision in *Latoudis v. Casey* allowing costs to successful defendants in summary proceedings, the lack of a scale in criminal proceedings has caused difficulty in assessing quantum where such costs are awarded.

Where a successful defendant is awarded costs in criminal proceedings a magistrate will occasionally fix quantum on the spot. This generally occurs where the amount of the legal costs is low and the practitioner can quantify it immediately. In most cases, however, an order for costs is made in favour of the defendant and the parties are expected to sort out the cost issues between themselves. If there is no agreement the matter must return to the magistrate for resolution. Without a scale it is difficult to determine what actually constitutes reasonable costs, and prosecutors are at a considerable disadvantage when negotiating bills with the defence lawyer.

This bill amends the regulation-making power in the Magistrates Court Act 1989 to allow a scale of costs to be prescribed for criminal proceedings. The amendments will also allow a scale of costs to be prescribed for appeals to the County Court against sentence pursuant to sections 83 and 84 of the Magistrates Court Act 1989.

Prescribing scales of costs for criminal proceedings will make the costs payable by the state to the

defendant more predictable, promote consistency in fees for work performed and create a basis for speedy negotiation and prompt payment of bills.

Rules of court

Rules for the Magistrates Court are currently made by a majority of magistrates. This procedure is cumbersome as there are more than 90 magistrates located at courts throughout the state and meetings of all the magistrates take place only three times a year. Rules of the higher courts are also made by the majority of judges of each court, but the County and Supreme courts have many fewer judges, all of whom are based in Melbourne.

The bill amends the Magistrates Court Act 1989 to provide that rules of the Magistrates Court can be made by the Chief Magistrate together with at least two deputy chief magistrates. The rule-making power will continue to be subject to being disallowed in whole or in part by a resolution of either house of Parliament in accordance with the Subordinate Legislation Act 1994.

Court Security Act

The Court Security Act 1980 establishes a security framework for courts and tribunals and in so doing balances security needs with the notion of open court. The bill makes amendments to the act to give legislative support to the use of scanning equipment in the courts and to clarify other search powers. Amendments are also made to allow private contractors to exercise powers as authorised officers under the act. A number of provisions have been included in the bill to ensure that in exercising powers under the act private contractors will have the same duties and responsibilities as members of the police force and protective services officers. The powers of authorised officers to retain items which can cause injury have also been clarified.

Vexatious litigants

Section 21 of the Supreme Court Act 1986 enables the Attorney-General to apply to the Supreme Court to have a person declared a vexatious litigant. A person who has been declared a vexatious litigant in accordance with section 21(2) must seek the leave of the Supreme Court in order to commence or continue proceedings in the court. When making an order under section 21 the Supreme Court is confined to the consideration of litigation conducted by the litigant in the Supreme Court, County Court or Magistrates Court and may make an order in relation to future proceedings only in these courts. Legislation providing for a vexatious litigant order to be made was originally enacted in 1927. Since that time many tribunals have been established which provide new avenues for litigation and consequently more opportunity for abuse of the judicial system.

The bill amends section 21 to provide that the Supreme Court can have regard to any past proceedings in any court or tribunal in Victoria and can make an order that prohibits a vexatious litigant from commencing or continuing legal proceedings in any court or tribunal in Victoria. The Supreme Court can also limit a vexatious litigant order to certain types of proceedings or proceedings in certain courts or tribunals. This amendment will accommodate the situation where, for example, a person may be a vexatious litigant in relation to a planning matter in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal but has a legitimate Workcover claim in the County Court.

Amendments to section 21 also allow the Supreme Court to order that an application for leave to commence or continue proceedings may be heard and determined by an inferior court or a tribunal presided over by a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court. This amendment addresses the concern that the requirement to seek leave to commence or continue legal proceedings in the Supreme Court may be prohibitive for many people.

Appointment of judges to the County Court

The County Court Act 1958 currently provides that a person is qualified to be appointed a judge of the court if he or she is a barrister or a barrister and solicitor of Victoria and has practised as a barrister or a barrister and solicitor in Victoria for at least seven years. The bill amends section 8 of the County Court Act to provide that a person is qualified to be appointed to the County Court if that person has been a practitioner of the Supreme Court for at least seven years. The amendment makes the appointment criteria for the County Court consistent with those of the Supreme Court.

Other matters

Other amendments contained in the bill will:

enable the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and the Magistrates Court to refer the whole or any part of a civil proceeding to mediation. The Magistrates Court can only make a referral with the consent of the parties;

clarify the process of execution of penalty enforcement warrants under schedule 7 of the Magistrates Court Act 1989;

provide that the Chief Magistrate, by notice published in the *Government Gazette*, may appoint days and times that the Magistrates Court and the Children's Court may sit;

clarify that the Chief Magistrate can issue directions as to the practice and procedure of the court for both criminal and civil matters;

provide that where there is a vacancy in the office of Chief Magistrate or there is a temporary absence in the office and Governor in Council has not appointed an acting Chief Magistrate, the next senior Deputy Chief Magistrate is to act as Chief Magistrate;

enable acting magistrates to be assigned to the industrial division of the court as well as be appointed as coroners or to crimes compensation tribunals;

provide that where there is a vacancy in the office of Chief Judge, the next senior judge is to act as Chief Judge;

provide that sheriff's and bailiff's fees can be paid directly to the Sheriff's Office;

enable the County Court to refer a matter to a special referee without the consent of the parties;

clarify that section 70 of the County Court Act 1958 does not abrogate the power of a trial judge in the County Court to grant leave to a party to move for judgment non obstante veredicto (notwithstanding the verdict);

repeal section 79 of the County Court Act 1958 which requires every order in council made for the purposes of the act to be published in the *Government Gazette*. The advertisement of significant matters covered by this general provision is provided for by other legislative provisions or established practice. There is no equivalent to section 79 in the Magistrates Court Act 1989 or the Supreme Court Act 1986;

provide that the judges of the Supreme Court can make rules to specify the particular classes of case which may be dealt with by a Court of Appeal constituted by two judges only;

improve the operation of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal by allowing the tribunal to make orders which will discourage parties and legal representatives from delaying hearings;

clarify that the Supreme Court may grant a certificate of indemnity under section 13 of the Appeal Costs Act 1964 where an appeal succeeds on the ground that the judgment or the verdict of the jury was against the evidence, or the weight of the evidence, or that the damages awarded were excessive or inadequate; and

repeal the act creating the Judicial Studies Board, which has been inactive since its inception.

Section 85 statement

I now wish to make a statement under section 85 of the Constitution Act. Clauses 8 and 37 of the bill provide that it is the intention of certain sections to alter or vary section 85. These clauses have the effect of preventing the Supreme Court from entertaining certain types of proceedings.

Clauses 7 and 35 provide mediators in the performance of their duties in connection with the reference from the Administrative Appeals Tribunal or Magistrates Court the same protection and immunity as a judge of the Supreme Court has in the performance of his or her duties as a judge. Clause 7 also provides immunity to a registrar of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal in the performance of his or her duties as registrar under section 50(5) of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1984. These functions include taxing or settling bills of costs.

The reason for the variation of the Supreme Court's jurisdiction is that immunities are necessary to enable mediators and registrars to carry out the

duties mentioned in clauses 7 and 35 without fear of litigation by disgruntled parties.

Conclusion

This bill reflects the continuing efforts of the government to improve the operation of the courts and tribunals in the justice system for the benefit of all Victorians. The government is actively pursuing an agenda to make the justice system effective, efficient and responsive to a changing environment. It has worked with the judiciary and the profession in developing this legislation which, while technical in nature, contains many useful and significant improvements to the way in which the courts and tribunals go about their business. Much of it springs from the thoughtful suggestions of members of the judiciary and the profession, for which I am grateful and which reflect a mutual desire to provide the best possible system of justice for Victorians.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. PAT POWER (Jika Jika).

Debate adjourned until next day.

Sitting suspended 6.27 p.m. until 8.02 p.m.

CRIMES (FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION) BILL

Second reading

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The principal object of this bill is to provide an amendment to the Crimes Act to define practices which comprise the serious indictable offence of female genital mutilation. This bill prohibits the performance of these procedures unless part of a surgical operation performed for the medical wellbeing of the patient by an authorised practitioner. It will also prohibit the removal of a person from Victoria to have such procedures performed.

The policy basis for this bill is to set an unequivocal standard that all forms of female genital mutilation are inappropriate. It is my view that in relation to children all forms of these practices should be outlawed. This legislation recognises that the rights of the child to health and wellbeing are paramount.

Practices that comprise female genital mutilation are believed to have predated Islam, Christianity and other religions. Female genital mutilation is sometimes portrayed in the media as having its origins in Islam. However, there is no Islamic religious basis for the practice. There are no medical or religious reasons to justify these procedures.

In June 1995, the head Imam for Australia, the Mufti, His Excellency Imam Al-Hillaly; the Very Reverend Father El-Bakhoumi of the Coptic Orthodox Church; and Sheik Mansour Leghaei from the Shiite Islamic tradition jointly issued a press release condemning such practices and supported government efforts to eliminate them.

Some form of these procedures is commonly undertaken by communities from north-eastern and north-central Africa including Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Egypt, Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania and some Arab countries. It is believed that female genital mutilation also occurs among some groups in Malaysia, Pakistan, India, Indonesia and the Philippines.

The 1991 census figures showed that there were 15 995 people living in Victoria whose birthplace was a country situated in the Horn of Africa. Victorian settlement figures for August 1991 to November 1995 show that a total of 7656 persons arrived from Africa during this time. These persons originated mainly from countries such as Ethiopia (including Eritrea), Egypt and Somalia — countries with a high incidence of such practices. Fifty per cent of women from Egypt and Kenya perform some type of female genital mutilation whereas approximately 90 per cent of women from Ethiopia (including Eritrea), Somalia and Sudan practise the severe forms.

Female genital mutilation is a violation of the human rights of women and children. It is a practice that is contrary to the United Nations Declaration on Violence against Women and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child. Australia is a signatory to both agreements.

By 1995, New South Wales and South Australia had passed legislation prohibiting these practices. This bill proposes that existing Victorian law be clarified

so that there will be no doubt that such practices constitute criminal offences.

The amendment to the Crimes Act 1958 proposed by this bill defines female genital mutilation as infibulation; the excision or mutilation of the whole or a part of the clitoris; the excision or mutilation of the whole or a part of the labia minora or labia majora; any procedure to narrow or close the vaginal opening; the sealing or suturing together of the labia minora or labia majora; or the removal of the clitoral hood. The bill makes it an offence to perform any of these practices on children.

This bill will ensure that any person who aids, abets, counsels or procures the performance of prohibited female genital mutilation will be charged and prosecuted as a principal offender. Penalties will be incurred in line with causing serious injury. It will not be a defence to a charge of performing prohibited female genital mutilation to say that consent was given by the victim, parent or guardian.

The only exceptions to an offence under this legislation will be if a procedure, which would otherwise fall within the definition, is a surgical operation that is necessary for the health of the person on whom it is performed; or is a surgical operation for purposes connected with a labour or birth and for the relief of physical symptoms connected with that labour or birth; or a surgical operation for the purposes of a sexual reassignment procedure. These procedures must be performed by medical practitioners or, in the case of procedures connected with a labour or birth, by a registered medical practitioner or a registered midwife.

Procedures necessary for the relief of physical symptoms include those procedures that may be interpreted as not being necessary for the medical welfare of the person. Such procedures include repairs to scarring as a result of episiotomies, perineal repair, prolapse, removal of skin tags, and the removal of hymenal remnants and non-malignant cysts.

The prosecution will need to prove that the female genital mutilation procedures were not performed as part of a defined surgical operation.

The removal of a person from Victoria for the purposes of performing female genital mutilation is prohibited. Amendment of the Crimes Act will assist to prevent such action. This legislation makes it clear that female genital mutilation is a serious offence if committed in Victoria or if committed on a Victorian resident in another state or country.

The government aims to ensure that young women are not persuaded or coerced into having these procedures performed in another country. It will now be the responsibility of friends and family members to protect young women from such pressures. Anyone who assists by arranging or taking a child or a young woman from the state with the intention of having such procedures performed in another state or country will be guilty of an offence under this legislation and face penalties as severe as those imposed on perpetrators. Where a girl or young woman undergoes procedures that amount to female genital mutilation with no medical justification for those procedures, and the person took or arranged for the child or young woman to be taken from the state, the court will expect the person charged to satisfy the jury that it was not that person's intention that the child or young woman be subjected to female genital mutilation while outside the state.

It is my view that education together with legislation is the best approach to eradicating these mutilating practices. In November 1994, I asked a working group of the Victoria Women's Council to undertake extensive consultations with relevant communities about female circumcision and related procedures. I also asked the working group to advise me on the educational needs of these communities.

A key finding from the consultations was that although some women from the affected communities felt that specific legislation would be ineffective and damaging to communities, many other women supported the introduction of legislation to prohibit female genital mutilation because it would reduce the harm suffered by young women in both the short and long term.

Education and support within the context of reproductive health were viewed as essential parts of any legislative response because they lead to an understanding of the harm such practices inflict and the reasoning behind the legislative approach.

The communities also made it clear to the working group that any education program for the affected community members needed to be delivered in an appropriate manner. This requires that any education program needs to be entrusted to and

managed by the targeted communities themselves, particularly where matters of extreme cultural sensitivity are concerned. These comments have been taken into account by the Office of Women's Affairs in developing the legal education program.

A five-year national education program on female genital mutilation funded by the commonwealth will also provide additional education on health and welfare aspects of female genital mutilation. Target groups for the national program will be affected communities and relevant health professionals. The Victorian Department of Human Services is coordinating the program in consultation with the Office of Women's Affairs, the Multicultural Affairs Unit in the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Education, the Community Policing Coordinator's Office, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, and the commonwealth Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

An interdepartmental working group is putting in place a clear strategic plan which will provide information for the various professional services which may come in contact with the practice of female genital mutilation.

In conclusion, this legislation will provide a clear message that practices of female genital mutilation are serious criminal offences and are totally unacceptable in Victoria. Passage of the legislation which is accompanied by education about the law and followed by information and support on the impact of these practices on the health and wellbeing of girls and women is the strategy being adopted.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla).

Debate adjourned until next day.

SMALL BUSINESS VICTORIA (REPEAL) BILL

Second reading

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — I move:

That this bill now be read a second time.

The purpose of the bill is to repeal the Small Business Victoria Act 1976 and enhance support services to intending and existing small business operators by providing for better integrated arrangements within the state development portfolio.

Since its establishment in 1976 SBV has enjoyed quasi-autonomous status as an organisation governed by separate legislation administered by a corporation of five members, a general manager and a number of middle managers. As a statutory authority Small Business Victoria has developed as a bureaucracy within a bureaucracy.

The unsatisfactory situation exists whereby management reports to the SBV corporation while at the same time also reporting through the Department of State Development and ultimately to me. The corporation also reports separately to me as the responsible minister. There is now an overriding need to move away from what are an excessively bureaucratic and cumbersome multi-layered organisation and corporate arrangements.

Overall SBV has been effectively and inappropriately one step removed from the government although at the same time almost wholly dependent on inner budget sector funding.

Victorian small businesses seek recognition, support and efforts to improve their operating environment and competitiveness, not a complex bureaucracy.

Last year the board of SBV commissioned a report to review SBV. The review by Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu concluded that the statutory authority structure of SBV is not in any way an essential characteristic of its continued existence. The review recommended new structural arrangements for full integration within the Department of State Development, which necessitates repeal of the Small Business Victoria Act 1976.

The board has accepted the report's recommendations. I take this opportunity to thank the board for its work and for its responsible attitude to achieving better outcomes.

Repeal of the SBV act will enable several substantial improvements to be made to the advantage of small business. For example, the policy and service functions are isolated. On the one hand, the policy and program development and research functions are undertaken by the Office of Small Business

within the Department of State Development. On the other, the service facilitation function is undertaken by a statutory authority outside the department, and consequently the linkages and synergy between policy and service delivery are inadequate.

The present public sector administrative reforms to more clearly delineate the policy and service delivery functions create the need for a greater degree of control and accountability over contract management arrangements and, therefore, improved coordination between policy and service groups.

Integration of Small Business Victoria within the Department of State Development will significantly enhance such coordination and the government's capacity to strategically stimulate and support Victorian small business at no extra cost.

In addition, the better integrated arrangements proposed in the bill will allow the government to more promptly withdraw from service delivery where adequate private sector services develop and to more quickly achieve an efficient and effective approach to provision of information and referral services by contracting out such operations wherever possible.

Full integration will also assist the process of developing a more effective and efficient regional network and presence, which in turn will ensure access by those interested in starting a small business or existing operators to relevant information, referral and support.

The imperative for expanding the regional network is that decisive and prompt decisions and actions are taken through a streamlined and directly accountable structure. This is critical given the collaboration with the federal government in developing the regional network and expanding the First Place business directions initiative — already operating in the CBD, Bendigo and Mitcham — throughout the metropolitan area and across regional Victoria. It would be advantageous for the matter to be the subject of direct government-to-government interface. In this context opportunities for leverage of resources, especially from the federal government, must be maximised.

Moreover, Small Business Victoria is not perceived by its client base as an independent entity or voice of small business. Rather, it is seen as a direct arm of government irrespective of whether it is established under its own legislation. Inner budget sector government funding will continue and there will be no diminution of services.

It is desirable for reasons of continuity that the banner and name Small Business Victoria be maintained by the portfolio. In addition, private sector involvement and sponsorship of promotional activities to the advantage of small business must be maximised under this banner. The entity of Small Business Victoria will therefore continue and SBV branding will be enhanced.

SBV's roles in strengthening management competencies and promoting opportunities for small business via access to appropriate private sector support services will continue, as will its information and referral function, which conveys the demands, obligations and requirements associated with starting or developing a business.

The present government is seeking the best possible contracting-out arrangements and sees small business support services as being most appropriately delivered by the private sector. This policy commitment relieves the small business sector of the burdensome legacy bequeathed by the Labor administration which presented the sector with an ever-burgeoning bureaucracy and which, of all things, believed its role was to compete actively with private sector providers of support services, particularly in providing small business owner-operators with business management training and counselling.

The government has made substantial efforts to reduce the regulatory and compliance burden on small business. The government has cut the number of licences required by businesses by 23 per cent. The rate of growth for new state regulations is at its lowest level since the 1960s, with a 14 per cent reduction in the number of new regulations made in 1995.

The present government has restructured the workers compensation system at a saving to all business of hundreds of million of dollars.

The Small Business Victoria that this government inherited from the previous government had evolved from an environment where the Labor government believed that enhancing its role equated with an ever-increasing bureaucracy. Bigger and not

smaller government was seen as the key to helping small business. The government believes the opposite: that the best way to help small business is by getting off its back and out of its pocket, and by generally making it easier and cheaper to start and run a business. This is the cornerstone of the government's small business policy.

The bill provides for abolition of the Small Business Victoria Corporation. Small Business Victoria will continue to operate within the Department of State Development in exactly the same manner as does Business Victoria.

While introducing change, the bill continues the government's commitment to small business, including the expansion of First Place services, the creation of better services and the removal of attendant and unnecessary bureaucratic constraints.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned for Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) on motion of Hon. M. M. Gould.

Debate adjourned until next day.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES BILL

Debate resumed from 30 October; motion of Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health).

Hon. M. T. LUCKINS (Waverley) — The Children's Services Bill establishes for the first time a separate framework for the licensing, operation and regulation of services for children under six years of age, including preschools, kindergartens and child-care centres.

Of late the opposition has been concerned about pecuniary interests, so I should declare a pecuniary interest in this bill because my child will benefit from it. More and more women are returning to the work force after having children. According to a discussion paper released in April 1995 by the Ministerial Children's Services Advisory Group, which made many of the recommendations that have been acted upon by the government in this field, 125 000 children benefit from attendance at one or more children's services. There are 3000 registered child service centres in Victoria employing more than 15 500 people.

Society has changed dramatically since World War II when middle-class women working outside the home were almost unheard of and certainly not encouraged.

The name change from child minding, established in the original 1951 legislation, to children's services in 1988 finally acknowledged the fact that a holistic approach was needed in the care of children. The aim is to ensure that children cared for away from home are in a learning and stimulating environment. Activities to educate and assist the development and coordination, expression and socialisation of children are to be provided — not just supervision. Legislation and regulation are therefore necessary to ensure that children in centre-based care are supervised in a safe and secure environment.

Children's services are one of the fastest growing industries in this state, in Australia and around the world. An increasing number of women are choosing to return to the work force to provide financial security for the family; to utilise the skills and education gained and to minimise the disruption of their career; and because some women, much as they love their children, find being at home frustrating and isolating. The decision to stay at home with your children or to pursue a career is an intensely personal one. Some women choose to care for their children and would never consider returning to work. Other working women carry the millstone of guilt so heavily around their necks that I am surprised they can raise their heads to converse with their workplace colleagues.

I have had interesting debates with my best friends on this subject where we have differed completely in our approaches to parenthood. At the end of the day the decision must be right for the individual. No-one outside the immediate family has the right to judge that choice. For me, the decision to return to work was heart wrenching. Much as I adored being home with my son, with the fun and flexibility that offered, I had to decide whether I should take advantage of opportunities that might not be available again. My son is now two years old and I returned to work when he was eight months old.

I chose to enter Parliament with the full support of my family, hoping I could represent the needs and aims of other young people, with the full knowledge that this occupation is not conducive to family life. But who else can advocate first hand and

understand the problems young parents encounter and the competing priorities they face?

I hope to encourage many more young women to enter this place so we can be assured that the 52 per cent of the population who are women have fair representation. Currently only 18 per cent of Victorian parliamentarians are women. If we are to encourage proper representation Parliament must address concerns about the provision of child care. It is not just a women's issue. Women are no longer the sole carers for children. Families and fathers are now taking a more active role.

Many honourable members would benefit from the availability of child care close to Parliament House, particularly occasional care. Fathers take a more active role in parenting in the 1990s — for example, my colleagues Mr Cover, Mr Katsambanis and the honourable member for Wantirna in the other place, whose wife had a baby girl a couple of weeks ago, all have young families and, like my husband, are SNAGs — sensitive new age guys. If for some reason their wives were unable to care for the children for a short time, they would have no option other than to bring the children with them to Parliament or face the Whip and ask for time off. That is clearly unacceptable. As a matter of urgency, Parliament should consider these dilemmas. This is a very different place now compared with 100 years ago when our procedures were first established.

The Kennett government is committed to equal opportunity for women and men with family responsibilities. The Employee Relations Act 1992 provided maternity, paternity and adoption for all Victorians for the first time — not just for those covered by an award but for the 265 000 who at the time were award free. Leave is available until the child's first birthday and most women return to work around that time — if they have child-care arrangements.

In 1990 a discussion paper from the National Council for the International Year of the Family released survey data which indicated that a staggering 500 000 Australian parents said their child-care needs were not met for long day care, outside school hours care and family day care. I know many women who have resigned from their positions at the end of maternity leave because of a lack of child care for children under two years of age. Care for babies is expensive for centres to provide. The ratio of babies to carers is much lower than for older children — and this is developmentally their most active period. The shortage of places for babies necessitates the decision by some women, unwillingly, to leave their jobs. This has two related results: first, the employer loses the knowledge and experience of the employee; and, second, the employee has increased difficulty re-entering the work force when the children are older. That contributes to higher unemployment. Labour market research indicates the longer you are out of the work force the harder it is to find a job.

I welcome the announcement by Minister Napthine of a 17 per cent increase in funding for long day care centres that provide kindergarten services. This funding increase to $459 per child will contribute to a much needed increase in preschool places. The government has made a $50 million commitment to preschools in 1997.

I am increasingly annoyed by the desperate claims of the opposition about kindergarten funding and attendances. In the other place the Leader of the Opposition claimed that kindergarten attendances had dropped by 122 per cent. When you look at the figures you see that that claim is farcical. I am sure many parents around Victoria are relieved that Mr Brumby is no longer teaching their children. His maths are appalling!

In fact 60 000 Victorian children — 90 per cent of the four-year-old population — attend kindergarten. For parents with more than one child, returning to work may not be economically viable. Child-care costs can be prohibitive. Honourable members may be surprised to know the cost of child care. A live-out nanny costs around $10 an hour or approximately $450 a week. In addition to salaries you are responsible for Workcover and superannuation. So if you want a nanny you must be in a position to earn around $1000 a week before tax.

I shall use two child-care centres in Oakleigh to illustrate the costs involved. A council-managed centre charges $31 a day, or $155 a week, for each child. A private centre charges $37 a day, or the same weekly fee of $155. As I said, parents have to earn double the amount if it is to be economically viable for them to have their children in child care, particularly for babies.

Another option I found to be satisfactory was family day care, where children are cared for in a home environment. That is funded by the commonwealth and delivered through local government and therefore does not form part of this bill. However, in the wider debate on child care I believe an expansion of this form of service would assist many families. The child is in a natural home environment. The carer can look after up to four children, including her own. The cost for care is lower. There is more flexibility available for those working shifts or part time. It also enables a mother to effectively work from home and be paid to care for children other than her own. The local government provider is responsible for the regulation of the type of carer, the home environment and the health, safety and security factors.

In my opinion the states should have regulatory control over family day care to provide true consistency and the highest standards in preschool care. I urge the minister to investigate and take up this issue with our federal colleagues.

Victoria is a signatory to the National Child Care Strategy and the Commonwealth-State National Standards Child Care Agreement, which have the objectives of enabling families with dependant children to participate in the labor force and other activities and enhancing equal opportunity for women; providing quality programs to help children reach their full developmental potential; and assisting employers to improve efficiency in the labour force. The Children's Services Bill goes some way toward achieving those objectives.

In particular, the regulations for children's service centres will be less prescriptive and able to provide more flexibility for the increasing number of part-time and shift workers. Much of the unmet demand for child-care services is from people who work non-core hours. We must recognise that the labour market is changing, and that more and more employees are working up to five days in any seven days and outside traditional working hours.

Traditional suburban children's service centres are under increasing competition from innovative services that are located close to where their clients work. For example, the Kids on Collins Service Centre operates from Monday to Thursday between 7.00 a.m. and 8.30 p.m., and on Fridays from 7.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. As well as offering long day care for parents working in the CBD, the centre provides occasional care for parents visiting the city to attend meetings, to go shopping or just to have a break from the children. Tourists may also use the service.

The centre aims to be a one-stop shop and provides many services: a nutritious dinner for the children, so that parents are less rushed when they arrive home and can be sure the child is getting the nutrients he or she needs; monthly haircuts for the children and a dry cleaning service for parents; regular screening for eye and ear problems; and an immunisation service on the premises, alleviating the need for parents to take leave to attend their local maternal and child health centres. The immunisation service is the most important service because it ensures that children receive the full immunisation program.

Every parent leaving a child in the care of others is concerned about the quality of that care and how healthy, safe and secure the environment is. Sexual, emotional and physical abuse are all too common in our community, and children are most vulnerable to abuse. All members of the community, particularly elected representatives, have a social responsibility to ensure that children are protected, especially when their care is entrusted to others. I noted the concerns attributed to the shadow minister for family services in another place regarding the availability of child care outside core hours, which were published in the *Herald Sun* of 10 October. The shadow minister was reported as being concerned that some parents will leave their children in child care for all their waking hours. I have more faith in parents than that. The vast majority of parents are responsible and put the needs of their children first. The Minister for Youth and Community Services said the government will move on parents who abuse the system. In any case, the cost of leaving a child in long day care for an extensive period would be prohibitive. Most parents could not afford to fork out a minimum of $120 a day.

For me, the option of extended hours would at least mean peace of mind on the odd occasions when I was delayed in traffic or at work. The problem with some suburban centres is that one's cherub could be the last child at the centre when it closes at 5.30 p.m., and it would be very stressful to be stuck in traffic under those circumstances. In addition, the average suburban centre does not currently cater for parents who work non-core hours, and the legislation will enable centres to become more competitive and to

offer the services their clients need. The industry faces many challenges in keeping up with labour market changes.

There is often debate in the community about mothers returning to work and children being left with strangers. Are children better off with mum? Possibly. However, in a modern world the reality is that parents need to work and are committed to providing a good quality of life for their children. You cannot fight progress, and thousands of women, with the support of enlightened men, have fought long and hard for the right of women to progress in our society. To many women progress means returning to work and making provision for the care of their children by others.

Because the care of children is paramount, the bill provides regulations that reflect the expectations of the community for the safety and security of young children. It also balances the commercial realities in the children's services industry. It deals in detail with licensing of children's services. Clause 10 provides that the secretary must consider whether the design and location of premises is satisfactory. Clause 11 addresses the current inflexibility of the registration requirements and attaches the licence to the applicant, not to the premises.

Divisions 2 and 3 of the bill deal with licensing requirements, and I am very satisfied with those provisions. The bill provides for an applicant to be subjected to police checks and requires him or her to be judged a fit and proper person to operate a centre caring for children. The licensee is then ultimately responsible for the centre and the conduct of the staff. Part 4 specifies penalties payable by a proprietor for failing to protect children from hazards, for providing inadequate supervision, for the use of corporal punishment or unreasonable discipline, and for the failure to take reasonable steps to ensure that the buildings, grounds, equipment and furnishings that are used are maintained in good repair and in a safe, clean and hygienic condition. Clause 44 deals with the removal of children from a service where there are reasonable concerns about immediate danger to health, welfare or safety.

The bill also corrects an anomaly in relation to pre-prep services conducted by schools and ensures minimum standards are met through the extension of the licensing provisions to all preschool services, regardless of who operates them. Many private schools are already offering pre-prep programs, and the demand for that type of program is growing. Pre-prep programs are another example of a children's service that takes a holistic approach and is flexible. Such services provide parents with a choice, which is what this new legislative and regulatory framework also seeks to provide.

I congratulate the Minister for Youth and Community Services and his predecessor, the Honourable Michael John, for their commitment to ensuring that the quality of care, safety and security for children who are not yet old enough to go to school is standard across Victoria, reflects the expectations of the community and, most importantly, the expectations of parents. I commend the bill to the house.

Hon. S. M. NGUYEN (Melbourne West) — I support the bill. Although I commend the government on introducing a bill that recognises the importance to and impact on families of the child-care industry, a number of amendments should be made to improve its implementation and to ensure that people working in the industry get a fairer hearing.

Clause 1, the purpose clause, should be amended to specifically provide that the interests of children are part of the purpose of the bill. After all, one of the main reasons for its introduction is to ensure adequate protection for children against the possibility of misconduct by a member of a child-minding organisation. The bill also needs to be amended so that it clearly spells out that the responsible minister and the department must consider the needs of the children as part of the purpose of the bill. Clause 6(1) states:

> The Minister, by notice published in the Government Gazette, may declare that all or any of the provisions of this Act do not apply to any specified children's service or any specified class or type of children's service.

Although there are reasonable grounds for the minister to have that kind of discretion careful consideration must be given before the provision is invoked. It should be accompanied by a guarantee that the parties concerned with a particular case are consulted.

The building of child-care centres in residential zones often causes considerable concern to the residents in the immediate area. They should at least

be given the opportunity of presenting their concerns to the minister, particularly if he or she is considering declaring a centre exempt from certain provisions in the bill. The opposition supports the amendment to section 6, which requires the minister to consult before the exemption is exercised.

Under the bill police checks of employees of child-care centres are not mandatory. If the government is serious about introducing a high standard for these organisations it should require that all employees are checked by the police. Victorian parents expect and should receive a high standard of care from licensees. The first step in setting the standard is to ensure that all employees of licensed child-care centres are checked by the police.

The bill provides that the cost for obtaining police checks will be borne by the employee. It is estimated that with 3000 licences and 15 000 employees the cost of police checks at $30 a check will result in $1.4 million in revenue over three years. Because many employees in the industry are aged between 16 and 17 years if employers require them to be checked by the police they will have to pay $30 just to put in an application for a job at a child-care centre.

Under the current regulations it is mandatory for staff to have chest X-rays before commencing employment at child-care centres. With the increase in the positive testing for tuberculosis, especially by nurses at the Dandenong Hospital, it would be appropriate for the protection of our children if the new regulations required all staff to have regular chest X-rays.

In conclusion, I support the basic thrust of the bill but urge members to consider the amendments to clauses 1 and 3 regarding the purposes of the act and clause 6 relating to exemptions that will be moved during the committee stage of the debate. I also urge members to consider amending the requirements for police checks so that they are mandatory for all employees and so those employees are not forced to pay for the checks. The foreshadowed amendments will improve the operation of the bill and set a standard that will give all Victorian parents confidence in the running of child-care centres.

Hon. J. W. G. ROSS (Higinbotham) — It gives me great pleasure to support the Children's Services Bill. The object of the bill is to elevate the licensing and operation of children's services from a subordinate position in the Health Act and to enshrine similar but more carefully constructed provisions in an act specifically drafted with children in mind to achieve the most favourable environment for child-care services.

There is no doubt that children are our most precious asset and represent the future of our society. For example, I have said on other occasions in this place that the policies needed to contain the escalating costs of health care are almost entirely dependent on the creation of new health attitudes, values and beliefs in the next generation. The prospect of success will depend almost entirely on how we care for, educate and nurture our children.

The government has already made budgetary provisions for children's services. During the last election campaign the government promised to provide a $2500 equipment grant to each government-funded kindergarten and a 3 per cent boost in the recurrent government contribution for eligible four-year olds attending kindergarten. On 30 July equipment grants totalling $3.6 million were given to Victoria's 1431 kindergartens and preschools, and the state budget provided for increased subsidies to begin next preschool year. Although those initiatives are not central to the bill they indicate the government's ongoing commitment to children's services.

The bill is clearly the product of a process of the social and family evolution that will continue indefinitely into the future. As recently as two generations ago it was tantamount to heresy to contemplate a system of child care outside the traditional family structure. Mothers were expected to stay at home to care for their children and attend to so-called domestic duties. Fathers were equally constrained in their relationships with their children and were seen predominantly as breadwinners and perpetuators of a masculine stereotype in society. Those values led to the concept of the extended family with highly participatory roles expected of grandparents and siblings — that is, child care was seen as a discrete family responsibility. Participation of the wider community in child care was not only an unfamiliar concept but also carried with it a strong sense of adverse prejudice.

Nowadays, whether or not choice is involved, there are good social and economic reasons to allow all adults the option of entering the work force. More

women than ever are working. Male and female executives are working longer hours, and many jobs now involve part-time and flexible hours and carry an expectation of around-the-clock availability.

Further, the pace of technological change means that both men and women should expect major career shifts that will almost inevitably involve significant retraining and will take away even more of the time parents have for the care of children.

Everyone is aware of changing family structures. Grandparents are also affected as they increasingly maintain their own interests, economic sovereignty and separate recreation priorities until much later in life, and of course this is a good thing. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the cultural infrastructure no longer exists to provide the traditional form of child care which is dependent upon extended families. As a consequence of those and other changes new structures are evolving, and this bill is a good example of that process. In a nutshell, the care of children is rapidly becoming a community responsibility and parents are looking to the state government to show leadership in setting standards for child care and ensuring the quality of child-care staff. If both parents are working — often with changing work schedules — coordination and flexibility must also be provided to meet the broad range of needs of parents and preschool age children.

It is not surprising in this climate of change that history is littered with a series of piecemeal legislative responses to a complex range of social issues involving children. Predictably, the Health Act was believed to be an appropriate vehicle to advance and protect the wellbeing of children in many settings, including child care. That belief is rooted in history and arose from the early success of health legislation in improving the health, status and social wellbeing of children. It is interesting in 1996 to reflect on whence we have come in terms of children's welfare. For example, of all the children born in Australia as recently as 1921 — and many of their parents are still living — 8.3 per cent died during the first five years of life, with 6.5 per cent having died in the first year and 3.1 per cent during the first month of life. Little wonder that the physical health of children was the major imperative over past years.

Thankfully that social imperative is changing. Now we can say categorically that the Health Act has a lack of clarity of definitions; a lack of flexibility in the way it regulates children's services; inadequate provisions for the transfer of children's services management; and serious deficiencies in the general censure provisions which are very important where non-compliance with legislation can seriously affect the wellbeing of children.

I am pleased to say that the time has come to repeal the provisions for children's services in the Health Act. The Children's Services Bill does just that, and so acknowledges that times have changed. Social amenity and flexibility in respect of a wide range of caring services are now required in legislation for the optimal development of every child. The proposed legislation will achieve that, and is bespoke tailored to meet the needs of children and their parents.

I refer briefly to those children on whom the changes will impact and those upon whom they will not. Children's services have usually been considered to include long-day care centres, which mostly operate from 7.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. and may be provided by community organisations, private individuals, employers or TAFE colleges; occasional day care, involving just a few hours a day or perhaps a few days during the week; school-age care — that is, outside school hours care; preschool, which is often referred to as kindergarten; early intervention programs; and home-based care. I draw the attention of the house to the fact that the bill does not apply to school-age care nor to home-based care where fewer than five children are involved.

Nevertheless, this range of new service industries is moving from a small insular sector to a vibrant consumer-driven economy. More than 125 000 children in Victoria benefit from attendance at one or more children's services. The overall children's services industry is estimated to employ directly more than 15 500 people in Victoria.

The bill will bind the Crown and means government services will be controlled in exactly the same way and meet the same rigorous standards as the 50 per cent of long-day care services and almost 60 per cent of occasional care services that are provided by the private sector.

In summary, the purpose of the bill is to relieve the pressures on traditional family structures and to move towards a situation where parents can rely on child-care professionals to act responsibly in loco

parentis. These professionals will be vetted — including by way of police checks — for suitability to deal with children and will work in centres that are safe and secure and where children can grow and develop in the best way possible. When those children mature, I am confident that they will be better equipped to take their place as well-balanced participants in an increasingly complex and technical society. I commend the bill to the house.

Hon. ANDREW BRIDESON (Waverley) — I support the Children's Services Bill. In doing so, I support and endorse the remarks of my coalition colleagues. I also welcome the support of the opposition for what I believe is an important piece of legislation.

It is incumbent upon any government to ensure that children receive quality care at child-care centres in the safest possible environment. I am not talking just about the physical environment but also about the people involved in giving that care. I am pleased to say that the bill ensures that, through a system of both licensing and regulation of children's services.

I direct my remarks particularly to clause 11 of the bill, which sets out the criteria for determining whether a person is a fit and proper person. An applicant for approval in principle has to satisfy the secretary of the Department of Human Services that the person who is the proprietor of the service is a fit and proper person.

I am particularly pleased that the Minister for Youth and Community Services has included clause 11, which will ensure that police checks will be conducted into not only the licensee applicants but into all direct contact staff of children's services. I pick up a point made by Mr Nguyen. I do not think I am misquoting him. He said that he had a concern that not all staff working in child-care centres will be subject to police checks. I have checked the second-reading speech, and it states clearly that:

> The bill includes a range of methods to better protect children from potential abuse and maltreatment while attending children's services. Police checks will be conducted in relation to all licensee applicants and to all direct contact staff of children's services.

I hope that allays Mr Nguyen's concerns.

In picking up clause 11 the minister has adopted recommendation 115 from the Crime Prevention Committee's report, entitled 'Combating Child Sexual Assault: An Integrated Model'. This report is a result of an inquiry into sexual offences against children and adults. The committee was chaired by Mr Ken Smith, and Mr Nardella was a member of the committee.

Hon. D. A. Nardella — A great committee.

Hon. ANDREW BRIDESON — I hear the comment from Mr Nardella that it was great committee, and I agree with that remark. Anybody who has read the report and spoken to anyone associated with the inquiry will know it is a great committee and that this is probably one of the best reports that has come out of a parliamentary committee in recent times.

I put on the record recommendation 115, which states:

> The committee recommends that prior to a person being employed, including voluntary employment, in a position which has a duty of care or supervision over children, a criminal history check must be undertaken to determine if they are a fit and proper person.

Members of the committee travelled Australia and the world and heard an enormous amount of evidence from people who work with children. Many of the stories they heard were horrible in the extreme. It seems that many people who physically and sexually mistreat children are able to find employment in situations where they are dealing with children. It is a credit to the Minister for Youth and Community Services in the other house that he has acted on the recommendation of the committee to include this provision.

During debate two weeks ago Miss Gould expressed concern about the cost of police checks. Under the existing law those costs are paid for by the department; this bill will have the costs of such checks borne by the applicants. I do not share Miss Gould's concerns and I know Mr Nardella and other members of the former Crime Prevention Committee do not share them.

Recommendation 117 of the CPC report states:

> The committee recommends that the fee incurred for the criminal history check shall be the financial responsibility of the applicant.

The committee came to that decision because it considered the cost to be justified as it may act as a deterrent to an offender applying for a position. It considered that to be a good provision if it discourages an offender or potential offender from applying for a job.

I support the comments made by my coalition colleagues. Nobody has yet mentioned the regulation-making powers of the bill contained in clause 56, which states:

> The Governor in Council may make regulations for or with respect to prescribing —

a range of things including:

> (a) requirements about the siting, design, layout, space and security of premises used for providing children's services;
>
> (b) requirements to be complied with for safety, security, cleanliness, hygiene and repair of premises, grounds, fencing, gates ...
>
> (c) requirements to be complied with for the security, safety, health and welfare ...
>
> (d) requirements for the staffing of children's services including, but not limited to, the appointment, numbers and qualifications ...

and requirements about the provision of education programs. Many other regulation-making powers are contained in the clause including those relating to record keeping, forms and so on.

Exhaustive and extensive consultation in the compiling of this legislation has occurred with providers and relevant associations. It will provide a more appropriate and flexible system that will deliver children's services that meet not only the needs of children but also of Victorian families. More importantly, the legislation sets the parameters for quality care in a safe environment. I commend the bill to the house.

Hon. SUE WILDING (Chelsea) — This bill was introduced into Parliament during the autumn session and was allowed to lie over so extensive consultations could be conducted with community groups involved in the industry.

The amendments have addressed the concerns of the industry. The aim of the bill is to license premises and regulate the industry. The bill addresses the needs of children and recognises the development of a new industry and the ever-changing aspects of the industry.

I suggest that 10 to 20 years ago there was no such demand or need to have child-care centres as we know them today. My electorate contains an increasing number of child-care centres because of the demands by families for a change in society's attitudes. The industry is a changing and developing one. No matter what the changes and developments may be, the most important thing is that our children must be looked after and cared for in a safe environment by respectable people.

I know many people who use child-care centres; not one family has ever chosen a centre without a considerable amount of serious consideration about its merits and suitability. It is not a decision they make lightly.

All aspects of their decisions are minutely established: the friendliness and efficiency of the staff, the variety and quality of the programs provided by the centre, the ratio of staff to children, the number of children at the centre and, most importantly, the happiness of the children already enrolled. The reputation of the centre is also taken into consideration, as are its state of cleanliness, the dedication of the staff and the centre's physical location. Many factors are taken into consideration by each family that must make this important decision.

The children in the centres are at their most impressionable age. They are like sponges: they absorb all knowledge and understanding that comes their way. Their experiences at those centres may well influence them for the rest of their lives. I was fortunate to have been able to raise my four children at home in their varied and exciting formative years with lots of social interaction, challenges and adventures, but not all families have those opportunities, nor do they give those values the importance I did. That was a personal decision and one I would not swap my time with them for the world. Many choose not to have that experience. They miss out on many things; they cannot share with their children many aspects of their developing years.

The role played by child-care centres is very important. We are now recognising their role through this bill. Because of that importance and the influence of child-care centres on young children,

the government must ensure that legislation is in place to ensure the centres provide a safe environment for our children. One major requirement is the need for control by fit and proper people who understand the needs of young children, take the responsibility seriously and work conscientiously.

We have become acutely aware of those changes in society and society's expectations, and there is a growing awareness of the vulnerability of children and the need to care for them and protect them from undesirable elements in our community. Aspects of the bill give parents that assurance; they will know that the people who are responsible for their children are people who genuinely care for and about children.

It is a sad indictment of our society that people are reluctant to become involved with young children if they are in awkward situations in, say, supermarkets. They are slow to put out a hand of comfort in case it could be misunderstood as molestation. That concern has made us suspicious of everybody. Our innocence has been challenged and, unfortunately, child-care centres have received an unwarranted amount of criticism.

This bill addresses the situation and ensures that people who work with children in preschool centres, maternal and child health centres, day-care centres and creches have proper qualifications. It removes any doubts that parents may have about the fitness of the people charged with the care of their children. The bill ensures children will be well cared for; that developmental programs will be provided; that a child's health and hygiene will be properly dealt with; and that a child will have all the physical and emotional support and opportunities possible for its proper development.

The growing need for child care is recognised in that the bill provides the flexibility to address changes in the industry and to continue to ensure our children always receive the most beneficial care for their future development. Because of changes in family circumstances many young families no longer have the ready-made facility of grandparents, aunts or uncles as baby-sitters. Many parents with young children find themselves living miles away from their family homes in communities whose residents have average ages similar to their own. The extended family is no longer the norm.

The minister has written to hundreds of organisations and asked them to comment on the bill; he offered them the opportunity to make submissions before this debate came on. Their input has been valuable, and many of their concerns will be addressed during the committee stage.

The bill addresses changes in society's expectations and ensures a safer environment for children and peace of mind for their parents. I commend the bill to the house.

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA (Melbourne North) — I want to add to the comments made by Mr Brideson. By including in clauses 11, 17 and 18 recommendations contained in the report of the former Crime Prevention Committee, which was ably chaired by Mr Smith, the government has put the state in a good position.

In gathering its evidence the committee heard about the tragedies that are occurring in child-care centres, the alleged abuse of children and how lives are being destroyed because governments and other authorities have not had the wherewithal to deal with those situations. Even if those facilities were closed, it would be easy for the abusers to move on to other child-care centres and continue perpetrating their dastardly deeds on other children. These people are the worse predators in society. They have no morals and do not care for children. The bill is a good piece of legislation because it gives the authorities the power to deal with those people.

Clause 11 sets out the criteria for determining whether someone is a fit and proper person to run a child-care centre. To be approved in principle applicants must satisfy the secretary that they are fit and proper persons to be proprietors of such services. The clause goes further by ensuring not only that the proprietors are fit and proper persons but that, as Mr Brideson said, the paid or voluntary workers who look after the kids in child-care centres are also fit and proper persons.

The secretary also has the power to provide protection for children who are allegedly in compromising or difficult situations. The bill also stipulates the various conditions under which licences will be issued so that children are protected.

It is commendable that in seeking to protect children in child-care centres the government has adopted wholesale the recommendations of the former Crime

Prevention Committee. As Dr Ross pointed out, children are the most vulnerable people in our society. They must be protected from predators who do not care about the lives they destroy in pursuing their immoral and sexual gratification. The bill goes a long way towards fixing that situation, and I commend it to the house.

Hon. B. C. BOARDMAN (Chelsea) — In supporting the bill, I am being presumptuous. When I indicated my intention to speak I was asked why I wanted to join a debate on legislation concerning children, especially as I am single and do not have any children. I see the legislation as preparing me for my future. I am a bit of a visionary: I expect that at some time in the future I will meet Mrs Right and settle down and have children. I also hope that when that occurs my children will be professionally and adequately cared for.

It is satisfying to find that the legislation has bipartisan support because it is important and will inevitably affect most members of the community. When considering the rationale for the legislation it is important to note the following statistics. In Victoria, 43 per cent of the women and 41 per cent of the men in the work force have dependent children. My research directed me to the results of a 1971 survey. Some 80 per cent of the women who took part responded that they saw motherhood as their primary role. It is interesting that when the same survey was conducted 20 years later, in 1991, that percentage had decreased to 32 per cent — and I suggest it is continuing to change.

Hon. C. A. Furletti — You are one of the early statistics.

Hon. B. C. BOARDMAN — The first survey was conducted soon after I was born, so I probably was included in those statistics. Currently, 37 per cent of single parents and 23 per cent of two-parent families who have found it difficult to enter or remain in the labour force have stated that the provision of adequate care for their children has been their main problem. This is why the legislation is so relevant.

Some people have the choice of staying at home and caring for their children. All governments recognise and commend those people, who are provided for through social security benefits and other allowances. However, we must also consider those people who are career conscious and who want to work. We are living in a very competitive society. There is no doubt that a person's career builds self-esteem and contributes vitally to his or her overall life. These days people have to try to find a balance between building their careers and caring for and raising their children. These people must be given access to safe and reputable child-care facilities.

This legislation sets out to regulate the child-care industry. Child care is a creditable service. It is also a growth industry. The figures show that currently there are 3000 centres and 15 000 staff caring for about 100 000 dependent preschool children. However, it is vital to note that it is not the actual centres that are the licensees; it is the people who are in charge of the centres who are awarded the licences. They are the people in whom we put our trust and the care of our children. It is for this reason that clause 11 sets out the guidelines to determine whether someone is a fit and proper person to be licensed to operate one of these facilities.

Mr Brideson touched on the fact that this is not going to be done at any cost to the government; the cost of the police checks will be borne by each individual applicant. Mr Nardella further expanded on that. He used a worthwhile description: he said that the police check will keep these predators, the people who seek self-gratification through preying on our children, away from the industry. If these people, who are probably the lowest form of life, decide they want to run one of these centres for their own self-indulgence the police check is an invaluable way of flushing them out of the system so that they cannot have any involvement in it whatsoever.

The bill also increases the term of the licence from 12 months to three years, which is commensurate with the fact that although we have a 12-year review of licensee applicants, if, after a police check applicants are found to be suitable to hold a licence for the premises, they should have the added luxury of knowing they will be secure in the industry for three years.

It is most important to note that this legislation will ensure that minimum standards are set in relation to the service, the programs and the care and will provide the necessary consistency in the standards for the industry. It is undoubtedly time for the introduction of this legislation, and the child-care industry deserves it. The people who will avail themselves of the industry, such as shift workers,

dual-income families and other people who are concerned about building their careers, will rejoice knowing that their children are cared for in a safe, professional and adequate facility that meets all the standards and requirements of the bill and the associated regulations.

In conclusion, I reiterate that this legislation is an investment for the future of Victorians, and I also see it as an investment for my future. I hope — I know the day will come! — that one day I can make use of the service. I commend the bill to the house.

Hon. E. J. POWELL (North Eastern) — It gives me great pleasure to speak in support of the Children's Services Bill. Unlike the previous speaker, Mr Boardman, I have had a longstanding interest in the provision of children's services. As Mr Boardman said, the investment is for our children in the future and not just as we go along at the moment.

Firstly, my participation was as a parent. When a child leaves home to go to preschool it is usually the first time the child actually leaves home for any extended period. It can therefore be either a stressful or unhappy period for both parent and child or a positive one, depending in part on the approach of the staff of the preschool. Happily for me my experiences with both of my children were positive and happy ones.

When I was a councillor of the Shire of Shepparton I became aware of the many local councils that owned and managed a number of preschools in the area. I came to realise the importance of child-care services to the community and the need for flexible community services to meet the needs of individual families.

One of the most widely used children's services is the preschool, which is a vital step in the development of our children as it prepares them for more formal education. Occasional care is for parents who want to be able to use that service only when it is needed: when parents want to go shopping without their children, to visit the doctor or the dentist, or just to take a break. This service is important to people who do not have family or friends close by to look after their child.

Long-day care is another important service for families with special needs. This service can also provide childminding centre services or after-school programs. For example, a private childminding centre in my electorate has a service where you can drop a preschool child off at 8.00 a.m. at the centre; the preschool director then takes the child to the childminding centre and drops the child at preschool; at 3.30 p.m. the child is picked up and taken back to the child-care service and looked after until the parent comes to pick the child up at 6 p.m. That is a valuable service and is also particularly beneficial for parents with full-time jobs or for shift workers.

One of my portfolios when I was a commissioner with the Shire of Campaspe was that of community services, which included children's services. The Shire of Campaspe is made up of five former municipalities and it inherited 13 preschools which were geographically based right across the shire. An audit and review of those preschools revealed an inconsistent approach to such issues as rules, regulations, operating decisions and disciplinary procedures. Safety audits of the preschools showed up different standards of safety, and clearly this is not acceptable. The Shire of Campaspe is now putting in place a policy document to provide guidelines for the operation, management and delivery of services to preschool centres across the shire. This document will be a benchmark document for Victorian preschools. I congratulate the parents, the children's services unit, the manager of community services in the Shire of Campaspe and the staff of the preschools for their cooperation, input and initiative in formulating the policy document. In the early stages I was also involved in some of those meetings with the preschool staff. The level of commitment and cooperation of the managers of the preschools and the community and parents was invaluable.

In preparation of the bill over the past 18 months the government also conducted extensive consultations with the community and children's services sector. It has responded to that and included in the bill feedback from the discussion papers released in April 1995.

I also commend the Victorian government on the introduction of the bill, which will ensure that minimum standards of care are set in the child-care industry, which is one of the fastest growing industries in Australia. There are a number of reasons for this growth. They include parents returning to the work force and career changes, which may involve people moving from place to

place to enhance employment opportunities, which for many means the extended family or trusted friends are no longer close at hand. Parents are also going back to education and training to learn new skills or to enhance the ones they already have. Families who use child care need to know that when they leave their child in care the child is in the safest possible hands.

A number of clauses in the bill will ensure that this is possible. Clause 7 makes it an offence to carry on an unlicensed children's service. This clause will ensure that certain conditions apply to people before they are able to obtain licences, such as that they are fit and proper persons. These conditions will ensure that people who want to go into a children's service think about it a lot before they do.

Clause 11 sets out the criteria for determining whether a person is fit and proper. An applicant for approval in principle must satisfy the secretary that a person who is to be the proprietor of the service is a fit and proper person, and Mr Nardella spoke on this clause. This provision, along with the police checks for all people involved in the running of the child-care service, will make sure appropriately trained and qualified people are in charge of our children.

Clause 27 makes it an offence not to adequately supervise children using a children's service. There have been cases in other areas where children have not been adequately supervised and have been put at risk, which is totally unacceptable. Parents need to know that their children are well looked after in a safe and stimulating environment.

Clause 30 makes it an offence for the licensee or a nominee not to be present at all times that the children's service is operating. Clause 28 makes it an offence to inappropriately discipline a child at a children's service. When we were going through our review at the Shire of Campaspe we found that there were lots of different interpretations of discipline across the child-care services, some acceptable and some clearly not. The benchmark for appropriate discipline procedures will be set and services will be required to follow those guidelines.

Clause 29 makes it an offence to fail to keep the premises and grounds from which a children's service operates in a safe, clean and hygienic condition and in good repair. This clause will ensure that the appropriate safety conditions are met; for example, that outside gates have childproof locking systems fitted and working, that outdoor play equipment is regularly checked for wear and tear, and that there are no sharp corners on play equipment, toys or benches.

Mr Ross mentioned the Victorian government grant in July this year of $2500 to every government-funded preschool in Victoria — of which there are 1431 — to enable preschools to upgrade outdoor play areas, complete minor capital works or buy extra books, toys, craft material or other play equipment. Some 58 000 children will benefit from the grant. I recently had the honour of personally presenting a number of those grants to four preschools in my electorate — one in Echuca, two in Kyabram and one in Shepparton. Those grants were part of the $3.6 million commitment from the Victorian government and approved by the Minister for Youth and Community Services. I must say that when I presented those grants the preschool directresses told me of the number of things they were going to do with the grants, from the upgrading of equipment to the provision of shade cloth to protect the children over the summer period.

I congratulate the minister, his department and the Victorian government on the introduction of the bill. It will ensure that there are set minimum standards of care in the child-care industry, while at the same time work towards best practices, and a recogniton by the government of the importance of looking after Victoria's children.

I acknowledge the opposition's support of the bill and thank opposition members for their comments during the debate. The house has had a bipartisan approach to looking after Victoria's children, which is to be commended. I commend the bill to the house.

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Ordered to be committed next day.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS) BILL

Debate resumed from 30 October; motion of Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health).

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — The opposition does not oppose the Children and Young Persons (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill. Although the opposition is concerned about some aspects of the bill it will agree to its passage because a number of the provisions are urgent. The major urgency of the bill relates to provisions to transfer young persons from prison to youth training centres. I understand two young people currently fall into that category. I shall return to that issue later.

The bill will allow the Chief Magistrate to set the days and times the Children's Court can sit. It will also allow the Chief Magistrate and the Children's Court Senior Magistrate to make rules to prescribe forms for the purposes of the Family Division of the Children's Court. These are obviously acceptable amendments that are required by the Children's Court so that the Chief Magistrate has the ability to amend the dates set out at the beginning of a year if the need arises.

Another provision will allow acting magistrates to be assigned to the Children's Court. The Auditor-General's report, which unfortunately was not tabled in the house but was leaked to the opposition and the media, made similar comments about the concerns and difficulties magistrates had in dealing with the Children's Court. Three years ago Mr Justice Fogarty said magistrates were not keen to work in the Children's Court. Between 1990 and 1995, 15 magistrates were appointed to the Children's Court and only two remain. Children's Court magistrates are required to work under poor conditions. The lack of experience and expertise in children's welfare and family services that magistrates in the Children's Court require results in the burn-out of magistrates. The provision to allow for the appointment of acting magistrates will not necessarily remedy the problems of the Children's Court. The government should closely examine Mr Justice Fogarty's 1993 report and the substance of the Auditor-General's report that was not tabled in this house.

Part 2 is the important part of the bill because it relates to the transfer of young offenders from prison to youth correctional facilities. I am aware of two matters that will be affected by the proposed legislation. The first is the tragic case of Peter Coe, the taxidriver who was murdered by a 13-year-old boy. The child was subsequently charged and convicted and was given a lengthy sentence. He is now 14 years of age and is currently serving his sentence in Melbourne Remand Centre. As the house would appreciate, it is not appropriate for a 14-year-old to be placed in Pentridge Prison or in the general prison community.

The second case involves a 15-year-old boy who was charged with and subsequently found guilty of throwing a brick from a freeway bridge at a car, killing the driver. I understand he is also now at the Melbourne Remand Centre awaiting sentence. This boy, like the other, is in an adult remand centre. Honourable members can appreciate why this 15-year-old boy spends 23 hours a day in solitary confinement, virtually locked in a cell the size of a small bathroom. It would be inappropriate to have a 15-year-old boy released either in the remand centre or in the general prison community. I believe the judge is now waiting for the passage of the legislation so that he can pass sentence and have the boy transferred to a youth training centre and placed in an educational program. Imagine a 15-year-old boy spending 23 hours a day in solitary confinement in a small room. That is what is now happening, which is why the opposition does not oppose the bill.

The fact that the bill is required also highlights the problem of younger and younger children committing serious crimes that attract lengthy sentences. The quick transfer of these young people to youth training centres will be possible after the bill is passed. The house is also aware that the person sentenced for the murder of Peter Coe was at the time in the care of the state. It is a concern that many more of these cases could be before the courts. Children in the care of the state have had serious charges laid against them. Unfortunately, this boy was one of them.

Appropriate action needs to be taken on children's protective services to ensure that the situation which occurred in the case of Peter Coe does not occur again. All honourable members and the public in general should be concerned that young children are committing such serious offences and that this legislation is needed.

The bill repeals the Youth Affairs Act, and with it will go the Youth Policy Development Council. The YPDC has developed statewide strategic policies for youth and provided an integrated approach across all portfolio areas that affect young people in Victoria. The council has also conducted research to ensure that its advice to the government has been based on sound information. The council's research

was published as part of a transparent process of giving advice and making recommendations to the government. In the past the council made recommendations which led to the establishment of the Ethnic Youth Issues Network and raised a large number of rural issues that resulted in the establishment of a number of rural youth programs.

Regional youth committees, which are intended to replace the YPDC, are not as well resourced and are staffed only by part-time executive officers. People who serve on the committees receive no sitting fees and perform those duties because of their commitment to youth. Although it is appropriate for the committees to obtain community input on local issues and to ascertain local views, one must question how appropriate the social planning required across all portfolio areas affecting youth will be without the council to conduct research and take in information from a broad area. The committees are more localised and specific, which is good, but there is also a need for a broader approach. By repealing the act the government will remove the legislative framework that requires it to take into consideration the advice of the YPDC. The committees operate on a voluntary basis and look at issues at a local level rather than across the broad portfolio areas that affect youth.

A question has been raised about the government's commitment to the advice the committees give. One of those concerns is centred on the funding rounds that have taken place in regional areas where the committees have vetted the submissions for funding of different organisations and made recommendations on funding priorities to the minister through the department. The opposition is not certain whether the advice of the committee in the Ballarat region was passed on to the minister, because of the 10 areas on which the committee made recommendations only 3 received approval for funding — and they were not even the 3 with top priority. The opposition can assume only that recommendations of regional committees are not taken seriously by the government because in the case I have referred to the committee's recommendations were ignored.

The decision-making process that took place in respect of the Ballarat region is not available to the opposition. It requested the information, and although it was initially advised that it would be made available, subsequently the department declined to make it so. Committees can make recommendations but there is no transparency in the process because information on how it was implemented has not been published. It is clear the government did not necessarily take the committee's advice.

The bill makes some administrative changes, but the major change is to allow children to be transferred from prisons to youth training centres. Although that is appropriate, the opposition is concerned that the government continues to ignore the advice of judges, committee members and people involved in community services in non-government areas that children's services need to be improved. If the government continues to ignore that advice there will be more tragedies and more young people committing serious offences — the very conditions that have led to the introduction of the legislation.

On the basis that it acknowledges the need for the legislation, the opposition will not oppose the bill. However, it urges the government to listen to specialists in the field and to take their advice on board.

Hon. JEAN McLEAN (Melbourne West) — The opposition does not oppose the bill because, as Miss Gould said, it contains provisions that are urgently needed to allow the transfer of offenders between prisons and youth training centres. I hope those provisions will help avoid the complete destruction of the lives of some young people. Unfortunately, the bill does not address many pressing problems concerning young people. I say 'unfortunately' because if those problems were attended to, the justice system would be fairer and more realistic for children and young people.

In 1993 Justice Fogarty of the Family Court presented a report to the government on protective services for Victorian children. The government chose to ignore his report. Justice Fogarty, a humane and tireless judge, has spent a great deal of his life trying to get governments and the public to realise that an enormous amount of work must be done if we are to create a just legal and social system that protects children.

In an article in the *Age* of Monday, 21 October, Mr Justice Fogarty is reported as saying:

> Inappropriately removing adolescents with behavioural problems from residential units and

placing them in foster care had led to a number of problems.

Justice Fogarty went on to criticise the number of residential care units that housed 132 young people and said it was motivated by the $7 million spending cuts rather than the welfare of those 132 children. Justice Fogarty went on to say that failure to address the needs of children in care might condemn them to life at the bottom of the social ladder.

The Chief Justice of the Family Court, Mr Justice Alistair Nicholson, called for a royal commission to be established by the federal government to look at what he says has become a national disgrace.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — This is tomorrow's bill.

Hon. JEAN McLEAN — My remarks relate to the bill and to what the bill is about. Mr Justice Nicholson went on to say that child protection nationwide was hampered by a fragmented legal system and poor training for workers. He said that arguably child protection systems are failing our children and that it is necessary to set a direction as to where child protection ought to go.

The bill does not address these issues.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — It does not even deal with the issues.

Hon. JEAN McLEAN — It does not deal with them, I agree, but it is related in so far as the bill does not address the most urgent issues in the community. The name of the bill is the Children and Young Person's (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill and it should address these issues, but it touches only briefly on some of them.

The Auditor-General's special report of June 1996 entitled 'Protecting Victoria's children — the role of the Department of Human Services' should have been welcomed, but the government chose to prevent the report being tabled in Parliament. That was a tragedy because it contained numerous recommendations that could lead to important improvements to help the state in the way it handles our children who come into contact with the court system.

Equally, it is obviously necessary to spend a lot more money keeping children out of the court system. Unfortunately, poverty, unemployment and lack of decent accommodation for parents are all problems on the rise, which exacerbate the number of children becoming wards of the state. The wealthy can send their difficult children to Geelong Grammar or other prestigious boarding schools, but society has a duty of care to all children.

Hon. Louise Asher — Why don't you send them to Cuba?

Hon. JEAN McLEAN — A lot of parents send their children to Geelong Grammar and other boarding schools because they cannot manage those children.

Hon. Bill Forwood — Stop picking on Geelong Grammar.

Hon. JEAN McLEAN — It does a very good job with sometimes neglected children. Unfortunately the majority of people are unaware of the inadequacy of the training and resourcing within the state system responsible for the care of children until there is a major tragedy, as occurred with the murder of the taxidriver, Peter Coe, by a ward of the state who had absconded from care 27 times.

Mr Justice Cummins, who heard the case, said it was a particularly troubling case because the child had been under the care of the state at all relevant times and that care failed him. Mr Tim Watson-Munro, a leading forensic psychologist, who assessed the child said the community would be horrified to know the extent of truancy and crime being committed by children in state care. He called for a royal commission into the Department of Human Services. He said violent incidents such as the murder of Mr Coe were emerging as a potentially disastrous problem for the department and the wider Victorian community.

The Reverend Ray Cleary, the chief executive of the Melbourne City Mission, the organisation that housed the 14-year-old who murdered Mr Coe, was reported saying there was a need for more extensive support because the boy had constantly absconded from care. He went on to say:

> We have been arguing with the government for more funding for a long time now. We need more money, more resources and highly trained staff who are more highly paid.

A forensic psychologist, the chief executive of the Melbourne City Mission, a judge and the mother of Mr Coe, the murdered man, are all calling for extensive changes to the system.

Unfortunately, the Premier of the state does not heed the warning signs or admit that there are problems. He attacked the judge and said:

> He doesn't provide any solution — he sits up there — he's paid to interpret and administer the law. If he thinks he can do a better job in terms of policy then either he should provide a solution or recognise that we can't afford — no-one can afford 24-hour child care.

Those remarks were callous and uncaring — probably an ignorant reaction. We are confronted with the murder of a taxidriver and the destruction of a young person's life, but instead of the Premier listening to those involved, the social workers, the judge and the forensic psychologist, who are highlighting the flaws in the system, he attacks them.

The ongoing stories of infants in need of care and protection, of being bashed to death, the lack of sufficient alternative accommodation for those in care, the overworked, underpaid and often under-trained social workers are not new problems. No-one is trying to lay all the blame on the government, but the introduction of mandatory reporting while at the same time cutting $7.4 million from residential care and placement and support services has brought into question the government's commitment to make mandatory reporting a valid protection mechanism rather than a sop to satisfy a concerned public. The lack of suitable residential units has pushed more children into foster care, has forced siblings to be separated, and children removed from their schools or kindergartens and away from their friends. It has meant that children are often moved many times and are not able to build permanent relationships with carers, teachers or anyone else — things that are normally taken for granted. Unfortunately, because of the shortage of residential units, children with no previous behavioural problems who are placed in care because parents cannot cope are often put with street-wise, older children who have absconded from care or are involved with drugs and other social problems. It amounts to the state putting children in its care in danger.

The Auditor-General's report, Protecting Victoria's Children, states in the summary of major audit findings, that the introduction of mandatory reporting in Victoria placed significant workload pressures on the Department of Human Services, which was accentuated by an initial underestimation of resourcing requirements. He went on to say that the closure of up to 20 per cent of cases in some regions, despite the existence of circumstances warranting further investigation, created an absolutely untenable situation for the care of our children.

Another provision in the bill is for the appointment of acting magistrates to be assigned to the Children's Court. I can find no justification and no explanation in the second-reading speech for the use of acting magistrates. In his 1993 report Mr Justice Fogarty said enormous difficulties were experienced in obtaining sufficient magistrates to sit in the Children's Court. He spoke of the high burn-out rate and said that few magistrates stayed longer than three years. He spoke also of the need for special and appropriate training for magistrates sitting in the Children's Court. There is nothing in either the bill or the second-reading speech that suggests special training will be provided for those acting magistrates, as would be appropriate for hearing child welfare matters.

Mr Justice Fogarty suggested that it would be opportune to put reforms into effect so that the court will correspond with those in some other states — that is, to establish a separate Children's Court that has no direct connection with the Magistrates Court, and that the Children's Court be headed by a judge of County Court status. Surely that proposition should at least be considered seriously.

The fact that acting magistrates are to be appointed seems to be an obvious admission that there are serious problems with the running of the court. We know that a large number of young persons who appear in the Children's Court are wards of the state. Those who receive convictions are often the same young people who graduate to adult prisons — their treatment in the court system can have lifelong implications. Paragraph 8.246 on page 266 of the Auditor-General's special report No. 43, Protecting Victoria's Children, headed 'Incidence of criminal activity', spells out very clearly the problems this court has in the following terms:

> For purposes of the audit study, of the 1297 children under guardianship or custody orders as of April 1995 and who were over the age of 10 years, data was

> obtained on the incidence of reported criminal activity to Victoria Police during the period March 1993 to May 1995. The outcome revealed that 274 children or around 21 per cent of the total had been formally processed as offenders by Victoria Police during this period, a rate many times in excess of the average incidence of criminal activity among adolescents in the community. Around 34 per cent of the 274 children were multiple offenders, with more than 4 separate reports to Victoria Police. Of particular concern was that the older the children and the longer they remain under protective care, the more likely the incidence of criminal behaviour ...

Surely that highlights the pressing nature of the need for an investigation into all aspects of the children's welfare service. The call for a royal commission, state and federal, is timely and necessary. The government has said it will refer the deaths of another 12 state wards to the Victorian Child Death Review Committee. It has admitted there is a backlog of cases under investigation. When it comes to dealing with our vulnerable children, we limp from crisis to crisis, and yet we live in one of the richest countries on earth. We spend an inordinate amount of taxpayers' money chasing major sporting events such as Olympic and commonwealth games and car and motorbike races, but this government does not show the same enthusiasm when it comes to protecting our most valuable asset — which is, of course, our youth.

Although it deals with a couple of minor issues and a couple of patch-up ones, like putting in acting magistrates, the bill does not address the issue that the government should be addressing at this time in our history.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I am of the opinion that the second reading and third reading of this bill require to be passed by an absolute majority. As there is not an absolute majority of the members of the house present, I ask the Clerk to ring the bells.

Bells rung.

Members having assembled in chamber:

The PRESIDENT — Order! In order that I may ascertain that the required majority has been obtained, I ask those members who are in support of the motion to stand in their places.

Required number of members having risen:

Motion agreed to by absolute majority.

Read second time.

Third reading

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — By leave, I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for her support for the bill. I will refer her comments to my colleague. I also thank Mrs McLean for her comments. I am not sure that they directly relate to the bill but I will ensure they are passed on to the relevant minister.

Motion agreed to by absolute majority.

Read third time.

Remaining stages

Passed remaining stages.

ELECTRICITY INDUSTRY (FURTHER AMENDMENT) BILL

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time on motion of Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance).

BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION BILL

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time on motion of Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business).

NORTH MELBOURNE LANDS BILL

Second reading

Debate resumed from 30 October; motion of Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology).

Hon. PAT POWER (Jika Jika) — The opposition does not oppose the bill. Honourable members will understand that the legislation provides for the revocation of the permanent reservation over a 1.6 hectare site located on the corner of Arden, Laurens and Queensberry streets and Munster Terrace, North Melbourne.

The land was permanently reserved and vested in the City of Melbourne in 1886 and again in 1888 and was used by the Melbourne City Council's electricity supply department. As a consequence of the privatisation of the former SEC this bill is required to enable the land to be sold to Citipower.

The bill is simple but nonetheless important. The opposition acknowledges it is an appropriate move for the government to make. However, I must express some reservations in that the sale of the former SEC has not had the beneficial results for Victorians that the government claimed would be the case.

More importantly, on the sale of public assets — in this case, in North Melbourne — a problem arises about Schintler Reserve. Some honourable members who know the inner city would know that that reserve is used as a community centre, for soccer matches and various other recreational activities by a social club representing the Argentinian community in Melbourne.

I am concerned that that community will suffer because of the dispersal of what has been a public asset. The opposition argues that given that the government has decided the sale should proceed and that the property was developed by the former Melbourne City Council for an electricity supply company, it would be appropriate if some, if not all, of the proceeds of the sale were returned to the community in some form so that the Argentinian community and other North Melbourne communities that use Schintler Reserve could be compensated.

I emphasise that the opposition does not oppose the legislation but it urges the government always to be constructively critical and careful when deciding the sale of public assets, especially when it involves public open space.

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — By leave, I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

I thank Mr Power for his support of the bill and I note his comments, which I will ensure are passed on.

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

Remaining stages

Passed remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

That the house do now adjourn.

Parlynet

Hon. PAT POWER (Jika Jika) — I direct a matter of concern to you, Mr President. I apologise for not having had the opportunity of raising the matter with you previously, although I will provide you with appropriate documentation shortly.

My concern relates to the work that needs to be undertaken as a consequence of the Parlynet program. On the day that Mr Adam Todhunter, the project director of special projects, visited my electorate office to establish the capacities of my computer a major problem occurred in that after he had completed his work and my electorate officer, in whom I have the utmost confidence, especially on computer matters, returned to the keyboard, the computer failed. My electorate officer was unable to reboot the machine.

I was forced to authorise a technician to come, at a charge of $105. When the technician arrived he was able to document that at 3.36 p.m. on 21 October, the date and time when Mr Todhunter had been present at the computer, the Windows registration database file had been invalidated; corrupted files and cross-linked files were found on the system; and the Colorado backup was corrupted or changed.

Last week I attended a meeting organised by the honourable member for Coburg in the other place at which Mrs Varty was present, along with Mr Todhunter and a Mr Harrington, the director of special projects. I attempted to relay the story to Mrs Varty at that time. Before I had the opportunity to complete my description of events, Mrs Varty interrupted and accused me of seeking to undermine the Parlynet process.

You, Mr President, would know because of my membership of the Library Committee that I am a great supporter of the use and application of technology. I took great exception to Mrs Varty's attitude, especially in the presence of two departmental people, and to her accusing me of seeking to undermine the process before I had finished my explanation.

Is it possible for you, Mr President, to discuss with Mrs Varty whether payment of the $105 account can be accommodated in some way; and could you relay to Mrs Varty my unhappiness and disappointment at her seeking to imply that I am opposed to the application of technology in this place?

Premier's Drug Advisory Council

Hon. C. J. HOGG (Melbourne North) — I draw to the attention of the Minister for Health the Penington report and the commitments the government has made to some aspects of it. I understand the major platform of the community education initiative will be the preparation of an information booklet, which will be distributed to all households in Victoria and which the minister has spoken about in this house.

As information of this kind always leads to further questions and to the need for further information, I ask the minister whether his department is preparing for the appropriate follow-up — for example, a hotline or free call service. Will the small grants initiative take effect at the same time or later on? Community agencies and groups are understandably anxious about the follow-up procedures, so I ask the minister to give the house some assurance or advice on the matter.

Tabcorp: Melbourne Cup Day

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA (Melbourne North) — I draw to the attention of the Minister for Finance Tabcorp's computer bungling on Melbourne Cup Day. It was the second time this year that the Tabcorp computers had crashed, and it cost the state and the racing industry large amounts of revenue. Will the minister tell the house whether the government has a role in ensuring that state revenue is protected? If so, will he take any action to protect both the multimillion-dollar revenue the state receives from Tabcorp each year and the revenue of the racing industry?

Responses

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — Mrs Hogg drew to my attention the Penington committee's recommendation that an education program be established, which the government has accepted. It is correct to say that brochures will be made available to all households early next year, but although that is a key plank of the program it is only one aspect. The department is putting a lot of effort into ensuring the availability of follow-up information services so that any queries can be responded to. Although it would be more appropriate to give the honourable member a more detailed outline of the range of initiatives being developed by departmental officers, I can assure her that we do not consider the information booklet to be the only response to the need for community education. A range of other options have been recommended by the Penington committee, which the government will ensure it is able to deliver.

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — Mr Nardella raised with me the failure of the Tabcorp computers during the Melbourne Cup meeting, the worst time for such a failure. No-one is more disappointed than the managing director of Tabcorp, whose worst fears involve a computer failure in the lead-up to the running of the Melbourne Cup.

The state is concerned about protecting its revenue. Although I am not directly responsible for Tabcorp or the racing industry, as the Minister for Finance I have a close and abiding interest in protecting the state's revenue base. The best form of protection in this case was the government's decision to privatise the TAB. I cannot think of any strategy that could better focus the minds of those responsible for the former TAB than tying their financial futures to Tabcorp's outcomes.

I have had discussions with Tabcorp since the Cup Day meeting. Extensive plans have been undertaken

to avoid the possibility of a recurrence, however remote it may be. I am also aware that Tabcorp has already decided to substantially upgrade its computer system. I do not know what else I can say, other than that it was an unfortunate incident. The views of the government have been well canvassed; we have read about them in the newspapers on a number of occasions.

The PRESIDENT — Order! Mr Power raised with me a matter relating to the Parlynet project. I am on the working party that is seeking to implement that project, which has exciting prospects for all members of Parliament and Parliament itself. As he said, Mr Power did not give me notice of his intention to raise the matter, so I am unable to provide him with an answer at this stage. Once I have the *Daily Hansard*, I will follow up the matter he raised.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned 10.27 p.m.

Wednesday, 13 November 1996

The PRESIDENT (Hon. B. A. Chamberlain) took the chair at 10.02 a.m. and read the prayer.

PAPERS

Laid on table by Clerk:

Statutory Rules under the following Acts of Parliament:

Business Names Act 1962 — No. 113.

Consumer Credit (Victoria) Act 1995 — No. 116.

Credit (Administration) Act 1984 — Nos 114 and 116.

Domestic Building Contracts and Tribunal Act 1995 — No. 115.

Gaming Machine Control Act 1991 — No. 118.

Lotteries Gaming and Betting Act 1966 — No. 117.

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — Ministers' exemption certificates under section 9(6) in respect of Statutory Rules Nos 114 to 116 and 118/1996.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Sessional orders

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

That so much of the sessional orders be suspended as would prevent general business taking precedence over other business until 2.30 p.m. during the sitting of the Council this day.

Motion agreed to.

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — I move:

That this house expresses its concern at the failure of Victoria's child protection services to adequately protect our children and to prevent child tragedies and calls on the government to —

(a) implement key recommendations of the parliamentary Crime Prevention Committee's report on child sexual assault, the Auditor-General's report on protecting Victoria's children and the report on child protection by Justice Fogarty;

(b) urgently provide resources to ensure adequate training and support for valued staff, improved physical and human resources for children in need of protection and more family support and prevention strategies; and

(c) establish a royal commission of inquiry which has the moral authority and powers to expose crucial weaknesses and recommend improvements which will be implemented.

The motion should be supported by members on both sides of the house because we are all caring people. No honourable member would fail to be touched each time it is reported that another child in the care of Victoria's child protection services has died — that is, a child in the state's care and our care. I am sure each member's heart goes out to the family of every child who has died in tragic circumstances.

This is not a contentious motion that requires members to divide along party lines. It does not call on the government to go against its policies. The motion simply asks the government to do no more and no less than to protect our children. To achieve this, the motion asks the government to implement the recommendations in the report of the former Crime Prevention Committee, the Auditor-General's report and Mr Justice Fogarty's report. We are asking for support and resources so those recommendations can be implemented. We are asking for a royal commission — an open, transparent inquiry — to expose the weaknesses and recommend improvements.

As far back as 1993 the government was being warned repeatedly by people such as the eminent Family Court judge, John Fogarty, that the system was in crisis. That is exactly what has occurred: the system is now at breaking point.

In question on notice no. 345 I asked the Minister for Youth and Community Services to advise me:

How many children/clients of the Department of Human Services, child protection services (including children in respect of whom a notification has been received) died as a result of abuse, neglect or a related accident or suicide in each of the years 1991-92 to 1995-96?

Although the Minister for Youth and Community Services went back further than the years I specifically asked about, yesterday I received the following response:

> Between 1989 and August 1996, 100 children known to protection and care services died. 16 children died as a result of physical injuries, 4 died as a result of suicide, 19 from SIDS, 24 from natural causes, 28 from accidents, 2 from non-stated causes and 7 were drug related.

According to the answer I received from the Minister for Youth and Community Services, some 100 children died while in the care of the state between 1989 and August 1996.

The Kennett government has swept away many of the positive reforms initiated by the previous Labor government after a review of the system by Mr Justice Fogarty in the late 1980s. In 1993 the government said about 400 residential beds would close because they were excess to the system's requirements. The plan was to shift the burden onto foster parent and non-government organisations. At the same time mandatory reporting was introduced and the government failed dismally to estimate its impact. At the time the government estimated that mandatory reporting would increase the number of reports by 8 per cent in the first year, but in fact the increase was 39 per cent. That increase in reporting occurred without the people involved in child protection services being given the appropriate resources, training and support.

The government has claimed it has put back some of the money that was taken out of the system, but if that has been done it has not addressed the problems in the child protection system caused by a lack of resources in the Department of Human Services, for non-government organisations, to provide support for parents, including foster parents, for the police, and for the Children's Court. Without sufficient resources the child protection service cannot operate adequately.

The Auditor-General's report highlights concerns about the system and makes a number of recommendations. Some of the concerns are: the number of notifications and investigations of cases has increased dramatically as a result of the introduction of mandatory reporting; the implementation of mandatory reporting was inappropriately planned and under-resourced; the quality of investigations and follow-up is undermined by the lack of resources; there are variations between regions, and some regions are experiencing more problems than others; workers are under-experienced, under-supported and overworked; cases that warrant further investigation are being closed; little or nothing is being done to assess and tackle the high levels of re-notification, abuse and neglect; there is too much abuse and neglect that is not the subject of any investigation or follow-up; and there is an overall problem with the quality of investigations.

A ministerial report refers to case 20, concerning a four-year-old girl who died on 13 June 1994 as a result of physical abuse — mainly head injuries — inflicted by the mother and her de facto husband. Both parents were registered clients of the Disability Services Division of the department, and the child was a client of the protective services section between 28 February 1994 and 6 June 1994, when the case was closed. The case was closed a week before the child's death! The report states that the regional director advised that case practice was conducted in accordance with program standards, and a ministerial briefing note of October 1994 states

> The case highlights a number of policy and procedural issues that warrant further consideration.

However, at the time of the ministerial report, the departmental inquiry into the death had still not been completed. That case has a terrible ring of familiarity to it. All honourable members remember a recent similar case — history is repeating itself.

When the budget cuts were announced in 1993 there was a massive outcry from Justices Fogarty and Nicholson, the former Children's Court magistrate, Greg Levine, VCOSS, the Children's Welfare Association of Victoria, Catholic Social Services, the Victorian Youth Affairs Council, NAPCAN, the Caroline Chisholm Society and the Human Rights Commission. The list goes on and on. The CWAV was so concerned that it took the unprecedented step of placing newspaper advertisements warning of the dangers of a further cutting of resources.

However, the Kennett government does not take advice from people who know what they are talking about. The previous minister, the Honourable Michael John, sacked the advisory committee sidelined Justice Fogarty, and showed his disaste for any scrutiny of the system when he unofficially

suspended ministerial inquiries into child deaths. We have read in the press of the government's past mismanagement of the system of inquiring into children's deaths. Delays of more than two years and a failure to conduct independent inquiries show that the government has the wrong priorities. It will be many months before the full circumstances of the most recent tragedies will be known. Why can't we have an open, transparent and independent inquiry — a royal commission — to find out what is wrong with the system and recommend measures to rectify the problems?

The government has changed the system of inquiries originally set up by the previous Labor government as a result of a report by Justice Fogarty. In 1994 the government adopted a policy of conducting department-client inquiries chaired by departmental officers rather than continuing the system of independent ministerial-client inquiries into child deaths. Consequently, inquiries are now less independent than was previously the case.

There has been a major dropping off in the number of client death inquiry panels appointed under the Kennett government. The first annual report on deaths, issued in July 1992, reported that 12 cases were investigated by ministerial panels in the period from February 1989 to July 1992. The second annual report for 1992-93 reported five cases of investigations by ministerial panels in the period from July 1992 to June 1993. The third annual report for 1994 reported two cases in the period from July 1993 to November 1994, one of which was conducted by a ministerial panel and the other by a departmental panel. The fourth annual report published in 1995 reported three cases of departmental inquiries in the period from December 1994 to October 1995.

I have been advised there have been more than 100 deaths in the past six years and a number of cases of deaths of children in care in the past three years, yet fewer and fewer inquiries are being conducted and they are taking longer and longer to reach their conclusions. Those inquiries are not transparent or independent — they are set up by the department and chaired by departmental officers — and there are long delays. There is a need for a prompt and independent inquiry. The department must be accountable and there is a need to ensure no cover-ups occur as a result of departmental inquiries. There is a need to ensure that all information surrounding the death of any child is made public and is acted on promptly to prevent further tragedies. Delays in the system are causing history to repeat itself. As I said, any delays in undertaking independent inquiries could cause further tragedies to occur.

The department conducted an internal review of its procedures, and in mid-1994 a huge report on the protective services workload review was prepared. The department's own report revealed the shocking burdens that were being imposed on child protection workers. It showed that they were massively understaffed, underresourced and undersupported and that they had case loads that were negligently high. The government accepted most of the recommendations in the report but has failed to act upon them.

The workers in the system suffer from low morale, inexperience and high turnover rates. Page 12 of the *Herald Sun* of Monday, 11 November, has an article which begins:

> Child protection workers have spoken out about a 'climate of fear' they say surrounds the system.

A former worker is reported to have said:

> Staff were 'dramatically' overworked and undertrained, and the system was 'bureaucratic'.
>
> 'The problem is the culture of the organisation,' she said.
>
> 'It's a culture of fear and intimidation.'

The article goes on:

> Overworked, underpaid and unappreciated were common themes that emerged when the *Herald Sun* spoke to child protection workers and other industry sources around Melbourne.
>
> ... problems like a lack of resources, intimidation and 'bullying' had worsened since 1992.
>
> ... the former worker mentioned above said that the system needed urgent change.
>
> 'The whole answer to the problem is opening up,' she said. Changing the management culture is the key to changing the whole system ...

> The worker said it was frustrating that their three-week strike in March was over the very issues the media was now raising —

and which are being debated here today.

> She said she and her colleagues were highly dedicated but overworked and hamstrung by bureaucracy and lack of resources.
>
> For example, there were no beds for teenage psychiatric patients and only 16 emergency beds for at-risk teens, which made finding them urgent help almost impossible.
>
> The worker said many colleagues were straight out of university, turnover was high due to the stress, and most burned out within 6-12 months.
>
> The threat of danger was constant during home visits because you could never be sure how a client would react.
>
> 'You can walk in and potentially have to put your own life in front of the child', she said.
>
> She said the system urgently needed more money and communication to boost awareness.

That was reported in Monday's *Herald Sun* as having been said by a child protection worker after she left the system. Her comments are similar to those made by the Auditor-General in his special report no. 43, entitled 'Protecting Victoria's Children: The Role of the Department of Human Services'. In paragraph 5.27 on page 87 he refers to both the stress that workers are under and the lack of resources:

> Audit acknowledges that due to the difficulty of the work and particularly the high stress levels, child protection workers commonly only remain in this line of work for up to 3 years and, in Victoria, in June 1995, the average experience level of child protection workers and senior workers was 2 years and 7 months.

In paragraph 5.29 the Auditor-General says:

> ... audit identifies that the turnover of child protection workers has been approximately 30 per cent in the previous two years ... Supervisors advised audit that, due to the situation, their ability to allocate individual cases to the most suitable case workers was at times limited.

The Auditor-General in his special report, the child protection worker whose comments were reported in the *Herald Sun* on Monday, and Mr Justice Fogarty in his report of three years ago, have all said the same thing.

The Auditor-General also refers to the difficulties faced by clients and their supervisors in trying to allocate jobs because of the high turnover and lack of experience of case workers. Paragraph 5.32 on page 88 has a quote from a young client of child protection services, who remarked:

> 'I'm sick of this, I've had 50 workers in the past year!'.

In paragraph 5.33 the Auditor-General notes:

> Both audit and DHS acknowledge that staff turnover is a contributing factor to poor case management and that solutions are difficult. Part 10 of this report recommends that DHS undertake a major reappraisal of its past strategies and direct priority to improving the overall professional status of its child protection work force. It also needs to address a range of management issues and improve staff working and employment conditions.

Again, that is exactly what Justice Fogarty and the child protection worker have said.

The Auditor-General outlines a concern about the introduction of mandatory reporting, noting in paragraph 5.36 on page 89 that it has:

> ... resulted in the transfer of long-term case workers to intake teams in order to assist in the processing of notifications and investigations.

That is the sort of approach children's services are required to take because of the increase in workloads, which has put added stress on the system. The Auditor-General also notes that:

> This strategy, while supplementing the intake teams, had the impact of reducing resources available for long-term case management. As a consequence, extended delays of between 6 to 12 weeks in allocation of case files became common due to the unavailability of workers.

I refer to case no. 16, which involved the death of a child and which is part of a ministerial report. On 13 January 1994, a seven-month-old female child drowned after being left in water in a shower base.

The ministerial report says there were numerous criticisms of the department's handling of the case.

The ministerial briefing note states that on 7 March Ms Robyn Clark, assistant director, Child, Adolescent and Family Welfare, decided that a departmental inquiry into the death was necessary. Her decision was endorsed by the minister on 19 September 1994. Unfortunately, delays occurred in the establishment of that inquiry. The briefing note identified significant issues in the case which included:

> The protective services investigation was not sufficiently thorough and comprehensive and hard to follow up and assess significant risk indicators.
>
> The adequacy of the protective services assessment — only one investigation and information gathering visit was conducted — the failure to consult with and/or fully consider assessment of the medical practitioners and maternal and child health nurses involved in the case.
>
> The region during the time of death was experiencing a high staff turnover. The SOC was considered to be overloaded with an unrealistic level of workers and cases to supervise.
>
> Thirdly the two protective workers involved in the assessment of this case were both new recruits to this regional office. One had 18 months experience, the other had been employed for less than three months and had not yet been inducted. Neither of the workers were social work trained.
>
> Findings included that the response by protective services was not consistent with the level of concern of the referral service.
>
> The protective service assessment was incomplete and case closure was premature, in particular assessment of neglect was inadequate.
>
> There were system witnesses at case management level.

That ministerial report reflects what the Auditor-General says about the high turnover of staff and the lack of training. The inquiry into the death of a seven-month-old baby refers to the fact that one of the two case workers involved had only three months experience and that neither had been inducted into the service.

The two reports — the one by Justice Fogarty and the protective services review in October 1992 — highlight the problems in the system. Previous ministers and the Premier have maintained everything is fine. The government's own department and independent members of the judiciary are saying children are suffering; there are delays in accessing courts and in investigations and notification of abuse; delays are occurring in obtaining access to residential care, and there are insufficient support services. Consequently, children are suffering; they are being exposed to danger and being neglected and abused. In the worst cases children are dying.

It is shameful that the government continues to hide this evidence; it refuses to conduct inquiries into deaths and it is reluctant to have an open royal commission in an effort to improve child protection services.

The Auditor-General's report highlights a number of other problems which have yet to be addressed. Too many cases lack detail and quality because of high staff turnover, high workloads, lack of support for child protection staff, delays in the allocation of cases, and inadequate emphasis on counselling, therapy and support for victims of abuse and neglect.

In an article in the *Herald Sun* of 26 October 1996 headed 'Breaking the cycle of abuse', Justice Fogarty says the community has lost faith in the child protection system. He is quoted as having said:

> As far as the department is concerned, and the government, they've learned nothing ... They've just got to clear out and clean up this department. It's the whole ethos and morale of the department that needs to be turned around. There is no strong leadership from the top. Workers feel isolated and under constant criticism.

That statement was supported in Monday's newspaper by the case worker who says the ethos and bureaucracy within the department are not assisting them in performing their duties.

The article reports comments of the former Children's Court magistrate, Nick Papas: he said that the problems in the child protection system were all too clear. He is quoted as having said:

> Justice Fogarty got it right when he said it was time for the Premier and the leadership to put the same effort

> into child protection as they have to get the grand prix and domes for Parliament House.

He says Justice Fogarty has got it right, and that the Premier and the ministers have their priorities wrong.

In the same article the Children's Welfare Association chief executive, Carol Russell, said the child protection system was falling apart through lack of resources. She says:

> The number of claims of child abuse made to the department jumped from 19 344 in 1992-93 (before mandatory reporting) to 31 619 in 1994-95 and 29 914 in 1995-96.
>
> It forced the department to hire rookie child protection workers, often working under the pressure of a high caseload.

The Auditor-General and Justice Fogarty said that would occur. The article further states:

> On Monday —

I remind the house that the article was dated 26 October, 1996 —

> when Justice Cummins sentenced Dillion Palfrey's mother and de facto husband to gaol, he said mandatory reporting was not enough.
>
> Three years after gaoling Daniel Valerio's killer, he said 'An innocent vulnerable child has yet again died.
>
> 'The system of child protection has yet again failed'. And he said the guilt spread further than the retarded couple who stole life from a fair-headed little boy who loved watching aeroplanes.

In sentencing Dillion Palfrey's parents, the judge's comments about the priorities being wrong remind us of what Justice Fogarty and Nick Papas have said. Child protection workers are saying the same — that is, our priorities are wrong.

The Auditor-General's report also highlights a number of concerns about support services and short-term placements. It refers to the fact that the policy shift from residential care to home-based or foster care does not have a sound enough basis and is not working for many children.

The report goes on to say there is a lack of reliable data with which to track both individual cases and system-wide problems. The cases I have highlighted today reveal an inability to track any references to the actual deaths. That has to stop, and that is what this motion is asking for.

The lack of residential care options must be addressed; the range and quality of those options must be improved. Short-term facilities are being used for long-term placements. They are inappropriately designed, structured and maintained. Many facilities include an inappropriate mix of young children and adolescent residents. All these issues need to be addressed by an open inquiry and the adoption of the reports I have referred to.

When Mr Smith tabled the report of the former Crime Prevention Committee, entitled *Combating Child Protection Assault — An Integrated Model*, his covering letter to honourable members stated:

> It is not my normal practice to write to members of Parliament individually when a report has been tabled, but I feel the high incidence of child sexual assault in the community makes this an issue which must be dealt with in each electorate and the committee's comprehensive recommendations offer models for new structures to be put in place.

Hon. K. M. Smith — Who was that?

Hon. M. M. GOULD — That was you, Mr Smith. I have already identified it as being a letter you circulated to members.

When Mr Smith tabled the report on 1 June 1995, he also said:

> We were staggered by the depth and nature of the problems existing in our so-called nice society, our beautiful state.

Finally, he said:

> I commend the report to the house and call on honourable members to actively support its recommendations. We have been entrusted with a clear picture of the extent of sexual abuse in our community, and we offer valuable solutions. If we do nothing else, let us get those in place and make a difference for tomorrow's children.

The second recommendation refers to the fact that although a sexual assault on a child may be reported, if the offence is not committed by the guardian or parent no support services are available. The report highlights that problem, and we must ensure its recommendations are implemented.

Recommendation 7 states:

> The committee recommends that the Minister for Community Services be designated as the minister responsible for the coordination of sexual assault services for children within the state.

It is not too much to ask that a model for collecting data be established. That recommendation should have been implemented immediately.

Recommendation 13 calls for the implementation of pilot programs, one in the metropolitan region and one in the country, and for the formation of a sexual assault response team. The report says the minister must be the driving force behind the reforms that have been identified and that if the recommendations are to be successfully implemented the buck must stop with him. The opposition supports recommendation 13. But again we must ask: has it been implemented?

Recommendation 16 identifies the need for a coordinated approach to providing services that are available to both government and non-government organisations. There is also a need to identify any gaps so that they can be addressed. Again, the opposition supports that recommendation but asks whether it has been implemented.

Recommendation 16 refers to the difficulties victims have in coming to terms with what has happened to them. Nobody disputes the need for professional services; however, as the report identifies, some victims have difficulty gaining access to those services. The report notes that victims are entitled to have access to them. Members of the committee heard horrific and tragic stories about incidents that had happened some time ago. Although they may not be seen as victims today, those people are still suffering from things that happened to them 20 years ago, and in that way they are still victims.

Recommendation 35 calls for the establishment of an integrated response team involving the police, which is logical, social workers and other professional workers in the sexual abuse field. The committee heard evidence about integrated models overseas which had been in place for a number of years and which had been shown to be successful. Most importantly they had been successful for the victims. The report notes that at the beginning there was some professional antagonism among the police, social workers and government workers and non-government workers but that after a few years the common interest of all those groups became the protection of children. Again we ask: has that recommendation been implemented?

Joanne Spicer was the manager of the City Central Child-care Centre in Geelong for most of the short life of Katy Bolger, the latest child under the protection of the state to die. Joanne, who looked after Katy daily, says:

> Looking after other people's children is an awesome responsibility, and we treat it as such.

I am sure all of us concur that it is an awesome responsibility. Members of Parliament should ensure that the best possible support is available for children who are in the care of this state, which is what the motion is asking for. It asks that the necessary resources be put in place and that the recommendations in the reports of Justice Fogarty and the Crime Prevention Committee, which was chaired by Mr Smith, be adopted. The motion also asks that the comments in the report of the Auditor-General be taken into account. I urge all honourable members to support the motion.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The government does not accept the motion, nor does it accept many of the arguments put by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. That in no way undervalues this government's commitment to operating an effective child protection system. The government has taken a number of initiatives to try to ensure reporting is comprehensive, but we should not underestimate the difficulties involved in child protection.

No member can be anything other than touched and saddened by the reports of children who have been abused by parents or primary caregivers and who have sometimes died as a result.

This is not a new challenge. The house has debated child protection on a number of occasions. I remember moving motions on child protection when the roles were reversed, when the present

government was in opposition. We then took and advocated a number of policy decisions, the most prominent of which was mandatory reporting. I was responsible for putting the policy change to the party room and advocating it in this place. Those initiatives were rejected by the then government. It is somewhat ironic to hear the Labor Party criticise the government about child protection when its own action in government was found wanting on many occasions.

The difficulties inherent in child protection have been recognised by everyone who has looked at the issue. Page 293 of the Auditor-General's *Special Report No. 43 — Protecting Victoria's children: The role of the Department of Human Services* states:

> Child protection is an inherently difficult and unglamorous work area which involves intrusion into private lives, generally without family acceptance and sometimes without subsequent justification. The difficulties are exacerbated by challenges for staff in the work environment including sensitive and sometimes violent client environments, and significant interference with personal life calling for spouse and family understanding.

It is not hard to understand why it is so difficult, because this society, like all human societies, is built around the family unit. It is within the family that children are nurtured and reared to adulthood. The government values that structure highly, and as legislators we have a responsibility to try to reinforce and support families in meeting what is probably one of the greatest challenges and certainly one of the most awesome responsibilities facing families. To interfere with that, to intrude on a family's right to develop attitudes and to nurture culture, is difficult. At the same time the government does not accept that children, or in fact anyone, ought to be subject to abuse by another human being. It is more tragic when it comes to children.

Those who work in the field have a very difficult task. The Auditor-General's report and his recommendations identify a number of deficits, some of which are already being worked on by the government. I remember highlighting the extraordinarily high and rapid turnover of staff in child protection services when they were operated by the Labor government. Again that reflects the difficulty of the work. It is often the case that because of the difficulty of the work we are able to attract only young graduates, often straight from university, who find the work extraordinarily stressful, as anyone who works in the field does. It is difficult to retain staff because people suffer burnout and leave.

In June this year the government put in place a new career structure and it appears to be working. Some 70 per cent of child protection workers now have more than 12 months experience in the field. But that area, as the Auditor-General rightly highlighted, is one of the deficits in the present system, and the government is working to fix that. We have seen a significant boost in the number of workers in the field.

It is worthwhile for me to remind the house of the audacity of the Labor Party in raising this issue. When Labor was in government it had 530 front-line workers. Between 1990 and 1992 under Labor there was no increase in this area. In 1995-96 we had 663 front-line workers. What happened to resources? The Labor Party was spending $24 million a year. In 1995-96 this government committed $48 million to the area of child protection. This year the figure will increase to $53 million, more than doubling the level of resources that have gone into child protection under this government.

One of the most significant changes the government made on coming into government was the introduction of mandatory reporting, which has significantly increased the number of notifications, as the government argued that it would. That was the reason for its introduction: to try to ensure that where abuse was occurring it was brought to the attention of the authorities. As a result of increased notification the number of reports to the government of abuse being substantiated has also increased, although not to the same extent. This does not mean that the abuse had just started happening; it was in fact going undetected under our predecessors.

The introduction of mandatory reporting ensured investigation of cases where there was a genuine belief that abuse may be occurring. The government found an increase in the number of substantiated cases as a result of those investigations.

It is worth pointing out to the house that the number of notifications climbed in 1992-93 from about 18 000 or 19 000 cases a year to 30 000. The number of substantiated cases of abuse per annum has increased from around 3500 to 4000 to about 6000.

It is worth comparing these figures with the situation in New South Wales, where mandatory reporting has been in place for many years. The New South Wales system has rates of investigation of child abuse, and investigates about 90 per cent of its cases. In Victoria about 79 per cent of cases are investigated either directly or indirectly, and we have a higher level of substantiation as a result of the introduction of mandatory reporting. It is true, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, that the government had underestimated the rate of increase as a result of the introduction of mandatory reporting. That demonstrates that the rate of increase was vastly higher than the government had anticipated based on the New South Wales experience.

The government has responded by increasing the resources and the number of front-line staff. But it is not just a matter of money, as Professor Glenn Bowes said in an interview on 3AW on 30 October:

> ... money of itself, resources of itself, won't help. The question is how to strategically use that, how and where to spend the dollars. Pouring all the money in the world into child protection won't prevent these terrible predicaments or deaths. We need to focus on a whole-of-government type approach, it's our view —

that is, the view of the committee he chairs —

> on the antecedents and issues that extend beyond child protection, drug dependence, poverty, intergenerational abuse, mental health services.

That is the concept this government has embraced and is implementing. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the case of a child protection worker expressing concern about the lack of access to mental health beds for young adolescents. We agree, and that is why this government has boosted funding in mental health services. That was never touched under the previous government. Labor had no extensive child and adolescent mental health services.

This year the government has allocated $8 million to further boost the child and adolescent mental health services. We took them to the suburbs for the first time. We established child and adolescent mental health services at Maroondah and other regions throughout the metropolitan area and country Victoria. The $8 million will be used to develop in-patient services and allocate them to various places around the state. That issue was never tackled by the previous government. It is an important step if we are to improve support and treatment in the same way as we are trying to do that across the spectrum of mental health services by providing care and support for parents who may subject their children to abuse because of their own mental illness.

The government established the Penington inquiry into drug usage, and as result of its recommendations has allocated $25 million to developing those services, focusing across the spectrum by putting resources into youth substance services and a whole range of preventive and rehabilitation programs.

I have noticed recent press criticism of the fact that we are not moving quickly enough. Opposition members who have had ministerial responsibility will understand our frustration because we are also getting criticism from the field that because we are consulting with some of the key providers about how we might structure the services, other providers are saying the people we are consulting are getting the inside running for development of the services. The government will go through the process of making the allocation of the resources to services contestable and transparent, but that does take a little time. The funds are there but the government is determined to ensure that when they are allocated it is done wisely and sensibly so that we get the optimum utilisation of the services, as recommended by Mr Smith's committee.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the need for services for young people who are sexually abused. We agree that such services are necessary. That is why this year the government has substantially increased funding for crisis and sexual assault services from $3.9 million in 1992-93 to $4.3 million this year. We have 16 CASAs across Victoria, including one after-hours specialist for children who have been subject to abuse.

The government is continuing to build the service program. We have put in place protocols between the child protection service and the police because there had been some difficulties in that area. Under the previous government Mr Justice Fogarty recommended that we get rid of what was then known as the dual-track system, and we advocated that in opposition because people were falling between the two reporting systems. There were constant arguments where one side was blaming the

other. Because the government recognised that the police have an important role it put protocols in place between the protection services and the police, and I am advised that those protocols are working effectively.

We have only recently established protocols with the Family Court on how cases of child abuse or suspected victims of child abuse are handled by that court and the interrelationship between the Family Court and child protection services. That is an important initiative of the government.

Another problem relates to persons moving interstate, because child abuse is not restricted by state borders. There are often cases of families moving around Australia to avoid detection. A suggestion of the Minister for Youth and Community Services, Dr Napthine, has been taken up and protocols are being developed that will operate not only throughout Australia but also in New Zealand so that orders made will apply across those jurisdictions. The Attorney-General is involved in developing a legal framework which will enable that to occur.

Although significant initiatives have been taken the government acknowledges it still has to do more because child abuse is a tragedy. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned 100 children who died under state care, but we need to put that in context. One cannot blame child protection services for those 100 deaths because many of them occurred through natural causes or sudden infant death syndrome. A small number occurred as a result of abuse, and I understand that unfortunately some .07 per cent of cases did lead to the death of those children. That is a matter of great concern to the government. We investigate each death and if it is not from natural causes or cannot be readily explained the coroner, the police and the department will examine the case.

The government has established not an interdepartmental committee, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, but an independent committee chaired by Professor Glenn Bowes, director of the Centre for Adolescent Health at the Royal Children's Hospital. That committee makes the decision on whether it will investigate those deaths. The government has received a report from the committee looking at a number of those deaths, and the process that has been established will be followed through. I am surprised at the comments of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition because I thought she would have made some attempt to prepare for the debate. It is not an interdepartmental committee. The Victorian Child Death Review Committee is an independent committee chaired by Professor Glenn Bowes. It has two departmental officers, Mr Brian Joyce, the regional director of the Southern Metropolitan Region, and Mr Geoff Lavender, the assistant director, Public Health, who is not involved in the child protection area but is a departmental officer.

Until September of this year the membership of the committee also included Ms Vicki Fraser, Chief Inspector of the Community Policing Squad. Ms Fraser has resigned and will be replaced by another suitably qualified police officer. Other members of the committee are: Professor Jan Carter, Director, Deakin Human Services Australia, at Deakin University; Mr Greg Levine, a magistrate and former Senior Magistrate of the Children's Court; Ms Sherrie Coote, Director of Kildonan Child and Family Services; Ms Margaret Coady, a senior lecturer in the Department of Early Childhood Studies at the University of Melbourne; Ms Amanda Mendes Da Costa, a barrister; and Dr Tony Weldon, a consultant paediatrician. That broadly based committee looks at each case in the context of how it was responded to, identifies gaps and makes a public report available.

As a result of work done already, particularly the Auditor-General's report, the department is repositioning child protection services in accordance with what the government believes are a number of important principles. One of those principles is that central to a well-balanced and effective child protection service is the establishment of mechanisms to provide a differential response under which most families that are referred will receive a service response and a minority will receive an investigative response. It is not just a matter of if, when a case is reported, it is not believed the abuse is serious the department takes no interest. There is a need to extend the preventive work of providing families that are under pressure with support as a way of trying to avoid the development of an environment that might lead to abuse.

The government wants to move from a situation in which the statutory child protection agency has the sole responsibility for responding to child maltreatment to a system of wider, shared community responsibility. It is all very well to lecture the government on its responsibilities, but

the responsibility for children and for supporting families is a broad community responsibility. That responsibility can be exercised in a number of ways, ranging from people simply being good neighbours and providing support to mothers who might be experiencing enormous stress and difficulty right through to handling situations in which, despite all the assistance, there is fear of abuse continuing by reporting that to agencies so that it can be investigated. Accountability for child protection must be a shared responsibility of the statutory child protection agency, the police, non-government agencies and the community so that we get a more comprehensive response.

The government faces an ongoing challenge in its desire to build up the preventive role of the service system that provides support to families. In working on the preparation of next year's budget, the department is considering how it can continue to build up that service system. The myriad reports on child protection already in existence provide adequate information on the problems and the government sees no justification for a royal commission. That is particularly so given the Auditor-General's comprehensive report, which has recommended a number of changes.

No-one should underestimate what a royal commission would cost. Generally such inquiries are very expensive, and the government believes resources would be better used in implementing some of the Auditor-General's recommendations that have been accepted by the government to build a more comprehensive service system. It seems to be almost contradictory to argue on the one hand that the government ought to be implementing a report it has already received and on the other that the government should start another investigatory process.

The Minister for Youth and Community Services in another place has indicated his personal commitment to the ongoing development of an effective and comprehensive child protection service. I commend him on the initiatives he has taken in the short time he has held his portfolio. He is building on the significant commitments of the government across a wide range of areas which recognise that child abuse is not a narrow issue but results from a whole range of influences that often have an impact on families in different ways. One effect may be that a parent who is suffering from a mental illness and is not having that illness treated will engage in child abuse.

It is estimated that 70 per cent of Australians who suffer from a depressive illness receive no treatment and that approximately 50 per cent of Australians with a chronic psychiatric illness do not get access to treatment and care. That is a blight on the nation. Victoria is better placed and spends more per capita on mental health services than any other state, yet there are still some gaps. I am committed to building up that service system. The government is making some significant advances in that area through the redevelopment of existing psychiatric services, locating them more appropriately and making them more accessible, achieving a balance between in-patient and community-based services, and recognising the complexity of the response.

The government has put significant effort and a significant level of resources into building up child and adolescent mental health services on the basis that if we can get mental illness recognised early and treated appropriately that will lead to curing of the illness for most people. The first psychotic episode experienced by 50 per cent of young people in the Western world goes either unrecognised or untreated, and it is only subsequent episodes that lead to the illness being diagnosed and treated. It is then too late for many young people and they suffer chronic psychiatric illness for the rest of their lives. The Victorian government is the first government to put resources into the development of a service response by allocating money to the education of general practitioners so they will recognise mental illness, know how to treat it appropriately and know when to refer patients to a specialist service.

Many factors contribute to the abuse and maltreatment of children: general economic circumstances, lack of employment, frustration, disillusionment, and stress created by poverty. Pure evil behaviour can be another cause, and in those circumstances there is a need for intervention and the removal and placement of the children in more appropriate and supportive environments.

The government, through the responsible minister, is committed to building the service system but does not think the system will be enhanced by further inquiries. A whole range of inquiries already conducted point to a number of significant deficits in the system that the government is addressing by providing additional resources to: build up the

service system by strengthening preventive and supportive programs, put in place new career structures, attract and hold experienced staff, and put in place protocols between various agencies to make sure they work effectively and in harmony.

It is important for the service system to deal appropriately with the victims and perpetrators of child abuse. Experience demonstrates overwhelming that child abuse is an intergenerational issue. There is much evidence to show that victims of child sexual abuse in particular often become perpetrators of child sexual abuse as adults. It is a matter of intervening and getting appropriate treatment to try to break that cycle. If we do not, we will be having ongoing debates — as will those who follow us — about the need to intervene at the hard end of the issue. We need to try to break the cycle, to change attitudes and to build strong families and communities. That is the way we will minimise the level of child abuse.

In conclusion, the government's rejection of the motion does not in any way indicate that it is not interested in or committed to child protection. Nor should the government's rejection of the motion be interpreted as a denial that there are issues that have to be worked on and tackled. The service and overall response system is not as comprehensive as we would we want. But the minister in charge of child protection and the Department of Human Services as a whole are committed to building the system to enable it to tackle the deficits that have been identified and to advance the cause.

Child protection is an important community issue, and we all have a responsibility to work towards the elimination of child abuse. I invite all members of the house to play a role. I ask them not to attempt to score political points but to make a commitment to building a community-based child protection service that provides a safe environment for all children so that they can grow into caring, responsible and contributing members of our society, free from abuse and maltreatment. It is a big ask, but I am sure that if the commitment is there we can improve on the current situation — even though we would argue that things are better than they were when we came to government in 1992.

Hon. C. J. HOGG (Melbourne North) — It is important to place on record that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not move the motion to score political points; nor did she argue it that way. She put her arguments in a very measured and sober manner. That is precisely the way we intend to conduct the debate — that is, by putting forward suggestions and trying to be constructive.

As the Minister for Health said, the house has had debates on child protection on a number of occasions. When child protection finally became a government-run service in 1985 — that is, when it was taken over from the Children's Protection Society — it was underresourced. The workers were poorly trained, and there were not enough of them; the service had too few resources; and there were many unfilled positions.

The design of the system in 1985 was not substantial and was not right for the circumstances — but none of us could have known that. The Labor government developed the system in consultation with the players in the field, including the VPSA, which was the union that had coverage of the workers. I can assure the house that the union was not backward in putting in a fairly large claim for resources and workers — and properly so. But in 1985 nobody could have foreseen how the demand for service would grow once the government took over responsibility for child protection from the Children's Protection Society.

Even though resources were quickly quadrupled, the system remained inadequate. It had a number of problems, some of which the minister touched on. He also talked about the difficulties with the dual-track system. However, he did not talk about the lack of a central register. He could have reminded me that in a similar debate in this house he drew to my attention the need for a central register — and I listened carefully to what he said. At that time he told me I was establishing a central register by stealth, because the various mechanisms that had been put into place almost amounted to a central register.

A former colleague, Lou Hill, then the member for Warrandyte in the other place, was about to go overseas as a member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. I asked him to find out what was happening with central registers — in the United Kingdom, I think — and he came back with some information. I have never made any secret of the fact that I was grateful to Mr Knowles and Mr Hill for giving the former government the information that helped us to reach conclusions different from those we might have reached.

The system we designed in 1985 was inadequate because we took over a system with an already inadequate resource base and failed to anticipate the demand. Most importantly — I can say this now because I can see it so clearly — we failed to recognise the social change that was occurring. The former Crime Prevention Committee, which was chaired by Mr Smith — I hear from my colleague Mr Nardella that it was an excellently chaired committee — was given a reference to inquire into child sexual assault. Some 15 or 20 years ago you would not have even used those terms in public, such was the taboo on topics to do with child sexual assault, incest or child abuse.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — Or just denial.

Hon. C. J. HOGG — Yes. I was a schoolteacher throughout much of the 1960s, 1970s and the early 1980s. My colleagues and I would certainly not have considered that we had a role to play in protective issues — until perhaps the beginning of the 1980s, when things were starting to change.

In 1985 neither I nor the government I was part of recognised the huge social change that was taking place. In a sense the lid had been taken off the issue: it had come out of the bottle and could not be put back. People were beginning to voice concerns that they had previously kept bottled up or had denied, and the demand for services took everybody by surprise.

The other social change which I also did not recognise in 1985 and which the minister touched on in one respect and talked about in detail in another was the emphasis on keeping families or mother and child units intact, almost regardless of the circumstances. This was not the case in the 1950s or before that, and it was really not the case in the 1960s; but things began to change in the 1970s. Because social changes such as those are slow, profound and subtle, you do not necessarily make sense of them at the time.

As the minister said when talking about the strategies the government has employed in psychiatric services and the work it has done or is beginning to do in adolescent psychiatric services, 20 or 25 years ago government administrators would not have been looking at providing support services for those families. They would have been looking at quick intervention and the removal of the child. That was the ethos of the time. It was not a case of either side of politics being bad or having wrong ideas; that was the way society conducted itself in those days.

Many of us here are old enough to remember what happened. Many social and other changes have occurred. When I was minister I was slow to understand those matters and then I was not as quick as I would have liked to be translating them into resources. That will always be a problem with resources because once you analyse and understand the problem, being able to translate the solution into resources is very important.

The opposition realises there is an enormous number of factors that help to prevent child abuse. Some of those things are available within mainstream services and include child care, kindergarten services, maternal and child health services and family support. The opposition would always say to the government, 'Do not stint in these areas, do not cut back in spending on kindergartens. Give children a good head start in education, but almost as importantly' — and we often do not talk about this in terms of preschool education — 'there are enormous opportunities for care and support roles in kindergartens'.

One reason I deeply wanted to see the former maternal and child health care system remain was that with an unlimited number of visits, a maternal and child health sister might perhaps pick up a sign of abuse that she would not be able to detect under the present model. Those matters are of tremendous importance.

I know this is a very emotional area. Significantly, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has sought to make this debate not emotional but measured. A terrible problem about a case that goes wrong in the child protection system is often the way the media report it and the difficulties that provides for the system and the individual workers. Child protection is a difficult area of work, as every honourable member has said and no doubt others will say. Few members would like to have to follow up on a call, perhaps confront an angry parent or relatives, make the necessary investigations, always using the best and finest of judgment that he or she could employ — sometimes in quite frightening circumstances — make a report and continue to follow up the case. Many of the protective workers are young and lack life experience, and that causes a problem.

Some of the reporting of child protection cases — not only here but in other English-language countries, too — is outrageous. One often gets the feeling that workers are being blamed for the injuries a child sustains or for a child's death. It is not the worker's hand that injures or the worker who kills a child. Perhaps in some circumstances the system fails society and the child, but it is outrageous to stigmatise the workers for something that is everybody's problem, in a sense, and must be constantly drawn to the attention of the media.

There is no simple way to address the problems that are being admitted here today. Ten years ago we underestimated the number of reports that would be received and the number of problems that would occur, and we were very much understaffed. As the then minister I put much time and attention into trying to get some older workers into child protection and looking at career structure issues.

I mention as an aside, which I know the minister will appreciate, that at the moment our government took over child protection, the home and community care (HACC) agreement was signed. There were many jobs for social workers and people with similar qualifications in local government in the organisation of home and community care — just as there were many jobs in protective services.

As one woman who worked in protective services for a year and then went to work in a HACC program in local government said, 'You must understand that I have done this job now for a year. I have been threatened twice, and my car registration number was taken at the last visit. I am now personally scared in this job. Every Saturday I open the newspaper and there are all those community service-type jobs being offered by local government. They pay more for work in aged care, an area where many people would like to work. It is an infinitely less stressful area — and I would probably be better paid'.

There was a problem with the career structure, but I acknowledge it was a problem that was difficult to fix. Every successive minister has tried to fix that problem, to get older and more experienced people into the system. The Labor government commenced a scheme that encouraged qualified people based in the country and interested in community service work to return to finish community welfare courses or perhaps start courses, in the hope that these people would become the core protection workers. If that happened we would have a cohort of mature protection workers. It is fair to say that those jobs are extremely stressful for people of any age.

The Labor government found the issue of child protection difficult and appointed Mr Justice Fogarty to investigate it.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — I think I may have said Justice Nicholson during my contribution, when I meant to say Justice Fogarty.

Hon. C. J. HOGG — Yes. I thought the minister had intended to say Justice Fogarty, not Justice Nicholson. Mr Justice Fogarty's was appointed by a Labor government which recognised that there might have been systemic questions that it had not grappled with. We can all acknowledge that there are probably insufficient resources and problems with training and that the child protection work force has inexperienced officers.

Questions also arise about the system: is there something we are doing in Victoria that we have got wrong or have failed to correct? We have yet to answer that deep question satisfactorily. The Labor government did not answer it satisfactorily and, frankly, it has yet to be answered satisfactorily by this government. Is there some way we should be doing things better?

When one reads Mr Justice Fogarty's reports one sees that an early attempt was made to carry out most recommendations and to keep a watchful eye on the system. His report touched to a large extent on questions about teenagers — and I appreciate the comments made today by the minister about mental health programs for teenagers — but I wonder whether the legislation that parliaments have worked over many years on has failed to correct the relationship between children and young persons and the state.

We need to have another close look at the legislation. We keep on amending it, but I wonder whether it is simply patchwork. Something is going seriously wrong. What is happening to teenagers today is not what we envisaged when we debated the Children and Young Person's Bill in this place in the 1980s. The legislation covering adolescents has been added to and amended. Everybody is trying to make it better, but I wonder whether the legislative base is wrong.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — Do you think it focuses too much on the rights of young people?

Hon. C. J. HOGG — Perhaps that is it.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — That was the big change in the legislation — to assert them.

Hon. C. J. HOGG — The minister is right: that was the big change. Just as the big social change from the 1960s to the 1970s was the emphasis on keeping families intact, almost regardless of the circumstances, so too the big social change today concerns the way adolescents live their lives and the rights children and teenagers now have. Nobody would want to move away from that, but we must get the legislative underpinnings right. Perhaps we should codify the relationships between young people, their families and the state. I am not at all sure that we have done enough, so perhaps a parliamentary inquiry is needed to examine the aspect of broader protection.

Mandatory reporting has placed a big strain on the system because it demands enormous resources. Over the past 10 or 12 years all parties have changed their policies on mandatory reporting. At present we all support mandatory reporting; we all want to see it properly resourced so that it works. At the moment every state except Western Australia has mandatory reporting.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — Queensland has very low reporting rates.

Hon. C. J. HOGG — I think Western Australia is the only state that does not have mandatory reporting. Nevertheless, we can say that almost all Australians agree that mandatory reporting is significant, but it is a strong statement of intent only if it is backed up by the right number and kinds of resources.

I raise these questions in a bipartisan way. Perhaps the system is too bureaucratic. The Victorian figures do not look good, and they have not looked good for a long time. Is there a lack of direct engagement between workers and their supervisors or between making and then acting on reports? They are the questions we should be asking.

What are the shortfalls in resources? We have heard about the big effort that is needed to overcome the resource deficits, but are the resources being put in the right places? That is a legitimate question. Are we cutting away at areas that should receive more attention or be better protected? For example, should we be emphasising the role of student welfare coordinators, who have oblique but substantial roles to play in protecting children, particularly when we are talking about older children at risk?

How much integration is there in the system? Is integration lacking? I ask all those questions aware of the pendulum having swung towards making certain that young children stay with their families. That can happen only if support services are available when they are needed. I am not certain that the pendulum will not swing back over the next 20 years. I am not saying it will swing back to the situation that existed in the 1940s or 1950s, because nobody would want that.

Beatrice Faust wrote an article on child protection that appeared in the *Weekend Australian* two weeks ago. She is neither a conservative writer nor a conservative commentator, but at the end of her article she said that perhaps we should be once again examining the adoption option. I put that forward because I wonder whether the pendulum of community discussion is about to swing back. As members of Parliament we ought to be aware of social changes such as these. I do not think we would want the pendulum to swing back because we went to great lengths to change the legislation. We want families to remain attached where they can be. We want them to be supported, but we want a system that works. If there are flaws in the system, we need to know what they are and, without trying to find fault, fix them up. We do not want to score political points from human difficulties and tragedies; we want to keep on making progress.

There was progress between 1985 and 1996, but it was not the progress we would have hoped for. When I was Minister for Community Services I remember being asked by an ABC journalist whether I could guarantee that no other child in state care would ever die. I noticed Denis Napthine, the Minister for Youth and Community Services in the other place, being asked a similar question about a month ago. No minister can ever give that unequivocal assurance, despite the demands of the public and the media.

The assurance we should be able to give is that we have the best system it is humanly possible to have. It is a matter of allocating resources and listening to

the critics, be they workers, judges or external authorities, and then acting on their recommendations. It is a matter of trying not to be so defensive. We are all somewhat defensive about these issues, and we have to be to a degree. Ministers of the day have dozens of layers of confidentiality to protect, which many people do not realise. Given that there has to be some defensiveness, we should try to be as non-defensive as it is humanly possible to be so that we get it right.

Perhaps we need to look again at the legislation to try to get that right, too. The level of direct and indirect resourcing is vital. We should never for one moment underestimate how important kindergartens and maternal and child health services are. We must try to be aware of the social pressures on families, the way the community is thinking and whether the pendulum is swinging so that the resources are put where they are needed at the right time. Every member of this house wants families to have as much support as possible and every member wants parents to be able to take care of their kids if it is at all humanly possible. But we also know that there are times when intervention and the removal of children is the appropriate course of action.

Where the removal of a child is appropriate the department has to be there with the proper resources to provide a good alternative for that child, because in the past it has been argued that the alternatives the system has provided have not been too good, either. That is another systemic question. Legitimate questions were asked concerning the child protection system in 1986, 1990, and again now in 1996. Each time we debate these questions I think we make a bit of progress. We certainly do not resolve all the questions but we do listen to each other. If that progress can be reflected in changed departmental practices, with a relaxation of bureaucracy — if that is what is needed, and I am not certain that it is — and with a commitment of resources, debates like this are of enormous value. That is the spirit in which Miss Gould spoke this morning and moved the motion on behalf of the Labor Party, and that is certainly the spirit in which I support it.

Hon. B. C. BOARDMAN (Chelsea) — It should be said from the outset that this government is undoubtedly strongly committed to providing the best child protection service, as Mrs Hogg mentioned, it is humanly possible to provide. It is also unquestionable that the government is trying to improve the system to provide that service, and recognising that consultation from within the department with the people who are providing the service is paramount.

No government would take any other stance. The government realises the importance of such valuable assets as young children and the provision of the necessary protection to enable them to make the transition from childhood to adolescence and into adulthood.

It is condemnable, and I am incensed by the opposition doing it, to use the recent tragic events surrounding the deaths of some young people under the protection of the Department of Human Services as a political tool. However, Mrs Hogg's submission was admirable and she made some positive contributions to the debate. It is encouraging for a change to see someone from the opposition, instead of government bashing, making a worthwhile and positive contribution to debate on what is undoubtedly a sensitive and important issue.

It is one thing to criticise; it is another to unjustifiably condemn a system whose staff are totally dedicated to providing a service second to none. The opposition shows little or no compassion and respect for the victims, the families and the other people involved in these cases by blaming the government for the tragedies without looking at the whole picture. This sensitive issue requires complete bipartisan support so that we can identify any problems that may exist, debate the issues and find possible solutions to improve the system. Instead of criticising all the time it would be encouraging if members of the opposition actually came up with some ideas. I note that the opposition's election policy regarding community issues on this very matter did not contain any suggestions for notable changes to the system.

I speak on this motion as one of the few in this house who has had direct contact with front-line workers in the area of child protection. My background in the Victoria Police exposed me to dealing with a range of issues, and there were none more distressing or of deeper personal concern to me than those involving the abuse of children. From my direct experience of working with front-line workers and other departmental staff I can say I find them highly committed, dedicated and professional individuals who work in an extremely difficult and stressful

environment that is indescribable unless you have seen it first hand.

I will give some examples of the interactions I have had. Before entering this place I worked at the Frankston police station. We had what is known as three medium-term units, which are facilities provided for adolescents under direct care who require supervision. The units are staffed by relatively young people who, as has been mentioned, have little life experience and perhaps are not the best people to oversee these adolescents' activities. Even so we do not want to create an environment where adolescents are incarcerated and deprived of their liberties so they cannot have appropriate interaction with the rest of the community to help them develop the life skills so necessary in adulthood. Because they come from varied and sometimes tragic circumstances these young people interact and exchange their ideas and philosophies. In some cases the older members may influence younger members, which may be detrimental to the cause they are pursuing. It is when the Department of Human Services workers notify and observe deficiencies in the system and see that some people may require extra supervision, counselling or guidance that their expertise and recommendations become most relevant. I thoroughly commend these people on the job they do. It is a difficult job done around the clock under difficult circumstances, which is something the public must understand. In most cases it is not a question of one big happy family living under the same roof. There are problems in these places and they need to be identified. With the bipartisan support of the government and the opposition we can try to alleviate these problems and find adequate solutions to enable us to provide the best services possible.

It is important to note that only a very small percentage of children in family situations are deemed to be at significant risk. It is the very small segment under the supervision of the department that are put into the category of requiring extra supervision and may be at severe risk that requires any type of intervention. It is the recent exceptionally distressing and disturbing cases that have attracted publicity and perhaps sparked this necessary debate. However, the cases that have attracted publicity are a minor percentage of all the children who are currently under care. My belief is that the media are a contributing factor to this debate and have blown it out of all proportion. I refer to an article with a photo of a baby underneath in the *Herald Sun* of 29 August this year headed 'Probe into baby deaths' which states:

> This is baby 'Helen' about two weeks before she died. She was left in the care of her heroin-addicted mother, and was one of 500 babies supervised by the state from 1989 to 1995.

On the front page they have printed a photo of the child. What the media failed to state on 29 August was that this photo was not of a baby two weeks before its death; it was actually of the baby after its death. It is tragic, and the public would view that matter with ultimate concern. The very next day in the editorial section the paper apologised profusely for making such an error. I quote from an article headed 'Keeping faith with readers':

> The foundation of good journalism is maintaining the faith of readers. Only the highest standards of accuracy and integrity can keep that trust alive.

The article goes on to apologise for printing that picture. If the media are so full of integrity and can easily manipulate and put across a message that the community may misinterpret, why would they try to promote this issue as other than a sensitive one by putting a photo of a dead baby on the front cover of a mainstream newspaper? I find it utterly disgusting. I do not think any apology is worthwhile or necessary because the incident should not have happened in the first place.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the recent tragic death of a child in Geelong. We all know of the circumstances, but again the *Herald Sun* grabbed the story and, through incomplete, inaccurate and unjustified reporting, lamented the death of another child in government care, highlighting quotes such as 'When will this stop?'. I remember the case quite well. It was no coincidence that on the TV the same night the honourable member for Albert Park could be seen criticising the government but providing no solutions.

In their wisdom, the minister and the department, together with the coroner, decided the best thing to do in the interests of both the victim's family and the members of the public who had been misinformed was to bring the inquest forward. When delivering his findings on the case, the coroner said the media should undoubtedly be criticised, especially the *Herald Sun*. He said it was inexcusable to have

publicised those events based on mere speculation and hearsay — and that is exactly what they did. Although it remains a tragedy, we now know the child died of an medically related illness and that there were no signs of abuse.

Another example of the media blowing issues out of proportion was the reporting of the tragic events surrounding the death of taxidriver Peter Coe. The *Age* of 19 August had a full-page Insight article that stated in part:

> At 14, he's a convicted murderer. At 16, she's the mother of his child. It all happened while they were under the care of the state child protection system. What went wrong?

It is distressing for everyone to have events such as those publicised in such a callous way. There are flaws in the system, to which the government is enthusiastically trying to find solutions, but the media does not help by glorifying the events and, without looking at the whole picture, sending the public the message that there is nothing wrong with government bashing. That a 14-year-old and a 16-year-old engage in consensual sex which leads to the pregnancy of one of the partners should not be made public. It is not something that government or child protection workers can stop. Those children are streetwise and know about sex and so on; if they want to engage in that activity they will certainly go ahead and do it. There is no point in bringing that into the debate on child protection, which is very sensitive and which has to be decided by other means.

As the Minister for Health mentioned, some of the positive initiatives the government has taken on this issue include the establishment of protocols involving the police and the Department of Human Services. There are also protocols involving the Family Court. Two and a half months ago the Minister for Youth and Community Services and Mr Justice Nicholson launched a significant program that acknowledges that in many child protection cases the families concerned have had dealings with the Family Court, whether due to marriage break-ups or domestic violence or other reasons. The protocols will ensure the cooperation of the department, the Family Division of the Children's Court and protection officers from the Family Court in addressing child custody issues and ensuring the interests of the children are paramount. The protocols are admirable and their implementation is essential.

The introduction of mandatory reporting is probably the most significant initiative taken by the government. One point previous speakers did not mention was that in 1989 the then Labor Minister for Community Services, Peter Spyker, said mandatory reporting did not produce results. Today we hear a different story coming from the opposition. Labor now says not only that mandatory reporting is worthwhile and produces results but that it is vital. While I was in the police force I worked under the old system and, after mandatory reporting was introduced in 1993, under the new system. There is no doubt that the new system has produced results. We have moved from an environment in which the issue was taboo and unpublicised to one in which it is compulsory for community leaders, police, medical practitioners, church leaders and youth groups to report to the department any suspicions they have of child abuse or neglect.

The new system created the environment in which already overworked departmental staff found their numbers were not increasing but their workload was. I think the number of reports increased by almost 50 per cent within a very short time. Many of the reports were found to be unsubstantiated; but it is vital to have a system that alerts people to the issue and makes them aware of the trauma and difficulties the department faces when it investigates the reports.

In 1990-91 the then Department of Health and Community Services employed 530 front-line workers. In 1991-92 there was no increase. As a result of the change of government in late 1992, this year there are 663 front-line workers, an increase of 133, or 30 per cent, over five years. I am sure the house will acknowledge that that is a significant increase. Those front-line workers are ably assisted by 108 administrative support staff, a vital resource the importance of which cannot be overstated. By comparison, Queensland has only 330 front-line workers and New South Wales has 727. Although New South Wales has a much larger population, perhaps 40 per cent larger than Victoria's, it has only 10 per cent more front-line workers in its community services department.

Budget figures should also be taken into account. There has been an almost 100 per cent increase in the money allocated to front-line child protection

workers. In 1991-92 the budget was around $24 million; in 1996-97 it has increased to $53 million, which is much greater than the increase in the CPI. It is significant, and the government should be applauded for the initiative.

The motion refers to the need to provide resources to ensure there is adequate training and support for valued staff. No-one would disagree that the most important aspect of a person's ability to perform his or her job is whether he or she is adequately trained and, if adequately resourced, prepared to do the job. The Minister for Health said there are problems associated with the average age of front-line workers. Students who graduate from university with little life experience and little experience in their field immediately become the face of the department. They immediately have to front an environment that they have little knowledge of, and they have to deal with all the associated problems of the department. They take on a role that is unlike any other. They have to be the confidants, counsellors, parents and guardians of the children they work with. Despite their youth and their lack of life experience, they have to come up with adequate solutions that ensure the children receive the highest level of service and protection.

I have personally observed their situations. The workers are very young. Even though I was young when I joined the police force, the comradeship and the support I received from the inner sanctums of the police force made me wise and aware of the problems I would face. Police officers were never put in a situation of having to work or make decisions by themselves. They always had the support, confidence and ideas of their peers and those higher up in the hierarchy on which to call. Front-line child protection workers in the field do not always have that luxury and often decisions made by officers without assistance will stick.

The designated career path the government has established for child protection workers is a significant initiative and deserves all the accolades it receives. It will boost the confidence and self-esteem of officers, reward their hard work and show a clear path to promotion. The government has also provided necessary support services such as counselling and has introduced a system of peer consultation and counselling to ensure that the level of camaraderie and support among staff are high.

Protocols that have been established between the Department of Human Services and the police, particularly the community policing squad, are also relevant to the debate. In 1989 Mr Justice Fogarty recommended the abolition of the dual-track system and the adoption of a single-track system to improve cooperation and eliminate any overlaying of investigations. There is no doubt that was the correct decision at the time and that the system has improved since Justice Fogarty's report was released.

The community policing squad now works more closely than ever with child protection workers and the tensions that existed previously have gone. The police are not displaying false bravado and there is no suggestion from the Department of Human Services that only one side is right or wrong. The system is now working quite smoothly and is relevant. It is difficult to explain the effect created by the existence of extremely strong personal experience and cultural differences between police officers and departmental staff. Tensions will always be present between people from different backgrounds, of different ages and with different life experiences when one department is competing with another.

The government's initiative in establishing protocols has sorted that out and the result is a system of close consultation with and cooperation between all parties involved in investigating child protection issues. The protocols have gone a long way towards improving the system. In his report the Auditor-General says the protocols should have been introduced earlier and has no hesitation in suggesting that they have improved efficiency and cooperation between the departments.

Other pilot programs established in the health department and Youth and Community Services include local assessment programs to ensure continuity and cooperation and training exercises and workshops between police and front-line workers. It is now not unusual to a see a group of police and front-line workers sitting down periodically and discussing issues openly and freely without any tensions arising from personality differences or other distractions.

Staff retention rates in the Department of Human Services have increased, particularly among front-line workers. It is encouraging that more than 70 per cent of current staff employed as front-line child protection workers have more than 12 months

experience. Previously there had been a significant level of staff turnover, but I cannot comment on whether that was the result of factors such as workloads and stress. The change can probably be attributed to the identification of a designated career path for workers and the knowledge that hard work will be rewarded. In addition, in June this year staff received salary increases, and nothing promotes self-esteem and improves efficiency more than additional remuneration.

Other government initiatives to improve services include the Families First program, assistance for families in growth corridors, which I believe the honourable member for Werribee in another place has mentioned has been very successful, additional funding for the positive parenting program and, most importantly, the establishment of the Office of the Family. The establishment of the office was one of the government's election promises, and I was pleased with the appointment of a person of the experience of Ms Gabrielle Levine to head the office.

In his report the Auditor-General acknowledges that the government has been progressive in some of its initiatives. He also acknowledges the need for an emphasis on home-based care. The government's initiatives have led to an increase of about 38 per cent in care and support services such as foster care and adolescent placement programs. As a result of those increases Victoria now leads the nation in this field. I have had a deal of experience in the most distressing field of domestic violence and I am encouraged by the government's initiative in establishing a $1 million program of domestic violence intervention.

I disagree with the opposition's view that a royal commission is the only answer to the problem. The Minister for Health gave details of the membership and staffing of the completely independent committee that the government has established to deal with these issues. The government has no representation on the committee, and it makes its public findings without ministerial or government intervention. I believe later this week the Minister for Youth and Community Services in another place will table one of the committee's findings. There is no need for a royal commission because an independent avenue of inquiry already exists. The opposition has acknowledged the independence and importance of the committee and agrees it is doing a good job. For those reasons no other level of inquiry or investigation is necessary.

The government has taken the initiative in establishing protocols between departments, ironing out some of the kinks in the system and, most importantly, recognising that problems exist. One of the most successful ways of implementing policy is to identify that a problem exists and then work cooperatively to find solutions to it.

Child protection services is a sensitive and prominent area of community concern. The feeling of disappointment and upset experienced by the community when tragedies occur is not helped by the often unjustified and inappropriate publication of events in the media. It is also not helpful when the opposition can suggest no solutions. We should all work together. It would be pleasing if an issue of this importance were given the bipartisan support it deserves. The motion is irrelevant.

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA (Melbourne North) — I support this extremely serious motion. I will concentrate on a specific aspect of the motion — that is, the part that calls on the government to:

> ... implement key recommendations of the parliamentary Crime Prevention Committee's report on child sexual assault ...

To a large degree all members of the house understand the issues involved in both child sexual assault and protecting children. In moving the motion the opposition is arguing that there is a way forward. It believes the recommendations in the report are extremely important and that they must be adopted if the state is to put together a better child protection system than is currently in place.

It is important to understand the history of the Crime Prevention Committee's report entitled *Combating Child Sexual Assault: An Integrated Model* released in May 1995. As part of its inquiry the committee decided to examine the 1992-93 police statistics on sexual assault. That aspect of the reference was self-generated, and all members of the committee took it very seriously. In a real sense we did not know what we were getting ourselves into. The investigation was extremely thorough. We took our work seriously because we had to, given the leadership shown by the chairman of the committee, Mr Smith. I am not being sycophantic but simply telling the truth in saying that his leadership and the work he put in were exemplary. I put that on the record because it is very important to say so.

As part of that investigation some members of the committee went overseas. It was not a junket, as was reported at the time, but a very gruelling trip. The exercise was extremely valuable and the contacts that were made and the networks that were created were important. The members of the committee — those who went overseas and those who did not — were at the cutting edge in examining the issue of sexual assault against children and adults. As a result, I believe we became experts in the field.

The committee took evidence in public and in camera. People who have not worked with the committee may find it difficult to understand how it operated. In some instances the committee acted as a confessional for those who came along to the public hearings. For some of the people who attended the public committee hearings it was the first time, 30 or 40 years later, that they had acknowledged to anyone that they had been sexually abused as children.

It is hard to comprehend some of their personal experiences. I will refer to a particular case to illustrate my point. A woman came up to me in a bookshop after a public hearing and said, 'My name is so and so. You are doing a fantastic job. Keep up the good work because the issues you are dealing with are real'. Then she talked to me about her experiences as a young girl 40 years before when she was sexually abused. A person does not come out of an experience such as that without a deeper understanding of the issues that affect people. Those insights were important to me.

Mr Smith, the director of research and administration, Mr Alan Ogilvie, and I heard many personal horror stories when we undertook to talk to the people who had written to or otherwise contacted the committee. That was extremely difficult in many instances. People explained their experiences of the system, if you can call it that. They told us what they and, in some instances, their children had gone through, the situations they faced and how they dealt with them in legal, personal and monetary senses. They talked about dealing with the stigma, the guilt, the stress, the anger and the futility of the situation, as well as the hopelessness they or their children felt after going through those experiences. We heard some horror stories from the paedophiles with whom we came into contact.

So that honourable members will understand what we were dealing with I will quote from part of Mr Smith's introduction to the report. The situations we heard about were extremely gruesome and upsetting and not something a normal person would ever think about. In his introduction on Mr Smith says:

> To hear factual accounts of the most obscene and perverse crimes, such as that of an offender on his way home from the hospital with his newly born daughter, masturbating at the thought of what he was going to do sexually to the child. Then regularly and intentionally penetrating the child with larger and larger objects until penile penetration was possible at the age of four. This is then followed by repetitive sexual assault till the child is eight years of age and the matter is finally brought to the notice of police. Who would believe that a father could do such a thing? Equally, who could believe that a mother could actively participate in such a crime?

That is the reality of some of the most awful experiences the committee had to deal with and which it learnt about during its investigations. Much thought is required about how to prevent those situations occurring; how to deal with offenders once they are caught; how to prevent them re-offending, if that is possible; how to safeguard the community; how to protect victims; and how to prevent the further victimisation of children by providing the necessary legal and support systems for them so they can recover to lead fruitful lives, having suffered such experiences.

The committee members talked to many people, including the police, the mums and dads, the young and the old. We even talked to the paedophiles; I found that very distressing because they are not people one usually comes into contact with. It is impossible to understand their thinking or to delve into their minds, but the committee attempted to do just that. It is impossible for us to fully protect the community from such people, as committee members know, having met them and having tried to understand the way they operate. The investigation by the committee was an absolute eye-opener.

The former CPC made 130 recommendations. As with the decisions of most parliamentary committees, the recommendations were made on a consensus basis. We tried to compile the best possible report in an attempt to offer government protection for the children. The recommendations

were wide ranging and extremely detailed. They dealt with all aspects of the issue seriously.

The parliamentary committee system can be one of the most fruitful areas in which members of Parliament operate. As was mentioned in yesterday's debate on racism, the recommendations arising from the committee's investigation are a good aspect of our parliamentary system because we dealt with real people. We had to think seriously and consider how we could make the system better, because there are no gains to be had in this area. We are dealing with real people.

The report with its 130 recommendations was tabled in May 1995. The committee later received a government response by way of a four-page response headed 'Government response to the first report of the parliamentary crime prevention inquiry into sexual offences against children and adults, May 1995'. The response detailed 22 points; it is important that I cover those points individually.

On the first page, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 are motherhood in nature but are important statements. Paragraph 4 commences with the word 'However,' and states:

> ... there are a number of recommendations which are not supported for the following reasons:
>
> many recommendations are currently in operation;
>
> many recommendations have substantial resource implications;
>
> insufficient evidence was provided that the proposed new administrative and operational structures would be the most effective;
>
> the proposed sexual assault response team model may lead to a fragmentation of response to child victims;
>
> possible alteration to ministerial responsibilities.

Paragraph 6 of the government's response referred to the committee's proposals about the structure the committee had recommended:

> The establishment of new administrative, policy advice and review structures ... accountability to the Minister for Community Services.

The recommendation would have resulted in the establishment of a Child Protection (Sexual Assault) Board and of sexual assault response teams (SARTS). Since 1985, New South Wales has had a Child Protection Committee which, like the recommended Child Protection (Sexual Assault) Board, monitors, coordinates and evaluates the child protection system. The New South Wales committee implements programs, provides pre-budget advice, monitors in conjunction with other bodies the effectiveness of legislation and has autonomy with non-government agencies. It also allows all the relevant departments to come together to discuss relevant issues concerning child protection under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Community Services.

Unfortunately, the government's response in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 states:

> The government considers that responding to child sexual assault is not the sole responsibility of the Minister for Community Services.
>
> The establishment of the Child Protection (Sexual Assault) Board and Regional Child Protection (Sexual Assault) Committees is supported in principle with respect to the provision of an advisory function only ... not ... for such bodies to have a management review function.
>
> The proposal to establish Sexual Assault Response Teams requires further consideration ...

Those replies are more motherhood statements with no action having been taken.

Paragraph 10 refers to processes and procedures. The committee had recommended:

> ... responding to notifications of child sexual assault ... parental involvement in decision-making regarding delay in or cessation of an investigation; processes for responding to the needs of the child; the conduct of the investigation process; and review mechanisms for decisions.

The committee had further recommended:

> ... assessment of adolescents and adult sexual offenders following conviction and the provision of treatment services to young offenders, prisoners and those under the supervision of community-based corrections.

The government's response was contained in paragraph 12 — a further motherhood statement.

Paragraph 13, detailing a further government response, states:

> To ensure accountability of decision-making, the development of operational guidelines, inter-agency protocols ... will be crucial.

The minister informed the house of the protocols involving the department and the police. The sexual assault teams have a coordinated approach to dealing with children who are notified as having been sexually assaulted, which is different from having protocols that may or may not break down. I will explain the sexual assault team's function in a moment.

Paragraph 14 explains the government's decision not to agree to parental involvement in decision making because:

> ... the possibility of pressure being applied by the alleged offender and collusion of the non-offending parent with the alleged offending parent means that parental involvement in decision making is not appropriate and may jeopardise the safety of the child.

Paragraph 15 states:

> Extension of assessment and treatment of adolescent and adult sexual offenders is supported. It is also noted that substantial additional resources will be required to extend treatment to all sexual offenders.

That acknowledges the need for resources. It is important that sufficient levels of resources are provided to prevent further abuse and to protect children. Prevention is better than cure, because in these instances there is no cure.

Paragraph 16 refers to the establishment at the federal level of a DNA database, which is still to be implemented. I acknowledge that there has been some discussion about that at both the federal and the state level, but progress has been too slow. The second part of the paragraph refers to the carrying out of criminal history checks on people who are involved or work with young children. That will be achieved as a result of legislation passed yesterday, and I applaud the government for that.

The government response includes legislative changes and the adoption of the recommendation to enhance the justice system's capacity to pursue child sexual assault prosecutions by increasing penalties and protecting children from being exploited in pornographic material, so much of that has been picked up.

The government's response at paragraph 18 concerns the need to strengthen the legislation. It states in part:

> The government is aware of the exploitative way in which children can be used in the manufacture of pornographic material and has taken steps to legislate against such practices.

Again, the opposition applauds the government for that.

Under the heading 'Resources', paragraph 19 outlines some of the committee's recommendations:

> The recommendations relate to the creation of new positions; the provision of support services to all child sexual assault victims and their families; training of professionals who respond to notifications; assessment and treatment of sexual offenders; buildings, infrastructure and facilities for investigators and courts; establishment of an emergency fund; and establishing and maintaining national databases to assist with detections of sexual offenders.

The government response at paragraph 20 includes the following:

> ... enhancing the profile of activities and rearranging priorities will address many issues.

Unfortunately, that does not go far enough. The government has not addressed the committee's recommendations on providing resources and training and re-ordering priorities. Instead, at paragraph 21 the government's response reiterates the importance of counselling and support services for people to recover. The paragraph then says:

> However, issues of access to such services must also be considered.

Again, there is no commitment to action or to any increase and improvement in services for victims.

Paragraph 22 of the government's response states that sexual assault response teams will not be supported or established because they are not financially or practically feasible. It also says that changes to the court system are being

considered, but again the response is too slow. The government has picked up only some of the recommendations of the committee, including few of its more critical recommendations.

It is important to understand in detail some of the thinking behind the recommendations. Recommendation 6 in the report entitled *Combating Child Sexual Assault: An Integrated Model* states:

> The committee recommends that the criminal offence of sexual assault against a child be vigorously prosecuted.

That is important because at present that does not always occur. The committee heard evidence that those offences can go unprosecuted for a number of reasons, and they are explained at paragraph 4.2 of the report.

Recommendation 9 states:

> The committee recommends that a Victorian Child Protection (Sexual Assault) Board be established.

That would establish an independent advisory panel free of political interference, regardless of which party was in office. That is important, especially when issues such as monitoring, reviews, policy and programs are concerned.

Recommendation 10 then states:

> The committee recommends that the Child Protection (Sexual Assault) Board be responsible for reviewing child protection (sexual assault) cases.

All too often problems arise because sexual assault cases are not reviewed sufficiently. Cases are not worked through to ensure better deals for victims, which is why that recommendation was made.

Recommendation 12 states:

> The committee recommends that the Child Protection (Sexual Assault) Board coordinate sexual assault teams (SARTs).

Honourable members should understand that SARTs would bring together a number of people to deal with and respond to notified sexual assaults. The evidence the committee received told of protection workers working in isolation and of mistakes being made. Workers had to cover up their mistakes because there was no group to support them.

The committee heard about where the system was not working. A sexual assault victim would first be interviewed by community services, then reinterviewed by the police, detectives and barristers in the criminal justice system and so even further victimised. The SARTs were about getting a team together so that a lot of that revictimisation did not occur where the evidence was not contaminated through untrained people being in contact with the victims. The recommendation sets that out in a very detailed way.

The committee saw it as a way of putting together a better system for child sexual assault victims. The government does not accept that SARTs are the way to go, so we have a continuing problem with child sexual assault reporting and prosecuting of offenders. Even though the protocols are there, as the minister mentioned, it is still not the optimum way for us to operate in these areas.

Recommendation 13 talks about pilot programs. The committee said it did not expect these response teams to be set up everywhere overnight but that they should be piloted — which is reasonable — and after a period should be reviewed.

Recommendation 24 reads:

> The committee recommends that protection workers attached to sexual assault response teams be responsible for advocacy of all child victims and be called protective advocates in order to reflect this change in focus.

That is important because all too often child victims are alone and there is nobody to protect their rights; there is nobody there to ensure that their needs are being looked after, and within the criminal justice system they are just part of the Crown case. The committee attempted to deal with that situation in its recommendations. These children are people, but the Crown considers them to be just part of its evidentiary case against the alleged perpetrators.

Recommendations 25 and 26 relate to pre-court counselling, where the protective advocate represents the victim. They recommend that support services including counselling be available to parents or guardians, provided such parents or guardians are not the alleged offenders.

Recommendation 35 is important. It states:

> The committee recommends that sexual assault response teams (SARTs) be established to provide an integrated team of experts to respond to sexual assault notifications.

When people notify that they have been sexually assaulted — it may be the first time they actually tell somebody — they go through this daisy wheel of having to tell people time and again. The kids who are placed in this situation told us and other people: 'This has happened to me; why don't they believe me? Why do I have to tell my story again and again? Is it because they think I am lying?'.

We have to try to make sure that these children need to tell their story once and once only within the criminal justice system and that they are believed.

Recommendation 37 states that:

> ... SARTs comprise police, protective advocates, legal counsel, medical and counselling services.

It is interesting that when the Crown is prosecuting it uses the victim as part of its case; nobody is there protecting or representing the victim, and that is what part of this recommendation is about.

Recommendation 39 is that SARTs be co-located. If you are dealing with a sexual assault case you should not have to ring up the police station to get a police officer or detective, a member of community services or a counselling service to get people to come along, all at different times, to deal with one notification.

Recommendation 54, I acknowledge, has been implemented, but there are quite a number of other recommendations that are extremely important. I will go through them. Recommendation 69 states:

> The committee recommends that legislation be enacted which presumes multiple victim sexual assault cases, which are presented together, will be heard together.

That is very important, but nothing has occurred in that regard. Recommendations 72 and 73 recommend that sexual assault cases be heard and that their trials proceed as a matter of urgency. This involves simple things like child witnesses giving evidence via closed-circuit television; provision of voice amplification for children; children being given booster seats when giving evidence, and screens be provided for children giving evidence in court. There is a famous example, but I cannot go into that at the moment.

Recommendation 82 has not been enacted. It states:

> The committee recommends that all courts provide a dedicated victim waiting room.

We are all at fault, but these are the types of recommendations that, if implemented, will protect a child who has been sexually molested from waiting in the same room at court as the accused perpetrator. These recommendations, up to no. 130, are extremely important and many of them have to be implemented. Because of the seriousness of this issue the opposition urges honourable members to support the motion before the house.

Sitting suspended 12.59 p.m. until 2.01 p.m.

Hon. E. J. POWELL (North Eastern) — As Mr Boardman said in his excellent presentation, the government is taking seriously its role in protecting Victoria's vulnerable children and is looking for ways of improving the system. I shall indicate the government's level of commitment by referring to the record under Labor. In 1991-92 the former Labor government allocated $25 million for front-line child protection staff. In 1995-96 the coalition government allocated $48 million for front-line protection staff, which is almost a 50 per cent increase. In 1996-97 the coalition government allocated $53 million. That is the extent of the level of this government's commitment to our front-line protection staff.

In 1991-92 under the Labor government there were 530 front-line child protection workers. It was the same as the allocation the year before, so there was no increase. In 1995-96 the coalition government had 663 front-line child protection workers in the system. In 1996-97 it increased its front line to 788.

I cannot support Miss Gould's motion in the form in which it is written. I am sure all honourable members would be concerned about any deaths of young people under state care, but I cannot agree with the suggestion that Victoria's child protection services have failed to adequately protect our children. The motion seems to say that all our children are at risk and the whole system has failed. Unfortunately, as Mr Boardman said in his speech, the media focuses on the negative stories.

Over many years the Department of Human Services and its predecessors have had many success stories and have been able to protect most of the children in state care. It is important that we do not always focus on the bad news stories. Child protection should be an issue for which members on both sides of the house, local government and local communities take responsibility.

The state government has partnerships with many community organisations. One of the community organisations I am involved with is The Bridge, which has been operating in Shepparton for the past two years. The Bridge is the common name for the Goulburn Valley Youth Access and Development Group, which provides support to young people who are disadvantaged and at risk in our community.

The organisation came about when the state government committed itself to funding for this purpose over three years if the community also contributed funds. The state government allocated $225 000 for three years to the project and the community has matched that dollar for dollar. I was the chairman of fundraising for the group during that time and I am proud to say the community was able to raise $265 000 over three years. The Shepparton Central Rotary Club, an organisation committed to our young people, contributed $100 000; another Shepparton Rotary Club contributed another $30 000; SPC, a large organisation known worldwide for its commitment to the family, contributed $75 000; and a number of major corporate bodies contributed $60 000, which totals $265 000 from the community over three years.

The community understood it had a problem and wanted some input into looking after the children who were disadvantaged or at risk or whose families were no longer able or willing to look after them. Some of the programs The Bridge has established to teach young people life skills are the Young Mums Group, which is a group of young mums 21 years and under who come along with their babies and mix with other young mums. They have regular afternoon sessions and guest speakers, including general practitioners and other people who deal with specific areas that interest the young mothers. It is a very positive young group that gets positive mentoring from older people and is assisted by the community.

Another program is the Meals program, which teaches young people to shop for and prepare meals. They are not allowed to have the meals unless they arrive early enough to go shopping with the youth workers. They look for good, economical, nutritious foods on the shelves and then prepare the meals. It gives them much assistance in attaining life skills. They then sit down together and eat the meals — so there is some socialisation — and then they are involved in the tidying up. If any young person arrives at the establishment just in time for the meal they are told, sorry, the meal started at 5 o'clock. That teaches them that meals involve having to shop, prepare, eat and tidy up. A doctor, whose services are given free to the organisation, comes in to talk with the group every week. It is an informal environment and these young people who are at risk actually talk to the doctor about their problems and the things they eat. If they have any ills or psychological problems they are referred on. The program gives them a contact they can keep in touch with.

Another excellent program the state government provides is the Youth and Family Support Crisis Intervention Program, through which qualified workers work with families that are at risk because the best place for a young person is at home with his or her family in a nurturing, loving and supportive environment, not somewhere else with other people. This family program works with the young people. They talk to the young persons separately and then talk to the family and try to work out the problems and solve them. There is continual counselling when it is needed and the people involved can be referred to other agencies.

When families stay together the workers from the program find out about any problems that arise. For example, a young lad might try to get work but be unable to find a job and his father might say, 'There are jobs out there. Get out'. Parents have to be told it is not that easy and so long as the child is trying they should be supportive of that young person.

Another program supported by the government, which funds the membership, is the gym program. Young people at risk work at the gym with volunteers from the police force. Because they work in the local gym in an informal atmosphere with a member of the police force they are able to form associations and relationships with their local police. This enables them to talk to the officers about their problems and learn to see the police as people who

are positive rather than as people who are there to reprimand them or give them discipline. The program is forging relationships between our young people and the police force, which is a very positive outcome.

The group is involved in another initiative with qualified youth workers who go to the secondary schools once a week so students who have problems or difficulties can have private discussions and talk discreetly about their difficulties. The problems might be at home within the family, with another relation or elsewhere. The students are able to speak in the strictest confidence to the workers, and it is an ongoing relationship because the workers come back once a week to the secondary school. The Bridge program has had a very positive result for the schools. A member of staff who is a qualified nurse goes to secondary schools and runs programs such as the VCE stress-buster program. Young people who are doing VCE are sometimes stressed out, and qualified people work with them to show them ways to overcome stress positively rather than reacting by using drugs or drinking or smoking.

A successful public health program run in the secondary schools by Quit that teaches young people to give up smoking is also conducted by this group under The Bridge program. A qualified youth worker attends court hearings involving minors, and the association works wonders with younger people who return to court time and again. The police are part of this association.

There is a lot of positive support from the state government. The program is not just about protecting children in custody; it is about providing funds so that those children do not go into custody and are kept in a nurturing environment — in a proper home environment. The support program teaches the young people positive ways to develop better life skills and learning skills.

The Victorian government spends more money than any other state government on family support and prevention programs. Recently I received a copy of a letter to the regional manager of the Hume region of the Department of Human Services from Shepcan, which is the Shepparton District Council Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. The letter referred to concerns about the high turnover of staff and low morale of the child protection unit workers and to reports that child abuse in the greater Shepparton area had increased by 14 per cent over the past 12 months — a dramatic increase since mandatory reporting was introduced.

I spoke to the Minister for Youth and Community Services, Dr Denis Napthine; he was concerned about the things I told him and agreed to meet the people in Shepparton. The minister met with the president and vice-president of the Shepparton group and listened with sympathy to people's concerns and answered their questions. When the president and vice-president from the group were interviewed by the local paper they stated that they had spent an hour with the minister and felt he understood their concerns and had allayed some of the fears of the child protection workers, and that it was a positive outcome.

As one of the minister's priorities he has established a regional working party to address the recruitment and retention of staff. Steps have been taken to engage tertiary institutions to promote the establishment of a social work course in the Shepparton area. The minister has been working with the La Trobe University in Shepparton to develop a social work course so that the workers do not have to go to Melbourne to study but can study in their own home town.

One of the issues raised with the minister was the number of inexperienced staff working in the child protection area. The minister gave a commitment to increase financial resources, improve working conditions and allocate more senior staff to the Shepparton office. Pay increases will be awarded to child protection workers.

It is important that we identify and acknowledge the level of responsibility that social workers have in our community. Extra training and support will be made available to social workers and there will be an increase in the budget in recognition of the extra workload they carry because of mandatory reporting. There is improved communication between the Victoria Police and the Department of Human Services at all levels. I will not go into that because Mr Boardman spent a great deal of time telling us about the improvements that have occurred and the way he saw things before and after mandatory reporting.

In dealing with Shepcan one of the big issues that came forward was the difficult job that child protection workers have. It is not an easy job. Many workers leave the industry not because it is not

looking after them but perhaps because the work is not for them. They join the industry thinking that they want to look after young children but then they realise they are not equipped for the work and it is not the job they wanted. Perhaps we can utilise those people in other areas and use the experienced ones to train people or roster them so that the inexperienced workers will have the support and mentorship of more experienced workers.

Earlier Mr Nardella spoke about the difficult times that child protection workers have and referred to some of the things he has seen. It is a very difficult job and the child protection workers do it under very difficult circumstances. One of the reasons for the low morale is that, as soon as people know why child protection workers are coming to the house, when they knock on the house door they are abused. If the workers in their wisdom decide that a child is to be taken away from that home they have to ensure that the decision is right. Usually the media hear about the case and report it, so a lot of criticism is aimed at the Department of Human Services saying it acted too quickly. If the protection workers leave the child in the home and something happens to it, they are criticised again. The decision-making process has a very high stress level for these people; they need our support and they need to know that we think they have a responsible and caring job.

The Minister for Youth and Community Services has indicated the steps that will be taken to improve services and the training and conditions of child protection workers. After hearing the way the minister spoke to the local people, I have no doubt that he is committed to making the service work better and is concerned when he hears that the support is not working. As a family man himself he cares about the future of our young people.

I congratulate the speakers this morning who advocated a bipartisan approach. This is the way we must go if we are to protect our young children in government care. We must be prepared to work together to achieve a more positive outcome for all Victoria. I would especially like to thank Mrs Hogg for her continuing interest in young people over a long time. That is how we must work to look after Victoria's children — by taking a bipartisan approach.

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — A number of honourable members who have contributed to the debate today, including Mr Boardman, asked why the opposition has not put forward an alternative view. This motion is aiming to do that. Experts in child protection services have given advice to the government about how our children's services need to be changed to ensure the protection of children is paramount.

The recommendations in the report on child protection by Mr Justice Fogarty, in the Crime Prevention Committee's report on child sexual assault and in the Auditor-General's report on protecting Victoria's children should all be adopted. That is the effect of the motion the opposition has moved. We also put forward the argument that the recommendations in those reports should be implemented together with a number of changes that were highlighted by Mr Nardella. Consensus has not been reached on the establishment of a task force to assist young children who have been sexually abused.

The recommendations have yet to be put in place. The motion is about having those recommendations implemented and ensuring sufficient resources are allocated to provide adequate training and support for the valued staff of the child protection service. No honourable member who spoke in the debate today criticised those staff members and many have congratulated them on the difficult job they do. Mrs Hogg referred to a person who had worked in the field for 12 months and had to leave because of the stress, difficulty of the work and trauma involved. It seems 12 months is about the longest period people can survive in child protection work.

The opposition wants the establishment of a royal commission with the moral authority and power to expose crucial weaknesses and prevent further deaths of children who are in the care of the state. I acknowledge the view of the Minister for Health and Mrs Hogg that it would be impossible for any minister to give a categorical guarantee that no child in the care of the state would ever die. However, a number of children could be saved if some of the recommendations were implemented and adhered to, and sufficient resources were allocated to child protection to ensure that appropriate training and accommodation were in place.

As I said when opening the debate, this motion should not be decided along party lines. The opposition asks the government to recognise what Justice Fogarty, the Auditor-General and the Crime Prevention Committee have said and to implement

their recommendations. I urge all honourable members to support the motion.

House divided on motion:

Ayes, 9

Eren, Mr	Power, Mr (*Teller*)
Gould, Miss	Pullen, Mr
Hogg, Mrs	Theophanous, Mr
Nardella, Mr	Walpole, Mr
Nguyen, Mr (*Teller*)	

Noes, 32

Asher, Ms	Hall, Mr
Ashman, Mr	Hallam, Mr
Atkinson, Mr	Hartigan, Mr
Baxter, Mr	Katsambanis, Mr
Best, Mr	Knowles, Mr
Birrell, Mr	Lucas, Mr
Bishop, Mr	Luckins, Mrs
Boardman, Mr	Powell, Mrs
Bowden, Mr	Ross, Dr
Brideson, Mr	Smith, Mr
Cover, Mr	Smith, Ms
Craige, Mr	Stoney, Mr (*Teller*)
Davis, Mr D. McL.	Strong, Mr (*Teller*)
Davis, Mr P. R.	Varty, Mrs
Forwood, Mr	Wells, Dr
Furletti, Mr	Wilding, Mrs

Pair

McLean, Mrs	de Fegely, Mr

Motion negatived.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE COMPLETION AUTHORITY

The PRESIDENT — Order! I advise the house that this evening the Chairman of the Parliament House Completion Authority, the Honourable Bill Baxter, will brief all members in the Legislative Council committee room on the progress of the development of the new Parliament House and the arrangements for an interim Parliament House. A similar briefing will be provided to staff members of Parliament at 11.00 a.m. on Friday at a venue to be advised.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Unemployment: figures

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) — My question without notice is to the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology. Unemployment figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics reveal that 7 of the 14 statistical regions in Victoria are now suffering double-digit unemployment. They include: outer western Melbourne, 11.8 per cent; north-eastern Melbourne, 11.1 per cent; south-eastern Melbourne, 10.5 per cent; Mornington Peninsula, 10 per cent; the Western District, 10.8 per cent; the Wimmera, 10.9 per cent; and Gippsland, 11.2 per cent. Given these alarming figures, does the minister accept that unemployment in Victoria is at critically high levels and that the labour market crisis is a result of the government's refusal to set out a coherent and forward-looking industry policy for Victoria?

Honourable members interjecting.

The PRESIDENT — Order! The question clearly calls for an opinion from the minister. I am sure the minister will be happy to comment on the figures, which may bring out the answer.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The short answer to the diatribe is no, but I am prepared and welcome the opportunity to give a longer answer. There is one underlying truth: unemployment was a lot worse under Labor than it is now.

Honourable members interjecting.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — We are delighted that under the Kennett government unemployment has come down.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — Compared to what?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — Importantly, we are prepared to compare our employment figures against the national average and against the figures for any other state. I am pleased to be able to advise the house that the ABS statistics indicate that 45 600 new jobs have been created in Victoria over

the past 12 months. That, Mr Theophanous, is the best performance of any state.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — And unemployment's gone up.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — That, Mr Theophanous, is better than the national average. We know very well that under Mr Theophanous — —

Hon. T. C. Theophanous interjected.

The PRESIDENT — Order! The Leader of the Opposition has asked his question. I will not permit a barrage of interjections from him while the Leader of the Government is answering.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — Poor old Mr Theophanous does not want to hear about the track record of his government, which is a relevant benchmark. We know that under the discredited government that Mr Theophanous was part of, unemployment was well over 12 per cent. We know that was Labor's legacy to the people it is meant to represent. Unemployment soared because of the great achievements of the Kirner government!

Of course, Labor wants us to forget the past. It would have us not remember that Labor failed on employment. It would have us not remember that over the past 12 months we have had a better employment record than any other state in the nation, one we are more than prepared to talk about.

We are also more than happy to keep bringing in initiatives to boost employment prospects in this state. Only yesterday I announced another government program, for the unemployed from non-English-speaking backgrounds, which will be of demonstrable importance to people who need assistance.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous interjected.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — Was that information provided by our predecessors? Was that information provided by Mr Theophanous and his discredited government? No, it wasn't! We have taken another step forward, and I look forward to employment growth continuing under the second Kennett government.

Taxis: safety standards

Hon. C. A. FURLETTI (Templestowe) — Will the Minister for Roads and Ports outline to the house the improvements in passenger and driver safety standards in the taxi industry that have been initiated by this government?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — I thank the honourable member for his question. In doing so I place on the record the fact that the article in this morning's *Herald Sun* does nothing to improve the confidence of the people of Victoria in the work that has been done by taxidrivers, the Victorian Taxi Association, and this government.

When the Victorian Taxi Directorate (VTD) was established early in 1994, one of the first things the government did was to set up a 24-hour telephone facility to enable people to ring in with their comments and raise issues about the taxi industry. In the first year, some 500 complaints were received; of those, 8 were of a sexual nature. It is important to understand that all the complaints and comments that are received on that line are investigated by the Victorian Taxi Directorate. If they require further investigation they are referred to the police, to whom they should rightly be referred.

About 50 per cent of all the comments that have come in over the two years in which the comment line has been in existence have been about the multipurpose taxi program — in particular, about what we refer to as wheelchair-bound taxis. I inform the house that as of 1 December a central booking service will be established so that people with disabilities will be able to ring one number to obtain that very important service.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — Took you long enough!

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE — Well, you didn't do it, you boofhead! For 10 years you did nothing! Come on Pat, move up! We need you, Pat!

The PRESIDENT — Order! I suggest the minister ignores interjections and finishes his answer.

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE — Currently, all drivers who wish to enter the taxi industry have to undergo probity checks. If any driver is found to have a criminal record, that is referred to the police. When

the VTD was established in 1994, 40 000 certificates and drivers were checked. As a result, 300 drivers were removed from the service because they had records which were not favourable to the industry.

During that period a further 200 applications to enter the industry have been refused. The government has established an extensive one-week, 40-hour TAFE course: before drivers can commence that course they will be required to undertake an English test and a knowledge of Melbourne test which introduces new technology. That program will be officially launched by the Premier shortly.

The government has made significant gains in the taxi industry through a cooperative effort between taxidrivers, the taxi industry and the community. Yesterday I launched facilities at 24-hour convenience stores where taxi ranks will be relocated. As many people would know, many taxi ranks in the suburbs have been located in railway siding areas where it is usually dark, and trains stop running after a certain time. We have removed the ranks and put them into areas near places like 24-hour convenience stores, supermarkets and McDonalds food stores. The taxi ranks will be quite clearly visible.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — What if you catch a train?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE — Trains stop running at a certain time. When they stop, the ranks will be relocated.

In King Street, Melbourne, we have established two secure areas for taxi clients. They will be manned by personnel from midnight to 6.00 a.m.; surveillance cameras and high-voltage lights have been installed to offer security in King Street for those who feel under threat.

It is important for the house to note that significant gains have been made in Victoria in safety not only for taxidrivers but also for young people, particularly females, who use taxis.

An issue raised in the *Herald Sun* today was about an application made for a female-only driving service for special-purpose vehicles. Victoria now has 300 female drivers of taxis and hire cars; people can pre-book those at any time, specifying that the vehicle should be driven by a female. Already Victoria has that service which some people require. The government has made significant moves in taxi safety in this state.

Government: asset sales

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) — I refer the Minister for Finance to the recently tabled Auditor-General's report on financial operations which indicates that the port of Portland was sold for $11 million, the port of Geelong for $6.4 million, the World Trade Centre for $21 million and the Grain Elevators Board for $9.2 million under book value. Does the minister now accept that the government should have withheld the sales until the market improved so that Victorians did not lose $47.6 million in a fire sale?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — I thank Mr Theophanous for his question, even though he raises an issue that has been a matter of public knowledge for at least a fortnight. It goes to the issue of the sale price secured by the government for a number of high-profile assets, including the port of Portland.

I am happy for the government to be judged on the outcome of the sale of those assets. I will make this point clearly to Mr Theophanous so he will understand: the value of an asset is no more or less precisely what somebody else will pay for it. We have a very public process to determine the value of those assets. I am prepared to stand by that against all comers. As it happens, I have a different view from the judgment of the Auditor-General given after the fact, and I am prepared to discuss that with him at a future date.

On the first issue raised by Mr Theophanous, about the port of Portland: it is my considered view that the privatisation of the port of Portland is the biggest and most effective single decision taken by a government in respect of western Victoria over at least the last generation. Of all the things I could think of, that is the most likely to give western Victoria and the south-east of South Australia the impetus those areas have been looking for over many years.

I cannot think of anything more significant than the privatisation of that port given the fact that, as you know, Mr President, the port of Portland is arguably the best deep-sea port in Australia.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — That is why the Auditor-General said you undersold it.

Hon. W. A. N. Hartigan — On a point of order, Mr President, the Leader of the Opposition is misrepresenting the minister.

The PRESIDENT — Order! There is no point of order.

Hon. R. M. HALLAM — I am happy for Mr Theophanous to be judged upon the basis of his question, and I think he stands condemned for the imputation in his question.

I am happy to stand by the outcome of both assets sales, particularly that of the port of Portland, because if I am allowed to be absolutely parochial — and forgive me, because I represent that area — I cannot think of a better decision than the privatisation of the port of Portland.

However, I am happy to be in disagreement with Mr Theophanous about the sale of assets as I am happy to be in disagreement with him on almost anything else I can think of.

Aboriginal health

Hon. C. A. STRONG (Higinbotham) — Will the Minister for Health advise the house of recent initiatives to improve the health outcomes of Victoria's Aboriginal community?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — All honourable members will be only too well aware of the very poor health status of most members of the Victorian Aboriginal community. In fact, the health status of Aboriginal Australians generally is at an unacceptably low level and many endeavours have been made by governments of all persuasions over a long time to improve it. Most of those initiatives involved a top-down approach and, as we know, there has been little improvement in the overall health status of Aboriginal people.

The process started under the former federal Labor government, which tried to establish a different framework for the planning, development and delivery of specific health services to members of the Koori community as well as trying to ensure we received a better response from generic health services.

The government has been seeking to take up any opportunities that may present themselves as a result of this new approach. Some months ago the Department of Human Services and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Control Health Organisation signed an agreement to establish not only a partnership but VACCHO's involvement in the planning and development of Koori health services, which it is, if you like, trying to implement from the bottom up.

That agreement requires those communities to identify health issues and strategies as part of the development of appropriate services. It also means that the generic health services will have to take specific action to identify, quantify and document levels of contact and to develop services that are culturally sensitive and responsive to the needs of the members of the Koori community.

At the end of last month the process was taken a step further with the signing of an agreement between the commonwealth government, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, the Victorian government and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Control Health Organisation. We now have a framework involving all four key parties to try to develop a more comprehensive approach that will respond more appropriately to the needs of the Koori community.

It is an historic and significant step in itself. It will not only improve health outcomes but establish a framework that will allow for more appropriate planning. The members of the community will be involved both in identifying and establishing priorities to meet their health needs and in developing a service system that is more responsive to those needs.

I look forward to the next step in this process — that is, the development of action plans that will take the process forward in an endeavour to achieve a better health status for the members of the Victorian Koori community.

Centaur International

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA (Melbourne North) — I refer the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology to Centaur International, a company which received Ausindustry grants in 1994-95 and 1995-96 and which has since gone into liquidation. What was the size of the grants given to Centaur and

how much taxpayers' money has been wasted on it and on other companies that have gone into bankruptcy?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The honourable member would know that the Ausindustry grants are a cooperative federal-state initiative, which provides grants for enterprise improvement in industry. The companies are chosen by an independent selection panel. If the honourable member wants to put his question on notice I will find out how much funding was provided and the reasons for that.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — He doesn't know.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — I certainly do not know, and that is not surprising given that hundreds of those grants are given out. I will be more than happy to give the honourable member the information in an appropriate form.

Bass Coast Beach Festival

Hon. K. M. SMITH (South Eastern) — Will the Minister for Tourism advise the house of the funding provided for the Bass Coast Beach Festival and the benefits from yet another event on Phillip Island?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — I thank Mr Smith for taking the initiative and approaching me for funding for the Bass Coast Beach Festival. This important festival, which will involve professional and amateur surfers, will be held on Phillip Island from 9 to 17 November this year. The Association of Surfing Professionals has awarded the Phillip Island Board Riders Club the right to stage the finals of the Australian surfing championship circuit for three years, beginning this year.

I congratulate Mr Paul Cochrane, the President of the Phillip Island Board Riders Club and an excellent man, on securing for Victoria an event which has previously been held in Sydney. Mr Cochrane is a former student of Bonbeach High School — a school distinguished by my attendance and closed by the Labor Party.

Mr Ken Smith, Mr Ron Bowden and Mr Alan Brown, the Minister for Transport in another place, have all represented the area with great vigour. They approached Tourism Victoria for funding for this event. As honourable members will be aware, Tourism Victoria provides small amounts of money when events are deemed to generate economic benefit. Tourism Victoria gave $15 000 to assist in the staging of the event which will attract interstate and international visitors, including 450 competitors, support crew and the like.

The event has generated great interest in Phillip Island. It is estimated that the economic benefits that will flow from the event, which Mr Smith has lobbied so hard for, will be in excess of $500 000, which will be injected into the local economy. Given that we on this side of the house have fostered a strong events culture in Melbourne, we are now trying to attract events to outlying regional areas. I congratulate Mr Smith and Mr Cochrane on their initiative, and I am sure the event will be very successful for Phillip Island.

Latrobe Regional Hospital

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — I refer the Minister for Health to the privatisation of Latrobe Regional Hospital and the fact that Australian Hospital Care has been awarded the contract. What is the length of the contract, how much is AHC being paid, and will the government release the terms of the winning tender?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I thank Miss Gould for her question, but she is in error. We have not awarded the contract. Australian Hospital Care has been nominated as preferred tenderer and negotiations are continuing on the formalisation of the contract. They are expected to be completed by the end of this month or early next month. The length of the contract is expected to be 20 years.

Gaming: research programs

Hon. ROSEMARY VARTY (Silvan) — Will the Minister for Gaming inform the house of recent decisions announced by the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority to expand its research programs?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — I am pleased to report that the authority has substantially expanded its gaming research program. I should point out initially that the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority is required by law to undertake research into the social impacts of gambling. The authority has responded to the

need to meet that requirement with some vigour. It has initiated a comprehensive research program into the effects of the developing gaming industry on our communities, our business sector and our citizens. The government is a fierce supporter of that program and has consistently approved the authority's request for funding from the Community Support Fund.

Government support is also evidenced by its decision to cap the number of gaming machines in Victoria at 27 500 pending completion of a number of these research projects.

Earlier this year the authority commenced an investigation entitled 'Social and Economic Effects of Gaming Machines in the Latrobe Valley, Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong areas'. Many people in the community were concerned that this project, while worthy and important, was too specific and failed to focus on other important areas, particularly inner city and small rural communities and those that may be disadvantaged not by having too many machines, as is the complaint we commonly hear, but by having access to no machines.

In response the authority applied for funding to conduct two additional studies looking at these precise issues. The government has approved an additional $239 000 to undertake these projects, including additional funding for the regional centres study. The first, entitled 'Impact of Gaming Venues on Inner City Municipalities', focuses on the cities of Maribyrnong, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Darebin and will cost $112 000. It will consider changes in consumer preferences, entertainment, cultural and shopping pursuits and individual and household expenditure patterns; the consequential impact on the economic and social environment of the respective community and its members; and, importantly, the hypothesis that gaming machines are concentrated in areas with lower socioeconomic populations and perceived increases in gambling-related problems.

The second of the research programs, entitled 'Impact of Electronic Gaming Machines on Small Rural Communities', will cost $65 000. As well as looking at the broader issues under consideration in the inner city and regional centres study this investigation will consider the interaction of gaming and changes in services and amenities available to residents in small towns.

Three areas have been chosen as the foci for this project. The first is Balmoral and Coleraine — neither of these towns has machines, although the nearest regional cities of Hamilton and Horsham have five venues with 180 machines between them. Through studying this area information will be gained on whether there has been a drift to larger towns with machines and possible impacts upon retailing and other industries in the small centres.

The second focus is the town of Camperdown, which has six venues with liquor licences but only one with a gaming licence. In this area the authority will be able to investigate the development of what can be seen as local gaming monopolies through the concentration of machines in single venues.

Finally, the foci will include Sale and the surrounding area, where machines are concentrated in several venues in the main town rather than being distributed throughout the region.

I commend the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority for responding to community concerns by initiating and conducting the studies, and I look forward to receiving and considering the results therefrom.

Speed limits

Hon. PAT POWER (Jika Jika) — Can the Minister for Roads and Ports confirm advice from the Federal Office of Road Safety that an emergency vehicle stop in dry weather when the vehicle is equipped with the best possible tyres and brakes and driven by a professional driver requires 15 more metres travelling at 60 kilometres an hour than when travelling at 50 kilometres an hour?

Is the minister aware that the Federal Office of Road Safety says that in wet conditions it would require more than 30 metres for such an emergency stop? Given this convincing data, why will the minister not recommend that speeds in residential areas be limited to 50 kilometres per hour?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — I am a bit slow in answering this question but I thank Mr Power so much for his question. All this information was printed in the newspapers, so it is good that he can interpret it.

Speed limits in Victoria were reviewed by an all-party parliamentary committee. For the benefit of

Mr Power I point out that that means the ALP and the coalition, so the opinions of opposition members on that committee are also important. I know that the honourable member has not read the committee report because if he had read it he would not have asked the question. I wonder why he asked it in view of the recommendations outlined in the committee's report.

Ever since the issue of urban street speed limits as opposed to residential street speed limits was raised the Victorian government has consistently taken the view that residential streets are streets off major road networks. An example is an ordinary suburban street without through traffic. Currently in Victoria an urban street has a speed limit of 60 kilometres per hour, generally speaking.

Following a recommendation by the all-party parliamentary committee into road safety the government implemented a policy in high-use residential streets where there may be a school or strip-shopping centre for local government to reduce the speed limit to 50 or 40 kilometres an hour. Some 10 applications have been made to alter the signage in speed restriction precincts.

I suggested we adopt this proposal at the Australian Transport Council's last meeting earlier this year. In Darwin this week we will be discussing the same issue.

The government has adopted a sensible approach about whether we should look at the issue of lowering the speed limit from 60 to 50 kilometres an hour on urban streets. Following the release of the all-party parliamentary committee report the government has gone along with the proposal. Victoria is and always has been very much into achieving national uniformity, which it pursues as a clear objective. We will listen to the debate that occurs this week, but at this stage in Victoria the speed limit is 60 kilometres an hour in urban streets. If councils wish to do so, they can reduce the speed limits in suburban streets to either 50 or 40 kilometres an hour.

Car plan

Hon. W. A. N. HARTIGAN (Geelong) — Can the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology advise the house of the government's submission to the Productivity Commission regarding the review of the car plan?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — I thank Mr Hartigan for his question and his interest in the future of the automotive industry in Australia, particularly given his strong base in Geelong.

I am pleased to advise the house that the Kennett government has made a comprehensive submission to the Productivity Commission, which is currently reviewing the car plan. We have called on the federal government to freeze the tariff rate for the automotive industry at 15 per cent until at least 2005, and then to conduct a further review before determining whether adequate progress has been made by our trading partners in reducing their own tariff and non-tariff barriers.

The government is also keen to see a review of progress within Australia on delivering substantial microeconomic reform which would benefit the automotive industry, among others. Victoria's strong view is that the review of the car plan must be seen in its proper historical context. The Australian car industry is a major employer in its own right and in related industries. In Victoria alone the industry employs 27 000 people directly and almost 100 000 people in related industries. Now more than ever the car industry is literally the engine room of Australia's wider capabilities in engineering, innovation and advanced manufacturing.

Tariffs for the Australian automotive industry have already been slashed from 57.5 per cent. By 2000 they will have fallen to just 15 per cent.

The industry has emerged from the transition period of the 1970s and 1980s as a world-competitive, export-focused industry.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous interjected.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — I am pleased to say that our local manufacturers — Ford, Holden and Toyota — are all undertaking major plant upgrades worth a combined total of more than $1.6 billion.

Our local car component industry has also emerged from the 1980s in excellent shape. This year alone we have seen major new investments announced in Victoria by Bosch and Pilkington Glass.

Australia has set the pace on reducing tariffs in this area and opening our car industry to global

competition. By contrast, progress by our major trading partners has been slow at best.

Seen in this context, the Victorian government strongly believes that beyond 2000 Australia's position on tariffs should be based on providing our world-class car industry with the long-term policy certainty and financial confidence its world-class performance justifies. We also want to ensure — —

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — What does that mean? Yes or no?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — If Mr Theophanous listened and paid attention when the public announcement was made he would know where we stand. Unfortunately he shows — —

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — I want to know where Mr Hartigan stands!

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — Mr Hartigan stands with me. What we don't know is where the ALP stands.

Hon. K. M. Smith interjected.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — Neither Mr Brumby nor Mr Theophanous has made any public comments on this whatsoever, which shows their absolute lack of interest in the automotive industry. Where is the ALP's stance on tariffs and the automotive industry? Where is it? Nowhere to be seen.

Honourable members interjecting.

The PRESIDENT — Order! The Leader of the Opposition directed a constant barrage of interjections at the minister. Mr Smith is not helping and earlier Mr Hartigan was not helping, either, causing a response from the Leader of the Opposition. Please let the minister finalise his answer.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — I am more than happy to see Mr Theophanous push harder and harder on the self-destruct button! Every day he makes a bigger fool of himself in front of his colleagues. Instead, why doesn't he release a detailed public statement on behalf of the ALP saying where it stands on tariffs? There has been no public comment at all by the ALP on this seminal industry issue.

The government has made a detailed submission to the Industry Commission. We have put it on the line. We want those tariffs frozen in the context I have explained because I believe there has to be a fall in our neighbours tariff and non-tariff areas. We have to ensure that we are efficient in Australia.

It is important to note that the Victorian government's position is in line with the united voice of the Australian automotive industry on this crucial issue.

All the different elements of the industry have come together and under the Premier's leadership we convened a meeting of the chief executives of the automotive car and component industries, and we speak with one voice in making our submission to the Industry Commission, as we will in making our submissions to the Howard government.

As the review process unfolds the Victorian government will continue to outline a clear case for placing the interests of the car industry in Australia and the overall Australian economy ahead of textbook economic theories.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Suspension of standing orders

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — By leave, I move:

> That so much of standing orders as require answers to questions on notice to be delivered verbally in the house be suspended for the sitting of the Council this day and that the answers enumerated be incorporated in *Hansard*.

I have answers to questions on notice 105, 194, 227, 246, 353, 376, 379, 384, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 401 and 403.

Motion agreed to.

ELECTRICITY INDUSTRY (FURTHER AMENDMENT) BILL

Second reading

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — I move:

> That this bill be now read a second time.

The bill contains a number of further miscellaneous amendments to the Electricity Industry Act 1993, the State Electricity Commission Act 1958 and other acts. Part 1 of the bill states its purpose and provides for its commencement. Part 2 contains various amendments to the Electricity Industry Act 1993.

The bill contains an extension to the powers of Powernet Victoria so that it is authorised to carry telecommunication cables in conjunction with its electricity transmission cables. The bill also clarifies that Powernet's easements may be used for this purpose but ensures that the power to compulsorily acquire land and easements may be used only for electricity-related purposes.

The bill enables the Office of the Regulator-General to determine whether particular facilities constitute co-generation facilities for the purposes of the act so as to provide certainty where the application of that term to a particular facility may not be clear.

In order to facilitate the transition to a national electricity market, the bill authorises the Governor in Council to make rules to facilitate the operation of a wholesale market for trading in electricity between persons in Victoria and persons in one or more other states or territories. These provisions will enable consistent wholesale market rules to be created for trading, initially between Victoria and New South Wales, as a transitional step towards the national electricity market.

The bill inserts a new section 159(6) to clarify that the licensing provisions of the act do not apply to the transmission, distribution or supply of electricity by or for the use of the Public Transport Corporation.

At present the Electricity Industry Act requires the holders of certain licences to be incorporated in Victoria as a means of supporting the enforcement provisions of the cross-ownership rules contained in part 13. The bill will allow that requirement to be waived by the minister, at the request of the Office of the Regulator-General, having regard to the conditions to which the relevant licence will be subject.

The bill contains a number of technical changes to the cross-ownership provisions contained in part 13 and the related licensing provisions in part 12. These amendments, which do not affect the policy underlying the provisions, are designed to:

equate partnerships and joint ventures with companies by providing for the issue of a single licence to the partnership or joint venture;

provide the Office of the Regulator-General with a specific power to include in a licence provisions requiring a licensee to continue to own property in Victoria used in the licensed activity, as a desirable adjunct to the office's powers of enforcement under part 13;

remove anomalies in the tracing of generation capacity;

remove from the effect of the cross-ownership provisions a small number of distributors who have been exempted from the requirement to hold distribution licences; and

repeal the provision that a transaction which results in a person holding a prohibited interest is illegal and void to ensure the provision does not have unintended consequences, in conjunction with providing for enhanced enforcement powers of the Office of the Regulator-General.

Part 3 of the bill amends the State Electricity Commission Act and various other acts. Section 15(4) of the State Electricity Commission Act authorised the establishment of the Newport power station subject to the conditions recommended by the majority of the Newport Review Panel. On one view, these provisions could be read as limiting the generation capacity of the power station and requiring its closure in 2012, among other requirements. The bill amends section 15(4) to clarify that those restrictions are not intended to apply and that the future operation of the power station is undertaken in accordance with normal commercial decisions and requirements. The bill also makes various drafting revisions and corrections to the State Electricity Commission Act.

The bill contains amendments to the Land Act 1958, the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978, the Forests Act 1958, the Alpine Resorts Act 1983, the Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987 and the National Parks Act 1975. The objective of these amendments is to provide certainty of tenure to Southern Hydro Ltd, the generation company which owns the state's hydro-electric assets, by providing appropriate powers for the creation of leases, licences and land management agreements over land subject to those

acts where necessary for the generation of electricity for supply or sale.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned for Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) on motion of Hon. M. M. Gould.

Debate adjourned until next day.

BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION BILL

Second reading

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 1996 is to repeal and replace the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act 1959. The bill provides for a simpler and more efficient administration of the registration of births, deaths, marriages, adoptions and changes of name and access to the register. The bill will promote consistent registry practices across the states and territories.

The bill implements an agreement of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General made in February 1995 to introduce common core legislation dealing with the registration of births, deaths, marriages and changes of name. Pursuant to this agreement, a model bill was subsequently developed by state and territory registrars of births, deaths and marriages. South Australia, New South Wales and the Northern Territory have already enacted common core births, deaths and marriages legislation. The proposed bill closely corresponds with the legislation enacted by the other jurisdictions, apart from specific variations which accommodate the particular requirements of Victoria.

The bill sets out the requirements for the notification and registration of a birth, registration of a marriage, registration of a death and registration of changes of name of adults and children. The scheme proposed under the bill broadly continues the existing system for the registration of births, deaths, marriages and changes of name and for the provision of certificates recording these events.

Notification and registration of a birth

The bill requires a doctor or midwife responsible for the professional care of the mother at the birth, or any other person present at the birth, to notify the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages of the birth. The notification can be by written or electronic means.

The bill acknowledges and supports the valuable and important role played by both parents in a child's upbringing, starting at the birth of a child, by making the parents jointly responsible for having the child's birth registered. Both parents are required to sign the birth registration statement which is lodged with the registrar. While the involvement of both parents in a child's life may be an ideal and desirable outcome, there are of course situations where such an outcome is not possible. In order to accommodate such situations, the bill makes provision for the registrar to accept a birth registration statement signed by one parent where the registrar is satisfied that it is not practicable to obtain the signatures of both parents.

Under the current act, the family name of a child is required to be the family name of the father if a person is registered as the father of the child. The bill removes the priority given to the father's family name in recognition that both parents should have equal rights in choosing a name for their child.

Registration of a marriage

The bill requires that a marriage solemnised in Victoria be registered by lodging either a certificate of marriage or other such evidence of marriage — as required by the registrar — with the registrar. The marriage is registered by the inclusion of the certificate as part of the register or by including particulars of marriage in the register.

Notification of a death

The bill requires a doctor who was responsible for the deceased's medical care immediately before death or who examines the body of a deceased person to notify the registrar of the death and cause of the death within 48 hours after the death.

Registration of changes of name

The bill sets out the procedure for the registration of changes of names of adults and children. In relation

to a child, the bill provides for either the parents — or one parent in certain circumstances — or a child's guardian to apply for registration of a change of name for the child. Where a child is 12 years of age or older, before the change of name can be registered the child's consent to the change of name is required, unless the child does not understand the implications of the change of name.

Corrections of the register by adopted persons

Currently the Adoption Act 1984 precludes an adopted person from adding or amending any registrable information in the person's original entry of birth on the register. For instance, an adopted person who subsequently discovers the identity of his or her natural parents and wishes to amend his or her original entry of birth to reflect the new information is at present unable to achieve this objective.

This discriminates against adopted persons, as non-adopted persons may apply to have registrable information added or amended. The bill addresses this anomaly by allowing an adopted person to apply to the registrar to have information either added or amended in the person's original entry of birth in the same manner as a non-adopted person.

The register

The bill obliges the registrar to maintain a register of registrable events — that is, births, changes of name, deaths, marriages or adoptions. The registrar is empowered to conduct an inquiry to find out whether a registrable event has occurred or to find out particulars of a registrable event. The registrar can correct the register to reflect the findings of an inquiry, to bring an entry about a particular registrable event into conformity with the most reliable information available to the registrar or at the direction of a court.

Privacy and security

The bill enables the registrar, subject to conditions the registrar considers appropriate, to allow a person or organisation that has adequate reason for wanting access to the register or wanting information from the register to have access to or to be provided with information extracted from the register. The registrar's discretion to determine the adequacy of the reason takes into consideration the nature of the applicant's interest, the sensitivity of the information, the proposed use of the information and other relevant factors.

The bill specifically provides for confidentiality and security of data on the register. An overriding duty to protect private and confidential information is imposed on the registrar. In granting access or providing information, the bill obliges the registrar, as far as practicable, to protect the persons to whom entries in the register relate from unjustified intrusions on their privacy. The bill makes unauthorised access to or interference with the register an offence.

Electronic access

The Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages has made significant advances in service delivery in recent years. Further advances, particularly in delivery of more convenient services electronically to Victorians and to interstate residents with Victorian roots, are needed to enhance compliance with government policy in relation to customer service and cost reduction. The bill allows the Victorian registry to issue information from the register of another state or territory. This will greatly improve service to those Australians born or married in one state or territory who are no longer resident there.

The bill allows the delivery of a more expedient and less expensive service by the registrar. The bill provides for more flexible methods of notification and access to the register. This will create greater ease in providing proper public access, particularly in developing appropriate means of electronic access. The bill fully reflects the current methods of computerised registration and generation of certificates together with further proposals for electronic access to the register.

Additional services

In addition to issuing official certificates containing certified information, the bill enables the registrar to engage in the provision of additional services which meet community needs — for instance, the provision of decorative birth certificates and the provision of historical or genealogical information.

The authoritative recording of the key events in our lives — birth, marriage and death — is fundamental to the way in which we organise our society. The work of the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages

underpins many other important transactions, from enrolling our children at primary school or applying for passports to the intergenerational transfer of property. The public has always enjoyed a high degree of confidence in the accuracy of the register. The bill will make timely improvements to its legislative framework by facilitating the greater use of new technology, with all its attendant advantages of quick, efficient and accessible service, and by reflecting some of the changes in social attitudes to these key events which have occurred over the years.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned for Hon. PAT POWER (Jika Jika) on motion of Hon. M. M. Gould.

Debate adjourned until next day.

CORRECTIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Second reading

Debate resumed from 30 October; motion of Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports).

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — The opposition opposes the bill. The bill is about opening up prison industries and allowing them to compete with industries in the general community. Prison industries have been accepted as a way of reducing crime and of building the self-esteem of prisoners. It has always been acknowledged that prison industries should not take the place of or compete with industries in the community generally and that prison industry jobs should not result in the loss of one job in the general community.

The bill will open up prison industries and allow them to compete with industries in the general community. The current prison industries system was established in 1983 by the late Pauline Toner, a minister in the former Labor government, through the establishment of the Victorian Prison Industries Commission, which is known as Vicpic. The commission was established to introduce appropriate equipment and training programs to ensure prisoners were taught skills to assist them in obtaining meaningful employment on their release from prison. The guiding principles used were that prison industries should be appropriately marketed, effective, create products that replaced imports and be based on a sound financial footing. The industry programs were integrated with rehabilitation programs run by prisons.

Prior to the establishment of Vicpic, prison industries ran at a loss, utilised old and run-down equipment and provided no benefit to either the prisons or the community in general. Following the establishment of Vicpic the community as a whole benefited because prisoners who had been through the program acquired skills they probably did not possess prior to going to prison and which would assist them in obtaining employment. A spin-off effect of improving the potential for prisoners to find employment is a reduction in crime because many repeat offences are the result of the inability of prisoners to obtain employment on release. All honourable members will be aware of the stigma associated with being an ex-convict and the difficulty such people have in obtaining employment. Those problems are made worse if the person involved has few or no skills.

I recall remarking on the ingenuity of prisoners in planning escapes when speaking with a previous employer of mine who was then and still is a member of the Victorian Adult Parole Board. He said that anyone who spends 20 hours a day sitting around doing nothing will come up with many creative but not necessarily productive ideas. He said that one of the spin-offs of the establishment of Vicpic was that it helped prisoners develop good work habits. Through participation in prison industries, prisoners can follow the routine of a normal working day. Most had probably never followed such a regime previously or, if they had, it would have been spasmodic. They can develop the discipline necessary to obtain and retain employment and adhere to appropriate and safe work practices. Participation in prison industries has increased steadily over the years under the guidance of the commission, rising from 30 per cent in 1983 to 90 per cent today.

Proposed section 84H(1), which is inserted by clause 3, states:

> The Secretary may direct any prisoner or offender other than a prisoner on remand to work in any prison industry or work program approved by the Secretary.

Proposed subsection (2) states:

> A prisoner or offender must comply with a direction of the Secretary under this section.

Under the current system a prisoner has a right to refuse to work in a prison industry. The bill provides that the secretary may direct a prisoner to work and that the prisoner must comply with the direction, so it will be compulsory for prisoners to work if the department directs them to. That is of concern to the opposition.

I understand that a number of other people, including social workers employed in our prisons, also have reservations about the proposal to give the secretary the power to direct prisoners to go to work. Although prisoners lose most of their rights once they enter prison, until now they could refuse to go to work. Although the establishment of the Victorian Prison Industries Commission (Vicpic) dramatically increased the participation rate in prison industries, from 30 per cent to 90 per cent, the bill contains the mandatory requirement that prisoners must go to work.

The opposition is also concerned about prisoners' rates of pay. We are not talking about a lot of money: prisoners receive between $4.50 and $6.50 a day. They should not be exploited as cheap labour at the expense of other workers. Community businesses should not have to bear the added burden of competing against cheap prison labour in selling their products on the open market. As I said, Vicpic ensured that the industries that were introduced into prisons did not compete with local community businesses but were targeted mainly at import replacement. The bill does not require that prison industries stay within the guidelines that ensure businesses in the general community are protected.

If prison industries are to continue to be effective in rehabilitating prisoners, a coordinated approach must be taken to ensure that the skills they gain are relevant and the training they receive will be of benefit to them when they return to the community. However, the bill will allow the private operators of prisons to run their own race. The Victorian Prison Industries Commission coordinated the development of prison industries, ensuring that in the main the training prisoners received was relevant. Now privately operated prisons will be able to establish prison industries without any guiding coordination. There is therefore no guarantee that the prisons will not establish industries that affect local community businesses or that the training prisoners receive will be relevant.

When private prisons were allowed into the state, the government said, 'Don't worry, it's not a big deal'. We were told the private operators would be only managing the privately owned prisons, which would be run in the same way as publicly operated prisons. The bill will end an effective program simply because the private operators have said they could not make a buck from the existing prison industries. In effect they have said, 'We want to open it up. We want to pick our own industries. We don't want to work under the constraints and guidelines set by the Victorian Prison Industries Commission. We want to have our own programs. We want to be able to select any industries we like and to put prisoners to work in those industries when we require them to'.

Although the government told the house that privately operated prisons would be no different from publicly run ones, the bill removes not only the right of prisoners to refuse to work but also the guidelines that prevent prison industries using cheap labour to compete with local businesses. As a result, prisoners, who will not earn much money, will be directed to work in prison industries and there will no control over what those industries can produce. The industries that private operators set up could undercut industries in the general community. The answer to why private operators would want to get into industries that compete with those in the general community is obvious: they are in the prison game not for reasons of social justice but as a profit-making exercise.

Proposed section 84H(1) provides that the secretary of the department may direct a prisoner to work. I refer to the company that has the contract to operate the new 600-bed male prison at Fulham. In the United States that company set up a prison industry in direct competition with a local community business and drove it out of the market. The company that has the contract to operate the Fulham prison has shown its true colours in the United States, where prisoners working for low rates of pay were used to undercut a local business.

That is a major concern of the opposition. Under Vicpic that was not allowed to occur. There were clear guidelines on the sorts of industries that could be set up and how they were to operate.

The new advisory body to be established by the bill has no regulatory powers or functions. Its members will be appointed by the minister, but there is no

requirement for its members to have particular expertise. The body will oversee the development of prison industries. Vicpic has had an obligation to ensure that a prison industry was financially viable and would not adversely affect the local community. The Victorian Trades Hall Council was involved in the operations of Vicpic to ensure that the jobs of local workers were not put in jeopardy because of low rates of pay of prisoners and because prisoners do not enjoy the same conditions as workers in the general community. That integral program was introduced to ensure protection not only for the general community but also for workers and businesses in such a way that prisoners were not abused by being used as cheap labour to undercut workers in the general community.

The bill does not specify what experience or qualifications will be required for membership on the advisory committee, as was required with Vicpic. The committee will be another example of a jobs-for-the-boys position; I know a few local government commissioners will finish their terms shortly! It is not what you know but who you know with this government.

The opposition is concerned that the advisory committee will be a committee only for the sake of having a committee. The bill has no guidelines about what the committee will do; it is an excuse to have some form of committee take the place of Vicpic.

Among other things, clause 3 inserts proposed section 84J, which states:

> The functions of the Committee are, at the direction of the Minister, to advise and make recommendations to the Minister on —
>
> (a) the provision of prison industries; and
>
> (b) any other matters relating to prison industries.

There is no requirement to ensure appropriate regulations are adhered to; it is simply at the direction of the minister. The board will be appointed by the minister, not by the Governor in Council. The Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee has raised with the minister its concern about that provision.

The advisory committee will not necessarily play the same role as has Vicpic, which did quite a satisfactory job. There is no need to abolish Vicpic because it has increased the participation rate of prisoners and has ensured no general community business will cease operating because of the use of cheap labour in our prisons, as occurred at Fulham Prison in the United States of America.

The main concern of the opposition is clause 3. It also inserts proposed section 84F, which gives the minister a right to appoint any place as a prison industry site and states in part:

> (1) The Minister may by Order appoint any place outside a prison under Part 3 as a prison industry site for the purpose of this Act.

That provision will apply to the entire state; the minister can appoint any place outside a prison as a prison industry site. He could appoint Parliament House as a prison industry site and have former prisoners building the Parliament House extensions. That would remove the opportunity for people in the general community to get jobs.

The act clearly defines areas that can be used as prison sites — namely, a prison or part of a prison designated as a farm or youth training centre or property actually owned by the Prison Industries Commission. Now we can have a prison industry site anywhere. We are returning to the dim, dark ages when prisoners could be used on the chain gang. They may even be used to build City Link!

An Honourable Member — Why not?

Hon. M. M. GOULD — That says it all about where you are coming from. 'Why not?', you say! The industry should not be put in jeopardy because the government will allow private operators to run a prison site anywhere in the state and to use prison labour at $6.50 per day. The government is renowned for looking after the big end of town. It could build City Link or extend Parliament House with prison labour. We could put the general community out of work. The company with the contract to run the 600-bed male Fulham Prison already has a record of putting local businesses out of work, as happened in its operations in the United States.

The second-reading speech refers to the reasons why prisoners will be required to put aside 20 per cent of their earnings. It states:

> To improve prison management the bill will provide for compulsory savings from earnings made by a prisoner while in prison.

Prisoners have to put away 20 per cent, which will be used not for the prisoners but to improve prison management. How? If one examines that scenario one sees that, conservatively, 90 per cent of prisoners now participate in prison industries. The bill requires prisoners to work if the secretary says so; the option to say no has been removed. For argument's sake, there may be 500 prisoners averaging $5.50 a day, each totalling about $25 a week.

Hon. K. M. Smith — For seven days a week!

Hon. M. M. GOULD — I will be conservative and say it is for only five days a week. There may be 500 of the 600 prisoners working; each would get $25 a week out of which $5 would be removed. The average length of stay in prison is five months, even allowing for short-term and long-term prisoners. The community will be saved the grand total of $100! Formerly when prisoners left prison they would receive a tram or bus fare, or $35 or $40. There is no way that the prison, which is owned and operated privately for profit, will hand over that money. The prisoner will have to take the $100.

So if you multiply $5 a week by 500 over 50 weeks a year — I have taken account of Mr Smith's comments and have given them a couple of weeks off — you come up with $125 000, which will be sitting in the bank. Who will monitor that? Which bank will it go into? There are no regulations governing the management of that money. The private operators will be able to put the money in the bank and keep the interest. I am sure many honourable members would like the interest on $125 000. That money could even be put on the money market. The gaolers could end up investing in themselves!

This bill does not explain what will happen to the prisoners' money because there are no directions on how the private operators should invest it. One begins to understand what the second-reading speech means when it says the bill will improve prison management. The money will be sitting in the bank collecting interest but the prisoners will not get it; there will be no interest for them.

This bill also extends the power of prison officers by allowing them to conduct searches in police gaols. The opposition does not deny the need for that at times, but it reminds the government that people in police gaols often have not been charged with offences. The opposition also draws to the government's attention the need to ensure those search powers are not abused.

Clause 12 states:

> The Chief Commissioner of Police may, by instrument, authorise a contractor under Division 3 or a sub-contractor of that contractor or a person employed by that contractor or sub-contractor to exercise all or any of the functions or powers as may be exercised under section 27 of the Bail Act 1977 or Part 9A of this Act or under the regulations made under this Act by a member of the police force.

Under this clause the police will be able to subcontract the carrying out of searches to a contractor, who can then subcontract to another contractor; so three levels will be involved. Some private security firms do not have great reputations. I am sure we have all seen examples of the overzealous behaviour of security officers on television or at the football. The opposition is concerned that security companies will now be involved in conducting searches in police gaols. As I said, we accept and acknowledge the need for searches, but we are concerned about the quality and standards of the security guards who may be conducting them.

The opposition has a number of concerns with the legislation. If the government believes it should not be about the availability of cheap labour or about prison industries unfairly competing against free enterprises in the general community, it should include the appropriate safeguards in the bill. Currently, Vicpic ensures that prison work forces are not used to put free-enterprise community businesses out of business. If it does not want the so-called black bomber security guards conducting searches in our police gaols, the government should put the appropriate safeguards in place. It should protect local businesses, the general community and the prisoners from being exploited. The opposition opposes this bill.

Hon. R. H. BOWDEN (South Eastern) — I support the bill which further advances the orderly and professional management of the Victorian corrections system. The bill covers a number of significant issues, and I will address some of them. It is important to recognise that this government has a good record in managing our prison system. Some significant innovations have been made in recent

years, which have been well received by the public at large. One of the outstanding innovations of the coalition government since assuming office in 1992 has been its willingness to depart from some of the longstanding and archaic practices of the past. The introduction of modern management practices in private prisons should be applauded.

It is important that the inmates of our prison system are effectively managed, because we are dealing with people who still have the right to be properly looked after. They also retain the right to good food, shelter and medical care. I also believe — I know I am not alone in this thought — in the importance of proper rehabilitation and the provision of proper facilities and good care and attention for those in the corrections system.

If honourable members cast their minds back over recent years during the time I have been a member of this house they will find that I have taken a regular interest in such matters. I follow changes to the prison system and the law and order situation with considerable interest. The measures contained in the bill will improve the operation of the corrections system. The fact that police officers will have their powers aligned with those of corrections officers is sensible and logical.

Many people find themselves temporarily housed in police gaols. It is reasonable and supportable that not only should the practices and professional procedures documented and authorised in police gaols be carried out with the level of professionalism that the community would expect, but also that they should assist police officers to carry out their jobs as well as possible, bearing in mind the fundamental welfare and care of the inmates.

A good feature of the bill is the detailing of this requirement. It is important that the power to search, seize and manage people in custody in police gaols be properly handled and that it is well and truly accepted in the community that those procedures stand in good stead with the custodial officers. It is practical and logical that the two issues be lined up.

Previous speakers have talked at length about the changes in the bill relating to people undergoing custodial sentences being required to work in industry.

The establishment of the Prison Industry Advisory Committee is a good move because it will enable the minister to obtain professional advice from a considerable number of appropriate people. The performance of the committee will be enhanced because of the depth and spread of talent and experience that can be assembled and brought to the minister's attention. The talent mix of the advisory committee members is not only in the interests of the minister but will also benefit the prisoners. The committee will be able to provide the minister with constant suggestions for improvements in training and productivity methods. Through the minister's consideration generally many worthy ideas will be generated and in turn implemented. The establishment of the advisory committee and the way it has been structured and made available to the minister in the context of the bill is a positive move.

The interests of the present employees of the Prison Industries Commission are well and truly protected because the staff of the former commission will be offered transfers. There will be no loss of expertise or talent, and there should be an uninterrupted flow of professional support to the industry and the people in custody. No-one is being disadvantaged by the termination of the former organisation.

An important feature of the bill is that the prison industry sites can be nominated and declared in the way the bill sets out. Depending on the activities, the technology and the opportunities, the bill will give the authorities a great deal of flexibility to ensure that those activities are carried out in proper areas, within safe industrial sites and with the appropriate equipment and technologies. This is modern practice and a good thing.

I am pleased about the strong suggestion in the bill that training will be made available to prisoners. Most honourable members agree that people are not sent to prison to be punished. I believe that 'corrections' is a positive word. To correct, assist and in turn rehabilitate people prior to their return to society is a worthy goal, and making modern work practices and constructive opportunities available to prisoners is a good thing. It has proved true over a long period that rehabilitation is more often possible when positive environments and constructive activities are made available.

The 20 per cent savings on the earnings of prisoners is an excellent idea, because while some honourable members have reservations about the level of

compensation — and concerns have been expressed in another place and here today about the actual pay rate for prisoners versus outside pay rates — it is a service that the government is providing for prisoners to make training and modern industrial techniques and experiences available. That a portion of a prisoner's wage can be saved brings two benefits: firstly, when the person is released from the prison system with money there is a justifiable reason for quiet pride in the mind of that person, who in turn can take the money he or she has honestly earned back into the community; secondly, it is an excellent incentive for people to work towards their release and to be assured that at that time they will have the funding to help them re-enter society. That is good and positive approach.

Another feature about the corrections service and the bill in particular is the concept of transparency and supervision and the reporting mechanism. It is clear that companies that are managing prisons privately are required to conform to all laws and regulations. The regulations and laws that apply are very specific and the managements understand that they have in their custody citizens of this state and that Parliament and the people of Victoria will not tolerate inappropriate or unacceptable circumstances.

On a positive note, the obvious transparency in place in the management, laws, supervision and regulations that Parliament has imposed on the private operators and custodians of the prisoners in their care is important because it assures us that those people will maintain the health, good circumstances and care levels that we expect to be available to the prisoners under their supervision.

An article headlined '17 000 held in jails' on page 14 of today's *Herald Sun* is relevant to the debate. Accompanying the article are two statistical charts which indicate that the average age of male prisoners in the Victorian corrections system is 31.4 years and the average age of females is 32. Prisoners aged 20 to 24 years are in the most common incidence group. The aspects of the bill concerned with training, rehabilitation and providing opportunities to gain experience will be useful to those young people once they are released from custody. If the high number of citizens in the younger age group in custody can receive training in interesting or useful activities with modern management and supervision, good equipment and modern machinery and practices they will be well equipped to gain productive employment after they leave the corrections system.

The article also listed the types of offences for which males and females were imprisoned. There are significant differences in the gender representation of offences. The article outlines the types of offences males and females commit, which suggests the prison system houses a wide group of people from various backgrounds who have committed different crimes. If those prisoners can benefit from constructive rehabilitation experiences, good training and supervision while they are under the care of private prisons the Victorian community at large can expect they will have reasonable prospects of re-entering the community successfully.

It is important that Victoria's policing, court and custodial laws and regulations arm those who provide professional services with the best support and facilities we can make available. The provisions in the bill will further equip members of the wonderful Victoria Police Force with further proper and correct tools to enable them to carry out their duties and properly manage the people placed in their care.

I understand some of the concerns of members of the opposition about the competitive aspect between the prison industry and outside industries. Although I understand what they say, I am sure that at the end of the day people operating in the prison system will be mindful of the fact that they have to conform with all the industrial laws and safety regulations currently applying in Victoria. They will not go out and willy-nilly tackle inappropriate and acquired tasks and jobs that do not make sense. I believe we will find that there will be a reasonably productive and successful interaction between the private sector and the prison system. We will certainly watch it with interest.

In conclusion, I believe this is a good bill. It provides for our policing professionals and those who have the large responsibility of maintaining the health and welfare of people in custody. It will further equip the people who manage prisoners with laws and regulations that will enable them to assist the rehabilitation of prisoners through training and providing industrial experience, which is all to the good. In that context, I have much pleasure in supporting the bill.

Hon. JEAN McLEAN (Melbourne West) — The opposition opposes the Corrections (Amendment) Bill. I also oppose the privatisation of prisons because I firmly believe corrections policies should be administered by the state. It is the state that makes and administers the laws through the courts and the state should have responsibility for the punishment and rehabilitation of prisoners under those laws. The bill highlights the further abdication of duty by this government. The minister's second-reading speech states:

> The bill also implements key elements of the government's corrections policy whereby maximum use is made of competition within the correctional services market.

'Competition' and 'market'! Are prisoners now seen as the government's market. The minister continues:

> The entry of the private sector into the delivery of private services has necessitated major changes in the way prison industries are delivered.

Why was that necessary? In order to carry out his extraordinary plan to allow private enterprise to use prisoners as cheap labour or, as I will explain, slave labour the minister has decided to abolish the Victorian Prison Industries Commission and replace it with the Prison Industry Advisory Committee. The Victorian Prison Industries Commission set up by the Cain Labor government comprised five people, one each from the Trades Hall Council, the Victorian Congress of Employer Associations and the Treasury, and two nominated by the community welfare services minister, one of whom would represent the then Department of Community Welfare Services. The commission turned our antiquated prison industries into a reasonably modern efficient workplace combining work skills and rehabilitation with effective marketing which made prison industries an important part of the system by providing useful and rewarding work for prisoners as well as covering costs.

The combination of expertise represented by the commission has ensured that prisoners are not exploited and that the prison industry does not create unfair competition with other manufacturers. Why should the present commission be abolished in favour of a committee of 10 who have no particular designated expertise? Under the proposed legislation, we know only that 10 people will be appointed by the minister. I wonder whether the trade unions will be represented by any of those 10 people, and I wonder why the new body is necessary.

The companies chosen to run private prisons include the United States company Wackenhut Corporation, which ran its first private prison in Texas in 1990. Questions have been raised about the probity of Wackenhut, which was founded by George Wackenhut, a former FBI agent who has run a number of gaols in the United States. Over the years Wackenhut's board of directors has comprised members of US military and intelligence establishments, and the company has been investigated over allegedly misusing drug rehabilitation funds allocated to the private prisons that it runs. Large question marks hang over the Wackenhut Corporation.

Victoria has the most far-reaching privatisation plan for prisons and auxiliary services in the world. We have gone the full circle from the 19th century, when prisons were taken out of the hands of private contractors because of the high rate of death and abuse of prisoners. No studies have been undertaken in Australia or overseas about whether private prisons are more cost effective or whether the cost factor should be a benchmark rather than rehabilitation and community safety.

In England, when the private company CCA — Corrections Corporation of America — operated a prison, the Home Office put a person permanently in the gaol because, after the Home Office conducted an evaluation, it concluded that private sector prisons should be subject to close scrutiny. The Home Office has a permanent controller on site, but the Victorian government does not intend to place similar officers in Victorian prisons.

The government is introducing the bill because, having undertaken a huge amount of privatisation of government enterprises, it has to find ways to facilitate the profit-making capacity of private enterprise — profit made from the misfortune and misery of prisoners.

In the United States the private prison companies, including Wackenhut, have found many ways to exploit the cheap labour that has been supplied by the state. Remember, this is slave labour so far as the private companies are concerned. The worker has no choice about the time, pay or conditions under which he works. The exploitation includes setting up

companies inside the gaols to compete with or replace other enterprises that are paying proper wages. Companies have been set up to compete with cheap labour in Asian countries and local industry has been destroyed since the private prisons have been operating these schemes.

Prison labourers are sent outside, often in chains, to work on farms and roads. I would not suggest that chain gangs be used on Victorian roads because our roads cave in and the men who are chained together would have a problem: they would have to have a different sort of fastening so they do not dangle over the edge!

An article I read recently said that in one US state a women's chain gang had been formed. The article explained how the women would dress in fancy cowboy gear and said that the chain gang was popular with various industries, that men loved the idea and that the women were often paraded around as entertainment. That is a possibility we have to look forward to with the privatisation of prisons.

Under new part 8B of the bill relating to prison industries, proposed section 84F refers to the appointment of a prison industry site and provides that:

(1) The Minister may by Order appoint any place outside a prison under Part 3 as a prison industry site for the purposes of this Act.

Proposed section 84G says:

(1) The Secretary may, for or in connection with the management of prison industry sites —

(a) carry on a business, or businesses, of manufacturing or producing goods, providing services or farming;

(b) train prisoners or offenders in the trades and professions associated with any of those businesses;

(c) sell goods and services manufactured, produced or provided in the course of any of those businesses;

Any profit from the sales of goods that prisoners make while being paid $4 to $6 a day goes to private industry. Proposed section 84H states:

(1) The Secretary may direct any prisoner or offender other than a prisoner on remand to work in any prison industry or work program approved by the Secretary.

(2) A prisoner or offender must comply with the direction of the Secretary under this section.

When gaols are run by the state in the interests of the community it may be acceptable to direct prisoners to work in a prison industry or work program, but when the prison is owned and run by a private company — and the private companies running the gaols are overseas companies — whose sole motivation is to make a profit, the compulsory work force is in fact slave labour. The fact that any work site could be designated a prison means that the labour could be exploited in any number of ways such as by private farms owned by the prison owners or their friends. Jobs on chemical sites, dirty jobs that no-one else wants — maybe the asbestos mine where the asbestos has been strewn all over the site — would be good places to send out the prisoners while paying them $6 a day.

On a visit last week to Pentridge and Barwon prisons with the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee I was reminded again that our prison population is made up of people who have come from the most deprived socioeconomic backgrounds: victims of child abuse, residents of children's homes, and often victims of the state care system. From the time they were born most of the inmates of our gaols have had few, if any, chances to make it in the outside world.

According to Catherine Gow from the People's Justice Alliance, approximately 80 per cent of women and 66 per cent of men are in gaol for non-violent offences; 52 per cent of women have been sentenced for property offences, including social security fraud and theft, which are essentially crimes of poverty; women are still being gaoled for prostitution; 24 per cent of women in our gaols are under the age of 24 years; 86 per cent were unemployed before being sentenced; 10 per cent are from non-English speaking backgrounds; 80 per cent of women prisoners have children; and 20 per cent are Aborigines, who make up 50 per cent of the number of women in prison cells.

Victoria has the second-highest representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in prison. In the past 10 years, 19 Aboriginal women and 32 non-Aboriginal women died in custody. Now we are giving private entrepreneurs a licence to force prisoners to work for very little pay. Although prisoners can profit from their labour, 20 per cent of their earnings will be forcibly saved. That is not, as was suggested earlier, similar to parliamentary

superannuation — we are talking about a very small amount of money.

Many prisoners are the sole breadwinners in their families and must send money home, yet they will receive no interest on that money and 20 per cent of those meagre earnings will be forcibly saved. That is certainly not superannuation. I do not know the reason for that no-interest policy, but I presume it will be another nice little windfall for the prison companies. It certainly will not go to the prisoners. Although prisoners earn only small amounts of money, the money adds up when you have a lot of prisoners.

If exploitation of prisoners will not occur under this proposal that should be spelt out in the bill. How else can we be sure that prison labour will not be farmed out at rates ranging from $4.50 to $6.50 a day — the rate at which prisoners are currently paid — to save the prisons paying award wages? I know very few people have sympathy with prisoners and most people do not care whether they are exploited, but they are supposed to be punished by having their liberty removed and not by being exploited for profit. I can think of no justification for the changes proposed in the bill except to create a slave-labour force for Wackenhut, Group 4 and CCA.

Another terrifying provision in the bill allows the Chief Commissioner of Police to delegate search and seizure powers to private contractors. In effect, that amounts to privatising police and correctional functions and delegating them to the red-necked, over-armed and untrained hoons who will manage our gaols. Both prisoners and visitors will be subjected to searches by God knows who for God knows what purpose.

Private prisons in Australia do not have a very good track record. The Arthur Gorrie Remand and Reception Centre in Queensland experienced four suicides, four serious disturbances and the use of teargas in several situations in its first 18 months of operation. Private prisons still cost the taxpayer a lot of money for each prisoner kept in them, without taking into account the hidden costs. However, we are no longer allowed to know the true costs because of that cute little thing called commercial confidentiality.

What are the ethical, moral and legal implications of giving a private company power over prisoners? The power to be given to private companies includes the power to place prisoners in solitary confinement and force them to work to increase the private profit of the companies. The power that is being handed over can be abused and the bill will make it easy for that to happen. This dramatic change in the responsibility of the government to ensure the welfare of all citizens and protect them from unfair exploitation is reminiscent of the workhouse mentality of the 18th and 19th centuries. In those times people were sent to workhouses because they were poor, and they were paid a pittance. If prison industries become profitable perhaps we will see the enactment of harsher laws so that more people will be put in gaol for longer, ensuring that the money will roll in.

Oscar Wilde, a one-time prison inmate, and Winston Churchill, both spoke about prisons as a sort of litmus test for the decency of society. The power to imprison is the greatest power the state has over its citizens. In a speech to the House of Commons, Churchill said:

> The mood and temper of the public in regard to the treatment of crime and criminals is one of the most unfailing tests of civilisation of any country.

If that is so, how civilised are we? What does Victoria's rush toward privatisation say about us? I oppose the bill.

Hon. W. A. N. HARTIGAN (Geelong) — The bill does not specifically deal with the decision to privatise prisons because that decision has already been made. Mrs McLean has chosen to introduce her socialist ideology into the debate, but if she were really interested in finding places where prisoners are used as slave labour she would look to the countries that she proposes we should help develop.

We live in a society in which the vast variety of services are provided by the private sector. Even today's publicly run prisons are, in the main, supplied with goods and services and most other things they need by the private sector. I understand Mrs McLean's ideological objection. She has been an enemy of private enterprise and democracy all of her political career. Her ideal models are North Korea and Cuba — and they used to include North Vietnam and the USSR. Mrs McLean does not believe or know anything about fair play. Her only concern is promoting her outdated, obsolete and failed ideology, and she does an appalling job of it.

Mrs McLean has attacked an initiative that will advantage prisoners and result in their being treated better. The only downside to the proposal is that her trade union mates will lose out on a little piece of their power. She has no knowledge of prisons and no interest in justice or proper procedures in them. I have never heard a bigger load of rubbish than we have just heard from a person who promotes places such as Cuba and North Korea as ideal communities. Cuba and North Korea are disastrous models, yet Mrs McLean has been promoting them all her life. She is promoting them now because she objects to privatisation and the effect it will have on her union mates not because she is interested in the benefit to prisoners.

If Mrs McLean had any interest in prisoners she would be interested in the benefits that will accrue to them as a result of this change. I have no doubt that the government's program will benefit prisoners by reducing recidivism and ensuring the state is run more economically. All the criticism levelled at the prison system has been levelled at the system as it now exists — a publicly-owned system.

Hon. Jean McLean — At least it is answerable to the people.

Hon. W. A. N. HARTIGAN — Mrs McLean interjects that the prison system is answerable to the people. But she does not like that either, because from what she has said it does not seem to work very well. She also complained about the process of justice. She seems to think only deprived people go to gaol and it does not matter that most offenders are unable to live in society in a way that reflects its interests.

It appears that everyone who goes to gaol is one of Mrs McLean's supporters. Although in this country we do not put political prisoners in gaol, that does happen in a number of the countries she promotes as ideal models of society. Many of those countries put political prisoners in gaol and make them work for slave-labour wages. I do not know which model Mrs McLean promotes but it is certainly not the model the government is introducing in the bill.

The bill refines the role of the police when they act in a custodial situation and introduces a quite reasonable requirement that some element of the funds earned by prisoners should be retained so that they do not leave gaol without money. I cannot understand how people like Mrs McLean, who quite happily benefit from living under the free-enterprise system and do not mind putting out their hands, have a problem with an attempt to modernise an industry that has until now been a hotbed of inefficiency.

This is a good and sensible piece of legislation. It will do nothing but benefit both the state and those poor people who find themselves in the corrections system. I commend the bill to the house.

House divided on motion:

Ayes, 31

Asher, Ms	Hallam, Mr
Ashman, Mr	Hartigan, Mr
Atkinson, Mr	Katsambanis, Mr
Baxter, Mr	Knowles, Mr
Best, Mr (*Teller*)	Lucas, Mr
Birrell, Mr	Luckins, Mrs
Bishop, Mr	Powell, Mrs (*Teller*)
Boardman, Mr	Ross, Dr
Bowden, Mr	Smith, Mr
Brideson, Mr	Smith, Ms
Cover, Mr	Stoney, Mr
Craige, Mr	Strong, Mr
Davis, Mr D. McL.	Varty, Mrs
Davis, Mr P. R.	Wells, Dr
Forwood, Mr	Wilding, Mrs
Furletti, Mr	

Noes, 9

Eren, Mr (*Teller*)	Power, Mr
Gould, Miss	Pullen, Mr
Hogg, Mrs	Theophanous, Mr
Nardella, Mr (*Teller*)	Walpole, Mr
Nguyen, Mr	

Pair

McLean, Mrs	de Fegely, Mr

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — By leave, I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

In doing so I thank those honourable members who contributed to the debate. I will respond quickly to

two issues that were raised. One was the compulsory saving of 20 per cent of prisoners' wages. Of course, the money will be paid into a prison trust account that will be set up entirely for the use of prisoners. It will not be used by anyone else, and nobody else will have access to it. The money will not be invested, and the account will remain as a trust account for prisoners' savings. The big thing is that it will enable prisoners to have some money at their disposal when they are released. That is a major aspect of the proposal. Many of the other issues raised in this place were also raised during the debate in the other house and responded to by the Minister for Corrections.

Mrs McLean asked about the advisory committee. I assure her that the members of the current board will be invited to nominate for membership of that committee. The membership will be based on expertise; but as I said, the current board members will be given the opportunity to sit on the new advisory committee.

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

Remaining stages

Passed remaining stages.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES BILL

Committed.

Committee

Clause 1

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I thank honourable members for their contributions during the second-reading debate. There appeared to be general support for the principles in this bill establishing, as it does, a clear legal framework for the regulation of children's services in Victoria. It is a first. It mirrors much of the thrust of the Health Act in the way it seeks to do that: it seeks to provide a balance between people's rights and obligations; to clarify and streamline the licensing systems and to provide key standards.

It also affords the minister a general exemption power which is now not available, and introduces a right of appeal through the AAT on all major decisions and appeals which are currently possible only through the less accessible County Court. It affords immunity for people who provide information.

The opposition has raised a number of concerns in this place and in the other house. My colleague, the Minister for Youth and Community Services in the other place, undertook to consider those concerns. Consequently, I intend to move amendments which the government believes substantially address many of the concerns raised in the other place.

I also respond to a matter raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Miss Gould, who expressed concern that the bill may shift the cost of the proposal requiring police checks of persons employed in the children's services industry by the government onto employees. Under the present legislation an employer may require a prospective employee to undergo a police check; if a check is required, the department pays for it.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition was also concerned about the storage of criminal check information by proprietors and in particular that employees may be required to hand over records of checks to employers. The proposal to require police checks of persons who may be employed in the industry is not a cost-shifting exercise by the government. Peak industry bodies have advised it is not current practice for prospective employees to routinely undergo police checks. There is no provision under the current legislation for an employer to require a prospective employee to undergo a police check.

This legislation provides that the children's services industry will assume greater responsibility for the maintenance of standards. It will be the responsibility of the proprietor to ensure the police checks are carried out as part of the process of appointment of suitable staff. The requirements for criminal record checks of prospective employees will be set out in new regulations and will be subject to the regulatory impact process. The regulations will ensure such confidential information is appropriately secured and that civil liberties are not breached. I hope that provides some reassurance to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — I move:

1. Clause 1, after "services" insert "in a way that promotes the welfare and interests of the children being cared for or educated by those services".

This amendment will ensure some clarity to the definitions clause setting out why this legislation is necessary — that is, to look after and promote the welfare and interests of children.

The opposition believes that encompasses everything the minister has said and will account for concerns raised during the second-reading debates in this and the other place.

Australia is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 3 of which states:

> In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

Because the legislation involves the licensing of child-care centres, appropriate legislation should be in place for the protection of children in those services. The amendment should be agreed to so that there is a guarantee about the commitment to children.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The government does not believe this amendment is necessary because the content of the words is implicit in the bill. Clause 18 talks about standard conditions on licensing and says that centres will be operated to ensure there is safety and that the needs of children are met. For those reasons the government does not agree to the amendment.

Committee divided on amendment:

Ayes, 9

Eren, Mr	Power, Mr (*Teller*)
Gould, Miss	Pullen, Mr
Hogg, Mrs	Theophanous, Mr
Nardella, Mr	Walpole, Mr
Nguyen, Mr (*Teller*)	

Noes, 31

Asher, Ms	Hallam, Mr
Ashman, Mr	Hartigan, Mr
Atkinson, Mr	Katsambanis, Mr
Baxter, Mr	Knowles, Mr
Best, Mr	Lucas, Mr
Birrell, Mr	Luckins, Mrs (*Teller*)
Bishop, Mr	Powell, Mrs
Boardman, Mr	Ross, Dr
Bowden, Mr	Smith, Mr
Brideson, Mr	Smith, Ms
Cover, Mr	Stoney, Mr (*Teller*)
Craige, Mr	Strong, Mr
Davis, Mr D. McL.	Varty, Mrs
Davis, Mr P. R.	Wells, Dr
Forwood, Mr	Wilding, Mrs
Furletti, Mr	

Pair

de Fegely, Mr	McLean, Mrs

Amendment negatived.

Clause agreed to; clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3

The CHAIRMAN — Order! There are two amendments to be moved to this clause. The minister may move his amendment first, which may test the amendment listed in Miss Gould's name.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

1. Clause 3, page 3, line 27, after this line insert —

> "( ) In this Act a reference to an absence in relation to an applicant, licensee or proprietor that is a body corporate includes a reference to the absence of the directors of the body corporate.".

There are numerous references in the bill to the absence of a proprietor, licensee or applicant from a children's service. This is an interpretative amendment which makes it clear that where an applicant, licensee or proprietor is a body corporate that body corporate will be taken to be absent from a centre if its directors are absent.

Amendment agreed to.

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — The amendment I intended to move depended on the successful passage of the opposition's amendment no. 1. As that first amendment was lost on a division, I propose to say nothing more other than that the opposition believes its amendment no. 2 would have clarified the intent of the bill — that is, that the care of children is paramount.

Amended clause agreed to; clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

2. Clause 5, line 27, after this line insert —

"( ) Sub-section (l)(b) does not prevent the Secretary from imposing conditions on any licence for a children's service relating to children who are enrolled at a school referred to in that paragraph being cared for or educated by the children's service.".

The Health Act currently provides that a maximum of 30 per cent of places at a centre can be filled by children who are over the age of 6 years or who are enrolled at or attend school. Clause 5 may be interpreted as preventing the retention of that or similar requirements. The amendment clarifies the licence conditions that can be imposed in relation to children who are enrolled at school at preparatory level or above and their attendance at a children's service.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to.

Clause 6

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — I move:

3. Clause 6, line 33, after this line insert—

"(2) The Minister must not make a declaration under sub-section (1) unless the Minister has called for and considered submissions about the effect of the declaration from any person who may be affected by the declaration.

(3) A declaration must include any reasons for the making of the declaration."

The opposition is that clause 6 gives the minister the ability to amend provisions of the act in relation to a specific service. The opposition asks that before making a declaration under clause 6(1) the minister consider submissions about the effect of such a declaration from any person who may be affected by such a declaration and that they be notified and that that declaration and the reasons for making any variations to the amendments be also published.

The amendment is self-explanatory, but the opposition asks that when the minister changes the licensing requirements, which this clause allows him to do, those changes be published and that the minister be given the opportunity to take into consideration the opposition's concerns, if any.

At the moment the clause allows the minister to make a declaration, but there is no requirement to publish it or to take into account what impact that might have on another child-care centre just down the road.

The amendment will ensure that those concerned will have the ability to put their submission to the minister, that the minister's decision is published and that the reasons are reported to those concerned.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The government does not accept the amendment. It is not standard to include such a requirement. The minister has given an assurance that the power would be used judiciously and sparingly. There are some concerns that it may be difficult to comply with such a requirement if the exemption were to apply to a wide range of persons.

While I understand the concern the member has raised in supporting the argument, this is the sort of issue the Minister for Youth and Community Services would focus on if he were looking to exercise his power in the interests of fairness and natural justice. If it is going to have a deleterious effect on some other service he might not use this process for providing that exemption.

Amendment negatived; clause agreed to; clauses 7 to 11 agreed to.

Clause 12

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

3. Clause 12, page 10, line 3, after "application" **insert** "or, if the Secretary requests further information from the applicant, within 60 days after receiving that information".

Clause 12 provides that the secretary must decide whether to grant an approval in principle to conduct a children's service within 60 days of receiving the application. The amendment clarifies that the 60-day time limit runs from when all relevant information is obtained by the secretary.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clauses 13 to 15 agreed to.

Clause 16

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

4. Clause 16, line 26, after "licensee" **insert** "and a declaration by the applicant that the person is a fit and proper person to manage or control a children's service".

If an applicant for a licence is not to be present at the service, clause 16 requires him or her to nominate a person who will manage or control the service in his or her absence. This amendment provides that if the applicant makes such a nomination he or she must declare that each nominee is a fit and proper person to manage or control the service.

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — Can the minister explain this amendment? My reading of the amendment is that it means another person could declare a person who applies for the licence a fit and proper person to run a service. Does a person have to go through the same checks and balances as a person applying for a licence, or is the reputation of the person applying to run a service based on the hearsay of the person appearing before the department to prove that he or she is a fit and proper person?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The responsibility will always remain with the person who has the licence, and if that person declares someone to be a fit and proper person, he or she is accepting that responsibility. It may also be that the person operating the service will carry the responsibility. This is to cover those circumstances when the person with the licence is for some reason not able to be there and must accept the responsibility for the person he or she nominates.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to.

Clause 17

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

5. Clause 17, page 12, line 12, **omit** "applicant" and **insert** "licensee".

This amendment modifies the drafting of clause 17(2) to make it consistent with the wording used elsewhere in the bill.

Amendment agreed to.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

6. Clause 17, page 12, line 20, after this line **insert** —

( ) The Secretary is not obliged to consider whether or not a person nominated by the applicant to manage or control the children's service in the absence of the licensee is a fit and proper person to do so in circumstances where the Secretary is satisfied —

(a) that —

(i) the applicant; or

(ii) if the applicant is a body corporate, at least one of the directors of the body corporate —

will be attending and managing or controlling the children's service on a daily basis; or

(b) that more than one person has been nominated to manage or control the children's service and the particular person being considered will not have primary responsibility for managing or controlling the children's service —

if the applicant has made a declaration that the person nominated by the applicant is a fit and proper person to manage or control a children's service.".

The bill provides that a person will be able to operate a children's service only if the secretary is satisfied he or she is a fit and proper person. It also provides that the applicant must nominate persons who will have management and control of a centre during his or her absence. There may be a number of nominees who are to be in charge at different periods.

The effect of amendments 6 and 7, when read with the bill, is that if the applicant is not present at the service on a daily basis the secretary will have to be satisfied that the primary nominee is a fit and proper person. This nominee will be the one person who, of all nominees, has the primary responsibility for managing the service in the absence of the applicant.

It will be the responsibility of the operator-owner to be satisfied about the appropriateness of the primary nominee and all other nominees. The secretary will have to ascertain that the applicant has complied with this obligation. The secretary will retain the power to intervene in cases where any particular nominee is not a fit and proper person.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to.

Clause 18

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

7. Clause 18, page 13, line 13, **omit** "the notification of".

The explanation is similar to the explanation I gave for the previous amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

8. Clause 18, page 13, line 19, after this line **insert**—

"( ) The Secretary must give notice in writing to the applicant of his or her decision within 60 days after receiving the application or, if the Secretary has required testing, examination or further information, within 60 days after receiving the results or report of the test or examination or that information.".

This amendment provides that the secretary must decide whether to grant a licence within 60 days after all relevant information has been received.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clauses 19 to 22 agreed to.

Clause 23

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

9. Clause 23, line 25, after "variation" **insert** "unless the Secretary, with the consent of the licensee, determines that the variation takes effect earlier".

Clause 23 provides that a variation of a licence does not take effect until 60 days after the secretary gives notice of the variation to the licensee. This is to give the licensee time to make the required modifications prior to the change taking effect. Sixty days notice is not necessary where the change will enhance the business, such as by increasing the number of children who may attend the centre. The amendment provides that a variation can take effect on an earlier date, with the consent of the licensee and the secretary.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clauses 24 to 27 agreed to.

Clause 28

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

10. Clause 28, lines 25 and 26, **omit** "and any staff member of the service".

Clause 28 provides that a proprietor and any staff member must ensure that no child at the service is subjected to corporal punishment or unreasonable discipline. It could make a staff member liable in relation to children who are disciplined in his or her absence by other staff. The amendment makes it clear that a staff member would be liable only for his or her own actions. He or she must not personally subject a child to corporal punishment or unreasonable discipline. The proprietor is to be responsible for ensuring that other staff do not use unacceptable methods of disciplining children.

Amendment agreed to.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

11. Clause 28, page 19, line 3, after this line **insert** —

"( ) A staff member of a children's service must not subject any child being cared for or educated by the service to —

(a) any form of corporal punishment; or

(b) any discipline which is unreasonable in the circumstances.

Penalty: 50 penalty units.".

The explanation for this amendment is similar to that for the last.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clauses 29 to 45 agreed to.

Clause 46

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

12. Clause 46, page 30, line 3, after "Act" **insert** "or in any notification referred to in section 54".

Clause 54 provides that a person who believes on reasonable grounds that the act has been breached may notify the secretary or an authorised person of those concerns. Such a person is to be immune from court proceedings such as breach of confidence and may not be identified as a notifier in court, and the

fact that he or she has made a notification can be otherwise disclosed only with his or her consent. Notifications are to be kept confidential to encourage persons to come forward and provide relevant information concerning breaches of the act.

It has been suggested that this unfairly protects the identity of a person who makes a complaint out of malice. It should be noted that immunity will apply only where the complaint is based on reasonable grounds. To further ease these concerns the amendment creates the offence of knowingly making a false or misleading notification to an authorised officer or the secretary.

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — These issues were raised by the opposition in the other place. I commend the government for taking on board the comments made by the opposition and for introducing the amendment.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clauses 47 to 60 agreed to.

Clause 61

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

13. Clause 61, page 39, line 12, after "Act" **insert** "and for a further 3 months after the end of that period".

14. Clause 61, page 39, line 23, after "208C" **insert** "and for a further 3 months after the end of that period".

Clause 61 provides for the transition from the regulation of children's services under the Health Act to the new Children's Services Act. Centres registered under the Health Act will, after the commencement of the Children's Services Act, be deemed to be children's services licensed under the new act. This means that such a service will have to apply for renewal under the new act to remain licensed beyond the date to which it was registered under the Health Act.

Clause 21(3) provides that an application for renewal must generally be made at least two months, but no more than three months, before the expiry of the licence. It will not be possible for services whose deemed licences will expire shortly after commencement to comply with this deadline. Amendment 13 adds three months to deemed licences so that all applications for renewal can be made in accordance with clause 21. Amendment 14 also states that for this extended period a person can continue to act as a nominee at such a service.

Hon. M. M. GOULD (Doutta Galla) — Mr Chairman, the opposition again has a similar problem because of an amendment it had proposed for this clause. The opposition drew the government's attention to its concern. I again congratulate the government on taking on board the comments of the opposition and proposing the amendment. I am not sure what I should do about the amendment I had intended to move.

The CHAIRMAN — Order! If Miss Gould agrees to amendments 13 and 14 she can elect not to move her amendment.

Amendments agreed to; amended clause agreed to.

Reported to house with amendments.

Remaining stages

Passed remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

That the Council, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, 19 November.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — I move:

That the house do now adjourn.

Aged Care: Linkages program

Hon. C. J. HOGG (Melbourne North) — I raise for the attention of the Minister for Aged Care the Linkages program, which has been enormously successful in providing efficient and effective services for older people. I also refer to the effectiveness of the ethno-specific organisations in providing good services for their communities, including older people who require essential and other services.

Several organisations have expressed interest to me in having access to the Linkages program. Can the minister give the house some idea of his thinking on this matter, whether he considered it appropriate and whether there is some chance in the future that ethno-specific organisations can be plugged into the Linkages program in some way?

Woodward's Hardwood Sawmill

Hon. PAT POWER (Jika Jika) — I raise for the attention of the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, who is the representative in this house of the Minister for Conservation and Land Management, the workers at Woodward's sawmill in Ballarat. Honourable members will be aware that as a consequence of the federal government's position on a reduction in log cut a significant amount of money — $500 000 as I understand it — has been provided by the federal government to buy out the mill's entitlement and to bring about a cessation of operations by June 1997. The house may be aware that that has resulted in the Woodward family having its circumstances addressed. But as a consequence of the federal government's decision a number of workers, some of whom have worked at the mill for as long as 30 years, will receive minimal payments.

The workers are in a difficult position. Their union, the forestry division of the CMFEU, has been attempting to negotiate a satisfactory resolution to the matter. The workers are good colleagues of mine, not just because they are members of the forestry division of the CMFEU but because they have given as much as 30 years service to the industry and to the Ballarat community. In pursuing their agenda of reducing the log cut, the federal and state governments ought to give consideration to the workers' circumstances.

I ask the minister to seek from the Minister for Conservation and Land Management an assurance that she will reconsider the position of those workers and see whether it is possible to provide them with adequate payments.

Vipac Engineers and Scientists Ltd

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) — I raise with the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology a matter of grave concern to members of the opposition. I refer to the industry grants made by the government, particularly in light of a grant which was made by the industry, trade and regional development division of the Department of State Development to a company called Vipac Engineers and Scientists Ltd. Mr Michael John Smith, of 1 Park Crescent, Kew, is a director of the company, and one of its major shareholders is the member for Silvan Province, Wendy Irene Smith. That company — obviously a Smith family company — received a state government grant, which returned a direct pecuniary benefit to Ms Smith and her partner. The matter is of grave concern given that, immediately prior to being elected to this house, Ms Smith was a senior ministerial adviser to Mark Birrell.

The same company, Vipac, was also awarded a contract with the Australian Grand Prix Corporation to undertake noise testing works prior to the running of the grand prix. As we all know, Mr Birrell, the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, currently oversees the industry grants. Prior to the last election he was Minister for Major Projects and no doubt would have played an important role in the staging of the grand prix.

We have a legitimate right to raise this matter and we do so based on a number of facts which have been presented to the house.

Hon. M. A. Birrell — What facts?

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — One fact being that a company called Vipac Engineers and Scientists received a grant. We do not know the level of the grant that is listed — —

Hon. M. A. Birrell — What year?

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — It is shown as a grant in the 1994-95 listing of the department.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — That is prior to the election.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — We are not disputing that.

Hon. M. A. Birrell — It was a grant by Phil Gude.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — That is correct; we are not disputing that. But we are saying that a grant was made to a company called Vipac Engineers and Scientists Ltd and that at that time

Mark Birrell's ministerial adviser was a major shareholder in the company.

Hon. M. A. Birrell — So?

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — She was your ministerial adviser. The same company also received a contract with the grand prix corporation to undertake works associated with noise testing prior to the running of the grand prix. Those are two matters of fact. We are simply asking the minister whether he can tell the house, firstly, how much the industry grant was, and, secondly — —

Hon. R. I. Knowles — Given that he did not make the grant, the answer is probably no.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — He is the responsible minister.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — He was not there.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — He has just released the names of the companies that received the grants. If he does not know, that is fine; he can get up and say, 'I don't know.'

We want the minister to assure the house that the process whereby Vipac received the industry grant and the contract with the grand prix corporation was conducted with complete propriety and probity.

ABC: administrative policy

Hon. D. McL. DAVIS (East Yarra) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, who is the representative in this place of the Minister for the Arts. As honourable members are aware, I have an ongoing concern about the Sydney-centric nature of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the disproportionate allocation of resources to Sydney. I am concerned about the implications that has not only for employment but also for the future of broadcasting in Victoria.

ABC management has recently announced staffing changes at 3LO, including the sacking of Mr Doug Aiton, a respected broadcaster. That reflects the decisions of the ABC's Sydney management, which will cut service delivery in Melbourne rather than corporate staff in Sydney. Will the minister make representations on the issue?

Responses

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — Mr Power asked me to pass on to Mrs Tehan, the Minister for Conservation and Land Management in the other place, a matter relating to Woodward's sawmill in Ballarat, and I will do so.

Mr David Davis raised with me his legitimate concerns about the Sydney-based decision making in the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the extraordinary decision to sack 3LO broadcaster Mr Doug Aiton. Most people in this chamber would regard Doug Aiton as a highly successful, balanced and popular broadcaster and a respected individual. I was surprised at the decision. I note that Mr Aiton has publicly blamed ABC management in Sydney for the outcome.

Like Mr Davis, the government is concerned that the Australian Broadcasting Corporation seems to be run from Sydney and that ABC management takes little account of the needs and aspirations of the Victorian community. I want to put on record my belief that this appears to be another example of the ABC losing its way because of decisions that are being made in Sydney. I welcome his advocacy on this issue.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — Why don't you get stuck into him about the budget cuts?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — Mr Theophanous has peddled another of the sleazy little spiels for which he is so well known.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — You don't like questions asked of you?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — Mr Theophanous is right, I do not like smear and innuendo, and for that reason I do not like Mr Theophanous. If he wants to spread lies without producing facts, he is free to do so. However, the government looks forward to him doing two things. Firstly, the government looks forward to him repeating his lies and vitriol outside Parliament so he can be sued. I warn him that giving defamatory and untruthful background briefings to journalists is extremely defamatory, particularly when such briefings are given in advance. If Mr Theophanous wants to put his questions on notice I will be more than happy to respond to

queries about a grant made in 1995 by the current Minister for Education in another place.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — So it was made?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — I believe it is in the annual report. I am sorry — —

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — Sorry for raising a fact?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — No, you did not raise a fact, you raised another of the grubby little sleazes you are known for, the sleaze and lies that fall so easily from your lips. If Mr Theophanous wants to put his question on notice I will be more than happy to provide details of one of the many hundreds of grants — I do not have the details in front of me — that were made independently by the former department when I was not even the responsible minister and which therefore had nothing at all to do with my administration.

Mr Theophanous also alleged some contract between Ms Smith's husband's company and the grand prix corporation. He has made another factual error because at no time have I ever had ministerial responsibility for the grand prix corporation.

Hon. T. C. Theophanous — I never said you were.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL — Why raise it then, because without that implication the lie has nothing behind it. If Mr Theophanous wants some facts he should put it on notice.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Aged Care) — Mrs Hogg referred to the Linkages program and the opportunity for the further development of ethno-specific linkages. The government has significantly increased resources to its Linkages program and is committed to getting statewide coverage under the program. Currently two ethno-specific programs are funded. One is run by the Jewish community welfare body Kesher and the other is the Co-As-It program run by the Italian-Australian community.

Currently the government does not intend extending those programs until there is statewide coverage. The government is trying to ensure that any Linkages programs are responsive to the needs of older members of the community who come from non-English-speaking backgrounds. The government will be assisted enormously in that if it can achieve devolution of the management of aged care services from the commonwealth to itself. The commonwealth currently funds community aged care packages which in many respects target similar groups to those targeted by the Linkages program. It would make a lot of sense if those programs could be combined to provide a more comprehensive coverage.

If the government had management of residential services it would consider cashing out some of the beds involved and putting them into community-based or Linkages-type programs. There is no doubt that older people overwhelmingly wish to live independently and that even those with complex needs can do so with the help of support services. The great advantage of the Linkages program is that it sometimes enables programs to be put together to meet needs.

If Mrs Hogg is concerned about a particular group I will be happy to look at how we can respond to its needs.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned 5.57 p.m. until Tuesday, 19 November.

Tuesday, 8 October 1996

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Carlton Cricket and Football Club Social Club: poker machines

(Question No. 1)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

In relation to arrangements concerning the establishment of poker machines at 177 Glenroy Road, Glenroy, which involve the Carlton Football Club Social Club and the developer Mr Alexander Robinson?

(a) Is the minister aware of those arrangements; if so, what has been the involvement of the minister or his department?

(b) Will the minister provide an assurance that the arrangements will not include any profit splitting that is in breach of the legislation concerning gaming machines?

(c) Will the minister make available a copy of the agreement between the club and Mr Robinson, as well as a copy of any management agreements which have been entered into concerning the proposal?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

(a) The Carlton Cricket and Football Social Club Ltd has submitted to the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority an application for a venue operator's licence to operate electronic gaming machines in premises at 177 Glenroy Road, Glenroy. As the club does not hold an appropriate liquor licence over the proposed premises, it is not eligible under the provisions of the Gaming Machine Control Act 1991 for consideration by the authority for licensing. Accordingly, the authority has not considered the club's application.

(b) The Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority are bound by the provisions of the Gaming Machine Control Act 1991.

(c) Under the Gaming Machine Control Act 1991, information supplied to the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority to assess applications is unable to be released.

Melbourne Parks and Waterways: appointment of former MLC

(Question No. 2)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

What are the full details in relation to the appointment of Mr George Cox to the board of Melbourne Parks and Waterways, including:

(a) whether the position was advertised; if so, when and where?

(b) whether any other candidates were considered for the job; if so, who and how many?

(c) whether any discussions occurred between the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, or any of his advisers, and the Minister for Conservation and Land Management, or any of her advisers, in relation to the appointment; if so, when and what was the substance of these discussions?

(d) whether the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology or any of his advisers were involved in any way in this appointment?

(e) whether the department recommended the appointment; if so, when; if not, who did and when?

(f) did Mr Cox approach the minister or any of the advisers in relation to the appointment; if so, when?

(g) was the board of Melbourne Parks and Waterways consulted about the appointment; if so, what was their attitude to the proposed appointment?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

Appointments to the Board of Directors of Melbourne Parks and Waterways are made under Part 4, Division 2 of the Water Industry Act 1994 (Act No. 121/1994).

The appointment of Mr George Cox as a Director of Melbourne Parks and Waterways was made by the Governor in Council on a recommendation of the Minister for Conservation and Land Management under sections 116 and 117 of the Water Industry Act 1994, following the normal processes of consideration by cabinet.

Mr Cox is one of nine members of the board, including a chairperson, as required under section 115 of the Water Industry Act 1994.

Director of Weights and Measures

(Question No. 3)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business:

In relation to the appointment of Mr Phillip Hatton as the Director of Weights and Measures:

(a) Who was on the interviewing panel for this position?

(b) How many people were interviewed by the panel?

(c) Was the salary level recommended by Mr Hatton?

(d) On what basis was the salary level decided and were interstate comparisons made?

(e) Did one of the applicants have 17 years of experience in the Australian Capital Territory whilst another was from the National Standards Commission, yet neither was interviewed for the position?

(f) Does the successful applicant have any previous experience in weights and measures administration?

(g) How many of the previous appointments as weights and measures inspectors were previous staff appointments, indicating their previous salary levels and the current level of their contract payments?

(h) Did Mr Hatton, in his review, recommend the creation of the position of Director of Weights and Measures?

(i) Was any advice offered by the department as to the propriety of appointing the same person who conducted the review to the position of director and, if so, what was the nature of that advice?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) —The answer is:

(a) The interview panel for this position consisted of Mr Mark Brennan, Deputy Secretary — Small Business and Youth Affairs; Mr Rex Deighton-Smith, Director — Office of Regulation Reform; Mr Philip Turner, Administration Manager — Small Business and Youth Affairs.

(b) Five.

(c) No.

(d) The skills required by the occupant were recommended by the consultants to the trade measurement outsourcing project, Arthur Andersen. The position was then assessed by the department against standard public service criteria.

(e) Yes.

(f) The successful applicant was not required to have previous experience in weights and measures administration as the consultants to the trade measurement outsourcing project recommended that Trade Measurement Victoria required a director who had the necessary change management skills and experience to successfully implement the major restructuring of the trade measurement system in Victoria.

(g) Two of the fourteen contractors were previously employed by the Office of Trade Measurement, receiving an average annual salary of $37 031 representing a total cost to the employer of $48 905, inclusive of payroll tax, superannuation, Workcover and administrative overheads. Further additional costs to government for each inspector also included personal expenses (approx. $4000 p.a.), vehicle costs (est. $7800 p.a.) and equipment costs (approx. $2000 p.a.). Therefore total cost to government for each of these positions was approximately $62 705 per annum.

As contractors under the restructured trade measurement system they receive an average annual contract payment of $66 766 from which they must meet all of the above costs.

(h) No.

(i) No.

City Link: time savings

(Question No. 4)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In relation to the government's claim that the City Link project will deliver travel time savings for motorists of 15 minutes between Tullamarine airport and the city and 20 minutes between Dandenong and the city, can the minister provide an explanation of how the City Link will deliver these time savings and indicate whether these time savings are dependent on any other road works?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The Melbourne City Link will deliver time savings by overcoming the congestion that currently occurs in every peak period and for lengthy periods at other times of the day along the city ends of the South Eastern Arterial, the Tullamarine Freeway and the West Gate Freeway.

The travel time savings are outlined in the environmental effects statements prepared by VicRoads for the Southern and Western bypasses in 1994. The results came from studies undertaken by the RACV and are consistent with work carried out by the Melbourne City Link Authority.

The travel time savings are the differences in the estimated travel times for journeys between Dandenong and the city, and Melbourne Airport and the city, for the current road network and for the network which includes the link roads.

The assessments for the existing roads assume typically congested conditions during weekday peak traffic, and contrast the relatively free-flowing conditions expected on the link. The travel times do not assume the worst conditions, however, but are representative of conditions across the broader peak period.

The travel time savings are not dependent on any road works other than those that are currently in progress. With regard to the South Eastern Arterial, it should be noted that major works are currently underway (funded by the Better Roads Fund) for the removal of the intersections at Burke, Tooronga and Toorak roads. These works will significantly reduce travel times in the vicinity of the works and outward bound traffic will also experience significant travel time savings in the order of 10-15 minutes on completion of these improvements. However, city bound traffic will continue to be severely restricted due to the congestion at the city end of the Arterial and the net improvement in overall travel times to the city is likely to be negligible.

When the link is opened, the congestion at the city end of the South Eastern Arterial will be dramatically reduced, thus yielding to motorists the full benefits of the grade separations and the altered South Eastern Arterial from Toorak Road to the city.

Local Government Board: chairperson and manager

(Question No. 19)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

Has the position 'Chairperson, Local Government Board' been abolished; if so — (i) when was that position abolished and why; and (ii) when was the position 'Manager, Local Government Board' created and why; and, if not, when will the position be filled and why has there been a delay in doing so?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The position of 'Chairman, Local Government Board' has not been abolished.

The position of 'Manager, Local Government Board' has been filled since its creation in January 1994.

Local government: former Buln Buln shire

(Question No. 20)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

Under what authority can the Shire of Buln Buln request an up-front payment of $100 to provide advice to one of its ratepayers confirming they were a ratepayer in respect to properties located in Drouin?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The Shire of Buln Buln ceased to exist on 2 December 1994.

Information was sought by a ratepayer of the Baw Baw Shire Council which required referral to rate books dating back to 1944. These records are held by the Public Record Office. This information had been provided to the ratepayer in the past on at least two occasions by the former Shire of Buln Buln.

The council charged the ratepayer $100 as a fee for service for the research time and associated costs of obtaining the information from the Public Record Office.

Local government: 'customers'

(Question No. 21)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

Will the minister take action to discourage local government commissioners from referring to ratepayers and residents as 'customers'?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

No.

Youth and Community Services: Loddon-Campaspe youth worker

(Question No. 22)

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Youth and Community Services:

(a) Why did the minister refuse funding for the 1996-97 financial year for a youth worker in Castlemaine and a youth worker in Bendigo?

(b) Were both applications endorsed 'highly recommended' by the Loddon-Campaspe Regional Youth Committee?

(c) Was any funding for the 1996-97 financial year given for any youth worker position in the Loddon-Campaspe region which was not endorsed 'highly recommended' by the committee; if so, what are the details?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Youth and Community Services is:

The Youth Support Program was advertised in December 1995 calling for applications to provide services for young people across Victoria during the 1996-97 financial year. This program attracted almost 300 applications. The total budget available was $3.396 million. Thirteen applications requesting almost $400 000 were received from the Loddon Campaspe region.

I am pleased to advise that over $3 million was allocated to more than 100 projects across Victoria to provide a range of direct services to young people. In particular, the Minister for Youth and Community Services approved in May funding of $91 380 for four projects in the Loddon Campaspe region.

This funding adds to almost $600 000 allocated to the region for youth services since 1994.

In addition, as a result of funds which became available through savings in the 1995-96 financial year, the Minister for Youth and Community Services approved several additional projects which had merit. The application from the City of Greater Bendigo for a youth worker was one of the projects approved. The Minister for Youth and Community Services has written to the City of Greater Bendigo advising them of this.

With the additional funding for the City of Greater Bendigo, the total allocation from the Youth Support Program for 1996-97 to the Loddon Campaspe region is now in excess of $111 000.

The focus of the Youth Support Program is direct service delivery to young people. Funding for the coordination of services was not a feature of the Youth Support Program as there are a number of other structures in place, namely, the Regional Youth Committee and funded regional and statewide youth organisations, to fulfil this role. The application received from Castlemaine had, as its primary focus, the coordination of services.

As I have indicated, not all applications received could be approved for funding. Applications were assessed by my department and advice sought from regional youth committees and the Regional Office of the Department of Human Services. Recommendations from regional youth committees are not the only source of advice regarding funding decisions.

However, I can confirm that both the Castlemaine and Bendigo projects were strongly recommended by the Regional Youth Committee. The Loddon-Campaspe Regional Youth Committee strongly recommended six projects as their equal first priority (including the Bendigo and Castlemaine applications), recommended two projects as their equal second priority and did not recommend the remaining five applications.

Funding of $15 000 was approved for the McIvor Health and Community Services which was recommended (as equal second priority) by the Regional Youth Committee. This project had previously been funded, is in a rural area of the region with few other services and had been strongly recommended by the Regional Youth Committee in the previous funding round.

Students: Bendigo secondary colleges

(Question No. 23)

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

What were the number of students in each Year level at the start of each school year from 1992 to 1996, respectively, for — (i) Golden Square Secondary College; (ii) Kangaroo Flat Secondary College; (iii) White Hills Secondary College; (iv) Bendigo Senior Secondary College; (v) Eaglehawk Secondary College; and (vi) Flora Hill Secondary College?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments by year level of selected secondary schools in the Bendigo area.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Ungraded	Total Enrolment
Bendigo Senior Secondary College (7595)								
1992	-	-	-	-	834.3	750.6	-	1584.9
1993	-	-	-	-	814.2	722.7	-	1536.9
1994	-	-	-	-	816.7	705.2	-	1521.9
1995	-	-	-	6.2	782.2	724.8	-	1513.2
1996	-	-	-	5.6	797.2	707.2		1510.0
Eaglehawk Secondary College (7790)								
1992	165.0	188.6	173.0	172.0	-	-	-	698.6
1993	192.4	164.0	189.4	163.0	-	-	-	708.8
1994	160.4	185.4	156.0	169.4	-	-	-	671.2
1995	180.2	156.2	175.4	141.4	-	-	-	653.2
1996	154.0	190.0	159.2	156.4	-	-		659.6
Flora Hill Secondary College (7837)								
1992	202.4	242.0	188.0	206.0	-	-	-	838.4
1993	198.0	212.4	231.0	190.0	-	-	-	831.4
1994	224.0	203.0	206.0	220.0	-	-	-	853.0
1995	199.0	228.0	196.0	199.0	-	-	0.8	822.8
1996	218.0	203.0	246.0	189.0	-	-		856.0
Golden Square Secondary College (7870)								
1992	171.0	173.0	151.0	132.0	-	-	-	627.0
1993	176.0	166.0	162.2	139.0	-	-	-	643.2
1994	200.2	173.0	171.6	151.2	-	-	-	696.0
1995	183.0	194.2	178.0	162.6	-	-	-	717.8
1996	196.0	182.0	192.0	165.0	-	-		735.0
Kangaroo Flat Secondary College (7205)								
1992	127.0	130.0	183.0	156.0	-	-	0.4	596.4
1993	132.0	132.0	131.0	182.0	-	-	-	577.0
1994	161.0	139.0	134.0	121.0	-	-	0.2	555.2
1995	142.0	164.0	137.0	121.0	-	-	-	564.0
1996	159.0	152.0	167.0	123.0	-	-		601.0
White Hills Secondary College (7405)								
1992	128.0	117.0	165.0	129.0	-	-	-	539.0
1993	141.0	137.0	122.0	162.0	-	-	-	562.0
1994	162.0	154.0	141.0	115.0	-	-	-	572.0
1995	160.0	151.0	153.0	124.0	-	-	-	588.0
1996	177.0	177.0	146.0	150.0	-	-		650.0

Coliban Water: salaries

(Question No. 24)

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Agriculture and Resources:

What are the details of the remuneration packages in each financial year from 1992-93 to 1996-97 (if set) for — (i) the chairman of Coliban Water; (ii) each of the directors of the board of Coliban Water; and (iii) the chief executive officer of Coliban Water, indicating the total value of the remuneration packages and the components making up the total packages, including the salary component, any component for motor vehicle use, superannuation, any bonuses and other benefits.

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources is:

It is accepted practice that in the interests of personal confidentiality it is inappropriate for information about individuals to be revealed. However, I am able to provide the following general information in response to the honourable member's question:

The Coliban Region Water Authority's reporting requirements are met through its annual reports. The following extracts are taken from its annual reports for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95. The annual report for 1995-96 is due by 30 September 1996, and its report for 1996-97 is due in September 1997.

1994-95

Total remuneration received or due and receivable during 1994-95 by directors of the Coliban Region Water Authority in connection with the management of the authority was $106 000.

The number of directors whose remuneration for the year ended 30 June 1995 falls within the following bands are:

Band(s)	No. of Directors
$0-9 999	4
$10 000-19 999	4
$30 000-39 999	1

The number of executive officers whose remuneration for the year ended 30 June 1995 falls within the following bands are:

Band(s)	No. of Executive Officers
$110 000-119 999	1

1993-94

Allowances paid to members of the board of the authority during 1993-94 were $64 000.

1992-93

Allowances for the two members of the authority and the advisory members of the board were $34 000.

Winters Flat Primary School

(Question No. 25)

Hon. D. A. NARDELLA asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

Will the minister restore cleaning funding at the Winters Flat Primary School to the 1995 level?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The cleaning budget at Winters Flat Primary School has been calculated according to the standard formula which applies for all schools. The formula is based in part on student numbers, in order to recognise changes in cleaning needs resulting from enrolment variations from year to year. While funding rates for cleaning were increased in 1996, this school's budget has declined due to reduced student numbers.

The funding formula is equitable and completely transparent. All schools have been provided with information to enable them to plan for budget changes in advance and to vary or terminate services under the standard contract as their circumstances change.

Consequently, no changes to the cleaning budget are proposed.

Ophthalmic surgery

(Question No. 26)

Hon. D. T. WALPOLE asked the Minister for Health:

(a) What are the current waiting lists for ophthalmic surgery in Victoria?

(b) How many ophthalmic procedures were undertaken at the Western and Sunshine hospitals during 1994 and 1995, respectively?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

(a) As at 1 April 1996, Victorian public hospitals reported a total of 2605 patients waiting for elective ophthalmic surgery. Of these, 3 were classified by their respective treating clinicians as urgent and none of these had been waiting for more than 30 days. There were 1555 waiting patients categorised as semi-urgent and 1047 categorised as non-urgent.

(b) The number of ophthalmic procedures undertaken at the Western and Sunshine hospitals during 1994 and 1995 was 153 and 235 respectively.

NOTE

The answer to question 26(a) is provided from public hospital waiting list returns where specialties are based on the treating clinician. The answer to question 26(b) has been derived from the Victorian Inpatient Minimum Dataset, maintained by the Department of Human Services, and represents the number of acute episodes with a diagnosis related group (DRG) determined to be a surgical case within the ophthalmology specialty.

Royal Melbourne Hospital: Essendon campus

(Question No. 27)

Hon. D. T. WALPOLE asked the Minister for Health:

How many operations by type were performed at the Essendon campus of the Royal Melbourne Hospital in each year from 1990-91 to 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

The number of operations by specialty type performed at the Essendon campus of the Royal Melbourne Hospital in each year from 1991-92 to 1994-95 are detailed in the table below. The Royal Melbourne Hospital has advised that equivalent data is not available for the 1990-91 financial year.

Specialty unit	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Anaesthetics	13T9	51	75	
Ear Nose and Throat	12	135	265	165
General Surgery	449	1169	1912	1833
Gynaecology	120	227	247	255
Ophthalmology	322	327	469	474
Orthopaedics	976	1168	1695	1567
Urology	97	383	486	444
Total	**1989**	**3418**	**5125**	**4813**

NOTES

1. The information contained in the answer to question 27 has been provided by the Royal Melbourne Hospital. This is because data held on the Victorian Inpatient Minimum Dataset is supplied for the Royal Melbourne Hospital as a single entity with no campus identification.

2. The answer to question 27 is provided for hospital defined clinical units, which are based on the specialty of the treating clinician.

Schools: cyclical maintenance, Essendon

(Question No. 28)

Hon. D. T. WALPOLE asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

Which schools in the Essendon electorate are due for cyclical maintenance in 1995-96 and 1996-97, indicating what work is programmed for each school?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

State government schools are not funded for maintenance on a cyclical basis, but rather they are funded for major maintenance on a relative needs basis.

Major maintenance normally covers the upkeep of the overall building fabric and services for the school. It can include roof repairs and other works to the exterior of the school such as the repair of window frames and general painting. Works to the interior of the school can include works such as carpet replacement, painting and electrical repairs.

Schools in the Essendon electorate that were funded for major maintenance in 1995-96 were:

School/College	Project Name
Aberfeldie Primary School	Relocation of Student Toilets
Essendon Keilor College (East Keilor Junior Campus)	Oil to Gas Conversion
Moonee Ponds West Primary School	Major Maintenance

Schools in the Essendon electorate that have been funded for major maintenance so far in 1996-97 are:

School/College	Project Name
Ascot Vale West Primary School	Major Maintenance
Strathmore Secondary College	Major Maintenance

Melbourne Parks and Waterways: appointment of former MLC

(Question No. 29)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

(a) Was the Premier or any of his advisers involved in any way with the appointment of Mr George Cox to the board of Melbourne Parks and Waterways; if so, what are the details?

(b) Did discussions involving such appointment occur with Mr Cox in the lead-up to the Liberal Party preselection for Silvan; if so, what are the details?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

(a) The appointment was made by Governor in Council following the nomal processes of consideration by cabinet.

(b) No cabinet discussions about the appointment of Mr Cox to the board of Melbourne Parks and Waterways were held prior to 30 March 1996. Mr Cox is one of nine members of the board, including a chairperson, as required under section 115 of the Water Industry Act 1994.

Former MLC for Templestowe

(Question No. 30)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

(a) During 1995 and 1996 did the Premier or any of his advisers make any offer to Mr Bruce Skeggs of an appointment to a government-appointed body; if so what are the details?

(b) During 1995 or 1996 did the Premier or any of his advisers speak to Mr Skeggs about withdrawing from the Liberal Party preselection for Templestowe Province on the basis that he would be given a government appointment; if so, when did the conversation take place and who was involved?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

(a) Appointments to government bodies are made by cabinet. Neither the Premier nor any of his advisers are in a position to offer such appointments to any person without cabinet discussion and a cabinet decision.

(b) The Premier has numerous conversations with numerous members of Parliament. As members of Parliament would expect, the Premier respects the private nature of such conversations. Reference is otherwise made to the answer to (a) above.

Boronia railway crossing

(Question No. 31)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports:

In respect of work proposed to relieve traffic congestion at the Boronia railway crossing:

(a) What is the total cost of the project?

(b) What amount of funds will be provided from state revenue?

(c) What amount of funds will be provided from federal funds?

(d) Will any funds be provided from other sources?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer is:

The Roads Corporation has provided the following information:

(a) The estimated cost of the project is $28 million.

(b), (c) and (d) The project is totally funded by the State of Victoria. There will be no funds provided by the federal government or from any other source.

Bullbar regulations

(Question No. 32)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports:

In respect of the fitting of bullbars to motor vehicles:

(a) What restrictions are being enforced on the use of bullbars in Victoria?

(b) What proposals are under consideration to develop and enforce stronger restrictions on the fitting of bullbars?

(c) Do bullbars comply with Australian Design Rule 42.9.1.1 or any other regulation or legislation?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer is:

The Road Safety Act 1986 specifically prevents the banning of bullbars. However, the fitting of a bullbar to a motor vehicle is a modification and as such must be approved by the Roads Corporation (Vicroads). Approval has been given to the fitment of those bullbars which comply with Vicroads published guidelines.

Australian Design Rule (ADR) 42 requires that any fittings to motor vehicles be designed so as to minimise the risk of injury to any person. Bullbars that comply with Vicroads guidelines meet the intent of the ADR.

There are no proposals currently under consideration in Victoria to develop and enforce stronger restrictions on the fitting of bullbars. Any proposals to amend the relevant ADR on the fitting of bullbars in Australia would be a matter for the federal government.

East Gippsland: employees

(Question No. 41)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of the new municipality of East Gippsland:

(a) Has this municipality shed a greater proportion of local government workers than any other Victorian municipality?

(b) What was the nature of redundancy packages offered to workers?

(c) What was the termination package offered to the current Director of Personnel Services?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

(a) No detailed analysis has been undertaken of employment figures in councils since amalgamation. Councils will be required to report on employment numbers in their annual reports which are required to be submitted to the Minister for Planning and Local Government by 30 September 1996.

(b) The East Gippsland Shire Council paid staff redundancy packages in line with the industry standard which is contained in the municipal restructuring agreements commonly known as 'G17'. These agreements were registered by the former councils at the Australian Industrial Relations Commission.

(c) The East Gippsland Shire Council does not employ a Director of Personnel Services.

Water quality: monitoring

(Question No. 42)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In relation to the regular monitoring of water quality in rivers and streams in the metropolitan area:

(a) At which sites does this occur?

(b) What is the frequency of monitoring in each case?

(c) What has been the cost for each financial year from 1991-92 to 1995-96?

(d) What have been the results for each river and stream?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

Prior to July 1993 regular monitoring of water quality in rivers and streams in the metropolitan area was conducted by both the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and Melbourne Water (jointly with Melbourne Parks and Waterways). From July 1993 the EPA passed full responsibility for this monitoring to the Melbourne Water/Melbourne Parks and Waterways Streamwatch program.

(a) Refer to attached table.

(b) Refer to attached table.

(c) Cost of monitoring by the EPA for financial years 1991-92 and 1992-93 was approximately $58 400 and $60 800 respectively. Due to progressive restructuring of Melbourne Water, the cost of monitoring from 1991 to 1995 is difficult to ascertain. The cost for 1995-96 is $414 450, consisting of government and additional external funding. These figures do not include labour costs.

(d) The results for 1991 for each river and stream in the Melbourne metropolitan area (along with the rest of Victoria) were reported in the publication *Inland Water Quality Monitoring Network 1991 Yearly Report* (EPA publication no. 360). Results for 1992 and 1993 are currently being used to prepare a report on 10-year trends in water quality. Summary statistics are available from the EPA on request. The results for sites incorporated into the Streamwatch program as of July 1993 are reported in the annual Streamwatch reports published by Melbourne Parks and Waterways.

The results for the Streamwatch sites are available in the Melbourne Water Annual Report. At present only the 1993-94 report is available. The 1994-95 report is being printed and should be available shortly. It is envisaged that the 1995-96 results will be available to the public towards the end of 1996.

All Current Water Quality Monitoring StreamWatch Site Information

Site	Waterway	Description	Frequency
			1996/97
MY15	Andersons Creek	Everard Drive Bridge	4W
149	Ararat Creek	Ararat Creek at Longwarry-Drouin Road	EQ
MY28	Arthur's Creek	Arthur's Creek	4W
151	Balcombe Creek	Balcombe Creek at footbridge off Uralla Drive	E4W
168	Boggy Creek	Boggy Creek at Lathams Road	EQ
MY18	Brushy Creek	Lower Homestead Road Bridge	4W
129	Bunyip Main Drain	Bunyip Main Drain at Iona Gauging Station	E4W
081	Canals	Canals at end of Acacia Crescent	C2T
119	Cardinia Creek	Cardinia Creek at Ballarto Road	EQ
089	Cardinia Creek	Cardinia Creek upstream Manestar Road	E4W
CL01	Cherry Lake		S
161	Chinamans Creek	Chinamans Creek at Eastborne Road	EQ
021	Corhanwarrabul Creek	Corhanwarrabul Creek at Stud Road	EQ
014	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek at Boronia Road	EQ
045	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek at Ferntree Gully Road	EQ
001	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek at Liverpool Road	EQ
046	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek at Marlborough Road	EQ
013	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek at rear Bayswater Park	EQ
050	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek at Stud Road (EPA 5654)	MSE2W
049	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek d/s Mile Creek (south side) (EPA5678)	MSE2W
053	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek upstream High Street Road	4W
051	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek upstream of Gates at Pillars Crossing	4W
085	Dandenong Creek	Dandenong Creek upstream Sheffield Road	E4W
008	Dandenong Creek	National Water Sports Centre - outlet (EPA 5682)	MSE2W
MY02	Darebin Creek	Clark Road Footbridge	4W
120	Deep Creek	Deep Creek at Ballarto Road	EQ
EPA3042	Deep Creek	Deep Creek CSR Bulla At Weir	M4W
MY29	Diamond Creek	Diamond Creek	4W
MY10	Diamond Creek	Main Road	4W
177	Dunns Creek	Dunns Creek at Marine Drive	EQ
166	Elster Creek	Elster Creek at Cochrane Street	EQ
007	Eumemmerring Creek	Eumemmerring Creek at Worsley Road	E4W
028	Eumemmerring Creek	Eumemmerring Creek u/s of Frawley Road (Hallam Nth Rd)	EQ
101	Eumemmerring Creek	Eumemmerring Creek upstream Belgrave-Hallam Road	EQ
029	Eumemmerring Creek	Eumemmerring Creek upstream South Gippsland Highway	4W
MD05	Gardiners Creek Main Drain	Gardiners Creek d/s of junction with SE Fway & Glenferrie Rd	2W
EPA3058	Jacksons Creek	Sunbury	M4W
MY19	Jumping Creek	Jumping Creek Road Bridge	4W
167	Kackeraboite Creek	Kackeraboite Creek at Mouth	EQ
010	Kananook Creek	Kananook Creek at Wells Street	SE4W
MY05	Koonung Creek	Bulleen Road	M4W
KC06	Kororoit Creek	Kororoit Creek	M2W
KC07	Kororoit Creek	Kororoit Creek at Derby Road Footbridge Sunshine	4W
KC05	Kororoit Creek	Kororoit Creek U/S Racecourse Road Ford	S2W
084	Lake Carramar	Lake Carramar at Outlet	C2T
083	Lake Illawong	Lake Illawong at Inlet	C2T
082	Lake Legana	Lake Legana at Bridge	C2T
148	Lang-Lang River	Lang-Lang River at South Gippsland Highway	E4W
127	Lang-Lang River	Lang-Lang River upstream Drouin-Poowong Road - Athlone	E4W
162	Main Creek	Main Creek at Boneo Road	EQ
MT04	Maribyrnong River	D/S Ascot Vale Main Drain	SE2W

All Current Water Quality Monitoring StreamWatch Site Information

MT01	Maribyrnong River	D/S of Footscray Main Drain	4W
MK01	Maribyrnong River	Maribyrnong River at Canning Street Ford (EPA 6070)	MS2W
EPA3030	Maribyrnong River	Maribyrnong River upstream of Kailor TP	MSE2W
080	Mariners Island	Mariners Island at Bridge	C2T
MY26	Merri Creek	Merri Creek	4W
LY06	Merri Creek	Merri Creek Roseneath Street	4W
121	Mernicks Creek	Mernicks Creek at end Bridge Street (Beach Road)	E4W
LY07	Moonee Ponds Creek	Moonee Ponds Creek at Mt Alexander Road	SE2W
009	Mordialloc Creek	Mordialloc Creek at end Wells Road	MSE2W
MY12	Mullum-Mullum Creek	Deep Creek Reserve	4W
MY30	Olinda Creek	Olinda Creek	4W
183	Olivers Creek	Olivers Creek at BHP Roadway	EQ
071	Patterson River	Patterson Lakes at Pump Station	C2T
070	Patterson River	Patterson River at Tidal Canal Gates	C2T
MY07	Plenty River	Henty Road Bridge	2W
MY27	Plenty River	Plenty River	4W
MY25	Ruffey Creek	Ruffey Creek at Parker Street	4W
114	Sandown Lake	Sandown Lake - Inlet end	CEQ
115	Sandown Lake	Sandown Lake - Outlet end	CEQ
176	Sheepwash Creek	Sheepwash Creek at Marine Drive	EQ
SK02	Skeleton Creek	Skeleton Creek	4W
SK5828	Skeleton Creek	Skeleton Creek	4W
MA1081	Steele Creek	Buckley Street	4W
MY32	Steels Creek	Steels Creek	4W
MY14	Stoney Creek	Research-Warrandyte Rd Bridge	4W
ST01	Stony Creek	Stony Creek	4W
MY31	Stringybark Creek	Stringybark Creek	4W
139	Sweetwater Creek	Sweetwater Creek upstream Nepean Highway	EQ
173	Tanti Creek	Tanti Creek at Esplanade	EQ
131	Tarago River	Tarago River at Morrisons Road - Labertouche	E4W
164	Tasselis Creek	Tasselis Creek at Marine Drive	EQ
079	Tidal Canals	Tidal Canals at Curlew Point	C2T
094	Toomuc Creek	Toomuc Creek at Princes Highway	E4W
122	Warrangine Creek	Warrangine Creek d/s of Frankston-Flinders Road (Bray Street)	EQ
MY21	Watsons Creek	Henley Road	4W
124	Watsons Creek	Watsons Creek at Dandenong-Hastings Road - Somerville	E4W
UY01	Watts River	Healesville-Kinglake Road	2W
UY09	Woori Yallock Creek	Warburton Highway	S4W
150	Yallock Outfall	Yallock Outfall at South Gippsland Highway	EQ
LY01	Yarra River	D/S Prahran Main Drain	S
UY08	Yarra River	Don Road Launching Place (EPA 2916)	MS2W
UY02	Yarra River	Everard Park Canoe Ramp (EPA 2904)	MS4W
LY05	Yarra River	Johnston Street Bridge	S
MY22	Yarra River	Spadonis Reserve D/S Olinda Ck	MSE2W
MY16	Yarra River	Warrandyte Road Bridge	MS2W
EPA4940	Yarra River	Yarra River at Alphington Park (EPA 4940)	MSE2W
MY06	Yarra River	Yarra River at Banksia St Bridge (EPA 3960)	4W
LY08	Yarra River	Yarra River at Princes Bridge	E2W
Code	**Description**		
E	*E.coli* sample taken each time		
S	*E.coli* sample every week over summer sampling (late-Nov to late-March)		

All Current Water Quality Monitoring StreamWatch Site Information

Q	Sampling quarterly (ie approx. every three months)	
2W	Sampling every two weeks	
4W	Sampling every four weeks	
M	Metals sampled every four weeks	
C	Contract site	
2T	Sampled twice a year (ie Nov & February)	

Local government: reserves and rate revenue

(Question No. 43)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of each local government area in Victoria what has been the movement in total and percentage terms, respectively, in the level of reserves and rate revenue in the past twelve months?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

Local government has undergone significant changes in the last 12 months. These changes include:

the completion of the restructure of local government;

the change in the end of the financial year from 30 September to 30 June;

the shortening/lengthening of the 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years for some councils due to the timing of the restructure, which has implications for financial reporting; and

the continued implementation of AAS 27 and the different stages of implementation by council impacts on the information reported. For example, the definition and classification of reserves may be inappropriate in a number of cases, such as the provision for long service leave being reported as a reserve by some councils in previous years.

The above changes present problems in compiling and comparing information on rate revenue and reserves over the past twelve months. This information is most readily sourced from councils' annual reports. However the annual reports for 1994-95 only provide financial information for the entity as at the reporting date, and information for a twelve-month period based on the new council structure is often not available.

To quantify the reductions in rates and charges resulting from restructure, the Office of Local Government surveyed all restructured councils in August 1995 to obtain information on rates and charges for 1993-94 (actual rate revenue) and 1995-96 (budgeted rate revenue) on the basis of the new council structures. The summary of this survey is attached.

ATTACHMENT A *VICTORIAN COUNCILS*
SUMMARY OF RATE CUTS AND OTHER SAVINGS

Municipal Council	Savings Target $m	Rates & Charges 1993/94 $m	Rates & Charges 1995/96 $m	Rates & Charges Cuts $m	Rates & Charges 1995/96 Reduction as a % of 1993/94	1995/96 Budget Additional Savings Used for new Initiatives $m	1995/96 Budget Total Savings $m
Alpine (S)	1.07	4.77	3.79	0.97	20.4%		0.97
Ararat (RC)	1.20	4.17	3.65	0.52	12.5%		0.52
Ballarat (C)	6.50	25.30	20.24	5.06	20.0%	1.68	6.74
Banyule (C)	9.50	32.95	26.36	6.59	20.0%		6.59
Bass Coast (S)	2.65	10.76	8.61	2.15	20.0%		2.15
Baw Baw (S)	3.09	13.70	10.96	2.74	20.0%		2.74
Bayside (C)	8.40	27.20	21.83	5.38	19.8%		5.38
Boroondara (C)	10.00 - 14.00	53.20	42.52	10.68	20.1%		10.68
Brimbank (C)	8.70	38.37	29.50	8.87	23.1%		8.87
Buloke (S)	1.09	4.34	4.11	0.23	5.4%		0.23
Campaspe (S)	3.80	11.36	9.05	2.32	20.4%		2.32
Cardinia (S)	2.90	11.37	9.87	1.50	13.2%	0.50	2.00
Casey (C)	6.80	31.50	24.70	6.80	21.6%		6.80
Central Goldfields (S)	1.12	4.10	3.18	0.92	22.4%		0.92
Colac-Otway (S)	2.40	7.92	6.72	1.20	15.2%	1.40	2.60
Corangamite (S)	2.80	7.40	5.92	1.48	20.0%	0.15	1.63
Darebin (C)	10.00 - 14.00	40.51	33.60	6.91	17.0%	4.02	10.93
Delatite (S)	1.51	7.22	5.91	1.31	18.2%	0.08	1.39
East Gippsland (S)	4.07	14.89	11.81	3.08	20.7%	1.05	4.13
Frankston (C)	4.40	21.64	17.00	4.64	21.4%		4.64
Gannawarra (S)	0.86	4.05	3.20	0.85	21.0%	0.01	0.85
Glen Eira (C)	4.70	31.55	25.96	4.70	14.8%		4.70
Glenelg (S)	3.10	9.79	7.85	1.94	19.8%	0.30	2.24
Golden Plains (S)	0.80	3.40	2.60	0.80	23.5%	0.10	0.90
Greater Bendigo(C)	6.00 - 9.00	29.46	23.57	5.89	20.0%	2.01	7.90
Greater Dandenong (C)	8.70	34.50	27.50	7.00	20.3%		7.00
Greater Geelong (C)	20.60	63.95	43.65	10.30	19.1%		10.30
Greater Shepparton (C)	5.50	18.70	14.95	3.75	20.0%		3.75
Hepburn (S)	1.00	3.48	3.11	0.37	10.6%		0.37
Hindmarsh (S)	0.67	2.75	2.31	0.44	16.1%	0.04	0.48
Hobsons Bay(C)	6.00 - 10.00	28.50	20.71	5.79	21.8%	0.73	6.52
Horsham (RC)	1.25	5.86	5.03	0.82	13.7%		0.82
Hume (C)	10.70	29.80	22.30	7.50	25.2%		7.50
Indigo (S)	1.50	3.60	3.24	0.36	10.0%	0.22	0.58
Kingston (C)	11.50	33.95	27.25	6.71	19.8%	2.26	8.97
Knox(C)	3.10	30.45	25.25	4.20	13.8%		4.20
La Trobe (S)	5.20	23.50	18.90	4.70	19.9%	1.44	6.14
Loddon (S)	1.13	4.39	3.95	0.44	10.0%	0.35	0.79
Macedon Ranges (S)	3.25	11.60	9.80	1.80	15.5%	0.72	2.53
Manningham (C)	4.00	32.80	28.70	4.10	12.5%		4.10
Manbyrnong (C)	5.80	29.00	24.65	4.35	15.0%	0.77	5.12
Marcroncan (C)	5.90	25.41	20.84	4.57	18.0%	0.69	5.27
Melbourne (C)	19.20	94.15	84.02	10.13	10.8%	15.17	25.30
Melton (S)	1.30	12.31	10.49	1.82	14.7%	0.06	1.87
Mildura (RC)	2.74	14.95	12.71	2.24	15.0%		2.24
Mitchell (S)	1.30	7.51	6.26	1.25	16.6%		1.25
Moira (S)	2.25	8.18	6.41	1.77	21.6%	0.26	2.03

ATTACHMENT A

VICTORIAN COUNCILS
SUMMARY OF RATE CUTS AND OTHER SAVINGS

Municipal Council	Savings Target $m	Rates & Charges 1993/94 $m	Rates & Charges 1995/96 $m	Rates & Charges Cuts $m	Rates & Charges 1995/96 Reduction as a % of 1993/94	1995/96 Budget Additional Savings Used for new Initiatives $m	1995/96 Budget Total Savings $m
Monash (C)	8.60	43.00	34.40	8.60	20.0%		8.60
Moonee Valley (C)	7.50	33.00	27.23	5.78	17.5%	4.10	9.87
Moorabool (S)	1.59	7.00	6.43	0.57	8.1%	0.58	1.15
Moreland (C)	6.00 - 10.00	39.32	32.40	6.92	17.6%	0.13	7.05
Mornington Peninsula (S)	11.10	45.10	34.10	11.00	24.4%	0.10	11.10
Mount Alexander (S)	1.47	5.10	4.84	0.26	5.0%		0.26
Moyne (S)	2.00	6.64	5.31	1.33	20.0%	0.30	1.63
Murrindindi (S)	0.96	5.08	4.07	1.02	20.0%		1.02
Nillumbik (S)	2.80	18.10	15.30	2.80	15.5%		2.80
Northern Grampians (S)	1.59	5.01	3.90	1.11	22.2%	0.27	1.38
Port Phillip (C)	15.00 - 20.00	36.00	32.00	4.00	11.1%	14.10	18.10
Pyrenees (S)	0.80	2.76	2.48	0.28	10.1%		0.28
South Gippsland (S)	2.30	10.85	8.65	2.20	20.2%		2.20
Southern Grampians (S)	2.60	8.42	6.80	1.62	19.2%	0.44	2.06
Stonnington (C)	13.00 - 17.00	38.10	26.60	11.50	30.2%	1.50	13.00
Strathbogie (S)	1.07	3.90	3.11	0.79	20.3%		0.79
Surf Coast (S)	2.10 - 2.40	7.22	6.47	0.75	10.4%	0.91	1.66
Swan Hill (RC)	1.93	8.01	6.88	1.13	14.1%	0.35	1.48
Towong (S)	0.64	2.37	1.92	0.45	19.0%	0.05	0.50
Wangaratta (RC)	2.04	7.90	6.32	1.58	20.0%		1.58
Warrnambool (C)	0.85	8.02	7.62	0.40	5.0%	0.15	0.55
Wellington (S)	3.71	15.34	13.02	2.33	15.2%		2.33
West Wimmera (S)	0.49	2.70	2.24	0.46	17.0%		0.46
Whitehorse (C) #	12.60	36.00	29.00	7.00	19.4%		7.00
Whittlesea (C)	2.90	25.20	23.40	1.80	7.1%	1.60	3.40
Wodonga (RC)	0.90	8.08	7.27	0.81	10.0%		0.81
Wyndham (C)	2.70	25.57	22.87	2.70	10.5%		2.70
Yarra (C)	10.00 - 15.00	37.40	29.92	7.48	20.0%		7.48
Yarra Ranges (S)	8.70	39.17	34.73	4.44	11.3%	0.57	5.01
Yarrambiack (S)	1.08	3.54	2.81	0.73	20.6%	0.37	1.09
Total ##	362.87 - 395.17	1492.42	1228.88	263.54	17.7%	59.53	323.07

Water: restructured authorities

(Question No. 44)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of each of the restructured water authorities in Victoria, what has been the movement in total and percentage terms, respectively, in the past 12 months for: (i) staffing; (ii) maintenance expenditure; (iii) revenue; (iv) wages and salary expenditure; and (v) directors' fees?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

The matters raised in this question fall within the administration of my colleague the Deputy Premier and Minister for Agriculture and Resources. On his behalf I am able to provide the following response:

The answer is provided in the following set of tables:

STAFF NUMBERS			
AUTHORITY	1993-94	1994-95	Change
Barwon RWA	427	395	-32
Central Gippsland RWA	233	210	-23
Central Highlands RWA	223	214	-9
Coliban RWA	188	176	-12
East Gippsland RWA	67	64	-3
Glenelg RWA	20	17	-3
Goulburn Valley RWA	122	111	-11
Grampians RWA	103	84	-19
Kiewa Murray RWA	65	65	0
Lower Murray RWA	102	102	0
Mid Goulburn RWA	49	47	-2
Otway RWA	41	45	4
Ovens RWA	57	45	-12
Portland Coast RWA	30	20	-10
South Gippsland RWA	50	50	0
South West RWA	68	63	-5
Western RWA	89	83	-6
Westernport RWA	23	24	1
TOTAL	1957	1815	-142

(ii) Maintenance expenditure

OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE EXPENDITURE ($'000)			
AUTHORITY	1993-94	1994-95	$ Change
Barwon RWA	41223	44023	2800
Central Gippsland RWA	24058	26214	2156
Central Highlands RWA	22228	22984	756
Coliban RWA	19499	18931	(568)
East Gippsland RWA	7632	8469	837
Glenelg RWA	2710	2953	243
Goulburn Valley RWA	11397	15022	3625
Grampians RWA	11747	14886	3139
Kiewa Murray RWA	6587	7300	713
Lower Murray RWA	7833	10852	3019
Mid Goulburn RWA	5754	6260	506
Otway RWA	5096	5533	437
Ovens RWA	6949	7482	533
Portland Coast RWA	2437	2703	266
South Gippsland RWA	6278	6295	17
South West RWA	7838	6715	(1123)
Western RWA	17795	18951	1156
Westernport RWA	4512	4949	437
TOTAL	211573	230522	18949

(iii) Revenue

REVENUE ($'000)			
AUTHORITY	1993-94	1994-95	$ Change
Barwon RWA	68298	69623	1325
Central Gippsland RWA	46141	43742	(2399)
Central Highlands RWA	32418	35783	3365
Coliban RWA	34306	35835	1529
East Gippsland RWA	13577	13742	164
Glenelg RWA	4938	4089	(849)
Goulburn Valley RWA	21350	21789	439
Grampians RWA	16268	16257	(11)
Kiewa Murray RWA	12138	13555	1417
Lower Murray RWA	15943	17523	1580
Mid Goulburn RWA	9635	9910	275
Otway RWA	6501	6793	292
Ovens RWA	11378	11920	542
Portland Coast RWA	5291	4792	(499)
South Gippsland RWA	10546	10138	(408)
South West RWA	11529	13030	1501
Western RWA	30475	31319	844
Westernport RWA	9565	10239	674
TOTAL	360298	370078	9780

(iv) Wages and salaries expenditure

WAGES & SALARIES ($'000)			
AUTHORITY	1993-94	1994-95	$ Change
Barwon RWA	17074	15918	(1156)
Central Gippsland RWA	8141	7988	(153)
Central Highlands RWA	10040	10664	625
Coliban RWA	7789	8197	407
East Gippsland RWA	2262	2631	369
Glenelg RWA	238	331	93
Goulburn Valley RWA	4250	4500	250
Grampians RWA	3678	3000	(679)
Kiewa Murray RWA	2370	2578	209
Lower Murray RWA	4507	5171	663
Mid Goulburn RWA	2003	2184	181
Otway RWA	1706	2175	469
Ovens RWA	1650	1410	(240)
Portland Coast RWA	160	563	403
South Gippsland RWA	1674	1751	77
South West RWA	1313	1217	(97)
Western RWA	3323	2916	(407)
Westernport RWA	984	990	6
TOTAL	73162	74184	1021

(v) Directors' fees

DIRECTORS' FEES ($'000)			
AUTHORITY	1993-94	1994-95	$ Change
Barwon RWA	127	137	10
Central Gippsland RWA	89	132	43
Central Highlands RWA	126	134	8
Coliban RWA	64	110	46
East Gippsland RWA	8	67	59
Glenelg RWA	3	40	37
Goulburn Valley RWA	55	95	40
Grampians RWA	0	68	68
Kiewa Murray RWA	0	53	53
Lower Murray RWA	20	114	94
Mid Goulburn RWA	26	87	61
Otway RWA	8	72	64
Ovens RWA	3	54	51
Portland Coast RWA	2	62	60
South Gippsland RWA	7	59	53
South West RWA	0	114	114
Western RWA	54	96	43
Westernport RWA	20	51	31
TOTAL	611	1545	934

Notes:

The information provided for each authority reflects the operations of the authority and that of its predecessor bodies. Most of the authorities were formed during the 1994-95 financial year, some as late as February 1995. Adjustments and extrapolations have been made to ensure that the information is for full 12-month periods.

Staff numbers refer to full-time equivalents, and include staff employed by predecessor bodies and municipalities on water operations.

Expenditure includes all operations and maintenance expenditure, excluding expenditure on waterway management and other major non-core activities (e.g., Central Highlands RWA timber mill operations).

Revenue is total revenue from the operating statement, including rates and charges, interest revenue, and revenue from developers and other capital contributions.

Wages and salaries include all wages, salaries, on-costs and other non-pecuniary benefits (e.g., motor vehicles) received by employees of the authorities and their predecessor water authorities. Note that some previous authorities did not pay wages and salaries, instead paying lump sums to municipalities as contractors. In addition, some information regarding wages and salaries of predecessor bodies was unavailable. Care should therefore be taken when comparing figures.

Directors' fees include salaries paid to directors, but for 1994-95 do not include reimbursement of expenses. Salaries are set in accordance with guidelines established by the government through the Office of the Public Service Commissioner.

Crown Lands Acts (Amendment) Act

(Question No. 45)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

Since the proclamation of the Crown Lands Acts (Amendment) Act 1994:

(a) How many long-term licences have been granted over river frontages?

(b) In how many cases were flora and fauna surveys undertaken?

(c) What approximate total area of streamside land is now subject to long-term licences?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

(a) All water frontage licences are in the process of being converted from annual to five-year terms. At 30 June 1996, 9011 water frontage licences had been issued for a five-year term out of a total of 9 655 licensed water frontage occupations. The remaining 644 licences are in the process of being changed to the new term.

(b) Statistics on how many of the licensed occupations have been the subject of flora and fauna surveys are not readily available. The occupation of water frontages is to be progressively reviewed over the five-year period of licences to determine the suitability of these areas for continuing licensed occupation, and to ensure adequate protection of the conservation and recreational values of these areas. These reviews are to be conducted by regional catchment and land protection boards.

(c) Information about the precise area of water frontage subject to five-year licences is not readily available, but it is estimated to be between 45 000 and 53 000 hectares.

Conservation and Land Management: redundancies

(Question No. 46)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration, how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

For the purposes of this response 'redundancy' has been defined as the case where a staff member has been retrenched and received a targeted separation package.

One staff member of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (and predecessor entities) was re-employed on a contract of five days to perform a high priority task. The redundancy payment had been $21 897.

One member of staff of another government department was employed through a consulting firm. This contract has now ceased. The amount of the redundancy is not on the records of any department, agency or authority within my administration.

Other agencies and authorities within the Conservation and Land Management portfolio have advised a nil response to this question.

Planning and Local Government: redundancies

(Question No. 47)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

During the financial years 1991-92 to 1995-96 agencies within the Planning and Local Government portfolio have not re-employed under contract any persons who have previously been made redundant.

Tertiary Education and Training: redundancies

(Question No. 48)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training is:

Nil. This response does not cover staff of TAFE institutes or universities, which are self-governing bodies responsible for their own day-to-day administration.

Arts: redundancies

(Question No. 49)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for the Arts:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration, how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for the Arts is:

No persons made redundant in agencies under the minister's administration were subsequently re-employed under contract in the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96.

Roads and Ports: redundancies

(Question No. 50)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Roads and Ports:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer is:

The following information is provided in respect of the re-employment under contract by the Department of Infrastructure's Office of Transport and the relevant roads and ports agencies of persons who were made redundant and received targeted separation packages:

Year	Number Re-employed
1992-93	Nil
1993-94	Nil
1994-95	Nil
1995-96	Nil

Treasury and Finance: redundancies

(Question No. 51)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In relation to each agency under the Treasurer's administration, how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

Department of Treasury and Finance and agencies — No employees that have been made redundant have subsequently been re-employed.

Aged Care: redundancies

(Question No. 53)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Aged Care:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Aged Care) — The answer is:

Aged Care is part of the Department of Human Services and the figures provided below relate to the whole department.

Redundancy payments have applied in hospital and aged care services for a number of years. Details regarding re-employment of officers in receipt of redundancy payments for the external agencies is not readily available and would involve considerable administrative expense to collect.

Redundancy payments for department-run services were introduced by government in November 1992. Actual targeted separation packages (redundancies) were not applied until the 1993-94 financial year. The figures relate to the year the officer was re-employed.

Re-employment of redundant officers only occurs in limited circumstances to fill short-term vacancies where technical skills are required to assist in the transition to new service delivery arrangements, or to positions which receive a lower remuneration. The position initially vacated by the redundant officer is never refilled and full cost savings are therefore achieved.

Year	Total number of persons re-employed (EFT)	Total amount of redundancy payments made
1993-94	8	$69 989
1994-95	4	$53 183
1995-96	8	$103 811

Multicultural Affairs: redundancies

(Question No. 54)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs):

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs is:

I am informed that the answer to this question has been incorporated within the Department of Premier and Cabinet response to parliamentary question no. 55.

Premier and Cabinet: redundancies

(Question No. 55)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration, how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

Department of Premier and Cabinet

No persons made redundant from the Department of Premier and Cabinet have been re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96.

Office of the Public Service Commissioner

No persons made redundant from the Office of the Public Service Commissioner have been re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96.

Office of the Ombudsman

No persons made redundant from the Office of the Ombudsman have been re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96.

Office of the Governor

No persons made redundant from the Office of the Governor have been re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96.

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

No persons were made redundant in the Victorian Auditor-General's Office during the financial years 1991-92 to 1995-96.

The Victorian Relief Committee

No persons made redundant from the Victorian Relief Committee have been re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96.

Attorney-General, Fair Trading, and Women's Affairs: redundancies

(Question Nos 57, 59 and 62)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Attorney-General, the Minister for Fair Trading, and the Minister for Women's Affairs:

In relation to each agency under the Attorney-General's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Attorney-General, the Minister for Fair Trading, and the Minister for Women's Affairs is:

One person employed within the Office of Correctional Services received a targeted separation package in 1994 and was re-employed by the Office of the Public Advocate. The value of the redundancy paid to this officer was $29 121.60.

It should be noted that receipt of a targeted separation package does not preclude re-employment.

Other agencies in the portfolios have not re-employed staff who have been made redundant.

Education: redundancies

(Question No. 58)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The phrase 'persons made redundant' applies to officers who received targeted separation packages and to executives who had their contracts terminated. No re-employment restrictions apply to those who have received the targeted separation package and applicants for employment in the Victorian public sector are not asked to divulge whether they have received such a package. Accordingly, no records have been maintained concerning the re-employment of recipients of targeted separation packages.

Industry, Science and Technology: redundancies

(Question No. 60)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration, how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

I am advised that in respect of each agency under my administration there is no record of anyone who has been made redundant being subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96.

Tourism: redundancies

(Question No. 61)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Tourism:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration, how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

Tourism Victoria

Tourism Victoria has not re-employed any persons who have been made redundant.

Australian Grand Prix Corporation

The corporation has not re-employed any persons who have been made redundant.

Agriculture and Resources: redundancies

(Question No. 63)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Agriculture and Resources:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration, how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources is:

For the purposes of this response 'redundancy' has been defined as the case where a staff member has been retrenched and received a targeted separation package.

One staff member of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (and predecessor entities) was re-employed on a contract of five days to perform a high priority task. The redundancy payment had been $21 897.

One member of staff of another government department was employed through a consulting firm. This contract has now ceased. The amount of the redundancy is not on the records of any department, agency or authority within my administration.

Other agencies and authorities within the Agriculture and Resources portfolio have advised a nil response to this question.

Police and Emergency Services, and Corrections: redundancies

(Question Nos 64 and 65)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Corrections, and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Corrections and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services is:

Two employees of the Country Fire Authority received packages and were re-employed. One took a voluntary departure package, was re-employed for one day, and was terminated when it was realised that he had taken a VDP. The value of the redundancy in this case was $11 214. The other received a targeted separation package in December 1995 and was re-employed as a casual in January 1996. The value of the redundancy paid to this latter employee was $7393.

One person employed within the Office of Correctional Services received a targeted separation package in 1994 and was re-employed by the Office of the Public Advocate. The value of the redundancy paid to this officer was $29 121.60.

It should be noted that receipt of a targeted separation package does not preclude re-employment.

Other agencies in the portfolios have not re-employed staff who have been made redundant.

Transport: redundancies

(Question No. 66)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Transport:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Transport is:

The Department of Infrastructure has advised that the former Department of Transport had not re-employed any staff under contract who had been made redundant and received a targeted separation package during the period from 3 October 1992 to 30 June 1996.

The Public Transport Corporation has advised that it was necessary to re-engage 27 former employees on short-term temporary contracts to meet specific emergency safe-working and operational requirements. The contractors had previously been made redundant from the PTC and the total redundancy amount involved was $355 658.

Small Business: redundancies

(Question No. 67)

THE HON. B.T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Small Business:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration, how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer is:

In relation to each agency under my administration no staff receiving redundancy packages have been subsequently re-employed under contract.

Sport: redundancies

(Question No. 68)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Sport:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration:

(a) how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96; and

(b) what was the total value of redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Sport is:

Sport, Recreation and Racing		
1992-93	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1993-94	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1994-95	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1995-96	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
Flinders Park		
1992-93	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1993-94	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1994-95	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1995-96	(a) Nil	(b) Nil

Victorian Institute of Sport		
1992-93	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1993-94	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1994-95	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1995-96	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
Professional Boxing Control Board		
1992-93	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1993-94	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1994-95	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1995-96	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
Martial Arts Control Board		
1992-93	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1993-94	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1994-95	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1995-96	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
Greyhound Racing Control Board		
1992-93	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1993-94	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1994-95	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1995-96	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
Harness Racing Board		
1992-93	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1993-94	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1994-95	(a) Nil	(b) Nil
1995-96	(a) Nil	(b) Nil

Industry, Science and Technology: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 69)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

I am advised that:

(i) The selection process involved a request to tender issued to selected organisations that had responded to the department of finance's general expression of interest for the outsourcing of Victorian government information technology.

(ii) The cost involved is $10.1 million over five years.

(iii) Fujitsu Australia.

(iv) The outsourcing contract contains performance measures in the form of service levels to be achieved in the delivery of services and it also provides for penalties where the specified service levels are not achieved.

(v) The business case indicates a small monetary saving over the period of the contract when compared to retaining the services in-house.

Arts: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 70)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for the Arts:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for the Arts is:

No outsourcing of information technology occurred within the minister's administration in the period 3 October 1992 to 30 June 1996.

Treasury and Finance: redundancies

(Question No. 72)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In relation to each agency under the Treasurer's administration, how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

I refer the honourable member to my response to question no. 51.

Health: redundancies

(Question No. 75)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1994-95 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

Health is part of the Department of Human Services and the figures provided below relate to the whole department.

Redundancy payments have applied in agencies administered by the department for a number of years. Details regarding re-employment of officers in receipt of redundancy payments for the external agencies are not readily available and would involve considerable administrative expense to collect.

Redundancy payments for department-run services were introduced by government in November 1992. Actual targeted separation packages (redundancies) were not applied until the 1993-94 financial year. The figures relate to the year the officer was re-employed.

Re-employment of redundant officers only occurs in limited circumstances to fill short-term vacancies where technical skills are required to assist in the transition to new service delivery arrangements, or to positions which receive a lower remuneration. The position initially vacated by the redundant officer is never refilled and full cost savings are therefore achieved.

Year	Total number of persons re-employed (EFT)	Total amount of redundancy payments made
1993-94	8	$69 989
1994-95	4	$53 183
1995-96	8	$103 811

Planning and Local Government: redundancies

(Question No. 76)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

This question was also asked as question no. 47, which has been answered.

Water: authorities' subsidies

(Question No. 77)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

What is the justification for the subsidy paid by South East Water Ltd and City West Water Ltd to Yarra Valley Water Ltd and is this subsidy planned to continue?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

The matters raised in this question fall within the administration of my colleague the Treasurer. On his behalf I am able to provide the following advice —

> On the separation of the retail water businesses from Melbourne Water Corporation it was necessary to introduce payments between the companies in order to maintain uniform pricing throughout the metropolitan area and ensure that the companies all had the ability to earn a similar return on capital. At present payments of rates revenue are made from City West Water Ltd to both Yarra Valley Water Ltd and South East Water Ltd. Payments between the retail companies will continue to be necessary while property values remain as the basis of charges for water. The government has a policy that water charges will increasingly reflect the amount of water used, and decreasingly reflect property valuations.

Conservation and Land Management: staff

(Question No. 78)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of each of the past four financial years:

(a) What has been the total number of staff in the National Parks Service?

(b) What has been the number of full-time equivalent National Parks Service staff employed in each national and state park?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

(a) The total staff number for the National Parks Service at 30 June 1996 was 514. This includes professional, administrative, technical and works staff. It includes staff who are responsible for the management of parks and reserves listed under the schedules of the National Parks Act 1975 and other conservation reserves established under other acts. Prior to the 1995-96 financial year many staff including works crews were funded corporately and it is not possible to provide comparable data for the previous financial years.

(b) The total effective full-time (EFT) ranger figure for the 1995-96 financial year is 213.8. The EFTs for the previous financial years are:

1994-95	200
1993-94	197.5
1992-93	180.7

Note:

These numbers apply to parks and reserves listed in the schedules of the National Parks Act 1975.

Conservation and Land Management: staff

(Question No. 79)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

Alpine Resorts Commission (year ending 31 Oct)		
Year	**SES**	**%**
1992	4	4.93
1993	3	4.48
1994	3	4.61
1995	3	4.98
Environment Protection Authority		
1992-93	6	2.02
1993-94	9	2.02
1994-95	9	2.02
1995-96	7	1.98
Melbourne Parks and Waterways		
1993-94	10	3.67
1994-95	9	3.13
1995-96	9	2.74
Royal Botanic Gardens		
1992-93	1	1.03
1993-94	1	0.99
1994-95	1	1.19
1995-96	1	1.31
Land Conservation Council		
1992-93	1	6.6
1993-94	1	8.3
1994-95	1	9.1
1995-96	1	9.1
Office of the Valuer-General		
1992-93	1	1
1993-94	1	1
1994-95	1	1.7
1995-96	2	4
Office of the Surveyor-General		
1992-93	2	4.26
1993-94	3	5.67
1994-95	3	2.67
1995-96	4	

Information on the numbers of staff employed at SES level in the Conservation and Land Management portfolio that were part of the former Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has been published in the relevant annual reports for those years.

All other agencies and authorities reported a nil response.

Industry, Science and Technology: staff

(Question No. 80)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

Year	Executives	Total Staff	Percentage
Department of State Development (includes former Department of Business and Employment)			
30.06.93	64	1111	5.8
30.06.94	64	991	6.5
30.06.95	69	1014	6.8
30.06.96	53	1090	4.9
Employee Relations Commission of Victoria			
30.06.93	1	37.6	2.6
30.06.94	1	32	3
30.06.95	1	31	3
30.06.96	1	30	3.3
Exhibition Trustees			
30.06.93	1	25	4
30.06.94	1	19	5.25
30.06.95	1	18	5.6
30.06.96	N/A	(Exhibition Trustees abolished as at 1 April 1996)	
Melbourne Exhibition Centre Trust			
30.06.95	1	6	16.5
30.06.96	1	3	33.3

Tertiary Education and Training: senior staff

(Question No. 81)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training is:

Date	Total Staff	Total SES	Percentage
Office of Training and Further Education			
30 June 1993	199	22	11.0%
30 June 1994	171	17	9.94%
30 June 1995	190 *	18	9.47%
30 June 1996	197 *	18	9.14%

*Increase in numbers from 1994 resulted from the transfer of staff from RMIT and OTFE managing a number of Commonwealth funded project activities.

Office of the Secretary — Higher Education			
30 June 1993	40	9	22.5%
30 June 1994	36	8	22.2%
30 June 1995	43	9	20.9%
30 June 1996	44	10	22.7%
Adult Migrant Education Services — Staff figures do not include teaching staff seconded from schools			
30 June 1993	340	Nil	Nil
30 June 1994	342	Nil	Nil
30 June 1995	325	1	.30%
30 June 1996	351	1	.30%

This response does not cover staff of TAFE institutes or universities, which are self-governing bodies responsible for their own day-to-day administration.

The response also does not address staff members at 30 June 1992 as this date preceded the election of the current government.

Arts: staff

(Question No. 82)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for the Arts:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for the Arts is:

Agency	Financial year	No. of executive staff	Total no. of staff (FTE at year end)	% of executive staff
Arts Victoria	92-93	2	20	10.0
	93-94	2	25	8.0
	94-95	2	25	8.0
	95-96	4	41	9.8
Public Record Office	92-93	1	41	2.4
	93-94	1	43	2.3
	94-95	1	42	2.4
	95-96	1	40	2.5
Museum of Victoria	92-93	4	253	1.6
	93-94	4	301	1.3
	94-95	5	272	1.8
	95-96	5	298	1.7
National Gallery of Victoria	92-93	3	171	1.7
	93-94	3	187	1.6
	94-95	4	199	2.0
	95-96	4	216	1.8
State Library of Victoria	92-93	3	296	1.0
	93-94	4	296	1.3
	94-95	4	290	1.4
	95-96	4	295	1.3
Geelong Performing Arts Centre	92-93	1	19	5.3
	93-94	1	21	4.8
	94-95	1	21	4.8
	95-96	1	24	4.2

Victorian Arts Centre Trust	92-93	8	410	1.9
	93-94	9	396	2.3
	94-95	9	396	2.3
	95-96	9	370	2.4

Treasury and Finance: senior staff

(Question No. 83)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Finance:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration, what has been the total number and percentage respectively of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

Year	SES/Exec. officers	%
Department of Treasury and Finance		
1995-96	101	19.8
Former Department of Finance		
1994-95	30	6
1993-94	34	4
1992-93	35	3

The Victorian Workcover Authority and the former Health and Safety Organisation merged on 2 July 1996. The former Health and Safety Organisation was the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for State Development. The merged organisation, the Victorian Workcover Authority, is the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Finance. Answers are given separately for the authority and the former Health and Safety Organisation as follows:

Year	SES/Exec. officers	%
Victorian Workcover Authority		

The total number of Senior Executive Service or equivalent level staff employed under contract compared with the total number of staff of the Victorian Workcover Authority is:

1995-96	22	8
1994-95	19	7
1993-94	22	8
1992-93	33	6

Year	SES/Exec. officers	%
Former Health and Safety Organisation*		
1995-96	8**	2
1994-95	6	2
1993-94	8	2
1992-93	5	1

* Figures supplied by the Department of State Development

** One position temporary

Roads and Ports: staff

(Question No. 84)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Roads and Ports:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer is:

The information being sought by the honourable member may be obtained from the data published in the annual reports of the former Department of Transport and relevant current agencies within the Roads and Ports portfolio.

Gaming: senior staff

(Question No. 85)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Gaming:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

The total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, in each of the past four years, are as follows:

Financial year	Total staff numbers	SES staff numbers	% SES staff
30-06-93	101	10	9.9%
30-06-94	135.8 *	9	6.6%
30-06-95	130.7 *	6	4.6%
30-06-96	123.1 *	6	4.9%

* full-time equivalents.

Planning and Local Government: senior staff

(Question No. 86)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The following table sets out the required data for the Department of Infrastructure (excluding the Public Transport Corporation and Vicroads).

	Total staff	Executive officers	Executive officers (percentage)
Department of Infrastructure			
30 June 1996	785	49	6.24
Department of Planning and Development			
30 June 1995	1821	56	3.07
30 June 1994	2037	58	2.85
30 June 1993	2417	57	2.36
Building Control Commission			
30 June 1996	47	4	8.6
30 June 1995	34	3	8.8
Docklands Authority			
30 June 1996	11	4	36
30 June 1995	7	3	43
30 June 1994	8	4	50
30 June 1993	9	4	44
Melbourne City Link Authority			
30 June 1996			
30 June 1995	12	5	42
Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainers Registration Board			
30 June 1996	29	1	3.4
30 June 1995	29	1	3.4
30 June 1994	29	1	3.4
30 June 1993	29	1	3.4
Urban Land Authority			
30 June 1996	45	6	13.3
30 June 1995	39	6	15.4
30 June 1994	38	5	13.2
30 June 1993	41	6	14.6

Multicultural Affairs: senior staff

(Question No. 89)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs is:

I am informed that the answer to this question is incorporated within the Department of Premier and Cabinet response to question no. 91.

Premier and Cabinet: senior staff

(Question No. 91)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

In respect of each agency under the Premier's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

Agency	Financial year	No. of SES staff	%
Victorian Auditor-General's Office	1992-93	20	12.4
	1993-94	19	13.0
	1994-95	19	13.5
	1995-96	20	13.5
Office of the Governor	1992-93	1	3.4
	1993-94	1	4.0
	1994-95	1	3.8
	1995-96	1	3.8
Office of the Ombudsman	1992-93	3	12.0
	1993-94	3	13.0
	1994-95	2	9.0
	1995-96	2	9.0
Office of the Public Service Commissioner	1992-93	7	25.0
	1993-94	9	31.0
	1994-95	10	25.0
	1995-96	7	20.0
Department of Premier and Cabinet	1992-93	34	14.5
	1993-94	24	12.6
	1994-95	17	9.7
	1995-96	16	12.2
Office of Chief Parliamentary Counsel	1995-96	4	14.0

Prior to 1 July 1995, the Office of Chief Parliamentary Counsel fell within the responsibilities of the Attorney-General.

The Victorian Relief Committee

There have been no SES or equivalent level staff employed by the Victorian Relief Committee during the past four years.

Attorney-General, Fair Trading and Women's Affairs: senior staff

(Question Nos 93, 95 and 98)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Attorney-General, the Minister for Fair Trading, and the Minister for Women's Affairs:

In respect of each agency under the Attorney-General's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Attorney-General, the Minister for Fair Trading, and the Minister for Women's Affairs is:

Please note that employment statistics in the Department of Justice are kept in financial years, not calendar years.

With regard to the numbers of senior executive staff within the Department of Justice, only executive officers who have signed executive contracts have been included. Agencies which have no SES staff or equivalent, other than the statutory head, have not been included.

AGENCY		1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96
*Department of Justice	SES staff Total staff % staff	53 5478 0.97%	52 4705 1.11%	56 4713 1.19%	53 4158 1.27%
Victoria Legal Aid	SES staff❶ Total staff❷ (include. P/T) % staff	7 367 (47) 1.91%	8 395 (61) 2.03%	8 391 (70) 2.05%	7 388 (71) 1.80%
Office of Public Prosecutions	SES staff Total staff % staff	4 151 2.65%	4 144 2.78%	5 137 3.65%	4 148 2.70%
❶Victorian Financial Institutions Commission	SES staff Total staff % staff	6 42 14.29%	5 34 14.71%	5 30 16.67%	4 30 13.33%
* Figures for all five portfolios are included within the Department. Agencies with SES staff are listed separately above.					
❶ The Chief Executive officer has not been included in these figures					
❷ Actual staff numbers, not effective full-time positions					
❸ SES equivalent has been defined as senior managers and the Chief Executive Officer of the Commission.					

Education: senior staff

(Question No. 94)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

To provide the information requested would require an inordinate amount of time and resources, which are not available. Mr Pullen may wish to submit a more focused and specific question on the matter.

Tourism: senior staff

(Question No. 97)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Tourism:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration, what has been the total number and percentage respectively of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

Tourism Victoria	**1992-93**	**1993-94**	**1994-95**	**1995-96**
SES or equivalent staff	3	7	8	8
SES or equivalent percentage of all staff	3.1%	6.8%	7.2%	6.7%

Australian Grand Prix Corporation*	**1995**	**1996**
SES or equivalent staff	3	6
SES or equivalent percentage of all staff	13%	16%

* There are no figures for 1993 and 1994 given that the corporation was not formed until 25 October 1994.

Agriculture and Resources: senior staff

(Question No. 99)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Agriculture and Resources:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources is:

Agriculture and Resources *(for the reporting period Agriculture and Resources comprises the former Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and the former Department of Food and Agriculture)*

	SES	**%**
Agriculture and Resources *(for the reporting period Agriculture and Resources comprises the former Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and the former Department of Food and Agriculture)*		
1991-92	25	1.2
1992-93	22	1.2
1993-94	22	1.3
1994-95	21	1.2

Daratech Pty Ltd

1991-92	3	4.4
1992-93	2	2.3
1993-94	2	2.5
1994-95	1	1.9

Energy and Minerals *(Energy and Minerals was created in late 1992 and merged with the former Department of Agriculture in February 1995)*

1993-94	10	5.3
1994-95	10	5.9

Melbourne Market Authority

1991-92	2	5
1992-93	3	6
1993-94	4	8
1994-95	4	11

Victorian Dairy Industry Authority

1991-92	Not available	Not available
1992-93	7	7
1993-94	6	7.5
1994-95	5	7.7

Victorian Meat Authority *(the Victorian Meat Authority was established in July 1993)*

1991-92	Not applicable	Not applicable
1992-93	Not applicable	Not applicable
1993-94	1	25
1994-95	1	25

Melbourne Water *(the former Melbourne Water ceased 31.12.94 and was replaced by four new bodies, including the new Melbourne Water, from 1.1.95)*

1991-92	85	2
1992-93	53	2
1993-94	41	4
1994-95T40	5	

City West Water Ltd *(commenced operations 1 January 1995)*

1994-95	4	1.2

Yarra Valley Water Ltd *(commenced operations 1 January 1995)*

1994-95	6	1.24

Note:
South East Water reported that it does not employ staff on a senior executive service basis and is unable to directly compare its total staff numbers (of 508 at 30.6.95 and 473 at 30.6.96) to senior executive service classifications.
Other agencies within the portfolio have advised that they do not employ staff at senior executive service or equivalent level.

Police and Emergency Services, and Corrections: senior staff

(Question Nos 100 and 101)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years.

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections is:

Please note that employment statistics in the Department of Justice are kept in financial years, not calendar years.

With regard to the numbers of senior executive staff within the Department of Justice, only executive officers who have signed executive contracts have been included. Agencies which have no SES staff or equivalent, other than the statutory head, have not been included.

AGENCY		1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96
*Department of Justice	SES staff	53	52	56	53
	Total staff	5478	4705	4713	4158
	% staff	0.97%	1.11%	1.19%	1.27%
Metropolitan Fire Brigade	SES staff❶	29	26	27	26
	Total staff	2029	1892	1841	1785
	% staff	1.43%	1.37%	1.47%	1.46%
Country Fire Authority	SES staff❶	14	14	15	16
	Total staff	824	776	799	821
	% staff	1.70%	1.80%	1.88%	1.95%
Victoria Police	SES staff	25	23	24	26
	Total staff	11902	12075	12285	12489
	% staff	0.21%	0.19%	0.20%	0.21%

* Figures for all five portfolios are included within the Department. Agencies with SES staff are listed separately above.

❶ Senior managers/CDR and above.

❷ Includes only those staff who have signed an Executive officer contract or are appointed by the Governor-in-Council on terms equivalent to those on a contract.

Transport: senior staff

(Question No. 102)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Transport:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Transport is:

The information sought by the honourable member is readily available from the annual reports of the former Department of Transport and the Public Transport Corporation. Since October 1992 the annual reports have published information relating to staff numbers, including executive officers/senior management.

Small Business: senior staff

(Question No. 103)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Small Business:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration, what has been the total number and percentage respectively of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer is:

In relation to each agency under my administration, the following information is offered :

30 June 1993	**Executive Staff (*1)**	**%**	**Total Staff (*2)**
Dept. of Bus. and Emp.	7	20.1	34.8
Small Business Victoria	6	10.9	54.6
Liquor Licensing Commission	0	0	74.2
30 June 1994			
Dept. of Bus. and Emp.	4	12.5	31.9
Small Business Victoria	6	11.9	50.2
Liquor Licensing Commission	0	0	72.2
30 June 1995			
Dept. of Bus. and Emp.	4	11.3	35.1
Small Business Victoria	5	11.4	43.5
Liquor Licensing Commission	0	0	61.4
30 June 1996			
Dept. of State Development	5	15.6	32.0
Small Business Victoria	5	14.0	35.5
Liquor Licensing Commission	0	0	59.2

*1 Executive and equivalent level staff, excluding statutory appointees.

*2 Staff, in full-time equivalents, on payroll as at 30 June each year.

Sport: senior staff

(Question No. 104)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Sport:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Sport is:

The type of information being sought is readily available from successive annual reports of the following bodies:

Sport, Recreation and Racing
Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism
National Tennis Centre Trust
Victorian Institute of Sport
Greyhound Racing Control Board
Harness Racing Board

Planning and Local Government: senior staff

(Question No. 107)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The answer to this question is the same as the answer to question no. 86.

Treasury and Finance: senior staff

(Question No. 108)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In respect of each agency under the Treasurer's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

The information sought by the honourable member is available from the annual reports of the Department of Treasury and Finance and from the respective annual reports of the agencies within the portfolio for each of the financial years.

Attorney-General, Fair Trading and Women's Affairs: information technology outsourcing

(Questions Nos 112, 188 and 189)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Attorney-General, the Minister for Fair Trading, and the Minister for Women's Affairs:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Attorney-General, the Minister for Fair Trading and the Minister for Women's Affairs is:

The information to respond to this question is contained in a table on the following two pages.

It should be noted that 'outsourcing' is defined as 'an arrangement whereby an external provider assumes responsibility for performing agency functions at a pre-determined price and according to pre-defined performance criteria'.

In determining what constitutes 'information technology', aspects of technology such as communications, training, servicing of existing technology and data entry have not been included.

It should be noted that details of information technology outsourcing under the heading 'Information Systems and Technology Directorate' on the attached table have also been included in the answer provided on behalf of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections as the directorate provides corporate services to the Department of Justice.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL, MINISTER FOR FAIR TRADING and MINISTER FOR WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

SERVICE	SELECTION PROCESS	SELECTED CONTRACTOR	TOTAL COST	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	ESTIMATED BENEFITS AND SAVINGS
***INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY DIRECTORATE**					
Client Services - Courts and Prisons computer hardware and software support (country locations).	Two year contract entered into in July 1995 on the basis of competitive quotations	Communications Networks International	$240,000	4 hour response	Budget Neutral - service enhancement
Client Services - Computer hardware maintenance and software support (Metropolitan sites)	Two year contract entered into in July 1995 on the basis of competitive quotations	Corporate Computer Sales	$174,000	4 hour response	Service provision while maintaining budget neutral position.
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S LEGISLATION AND POLICY BRANCH					
Software support to Unix and Uniplex System	Selection based on specialised knowledge and expertise and advice from ISTD.	Integration Design P/L	$10,000 for period 21/1/93 to 25/8/94 for software support.	Satisfactory completion of terms of contract	Specialised nature of skills not available internally. Critical to daily operation of system.
VICTORIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION					
System administration and facilities management	Competitive tendering	Sun Service	$823,800 (plus add-ons if required)	The VEC has prepared a project plan for the delivery of key services. Sun Service report each week to the VEC's IT Steering Committee. There can be monthly review of Sun Service compliance with the contract and with output targets.	Minimisation of computer failure. The VEC cannot afford computer failure during critical election periods. Cost of outsourcing considered to be more economical. the VEC will have access to a wider range of computer expertise which will assist in future business planning. A single point of service delivery will improve accountability.

* Provision of services to all portfolios within Department of Justice.

Local government: street lighting

(Question No. 113)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect to the obligation of new municipalities relating to street lighting, what are the details in each case of any increased costs incurred by municipalities following disaggregation of the former State Electricity Commission of Victoria for — (i) provision of new street lighting; (ii) care and maintenance of street lighting; and (iii) energy supplied for street lighting?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

There is no requirement under the Local Government Act 1989 for information on the cost of street lighting to be provided to the Minister for Planning and Local Government or the Office of Local Government by each council. The Office of Local Government has no data related to the honourable member's question and it is considered that the collection of the data would be too voluminous and costly to obtain from all councils.

SEC privatisation

(Question No. 114)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In relation to the $1.8 million campaign to privatise the State Electricity Commission:

(a) What was the total cost of advertising undertaken in the — (i) daily press; (ii) suburban press; and (iii) rural press?

(b) What was the total cost of operating the Electricity Open Line, indicating the total number of staff employed and total staffing costs?

(c) What was the total number of telephone calls received on the Electricity Open Line, the number of leaflets mailed out as a result of enquiries, and the total postage cost?

(d) What was the number of leaflets printed as part of this campaign, indicating the — (i) cost of production; (ii) cost of distribution; and (iii) number issued to date?

(e) Was Professor Bob Officer paid to participate in the advertisements?

(f) Was Professor Michael Beesly paid to participate in the advertisements?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

As part of the process for reforming the electricity supply industry, of which privisation has been a component commencing in the first half of 1995, a communication program was implemented and is ongoing to explain the features of the reforms in the community.

Answers for the 1 January 1995 to 30 June 1995 period on this basis are:

(a) Media placement costs were —

(i) $231 601

(ii) $107 269

(iii) $45 037

(b) Expenditure incurred on a fee-for-service basis in providing the Electricity Open Line was $134 323 as at 30 June 1995. Staffing numbers fluctuated at any particular time depending on the number of calls received.

(c) To 30 June 1995, 5 877 calls. Extensive briefing material, which is publicly available, was provided to the Electricity Open Line. The distribution cost of sending this material in response to enquiries from the open line totalled $847 for the same number of items.

(d) Amongst material which was publicly available and most commonly sought through enquiries was the brochure titled 'The Privatisation of the SEC: Your 20 Questions Answered'. A total of 15 250 brochures had been printed for general distribution. The cost to print the 20-page brochure was $7175. In addition to the Electricity Open Line, copies of the brochure, together with other material, have been made publicly available through a vast range of source localities including electricity entities, the Department of Treasury and Finance, and Information Victoria.

(e) No.

(f) No.

Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority: meetings

(Question No. 117)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

What were the dates of all meetings of the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, including the details of members' attendances at each of those meetings?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

The dates of all meetings of the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, including full meetings, special meetings and meetings conducted by telephone, as well as the details of attendance by members at each of those meetings, are provided in the following tables. Table 1 records attendances from inception of the authority until 30 June 1995 and table 2 records attendances for the 1995-96 financial year. The symbol 'X' has been used to indicate the attendance of a member on a particular date.

TABLE 1 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF THE VICTORIAN CASINO & GAMING AUTHORITY FROM INCEPTION, 3 JUNE 1994, TO 30 JUNE 1995

Date	Richards	Edwards	Bosch	Cook	Dwyer	McMeckan	Oddy	Schein'l	Church
3 Jun	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
9 Jun	X	X		X		X	X		
15 Jun	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
24 Jun	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
12 Jul	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
26 Jul	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
8 Aug	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
9 Aug	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
23 Aug	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
13 Sep	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
27 Sep	X	X	X	X			X		X
10 Oct	X		X	X	X		X		X
18 Oct	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
28 Oct	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4 Nov	X	X	X	X		X		X	
10 Nov	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
17 Nov	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
22 Nov	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
12 Dec	X	X	X		X	X	X		
20 Dec	X	X	X		X	X	X		
17 Jan	X	X	X			X	X	X	
30 Jan	X	X	X			X		X	
10 Feb	X	X	X					X	X
21 Feb	X	X	X			X		X	X
7 Mar	X	X	X			X			X
21 Mar	X	X	X			X		X	X
4 Apr	X	X	X			X		X	X
18 Apr	X	X	X			X		X	
2 May	X	X	X			X		X	
16 May	X					X		X	X
30 May	X	X				X		X	X
20 Jun	X		X			X		X	X
Total	**32**	**28**	**26**	**18**	**16**	**28**	**19**	**23**	**13**

TABLE 2 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF THE VICTORIAN CASINO & GAMING AUTHORITY 1995-96 FINANCIAL YEAR									
Date	Richards	Edwards	Bosch	Church	Gribben	McMeckan	Schein'l	Swan	Walter
4 Jul		X	X	X	X		X		
25 Jul	X	X	X		X	X	X		
7 Aug	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
15 Aug	X	X	X	X		X	X		
29 Aug	X	X	X	X		X	X		
1 Sep	X	X	X	X		X	X		
5 Sep	X	X	X	X		X	X		
19 Sep	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
29 Sep	X	X	X			X			
4 Oct	X		X	X	X	X			
11 Oct	X			X	X	X			
17 Oct		X		X	X	X			
23 Oct	X		X	X		X			
27 Oct	X		X	X	X	X			
1 Nov	X		X		X	X			
21 Nov	X	X	X	X	X	X			
6 Dec	X	X	X	X	X	X			
19 Dec	X	X	X			X			
16 Jan	X		X	X	X	X			
6 Feb	X	X	X	X		X			
20 Feb	X	X	X	X	X	X			
5 Mar	X	X	X	X	X	X			
18 Mar	X	X	X	X		X			
9 Apr	X	X	X	X	X	X			
23 Apr	X	X	X	X	X	X			
6 May	X		X	X	X	X			
21 May	X	X	X	X	X	X			
31 May	X		X	X		X			X
4 Jun	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
18 Jun	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
24 Jun	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Total	29	23	29	27	21	30	8	3	3

Inter-departmental Ethnic Services Committee

(Question No. 118)

Hon. C. J. HOGG asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs:

In relation to the government's Inter-departmental Ethnic Services Committee:

(a) How often has the committee met since its inception in 1993?

(b) What is the composition of the committee in respect of — (i) the departments represented; and (ii) personnel attending meetings?

(c) What decisions have been taken by the committee?

(d) Which, if any, of those decisions have been implemented?

(e) Who is the president and/or chairperson, or secretary of the committee?

(f) Does the committee keep any minutes or records of its deliberations?

(g) What have been the annual costs in maintaining and servicing the committee?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs is:

IDESC has been renamed the Inter-departmental Multicultural Services Advisory Committee (IMSAC) to reflect the government's multicultural policy.

In accordance with the VMC's the *Multicultural Victoria Inquiry Report* recommendations, IMSAC has been expanded to 14 members. The terms of reference have also been amended to reflect government's multicultural policy. The committee meets every month to discuss government's initiatives, and to implement and coordinate policy between departments.

(a) The committee has met on 27 occasions since its inception in 1993.

(b) Seven departments are represented.

(i) They are:

1. Department of Treasury and Finance
   A representative from Treasury
2. Department of Education — representatives from:
   Broadening Horizons Through Language Team —
   Directorate of School Education
   Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES)
   Office of Training and Further Education (OTFE)
3. Department of Justice — representatives from:
   Office of Correctional Services Commissioner
   Victoria Police Centre
   Office of Women's Affairs
4. Department of State Development — representatives from:
   Employment Branch
   Sport and Recreation Victoria
5. Department of Human Services — representatives from:
   Primary Care Division
   Office of Housing
   Office of Youth Affairs
6. Department of Infrastructure
   A representative from the Office of Local Government.

The Victorian Multicultural Commission attends the meetings as an observer. IMSAC has 14 members drawn from the abovementioned departments.

(ii) **Personnel attending meetings**

Assistant Secretary
Multicultural Affairs Unit
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Principal Adviser
Multicultural Affairs Unit
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Chairperson
Victorian Multicultural Commission

Budget Officer
Budget Management
Department of Treasury and Finance

Team Leader
Broadening Horizons Through Language Team
Learning Support Projects
Directorate of School Education
Department of Education

Policy Officer
Policy Planning and Standards
Office of the Correctional Services Commissioner
Department of Justice

Manager
Program Development Unit
Sport and Recreation Victoria
Department of State Development

First Assistant Secretary
Employment Branch
Department of State Development

Operations Department
Community Liaison Division
Victoria Police Centre
Department of Justice

Manager
Special Programs
Primary Care Division
Department of Human Services

Policy Adviser
Office of Local Government
Department of Infrastructure

Manager
Policy and Program Review Branch
Department of Human Services

Director
Adult Migrant Education Services
Department of Education

Planning Officer
Adult Community & Further Education
Office of Training and Further Education
Department of Education

Policy Officer
Office of Women's Affairs
Department of Justice

Manager
Youth Policy Branch
Office of Youth Affairs
Department of Human Services

(c) Since its inception, the committee has contributed to government initiatives, strategic documents and publications, and has been a forum for debate and exchange of ideas between departments on important issues.

The following decisions have been taken by the Inter-departmental Multicultural Services Advisory Committee (IMSAC):

to assist with the development, launch and implementation of the Interpreter Card;

to facilitate the use of the Interpreter Card through the publication of two booklets — *Speaking of Diversity...* and *Working with Interpreters*;

to provide assistance to the Victorian Multicultural Commission generally and in its report into the adequacy and appropriateness of services to Victorians who have difficulties in communicating in English;

to implement the recommendations of the VMC's report;

to coordinate departments' response to the VMC report;

to organise the collection of ethnicity data and to assist with the development of the publication 'Accounting for Diversity';

to assist with the preparation of the Integrated Settlement Plan for Victoria 1994-1999, and to carry out the six-monthly evaluation of the plan;

to maintain a close working relationship with the State Inter-governmental Ethnic Services Committee (SIGESC);

to maintain links with the Victorian Multicultural Commission;

to investigate and collate important policies and strategies of government departments;

to assist in the preparation of the government's ESL paper;

to contribute to the government's equity and employment guidelines;

to assist with the Victorian government's response to the Commonwealth Migration Program 1994-95;

to assist with the Victorian government's response to the federal government's Inquiry into Access and Equity 1994-95;

to monitor the meetings of the Ministerial Council and Standing Committee of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs;

to monitor the proposed legislation on female genital mutilation;

to assist in the preparation of the Victorian government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission;

to assist in the coordination and distribution of publications;

to invite speakers to address the committee;

to assist in Multicultural Media Project; and

to continue to discuss government's policy which impacts on Victorians who have difficulties in communicating in English.

(d) Decisions implemented are:

1. **Interpreter Card**

The committee contributed to the successful launch of the Interpreter Card on 28 February 1995. The committee was active during the two years preceding the launch in that it reviewed the background paper: studied options regarding cost and printing; departments' budget; demand and usage; structure and the feasibility of telephone numbers on the card. Members also responded to a questionnaire on the Interpreter Card.

The committee followed up on the implementation of the card and nominated representatives from departments to attend training sessions with the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Services (VITS) on the use of the card. The committee organised distribution points for the card and over 100 000 cards have been distributed.

The committee has reviewed and identified difficulties experienced in the implementation process. It approved a letter to departmental secretaries to review the impact of the card and recommended further training. The committee is presently working with government agencies in assisting with the use of the card and for this purpose has contributed to the publication of two booklets. The booklets, *Speaking of Diversity...* and *Working with Interpreters*, were launched on 10 October 1995.

2. ***Speaking of Diversity...***

The booklet *Speaking of Diversity...* — a framework for Victorian government departments and funded agencies on the delivery of translating and interpreting services to non-English-speaking Victorians — received the full support of the committee.

3. ***Working with Interpreters***

The booklet *Working with Interpreters* — a guide for Victorian government departments and funded agencies in their work with interpreters. The IMSAC was keen to assist departments in the development of protocols and procedures in the delivery of language services. In doing so, the committee has assisted the Victorian government in realising its policy of providing appropriately qualified/accredited interpreters to help Victorians who have difficulty speaking English to deal with government departments and funded agencies.

4. **Implementation of the Victorian Multicultural Commission's (VMC's) inquiry report**

IMSAC members liaised individually with the commission in its inquiry into the adequacy and appropriateness of services to Victorians of non-English-speaking backgrounds. As representatives of specific departments, they assisted in preparing and coordinating their department's response to the inquiry. The Victorian Multicultural Commission's report was launched in November 1995. The committee debated the specific recommendations that applied to it and decided on a course of action.

Recommendation 8: that the IDESC annually focus on new needs and strategies for ethnic communities, and particularly the needs of recently arrived groups.

The committee endorsed the recommendation and agreed to annually focus on the new needs and strategies for ethnic communities, particularly the needs of recently arrived groups. The committee is looking at the provision of improving the dissemination of information through the strengthening of local networks, the involvement of the Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES) and the role of SIGSC in monitoring services to the newly arrived.

Recommendation 28: that the IDESC focus on mechanisms for regularly identifying and sharing information about best practice in service delivery to non-English-speaking clients.

Recommendation 29: a mechanism be identified for annual public recognition of good practices in service delivery to ethnic communities.

Publication of document on best practice

The committee endorsed the above recommendations and suggested that the IMSAC could be a vehicle to progress the initiative to recognise best practice. The committee decided on an annual publication, with costs shared between member departments. The target audience would include federal, state and local government agencies, general community welfare agencies, and ethnic community agencies. The scheme is perceived as having advantages as it will enhance the exchange of information between government services and funded agencies on ways of improving service delivery, and provide access to services for Victorian communities. It will also demonstrate the government's commitment to high standards in customer service for all Victorians.

Recommendation 30: that each department nominate a position which carries responsibility for monitoring ethnic issues and liaising with the IDESC. In large departments, each division nominate a person to liaise with the departmental representative.

Expansion of IDESC

The committee endorsed the recommendation to extend membership bringing the total number of members to 14. The new members include:

Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES)

the Office of Youth Affairs

the Office of Women's Affairs, and

the Office of Training and Further Education.

Recommendation 31: that the IDESC, supported by the Ethnic Affairs Unit, maintain and regularly publish a listing of services to ethnic clients.

Update of the listing of government services booklet

The committee endorsed this recommendation and agreed to assist the Multicultural Affairs Unit in updating the listing of government services booklet, as new programs are likely to be initiated or further additions are likely to be made to existing programs.

5. **Coordinating departments' response to the VMC report**

IMSAC members have been active in coordinating comments from their departments to the VMC report. These comments have been incorporated by the Multicultural Affairs Unit in the government's response to the VMC report.

6. **Integrated Settlement Plan for Victoria 1994 — 1999 (ISPV)**

The Integrated Settlement Plan for Victoria 1994 — 1999 was successfully tabled at the meeting of the ministerial council and Standing Committee of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs in June 1995 in Perth, by the Parliamentary Secretary, Mr Phil Honeywood, MLA, and publicly launched on 10 July 1995. In producing the plan, the unit as a member of the IMSAC, coordinated the government departments' response through the various stages of the plan. An important aspect of the IMSAC contribution was in the area of service objectives and the evaluation process of the plan. IMSAC coordinated departments' response to the six-monthly review of the plan in May this year, and Victoria reported back to the June meeting of the Ministerial Council of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs on progress made.

7. **Links with the State Inter-governmental Settlement Committee (SIGSC)**

The IDESC has worked together with the SIGSC through the chairperson who is represented on that committee, on the settlement needs of migrants in Victoria. The most significant contribution was to the State Integrated Settlement Plan 1994-1999 and monitoring of the plan. Other areas of work with the SIGSC include: data collection; refugee young people at risk; settlement issues; and employment issues.

8. **Links with the Victorian Multicultural Commission**

The VMC attendance on the committee has been useful in providing information on the impact of government policy on Victorians who speak a language other than English. Similarly, the committee has advised the commission on various policies, projected trends and expectations. A significant contribution was made in the feedback on consultations with community groups during the inquiry.

9. **Policies and strategies of departments in delivery of services to ethnic communities**

The IMSAC investigated and organised the collection of documents on the policies and strategies of each department in their delivery of services to ethnic communities. The information gathered has facilitated an exchange of information between departments and has also assisted the Victorian Multicultural Commission's inquiry into the delivery of services by government departments to NESB clients. The policies and strategies have been incorporated in the commission's report, in one of its books titled *Listing of Victorian Government services for NESB clients.*

10. **ESL paper to the ministerial council**

The committee was asked for input to the ESL paper produced by the unit for presentation at the June 1995 meeting of the Ministerial Council and Standing Committee of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. This paper was discussed with relevant departments through the IMSAC forum. The paper focused on the current inadequacies in English-as-a-second-language provision and suggested recommendations to address those problems. Ministers noted the Victorian paper and requested that it be forwarded to the Ministerial Council on Employment, Training and Youth Affairs for the council's information. The paper significantly influenced the federal government's decision to relax the 510 hours limit and to introduce more flexible arrangements in the delivery of ESL.

11. **Equity and employment guidelines for people from NESB**

Following the designation of people from NESB as an EEO group in 1993, the Office of the Public Service Commissioner drew up guidelines, with the aim of providing examples of best practice to assist departments to develop appropriate strategies which address issues faced by their NESB work force. The committee provided comments in the following areas: employers' responsibilities; background data; data collection; recruitment and selection; training and career development; cultural awareness strategies; case studies, contacts, references and resources.

12. **Response to the Commonwealth Migration and Humanitarian Program 1994-95**

Members' input to the Victorian government's response to the Commonwealth Migration and Humanitarian Program 1994-95 and 1995-96 gave departments the opportunity to highlight the issues arising from the program in the area of employment, labour market reforms, English language teaching, availability of DEETYA programs, English language tuition for asylum seekers and knowledge of government procedures.

13. **Response to the federal government's Inquiry into Access and Equity**

The committee's assistance was sought in the preparation of the government's response to the federal government's Inquiry into Access and Equity.

14. **Monitor the meeting of the Ministerial Council and Standing Committee of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs**

IMSAC members contribute agenda items to the meeting of the Ministerial Council and Standing Committee of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and closely follow the outcomes of the conference. Agenda items relating to equal opportunity, access and equity, and reporting mechanisms on programs and services provided to Victorians who have difficulty speaking English, are monitored. Agenda items relating to equal opportunity, access and equity, reporting mechanisms on policies, use of the acronym 'NESB' have been items for discussion at IMSAC meetings. Victoria presented a paper on the use of the term 'NESB' to the ministerial council in May this year. Members agreed to, where possible, limit the use of the term 'NESB'.

15. **Female genital mutilation and related practices**

IMSAC members have been monitoring the federal government's policy and proposed legislation on female genital mutilation. The committee through its membership on the interdepartmental working group organised by the Department of Justice, is exploring strategies for the health education campaign for female genital mutilation. The committee's representative from the Department of Health, is also the chair of the National Education Program on Female Genital Mutilation. The committee organised the Victorian itinerary of Mrs Dorkenoo, a WHO consultant, whose visit to Australia was organised by the commonwealth. Mrs Dorkenoo met with politicians, bureaucrats across departments, health providers and community members.

16. **Submission to Commonwealth Grants Commission**

The Multicultural Affairs Unit is working on a submission due in January 1997 to the Commonwealth Grants Commission. It has sought input from IMSAC members on aspects of funding to migrants. The submission will focus on three major deficiencies and will provide evidence against the assumption that:

the immigrants who speak a language other than English, only cost extra to service in the first five years after arrival, and that this extra cost over that time is constant;

the weighting given to the NESB factor in deriving the socioeconomic composition disability factor;

the lack of an allowance for Victorians who speak a language other than English, for some expenditure categories, which clearly means extra cost to state governments.

The committee have been closely following the outcomes of workplace discussions organised by the Department of Treasury and Finance and attended by the unit.

17. **Coordination and distribution of publications**

There has been considerable demand from departments for the *Speaking of Diversity...* and *Working with Interpreters* booklets launched last year. The *Multicultural Resources Directory* was published by the unit and launched on 8 May this year. Members assumed responsibility for the distribution of the booklets within their departments.

18. **Invitation to speakers to address the committee**

IMSAC took a decision to invite speakers to address the committee on government policy and relevant issues with the first speaker being the Director of the Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES). This exposure to the committee would help broaden its perspective on matters which concern the Victorian government and that of Victorians at large.

19. **Implementation and monitoring of the language allowance**

The government in its March 1996 Multicultural Affairs Policy announced a language allowance of $500 000 to be administered by the Multicultural Affairs Unit. The allowance will ensure a pool of language aides are made available to assist with routine or common inquiries from clients with limited English, by encouraging staff to sit a language aide test and recognising the value of their language skills. The committee is committed to monitoring the implementation of the language allowance within departments and will advise on appropriate changes to the guidelines.

20. **TIS charging practices**

The committee discussed the proposed changes to the fees charged by TIS. From 1 October TIS will begin charging all state government departments and agencies for use of services, which for some had been on a fee-free basis. Members are monitoring these changes to advise their departments of a likely increase in costs.

21. **IMSAC as a forum of discussion**

Important issues discussed were:

The need to incorporate service delivery aims for people who come from culturally linguistically diverse backgrounds, in corporate and business plans.

Statistical information and demographic changes of population of people of culturally linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The role of youth and that of Victoria Police in the assistance of youth, the role of the Police Ethnic Advisory Committee in assisting ethnic communities, and the recruitment strategy for Victoria Police.

The funding formulae for, and evaluation of, the Community Based Employment programs which target migrant communities and is funded by the Department of Business and Employment.

The government's Ethnic Health Strategy and the role of the Department of Health and Community Services in the delivery of services funded by the state.

Housing services provided to migrants by the Housing Division of the Department of Planning and Development, policy guidelines in housing and the use of interpreters and translators.

Proposals to progress the endorsement of 'Cultural Understandings as the eighth key competency' by the Ministerial Council of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).

The meaning and definition of 'NESB'.

The role of consultants in the context of conferences such as the conference on 'Planning for Change' by the Department of Health and Community Services.

Programs for disabled people who come from culturally linguistically diverse backgrounds, organised by the Department of Art, Sport and Tourism.

Review of the Migrant Skill and Qualifications Board.

Languages taught in ethnic schools.

Funding to ethnic schools.

Directory of ethnic organisations produced by the Multicultural Affairs Unit.

BIMPR longitudinal study.

BIMPR reference group decision regarding applications for funding.

The project on equitable allocation of funds currently provided to local councils for interpreting and translating services to their NESB clients.

Community service obligation (CSO) guidelines for new applicants.

CSO funding for community legal centres.

The role and impact of information technology on service delivery.

Language services.

Case management studies by the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Federation Internationale de Traducteurs (FIT) World Congress.

NAATI's publication, the *Ethics of the Profession of Interpreting and Translating.*

Changes to the government's policy on housing in relation to the Priority Housing Guidelines which was introduced in January 1996. The Office of Housing has produced information sheets on priority housing in 16 languages. The income and asset test limits have been lowered to health care card levels to target those in greater need of assistance.

Office of the Public Service Commission's booklet *Managing Diversity Approach to Merit and Equity.*

Conference on delivering tenancy services to Victorians experiencing difficulties in speaking English — New Country New Home — organised by the Office of Fair Trading and Business Affairs.

The review of language services undertaken by Department of Human Services. The language review will report on the appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness of the current provision of language services in meeting the needs of clients who speak a language other than English of the health services and make recommendations on future arrangements for the provision of language services.

The initiative of the Office of Corrections in setting up *Minimum Requirement and Guidelines* to administrators of private prisons, which will focus on data collection and the level of service delivery.

Distribution of the *Multicultural Victoria Report.* Members also agreed to provide input for future publications.

Department of Education's draft ESL strategy plan to be released this year.

Information technology and its importance to people who are unable to speak English.

Regional migration issues following the federal government's migration policy announcement.

(e) The chairperson of the committee is:
Ms Ann Duffield
Assistant Secretary
Multicultural Affairs Unit

(f) Minutes of the committee's monthly meetings are recorded and the files are maintained by the Multicultural Affairs Unit.

(g) No costs are involved in servicing the committee.

City Link: postcode 3121 properties

(Question No. 119)

Hon. C. J. HOGG asked the Minister for Roads and Ports:

In relation to properties owned by Vicroads or the Melbourne City Link Authority in the area covered by postcode 3121:

(a) How many properties are there?

(b) What are their addresses?

(c) When were they purchased?

(d) At what price were they purchased?

(e) What is currently located on each site?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer is:

The Roads Corporation (Vicroads) has provided the following information in respect of its 19 properties in the subject area:

	Address	Purchase Date	Purchase Price	Use
1.	451-459 Burnley Street, Richmond			Vacant
2.	44 Swan Street, Richmond			Vacant
3.	11A Wellington Street, Richmond			House
4.	10-12 Jessie Street, Richmond			Vacant
5.	234-247 Bridge Road, Richmond			Vacant
6.	385 Punt Road, Richmond			Vacant
7.	69-71 Butler Street, Richmond			Car park
8.	102A Elizabeth Street, Richmond			House
9.	14 Jessie Street, Richmond			Vacant
10.	Lot 2 Wellington Street, Richmond			Vacant
11.	36 Lennox Street, Richmond			Vacant
12.	Lennox Street, Richmond			Vacant
13.	Victoria Street, Richmond			Car park
14.	Lot 1 Wellington Street, Richmond			Vacant
15.	Gibdon Street, Richmond			Vacant
16.	48-58 Swan Street, Richmond			Vacant
17.	Lot 1 Swan Street, Richmond			Units/Part vacant
18.	1-9 Swan Street, Richmond			Vacant
19.	287 Bridge Road, Richmond	12.10.85	$107 848	Vacant

Notes:

(i) Properties numbered 1 to 13 were originally purchased by the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works and transferred at no cost to Vicroads in 1989 in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Transfer of Functions) Act 1985; and

(ii) Properties numbered 14 to 18 are either remnant properties or the amalgamation of remnant areas after roadworks.

The Melbourne City Link Authority falls within the responsibility of the Minister for Planning and Local Government, who has provided the following information to assist the honourable member:

(a) & (b) At 26 July 1996, the authority has taken possession of the following six properties in the area covered by postcode 3121:

291 Coppin Street

189 Coppin Street

287 Coppin Street

285 Coppin Street

62-70 Rooney Street

North-east corner of Rooney Street and Barkly Avenue.

(c) Settlement has been reached in three cases, with settlement expected to be reached on the remaining properties in the near future.

(d) Agreement for compensation has been reached in the case of five properties. The total amount is $6 808 693 and includes the market value of each property, solatium as appropriate, replacement property allowances, fees and costs directly attributable to the acquisition of properties, and relocation/removal costs. As the owners of the properties have not disclosed the amounts of compensation, the confidentiality of the information should be respected and not disclosed.

The negotiations on the remaining properties are still being conducted.

(e) At the time of their acquisition, four properties were residential and two were industrial. All buildings on the properties have since been demolished and the acquired land is being used for construction for the Melbourne City Link project.

Urban Land Authority: *NTM Weekly* advertisement

(Question No. 120)

Hon. C. J. HOGG asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In relation to the Urban Land Authority advertisement placed on the back page of the November 1995 issue of the *NTM Weekly* magazine:

(a) What amount was paid by the authority to the magazine owners?

(b) What was the print run of the magazine as advised to the authority and where was the magazine delivered?

(c) On the basis of what advice or assurances was the authority persuaded this was a sound use of its advertising budget?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

(a) $5000 was paid for back cover full-colour advertisement.

(b) The Urban Land Authority was told that the magazine would be hand delivered to approximately 50 000 homes, including all households within the target area of Roxburgh Park.

(c) The magazine was sold as a full colour community magazine which promoted retail businesses within the target area. Copies of previous editions are shown which indicated that the magazine would be an effective vehicle to promote Roxburgh Park on the basis of its presentation and contents. The negotiated rate for the advertisement was considered to be good value, being cheaper than for other publications with similar coverage.

Premier: *NTM Weekly*

(Question No. 121)

Hon. C. J. HOGG asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

Was the Premier approached and did he give written or verbal permission for his photograph to be used on the front page of the November 1995 issue of the *NTM Weekly* magazine?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

Yes. Copies of media releases and publicly available articles, and a photograph, were sent to the publication as a response to a media request.

Tricontinental royal commission

(Question No. 122)

Hon. JEAN McLEAN asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Attorney-General:

What were the costs associated with the Tricontinental royal commission between — (i) the appointment of the commissioners and the completion by them of their first report; and (ii) the completion of their first report and the winding up of the royal commission, indicating in each case the cost of salaries, accommodation, consultants, the purchase, lease or hire of equipment, other material, any other major expenditure, and the total?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Attorney-General is:

The costs associated with the Tricontinental royal commission between the appointment of the royal commission on 7 September 1990 and the completion of an interim report, which was to be completed by 30 June 1991 — this was officially completed on 30 July 1991 — are reflected in the following figures for the financial year 1990-91:

Expenditure for 1990-91

Salaries			$769 341
Accommodation			$649 758
Consultants			$3 130 596
EDP operating lease			N/A
Other expenditure			
Payroll tax		$45 394	
Office requisites		$42 132	
Telephone charges		$51 109	
Office equipment		$125 809	
EDP purchases		$112 987	
Computing services		$295 000	
Recording equipment		$65 226	
Photocopying charges		$41 434	
Car parking		N/A	
Miscellaneous incidentals		$11 745	
	Subtotal	$790 836	$790 836
Total			$5 340 531

The following figures for the financial years 1991-92 and 1992-93 show costs associated with the period from the completion of the first report to the winding-up of the royal commission in 1992.

Expenditure for 1991-92

Salaries			$1 219 336
Accommodation			$568 811
Consultants			$7 194 319
EDP operating lease			N/A
Other expenditure			
Payroll tax		$78 929	
Office requisites		$44 370	
Telephone charges		$34 100	
Office equipment		N/A	
EDP purchases		N/A	
Computing services		N/A	
Recording equipment		$92 708	
Photocopying charges		$43 988	
Car parking		$25 670	
Miscellaneous incidentals		$240 633	
	Subtotal	$560 398	$560 398
Total			$9 542 864

Expenditure for 1992-93

Salaries			$152 635
Accommodation			$191 813
Consultants			$1 288 321
EDP operating lease			$142 197
Other expenditure			
Payroll tax		N/A	
Office requisites		$30 248	
Telephone charges		$5 527	
Office equipment		N/A	
EDP purchases		N/A	
Computing services		N/A	
Recording equipment		N/A	
Photocopying charges		N/A	
Car parking		$4 870	
Miscellaneous incidentals		$45 196	
	Subtotal	$85 841	$85 841
Total			$1 860 807

Zip gun

(Question No. 123)

Hon. JEAN McLEAN asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

In respect of the device described as a 'zip gun' produced outside the Camberwell Civic Centre on 30 July 1994:

(a) Was the device examined to determine whether it appeared to be a firearm within the definition provided in the Firearms Act 1958; if so, with what result?

(b) Did the minister receive advice indicating that the device was, or was not, a firearm within the definition provided in the Firearms Act 1958; if so, what was the — (i) source; (ii) date; and (iii) nature of that advice?

(c) What was the date on which the device was first examined by the Victoria Police, indicating — (i) the circumstances in which it came into their possession; (ii) from whom it was obtained; (iii) the date on which it next passed out of the possession of the Victoria Police; and (iv) the name of the person to whom it was passed on that occasion?

(d) Did the device again come into the possession of the Victoria Police; if so, what was the — (i) source; (ii) date; and (iii) subsequent disposal of it?

(e) Was any decision made not to test before a court the application of the definition of 'firearm' in the act to the device; if so — (i) when; (ii) by whom; and (iii) why?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services is:

(a) The device was examined by a firearm examiner who concluded the contrivance could not be reasonably mistaken by a person to be a genuine pistol. It was not capable of discharging any shot, bullet or other missile.

(b) The minister was advised that there was no breach of the firearms legislation arising from the incident outside the Camberwell Gun Show on 30 July 1994. This advice was supplied to the minister through a letter to the Deputy Director, Police, Emergency Services and Corrections Directorate, Department of Justice, from the Registrar of Firearms on 28 November 1994.

(c) (i) The device was provided to the police during an interview at the Altona North CIB offices on 31 August 1994.

(ii) The device was obtained from Mr Leslie Jack Twentyman.

(iii) The device has not passed out of police possession since it was obtained.

(iv) Refer to (iii) above.

(d) The device has not passed out of police possession since it was obtained.

(e) (i) October 1994.

(ii) The decision was made by senior police in J District (Altona North).

(iii) The Victoria Police Force regards the current definition of 'firearm' in the Firearms Act as appropriate. It was not considered necessary to test the application of the definition to the object in question. The 'zip gun' did not fall within this definition and could be described as nothing but a child's crude toy.

Port Phillip: commissioner's leave

(Question No. 124)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of the Chairman of Commissioners of the City of Port Phillip, what periods of paid leave and unpaid leave, respectively, have been claimed and/or approved, indicating in each case the purpose of the leave and the travel destinations?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

I am unable to answer the honourable member's question because the terms and conditions of the appointment of the chairman of commissioners did not require the approval of the minister for leave to be taken, and therefore the information requested is not held within either my office or the Office of Local Government.

Stonnington: commissioner's leave

(Question No. 125)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of the Chairman of Commissioners of the City of Stonnington, what periods of paid leave and unpaid leave, respectively, have been claimed and/or approved, indicating in each case the purpose of the leave and the travel destinations?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

I am unable to answer the honourable member's question because the terms and conditions of the appointment of the chairman of commissioners did not require the approval of the minister for leave to be taken, and therefore the information requested is not held within either my office or the Office of Local Government.

Darebin: commissioner's leave

(Question No. 126)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of the Chairman of Commissioners of the City of Darebin, what periods of paid leave and unpaid leave, respectively, have been claimed and/or approved, indicating in each case the purpose of the leave and the travel destinations?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

I am unable to answer the honourable member's question because the terms and conditions of the appointment of the chairman of commissioners did not require the approval of the minister for leave to be taken, and therefore the information requested is not held within either my office or the Office of Local Government.

Yarra: commissioner's leave

(Question No. 127)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of the Chairman of Commissioners of the City of Yarra, what periods of paid leave and unpaid leave, respectively, have been claimed and/or approved, indicating in each case the purpose of the leave and the travel destinations?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

I am unable to answer the honourable member's question because the terms and conditions of the appointment of the chairman of commissioners did not require the approval of the minister for leave to be taken, and therefore the information requested is not held within either my office or the Office of Local Government.

Planning and Local Government: ministerial call-ins

(Question No. 128)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In relation to all ministerial call-ins since 1 January 1995, what are the details of — (i) all call-ins of planning permit applications before Local Government Planning Authorities and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal; (ii) the date of the 'call-in'; (iii) the reasons given for the call-in; (iv) the name of the applicant; (v) the decision of the minister; and (vi) the date of the decision?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is set out in the following tables:

(Tables referred to in answer (15 pages) supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Education: outsourcing

(Question No. 131)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of the Department of Education's annual financial statement and annual report, how is the outsourcing of functions indicated and how is the expenditure on that outsourcing indicated?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

Reference is made in the text of the annual report to the major functions that were outsourced during the financial year under review. Reference would not normally be made to functions that had been outsourced in previous years.

It is unlikely that functions that have been outsourced would be named in the financial statement. Any expenditure on a function being outsourced would be reflected in the movement of funds from the operating expenditure for the unit where the function had formerly resided to the particular line against which the function as an outsourced item is to be charged henceforth. If the quantum of the movement were material, an appropriate annotation would be made.

Education: property sales

(Question No. 132)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of the 51 Directorate of School Education properties put up for sale by tender in March 1996 on behalf of the Directorate of School Education by estate agents Knight Frank:

(a) How many have been sold?

(b) To whom was each property sold?

(c) How much was paid for each property?

(d) What was the Valuer-General's valuation of each property?

(e) What is the dollar amount to be retained by the Department of Education of the proceeds of the sales?

(f) To which area of the education budget will the proceeds be directed?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(a) As at 15 July 1996, 40 have been sold or contracts of sale exchanged.

(b) Clause 18 confidentiality of the tender document forming part of the contract of sale precludes this information from being released. Any interested person could apply for a search of title at the Office of Titles to find out this information on any particular property.

(c) Clause 18 confidentiality of the tender document forming part of the contract of sale precludes this information from being released. Any interested person could apply for a search of title at the Office of Titles to find out this information on any particular property.

(d) Clause 18 confidentiality of the tender document forming part of the contract of sale precludes this information from being released. Any interested person could apply for a search of title at the Office of Titles to find out this information on any particular property.

(e) The Department of Education retains the total revenue received from these sales.

(f) All of the proceeds are directed back into the capital works area to be used for the upgrade and maintenance of existing schools.

Education: budget savings

(Question No. 133)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

For each financial year since 1992-93 and in relation to the estimates for 1996-97:

(a) What has been the budget savings target required of the — (i) Directorate of School Education; and (ii) Department of Education?

(b) What has been the estimated full-year effect of each of these targets?

(c) What has been the actual savings outcome in each case?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(a) and (b) The savings requirements of the Directorate of School Education and the Department of Education were:

Savings Requirement	Directorate of School Education	Department of Education
1993-94	$70.9 million	$80.8 million
1994-95	$95.3 million	$113.3 million
1995-96	$3.9 million	$14.9 million
Total	$170.1 million	$209.0 million

No additional savings are required in 1996-97 apart from the standard 1.5 per cent productivity requirement which is applied to each agency.

(b) The above figures incorporate the full-year effect of the savings targets.

(c) The directorate and the department achieved each year's savings target.

Education: staffing levels

(Question No. 134)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

(a) Between July 1992 and June 1996, what has been the reduction or change in the Directorate of School Education and the Department of Education, respectively, of — (i) teaching positions (primary, secondary and total); (ii) non-teaching positions in schools/educational institutions (primary, secondary and total); and (iii) non-teaching positions in out-of-school locations?

(b) In each case will the minister provide details as to how the reduction was achieved?

(c) For each of these categories, what were the EFT numbers on the payroll for July 1992 and June 1996?

(d) For each of those categories, how many staff, in numbers and EFT, took redundancies?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(a) and
(c) Staff receiving pay: (numbers and equivalent full time)

Category	June 1992		June 1996		Reduction
	(No.)	(EFT)	(No.)	(EFT)	(No.)
Teaching positions:					
Primary	20 916	20 347.6	18 947	18 057.0	1 969
Secondary	21 553	20 862.5	18 535	17 503.9	3 018
Total	42 469	41 210.1	37 482	35 560.9	4 987

Non-teaching positions:					
Primary	5 905	4 268.5	3 964	3 001.7	1 941
Secondary	5 759	4 646.2	3 369	2 668.0	2 390
Total (school)	11 664	8 914.7	7 333	5 669.7	4 331
Non-school	1 668	1 551.1	1 016	996.7	652
Total (non-teaching)	13 332	10 465.8	8 349	6 666.4	4 983

(b) The government developed early departure schemes to assist agencies in the reduction and restructuring of the public sector work force. These schemes together with natural attrition account for the reduction over the June 1992 to 1996 period. The major work force reductions occurred during the 1992-1993, 1993-1994 and 1994-1995 financial years. In particular the voluntary departure package and the resignation incentive scheme were used for members of the teaching service, while the voluntary departure package and targeted separation package were used for non-teaching staff in both school and out-of-school locations. Targeted separation packages (redundancies) were primarily used to enable the purchase of contract school cleaning services rather than the direct employment of school cleaners.

(d)

Category	Redundancies 1992 - 1996		Category	Redundancies+ 1992 - 1996	
	(No.)	(EFT)		(No.)	(EFT)
Non-teaching positions:			Teaching positions:		
Primary	1 797	1 609.0	Primary	0	0.0
Secondary	2 144	1 919.0	Secondary	0	0.0
Total (School)	3 941	3 528.0	Total (School)	0	0.0
Non-school	55	54.6			
Total (non-teaching)	3 996	3 582.6			

Education: new works

(Question No. 137)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

What are the details of all departmental new works for 1996-97 and all commitments for future works, including amounts approved and over what period, by — (i) DSE region; (ii) Commonwealth Ministry of Education, Employment and Training and Youth Affairs region; and (iii) Legislative Assembly electorate?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The list of new capital works is as indicated in appendix C of the autumn economic statement.

Treasury and Finance: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 139)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

Department of Treasury and Finance

(i) The selection process consisted of:

an open 'request for expressions of interest' by companies experienced in outsourcing in the *Age* and the *Australian*;

a multi-stage process of narrowing down applicants to a final two vendors, facilitated by independent consultants;

a due diligence process to ensure both final vendors were completely acquainted with the then current state of information technology, required outcomes and future planning;

a 'best and final offer' process from which a preferred vendor was selected; again, this process was facilitated by an independent consultancy;

final contract and price negotiations concurrent with a full presentation of process and outcomes to the Victorian Government Purchasing Board (VGPB) for approval;

contract signing and implementation of transition.

(ii) Actual fees and the structure of fees being paid to the selected vendor are commercial in confidence. The overall three-year cost approved by the VGPB is approximately $4.5 million for the two departments of Premier and Cabinet, and Treasury and Finance and this will not be exceeded.

(iii) The successful vendor was Unisys Australia Ltd.

(iv) Performance measures are expressed in terms of desired outcomes and cover a number of performance areas. Actual details are again commercial in confidence. However, in general terms, the most significant are:

expected total availability of the network during working hours;

expected total availability of the network outside working hours;

expected response times to reported problems by category of problem; and

expected resolution time for reported problems by category of problem.

(v) Savings are in the form of avoided costs relating to the increasing sophistication and complexity of the departments network and communications requirements. The major reason for outsourcing was to eliminate the former high risk of reliance on a very few key and in-demand network specialists. That benefit has been fully achieved by the availability of a pool of skilled resources to back up actual on-site staff. Other benefits include:

the availability of skilled advice from a world-wide source on various new technologies and their applications;

substantially improved forward planning and documentation of IT facilities; and

a certainty of costs for IT support.

Victorian Workcover Authority

(i) The selection process was:

the DMR Group Australia Pty Ltd was selected by tender from eight consulting companies to assist the authority in the divestiture of its business information system. DMR assisted in the packaging of the division for sale and preparation of a request for proposal document. Newspaper advertisements seeking proposals were placed in the *Age* and the *Australian* newspapers on 1 June 1993. On 10 June 1993, 14 companies attended a briefing and collected the documentation. Responses closed on 28 June 1993 and eight proposals were received, four of which were short-listed to receive a request for tender which was issued on 6 August 1993. Tenders closed on
23 August 1993.

DMR and Ferrier Hodgson Corporate Advisory assisted the authority in evaluation of responses. Two companies were short-listed to undertake due diligence and contract negotiations commenced. Continuum Australia Ltd was selected as the successful tenderer, the contract was executed on 13 December 1993 and business transferred on 21 December 1993.

(ii) The costs involved were:

the cost of the DMR/Ferrier Hodgson consultancy was $ 311 203;

the value of the contract with Continuum Australia is bound by confidentiality provisions. It consisted of an upfront payment to the authority to purchase the capital assets, engagement of authority staff and transfer of property leases and other commitments related to the operation of the division. The authority, on behalf of the Workcover scheme, manages the contract and pays usage-based fees for the services provided. The contract is for three years. The purchase was approved by the Budget and Economic Review Committee of cabinet and was subsequently reviewed by the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee.

(iii) The successful company was Continuum Australia Ltd.

(iv) The contract includes stringent and detailed performance levels relating to the range of services provided. Monthly reporting monitors performance against all service levels.

(v) The principal driver for sale of the business information systems division was to divest the authority of a function it was no longer appropriate to perform. The business information systems division provided computer services in support of operation of the Workcover scheme. Operation of the scheme is now undertaken by authorised insurers with the authority performing a regulatory role.

Additional benefits flowing from the divestiture included compliance with government policy relating to outsourcing of information technology, the retention of computer operations in Victoria, expansion of the software development industry in Victoria, and transfer of approximately 100 public sector employees to the private sector.

Savings of approximately $4 million will be achieved over the life of the contract.

Employee Relations Commission: appointments

(Question No. 140)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In relation to the Employee Relations Commission President, Deputy Presidents and Commissioners, respectively, what is the — (i) length of term of each appointment; (ii) date of expiration of each appointment; (iii) penalty for early cancellation of contract, including any clause covering circumstances in which the contract can be terminated; and (iv) remuneration for each of the appointees?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

(i) and
(ii)

President S. Zeitz	Ten years from 30 March 1993 until 29 March 2003
Deputy President R. Garlick	Effective 1 June 1993 until reaching 65 years (2002)
Deputy President G. Lane	Effective 1 June 1993 until reaching 65 years (2001)
Commissioner P. Burke	Effective 1 June 1993 for a term of 10 years
Commissioner R. Hastings	Effective 1 July 1993 for a term of 10 years
Commissioner W. Pimm	Effective 1 June 1993 for a term of 10 years
Commissioner J. Stewien	Effective 31 May 1993 for a term of 10 years
Commissioner Q. Turner	Effective 18 May 1993 for a term of 10 years.

(iii) The President, Deputy Presidents and Commissioners of the Employee Relations Commission of Victoria are appointed by the Governor in Council under the provisions of the Employee Relations Act 1992 (Section 82(1); 82(2) and 82(3)). The conditions of their employment are contained in Schedule 3 to the act.

(iv) remuneration for each of the appointees (excluding superannuation and allowances)

President	$163 706 effective 19 August 1994
Deputy Presidents	$133 839 effective 1 March 1996
Commissioners	$103 970 effective 1 March 1996.

Employee Relations Act: employment agreements

(Question No. 141)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

What are the details of the number of employment agreements pursuant to the Employee Relations Act 1992 for the 1992-93, 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 financial years by — (i) individual agreements; (ii) collective agreements; (iii) collective agreements involving 100 or more employees; (iv) metropolitan Melbourne; and (v) non-metropolitan Melbourne?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

(i) individual agreements

I am advised that statistics on individual agreements have not been collated on the basis of single financial years. The Employee Relations Commission's annual reports have included the following entries on numbers of individual agreements in force:

First annual report — year ended 31 October 1993 — individual agreements:

As at the date of this report notification of approximately 280 000 individual agreements had been received by the CAO (Commission Administration Office) from employers. Further notifications are continuing. A breakdown into industries or classification numbers is not possible, as the act's reporting requirements run to notification of numbers only. In most cases respondents have reported entirely in line with their obligation and there is no meaningful way of knowing the nature of further breakdown of who the individual agreements apply to in respect of individual workplaces. Two notifications were sent, via the commission newsletter, to all 189 recognised employer associations regarding the notification requirement.'

Second annual report — year ended 31 October 1994 — individual agreements:

Section 13(2) of the Act requires that employers notify the CCAO (Chief Commission Administration Officer) of the number of individual employment agreements by which they are bound as at 30 June each year. As at the date of this report notifications of 349 638 individual agreements had been received by the CAO. This figure includes some 280 000 individual agreements notified to the CCAO to 31 October 1993. An advertising campaign was undertaken during 1994 to alert employers of their obligations under the Act.'

Third annual report — year ended 31 December 1995 — individual agreements:

Section 13(2) of the act requires that employers notify the CCAO (Chief Commission Administration Officer) of the number of individual employment agreements by which they are bound as at 30 June each year. For the period
1 November 1994 to 31 December 1995 employers advised that they were bound by 203 822 individual employment agreements.

(ii) collective agreements;

(iii) collective agreements involving 100 or more employees

Financial year	Collective agreements	Collective agreements (more than 100 employees — where stated)
1992-93	94	0
1993-94	165	3
1994-95	161	5
1995-96	150	4

(iv) Metropolitan Melbourne;

and

(v) non-metropolitan Melbourne

Statistics are not available for Melbourne on this geographic basis.

Wage Line: inquiries

(Question No. 142)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

What are the details of the number of inquiries through Wage Line for each of the 1992-93, 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 financial years under the following headings — (i) those related to state agreements pursuant to the Employee Relations Act 1992; (ii) those related to federal awards; (iii) metropolitan Melbourne; and (iv) non-metropolitan Melbourne?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

I am advised that the number of inquiries handled by the central Wage Line service for the 1992-93 to 1995-96 financial years is summarised in the following table:

Financial Year	Non-Toll-Free Wage Line Inquiries	008-1800 Toll-Free Service (Non-Metro)	Total Calls Handled by Central Wage Line Service
1992-1993	272 698	52 868	325 566
1993-1994	256 587	51 429	308 016
1994-1995	250 308	54 420	304 728
1995-1996	232 051	46 667	278 718

The program does not identify inquiries specifically related to state agreements pursuant to the Employee Relations Act 1992. The program does not identify inquiries specifically related to federal awards. All statistics given for 008-1800 toll-free service originate from the non-metropolitan area.

Note: The statistics provided for the non-toll-free service may include callers using STD facility from outside the metropolitan area.

State Development: staff

(Question No. 143)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

What are the details of staffing numbers in the Department of State Development for the financial years 1995-96 (actual) and 1996-97 (projected), indicating — (i) total numbers of executive officer level; and (ii) total numbers of non-executive officer positions; and (iii) total staff by metropolitan and non-metropolitan region, including the specification of each regional area?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

I am advised that staffing numbers in the Department of State Development as at 30.06.96 were 1090 officers.

(i) EO-1 1 EO-2 13 EO-3 39

(ii) 1037

(iii) metropolitan 949; non-metropolitan 141

Non-metropolitan staff are based at the following locations: Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Mildura, Shepparton, Swan Hill, Traralgon, Wangaratta, Warrnambool, Wodonga.

Treasury and Finance: staff

(Question No. 144)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

What are the details of staffing numbers in the Department of Treasury and Finance for the financial years 1995-96 (actual) and the 1996-97 (projected), indicating — (i) total numbers of executive officer positions (former SES positions) disaggregated to numbers at each executive officer level; (ii) total numbers of non-executive officer positions; and (iii) total staff by metropolitan and non-metropolitan region, including the specification of each regional area?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

Full details of executive and non-executive officer positions in the Department of Treasury and Finance for the 1995-96 financial year will be published in the department's annual report.

1996-97 projected staffing numbers for the department have not been finalised.

Government office accommodation

(Question No. 145)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

Will the minister provide a full list of all state government leased and owned office accommodation for the financial years 1994-95 and 1995-96, indicating the — (i) location of each office; (ii) lease expiry date for each office; and (iii) function of each office (e.g. regional health office)?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

The Victorian Government Accommodation Group (Department of Treasury and Finance) generally manages all leased and owned government office accommodation in the central business district, city fringe areas and all government-owned public offices throughout the state. Attached is a list of those properties at 30 June 1996.

Suburban and country leased offices are generally managed by departments. Attached is a list of those properties at 30 June 1996. This information at 30 June 1995 is not available as the information was not held by the Victorian Government Accommodation Group in a form that can be readily retrieved and the time and cost of collecting it cannot be justified.

The specific function carried out at each office is not recorded; however, the attached lists show the occupant(s) of each office, and this gives an indication of the type of activity undertaken.

(Attachments referred to in answer (17 pages) have been supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library).

Office of State Owned Enterprises: projects

(Question No. 146)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

Will the minister provide a full list of projects undertaken or to be undertaken by the Office of State Owned Enterprises for the financial year 1995-96 (actual) and 1996-97 (projected)?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

As part of the recent administrative changes the former Office of State Owned Enterprises has been separated into two divisions: Privatisation and Industry Reform; and Energy Projects.

These divisions are involved in a number of projects covering, inter alia, the areas of electricity, gas, water, ports, and transport, and in general with reform policy. Some details of projects undertaken in 1995-96 will be published in the department's annual report.

Treasury and Finance: corporate services

(Question No. 147)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

In relation to the Department of Treasury and Finance, for the financial years 1995-96 (actual) and 1996-97 (projected):

(a) What are the numbers and levels of employees in corporate service(s) functions within the department?

(b) What is the total cost of corporate service(s) functions within the department?

(c) What are the numbers and levels of employees attached to the minister's offices within the department?

(d) What is the total cost of the minister's offices within the department?

(e) What is the total number and cost of consultants contracted to the department and the ministers' offices?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

(a) 102 staff of which 68 are in the corporate resources agency, which services the Department of the Premier and Cabinet as well as the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Staffing levels are as follows:

Classification	Staff numbers
EO 3	8
VPS 1	12
VPS 2	41
VPS 3	18
VPS 4	11
VPS 5	10
AM 3-4	1
Casual	1

(b) 1995-96 (actual) $12 138 000

1996-97 (projected) $11 283 000

These figures include salary, salary on costs, operational expenditure and costs for contract services where the department has outsourced services.

(c) Only one officer — VPS 2 level — has been seconded from the Victorian public service to the office of the Minister for Finance.

(d) 1995-96 (actual) $489 000 *

1996-97 (projected) $674 000 *

* Combined costs for both the Minister for Finance and Minister for Gaming.

(e) The total number and costs of consultants are contained in the department's annual report.

Attorney-General: Mr Greg Craven

(Question No. 148)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Attorney-General:

Has the Attorney-General employed the services of Mr Greg Craven in any capacity since his engagement as head of the Specialist Government Law Service with Melbourne solicitors Russell Kennedy; if so, what was the cost?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Attorney-General is:

I am informed that Mr Craven has received consultancy fees of $16 744 since 1 February 1996.

Premier: Mr Greg Craven

(Question No. 149)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

Has the Premier employed the services of Mr Greg Craven in any capacity since his engagement as head of the Specialist Government Law Service with Melbourne solicitors Russell Kennedy; if so, what was the cost?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

The Premier has not employed the services of Mr Greg Craven since his engagement as head of the Specialist Government Law Service with Melbourne solicitors Russell Kennedy.

Crown Casino: employees

(Question No. 150)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

What are the details of the number of people who have been employed at Crown Casino since its opening who have a criminal record?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

(i) To provide the details sought by the honourable member would involve considerable research which cannot be justified given the available time and resources of the authority; and

(ii) The authority's extensive probity investigation processes ensure that persons seeking to be licensed and employed at the casino meet the suitability requirements of the *Casino Control Act 1991* with regard to character, honesty, integrity, responsibility, personal background and general reputation.

Crown Casino: deaths

(Question No. 151)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

Will he ascertain and inform the house how many people have died through natural causes or by committing suicide at Crown Casino since its opening?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

I am informed that:

(i) no suicides have been committed within the casino environs;

(ii) an attempted suicide in the casino by a 56-year-old male on 18 November 1995 was not linked to gambling;

(iii) there are four recorded deaths which occurred in the casino and all were attributed to natural causes.

Crown Casino: Community Benefit Levy

(Question No. 152)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

How much money has been paid by Crown Casino since the casino opened into the Community Benefit Levy pursuant to the Casino Control Act 1991 for each of the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1995-96?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

Community Benefit Levy moneys paid by Crown Casino pursuant to the Casino Control Act 1991 since the casino opened is as follows:

Year	Amount ($m) #
1992-93	Nil*
1993-94	Nil*
1994-95	3.218
1995-96	4.775

* The Melbourne temporary casino did not open until 30 June 1994.
# These figures represent cash collected in each financial year.

Crown Casino: Community Benefit Levy

(Question No. 153)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the the Minister for Gaming:

For what purposes were any moneys paid into the Community Benefit Levy by Crown Casino used in each financial year since the opening of the casino?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

Pursuant to the provisions of subsection 2 of section 114 of the Casino Control Act 1991, moneys paid as a Community Benefit Levy by Crown Casino in each financial year since the opening of the casino, being 1994-95 and 1995-96, were applied in the manner in which the Hospitals and Charities Fund may be applied, that is, for the provision of services to acute and aged care patients through the public hospitals and aged care centres.

Minister for Gaming: Mr Mathieson

(Question No. 154)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

Has the minister had any meetings with respect to the gaming industry with Mr Bruce Mathieson, since becoming minister indicating — (i) the nature of the discussions at such meetings; and (ii) the dates on which these meetings took place?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

I have met with Mr Bruce Mathieson only once since becoming Minister for Gaming. The occasion was 21 August 1996 when he and I were among those attending a dinner forum hosted by Tattersalls to discuss general issues confronting the Victorian gaming industry.

Casino Control Act

(Question No. 155)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

Has the minister had any discussions with Mr Ron Walker and/or Mr Lloyd Williams and/or Mr Kerry Packer with respect to the new section 28A of the Casino Control Act 1991, indicating — (i) the nature of such discussions; and (ii) the dates on which these discussions took place?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

I have had no discussions with Mr Ron Walker and/or Mr Lloyd Williams and/or Mr Kerry Packer about the new section 28A of the Casino Control Act 1991.

Premier: Mr Bruce Mathieson

(Question No. 156)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

Has the Premier had any meetings with respect to the gaming industry with Mr Bruce Mathieson, indicating — (a) what was the nature of the discussions at such meetings; and (b) the dates these meetings took place.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

The Premier cannot recall any such meetings taking place.

Casino Control Act

(Question No. 157)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

Has the Premier had any discussions with Mr Ron Walker and/or Mr Lloyd Williams and/or Mr Kerry Packer with respect to the new section 28A of the Casino Control Act 1991, indicating — (a) the nature of such discussions; and (b) the dates on which these discussions took place?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

The Premier cannot recall any such discussions taking place.

Fair Trading: complaints

(Question No. 158)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Fair Trading:

In relation to the types of complaints received by the Office of Fair Trading and Business Affairs — (i) what are the categories of complaints received; (ii) for each of those categories, how many complaints were received in 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1995-96, respectively; and (iii) what total funds were expended for all community education campaigns in 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 respectively?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Fair Trading is:

The information available in response to the honourable member's question is set out below:

(i) and

(ii) Categories of complaints and number of complaints received:

Categories	Years			
	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95*	1995-96
Automotive industry	2470	2002	2041	1997
Household and domestic products	2952	3240	4600	4247
Building industry	2235	1859	1044	1865
Residential tenancy	4295	4207	4869	4954
Estate agents				519#
Total	11 952	11 308	12 554	14 122

* Although the honourable member did not seek figures for 1994-95, they have been provided for continuity and completeness in the response.

#The former Estate Agents Board was replaced in February 1995 by three new authorities. Complaints are directed to the Estate Agents Licensing Authority and statistics on complaints have been kept only since 1 February 1995. The figure listed above includes complaints between 1 February 1995 and 30 June 1996.

(iii) Total funds expended on community education activities:

1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96*
$1 228 169	$725 246	$910 097	$875 000

* Although the honourable member did not seek figures for 1995-96, they have been provided for continuity and completeness in the response.

All activities of the Education and Marketing Branch (EMB), Office of Fair Trading and Business Affairs, are directed to the provision of community education, whether this be through production of actual products such as publications and audio-visual material, or through press, TV and radio advertising, or through launches, seminars, award schemes, etc. Hence the above figures include all expenditure by EMB including salaries and operating costs.

Transport: performance indicators

(Question No. 160)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Transport:

In relation to the delivery of public transport services in Victoria:

(a) What does the government regard as 'international best practice'?

(b) How does it define and implement this concept?

(c) What benchmarks does it use?

(d) How do these benchmarks compare with the delivery of public transport services in other Australian states?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Transport is:

(a) International Best Practice (IBP) relates to the work practice of organisations and how those practices are performed. This means that there is no universal IBP standard applicable to the rail sector as a whole. The reason for this is that each system must be viewed in its own context and what may be best practice for a particular activity for one system may not be so for another because of the unique operating environment.

(b) The coalition government has since 1992 worked to establish best practice in many work areas of the Public Transport Corporation (PTC) and this is best reflected by the action taken to outsource many activities which would be more efficiently carried out by others for the Corporation. Other examples include the introduction of SPOT (Single Person Operation of Trains) which allows the PTC to operate suburban trains safely without guards.

The government's greatest interest is in ensuring year-on-year performance improvements in the outputs of the PTC and the record to date vindicates this approach. It is important to ensure the most effective work practices are implemented which are best able to deliver improvements taking into account local operating conditions.

(c) and (d) The PTC contributes to the ongoing study by the Steering Committee on National Performance Monitoring of Government Trading Enterprises established under the auspice of the Council of Australian Government (COAG) and the honourable member is referred to its yearly report on Government Trading Enterprises — Performance Indicators.

Transport: provider standards

(Question No. 161)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Transport:

With regard to each mode of public transport, what specific standards does the government set for the providers, both public and private, of public transport in the passenger and freight areas?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Transport is:

The honourable member is referred to the annual report of the former Department of Transport for the year 1994-95, which contains information in response to this question.

Transport: premium stations

(Question No. 162)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Transport:

With regard to the premium station program:

(a) What is the works program to be implemented at each station?

(b) What is the cost at each station?

(c) What is the completion date at each station?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Transport is:

In 1994 the coalition government made a commitment to upgrade 51 rail stations to premium stations. All 51 stations will be officially operational by the end of 1996 and open for business from first to last train every day. This is in sharp contrast to the dark days of Labor under which Melbourne only had 35 stations staffed from first to last train.

As part of the government's initiative to upgrade all railway stations, a further 10 stations will be upgraded as premium stations to be staffed from first to last train, provide customer service and emergency assistance if required. These facilities are in addition to the modern, up-to-date facilities which are being provided as part of the refurbishment of all railway stations, including improved lighting, closed-circuit television, public telephones, public address system and audio communications on each platform. Concept plans and schedules are currently being developed for the additional 10 premium stations.

Transport: special projects

(Question No. 164)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Transport:

For each financial year since 1992-93, what has been the complete allocation, by description and money amount, of the Department of Transport budget item 3421 special projects, or its successor budget item?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Transport is:

Relevant information relating to expenditure on special projects has been published in the annual reports of the former Department of Transport. Funds were expended on projects with objectives which fell into one or more of the following categories:

Projects which facilitated the co-ordination and or provision of transport services;

Projects that required seed funding, were considered to be one-off activities; or projects that occurred during the year for which no funding had been made available; grants to transport industry related organisations; and transport related projects that had community and or social interests and benefits.

The total special projects funding allocations made since 1992 were as follows. It should be noted that the available data includes projects which came within both the Transport, and Roads and Ports portfolios.

1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
$1 923 918	$1 923 575	$1 916 000

Planning and Local Government: land rezoning

(Question No. 165)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In each of the past four years on how many occasions has the minister used his discretion to rezone land without public advertisement, giving the date of rezoning and affected land in each case and the reason?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The collation of this information would be very time consuming. Notice of all amendments approved are given to the Parliament, together with details of whether or not the minister exempted himself from notice.

If the honourable member seeks specific details in respect of any particular rezoning, I will be happy to provide them.

Conservation and Land Management: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 166)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

Information about the entity to which this question pertains is provided below:

Former Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

In line with government policy, action was taken to test the marketplace with respect to the provision of information technology services for this department. In preparation, the following process was undertaken:

preparation of a scoping report;

preparation of expression of interest documentation;

testing of the marketplace; and

evaluation of responses.

In line with Treasury guidelines for outsourcing of services, a selective tender was pursued for all aspects of the process.

On the basis of cost effectiveness and indefinite benefits to the organisation at the time, it was decided not to outsource any of the information technology services contained in the expression of interest document.

Multicultural Affairs: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 167)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs is:

The answer to this question has been incorporated within the Department of Premier and Cabinet response to parliamentary question on notice no. 169.

Premier and Cabinet: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 169)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

Department of Premier and Cabinet (Including the Office of the Public Service Commissioner and Office of Multicultural Affairs)

(i) The selection process consisted of:

An open 'request for expressions of interest' by companies experienced in outsourcing in the *Age* and the Australian.

A multi-stage process of narrowing down applicants to a final two vendors, facilitated by independent consultants.

A due diligence process to ensure both final vendors were completely acquainted with the then current state of information technology, required outcomes and future planning.

A 'best and final offer' process from which a preferred vendor was selected. Again, this process was facilitated by an independent consultancy.

Final contract and price negotiations concurrent with a full presentation of process and outcomes to the Victorian Government Purchasing Board (VGPB) for approval.

Contract signing and implementation of transition.

(ii) Actual fees and the structure of fees being paid to the selected vendor are 'commercial in confidence'. The overall three-year cost approved by the VGPB is approximately $4.5 million for the two departments of Premier and Cabinet, and Treasury and Finance and this will not be exceeded.

(iii) The successful vendor was Unisys Australia Ltd.

(iv) Performance measures are expressed in terms of desired outcomes and cover a number of performance areas. Actual details are again 'commercial in confidence'. However, in general terms, the most significant are:

expected total availability of the network during working hours;

expected total availability of the network outside working hours;

expected response times to reported problems by category of problem; and

expected resolution time for reported problems by category of problem.

(v) Savings are in the form of avoided costs relating to the increasing sophistication and complexity of the departments' network and communications requirements. The major reason for outsourcing was to eliminate the former high risk of reliance on a very few key and in-demand network specialists. That benefit has been fully achieved by the availability of a pool of skilled resources to back up actual on-site staff. Other benefits include:

the availability of skilled advice from a worldwide source on various new technologies and their applications,

substantially improved forward planning and documentation of IT facilities, and

a certainty of costs for IT support.

Office of Chief Parliamentary Counsel
The Office of Chief Parliamentary Counsel has not outsourced any information technology since 1 July 1995.

The Victorian Relief Committee
The Victorian Relief Committee has not outsourced any information technology.

Victorian Auditor-General's Office
The Victorian Auditor-General's Office has not outsourced any information technology.

Office of the Governor
The Office of the Governor has not outsourced any information technology.

Office of the Ombudsman
The Office of the Ombudsman has not outsourced any information technology.

Treasury and Finance: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 177)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

I refer the honourable member to my answer to question no. 139.

Gaming: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 178)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of outsourcing?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

I am informed that the majority of information technology services have been purchased under contract by the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority and its predecessor organisations, the Victorian Gaming Commission and the Victorian Casino Control Authority. Responsibility for information technology has not been outsourced, other than for maintenance of the authority's minicomputer for the period February 1993 to March 1995, details of which are as follows:

(i) Selection Process: quotations were sought from three suppliers for the support of the equipment and the provider was selected on the basis of the support required at the best price.

(ii) Total cost involved: $17 028.40.

(iii) Successful company: WANG Australia.

(iv) Performance Measure: minicomputer maximum 5 per cent down time during business hours and maximum
2 hour engineering response time.

(v) Savings and Benefits: the benefits included rapid access to engineering staff and rare spare parts in the event of computer breakdown.

Treasury and Finance: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 180)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the Treasurer's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

The outsourcing of information technology has occurred in the following areas:

Department of Treasury and Finance

(i) Selection process

The process consisted of:

An open request for expressions of interest by companies experienced in outsourcing in the Age and the Australian.

A multi-stage process of narrowing down applicants to a final two vendors, facilitated by independent consultants.

A due diligence process to ensure both final vendors were completely acquainted with the then current state of information technology, required outcomes and future planning.

A best and final offer process from which a preferred vendor was selected. Again, this process was facilitated by an independent consultancy.

Final contract and price negotiations concurrent with a full presentation of process and outcomes to the Victorian Government Purchasing Board (VGPB) for approval.

Contract signing and implementation of transition.

(ii) Total cost

Actual fees and the structure of fees being paid to the selected vendor are commercial in confidence. The overall three-year cost approved by the VGPB is approximately $4.5 million for the two departments of Premier and Cabinet and Treasury and Finance and this will not be exceeded.

(iii) Successful company

The successful vendor was Unisys Australia Ltd.

(iv) Performance measures

Performance measures are expressed in terms of desired outcomes and cover a number of performance areas. Actual details are again commercial in confidence. However, in general terms, the most significant are:

expected total availability of the network during working hours;

expected total availability of the network outside working hours;

expected response times to reported problems by category of problem; and

expected resolution time for reported problems by category of problem.

(v) Estimated savings and major benefits

Savings are in the form of avoided costs relating to the increasing sophistication and complexity of the departments' network and communications requirements. The major reason for outsourcing was to eliminate the former high risk of reliance on a very few key and in-demand network specialists. That benefit has been fully achieved by the availability of a pool of skilled resources to back up actual on-site staff. Other benefits include:

the availability of skilled advice from a world-wide source on various new technologies and their applications;

substantially improved forward planning and documentation of IT facilities; and

a certainty of costs for IT support.

State Revenue Office (SRO)

On 29 April 1996, the SRO signed a five-year contract (with option of two one-year extensions) to outsource its IT&T service provisions to Ferntree Computer Corporation.

(i) Selection process

Expressions of interest were called for on 14 April 1995, by way of advertisement in the *Age* newspaper. Responses were received from nine organisations.

Following the evaluation process, a business case was established recommending that four organisations be requested to submit responses to a request for tender (one shortlisted tenderer withdrew).

The request for tender was then issued to the remaining shortlisted tenderers on 18 August 1995. All three submitted tender responses.

Two organisations then proceeded to the best and final offer stage before final selection was made.

(ii) Total cost

The total expenditure commitment is $47.8 million (in today's dollar terms). If both extensions were exercised, expenditure of $66.9 million (in today's dollar terms) would be incurred over the seven-year period.

(iii) Successful company

Ferntree Computer Corporation.

(iv) Performance measures

Performance measures are in place to ensure that services are delivered according to business requirements. A penalty/bonus regime is also put in place where points will be accrued where the service levels provided by the service provider are less than the specified service levels, or exceed the specified service levels by a specified amount. The service provider will report monthly on performance against all service levels.

(v) Estimated savings and major benefits

Savings of between 10 per cent and 15 per cent against budget allocation over the five years is estimated from the outsourcing arrangement.

Some of the benefits associated with outsourcing IT&T services cover the following areas:

transfer/share risks, scarce technology resources, focus on core business, cost savings, improved delivery of IT&T services, flexibility in meeting changing demands, greater access to resources, scarcity of capital funding, and to enable business renewal study efforts.

Transport Accident Commission (TAC)

(i) Selection process

In May 1995 the TAC board invited three companies to tender for the management of the information technology services.

These companies were chosen for their Australian and international experience in the operation of outsourced IT services and functions.

Tender specifications and outsourcing model were prepared with independent advice from advisers with experience in the field.

A TAC taskforce then evaluated the three tenders against the selection criteria.

(ii) Total cost

The five-year contract is $69 million.

(iii) Successful company

The successful tenderer was DMR Group Australia Pty Ltd. Telstra Corporation Ltd separately undertook a subcontract with DMR to provide technology infrastructure.

(iv) Performance measures

The agreement sets detailed measures in the following areas:

Mainframe computer processing services.

Midrange computer processing services.

Client/server technical environment support.

Application maintenance and production support.

Application enhancements.

Application systems development.

Voice network configuration and management.

Network devices installation and connection.

Help desk.

(v) Estimated savings and major benefits

The projected savings are of 12.5 per cent over the five years of the contract.

The objectives of the outsourcing included:

delivery of the business outcomes of the TAC business systems strategy in the shortest time frame at the best cost;

to lay off the development risk;

to lay off the management and operational responsibility of IT services to a specialist organisation who can integrate total IT service; and

to exploit leading edge technology by working through a specialist organisation with worldwide knowledge and experience in technology and business change management.

Roads and Ports: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 181)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer is:

The provision of information technology services for the Roads Corporation (Vicroads) and the Public Transport Corporation (PTC) was outsourced to IBM Australia in 1994.

The government received five proposals from which two companies were shortlisted.

The selection and negotiation process was a complex and detailed exercise, involving a team from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Treasury, the departments of Transport, Finance, Industry and Employment, Vicroads, and the PTC. Also involved in the process were the University of Ballarat and the City of Ballarat.

The agreement provides for the successful company, IBM Australia, to take over the in-house computer operations of Vicroads and the PTC. It includes computer processing, data network and end-user services, and maintenance and upgrading of computer systems. Included in the contract are the critical financial and resource management systems of both Vicroads and the PTC, Victoria's vehicle registration, driver licensing, rail freight and passenger services systems.

While specific financial details of the agreement are commercial in confidence, the cost of the outsourcing is offset by savings of over $20 million which will be achieved on the cost of the PTC and Vicroads' information technology services over the five years of the initial contract. Additional savings were realised by the agencies not having to undertake an imminently necessary major computer upgrade.

The outsourcing also has enormous benefits for the state generally and the Ballarat community in particular. IBM constructed a new data complex in Ballarat which will provide 160 full-time jobs in the city and provide business opportunities for local suppliers. The company also agreed to funding a chair of computing at the University of Ballarat, 20 scholarship places at the university from the start of this year, and a trainee program for cadetships in information technology.

The successful completion of this project illustrates the government's commitment to ensuring outsourcing of public sector activities provides the best end result for the people of Victoria.

Agriculture and Resources: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 182)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Agriculture and Resources:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources is:

Former Department of Agriculture, Energy and Minerals

In line with government policy, action was taken to test the marketplace with respect to the provision of information technology services for this department. A scoping document was prepared but action was deferred due to the merger of the former Department of Agriculture with that of Energy and Minerals. Further work will be undertaken during the current financial year which will result in the preparation of an expression of interest document and testing the marketplace.

Yarra Valley Water Ltd

(i) The existing outsourcing agreement between Melbourne Water Corporation and Managed Information Technology Solutions (MITS) Ltd was moved to Yarra Valley Water Ltd until 30 September 1995.

This agreement has been extended with board approval until 30 June 1997.

(ii) The total cost incurred for the outsourced information technology functions were:

1 January to 30 June 1995 — $2.77 million

1 July to 31 December 1995 — $2.84 million

1 January to 30 June 1996 — $3.25 million

(iii) The existing agreement for information technology functions is with MITS Ltd.

(iv) The performance measures in the existing agreement relate to problem management, information technology service availability, and performance management.

(v) The agreement with MITS Ltd for the period 1 January 1996 to 30 June 1997 represents an annual saving of $0.16 million when compared with the costs incurred in the 12 months ending 31 December 1995.

After implementation of the new customer billing system, the annual saving will be $3.92 million per year when compared with the costs incurred in the 12 months ending 31 December 1995.

Police and Emergency Services, and Corrections: information technology outsourcing

(Questions Nos 183 and 184)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections is:

The information to respond to this question is contained in a table on the following two pages.

It should be noted that 'outsourcing' is defined as 'an arrangement whereby an external provider assumes responsibility for performing agency functions at a pre-determined price and according to pre-defined performance criteria'.

In determining what constitutes information technology, aspects of technology such as communications, training, servicing of existing technology and data entry have not been included. It should be noted that details of information technology outsourcing under the heading 'Information Systems and Technology Directorate' on the attached table have also been included in the answer provided on behalf of the Attorney-General, Minister for Fair Trading and Minister for Women's Affairs, as the directorate provides corporate services to the Department of Justice.

MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES and MINISTER FOR CORRECTIONS

SERVICE	SELECTION PROCESS	SELECTED CONTRACTOR	TOTAL COST	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	ESTIMATED BENEFITS AND SAVINGS
*INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY DIRECTORATE					
Client Services - Courts and Prisons computer hardware and software support (country locations).	Two year contract entered into in July 1995 on the basis of competitive quotations	Communications Networks International	$240,000	4 hour response	Budget Neutral - service enhancement
Client Services - Computer hardware maintenance and software support (Metropolitan sites)	Two year contract entered into in July 1995 on the basis of competitive quotations	Corporate Computer Sales	$174,000	4 hour response	Service provision while maintaining budget neutral position.
COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY					
Statewide Decentralised Finance System	Expressions of Interest followed by tender	Bookkeeping Solutions/SBT	$780,000 total cost plus outsourced labour cost of $160,000 initially and $55,000 recurrent.	Functionality, time, cost	Provision of a service in accordance with best practice business processes. No internal resources available.
Centralised Human Resources System	Expressions of Interest followed by tender	Ferntree/Mincom	$470,000 total cost plus outsourced labour cost of $230,000 initially and $40,000 recurrent	Functionality, time, cost	Provision of a service in accordance with best practice business processes. No internal resources available.
Manufacturing/Finance System	Expressions of Interest followed by tender	GEAC	$80,000 total cost plus outsourced labour cost of $30,000 initially and $15,000 recurrent	Functionality, cost	$20,000 internal labour and application of best practice business processes to manufacturing unit.
Statewide Area Network	Expressions of Interest sought, followed by tender.	Telstra	$160,000 per annum	WAN availability	$30,000 internal labour and more efficient facility management
Applications Development for Core Business of CFA	Expressions of Interest will be issued	Submission awaiting approval	$200,000 to $400,000 per annum, estimated	Functionality, time, cost	Offset to internal labour and project funding and more efficient delivery of systems, lower establishment

SERVICE	SELECTION PROCESS	SELECTED CONTRACTOR	TOTAL COST	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	ESTIMATED BENEFITS AND SAVINGS
Local PC Support	Volume of business in individual regions too small to call for tenders.	Various regional suppliers	$40,000 to $60,000 per annum, estimated recurrent	Time, cost	More timely maintenance of equipment
FIREARM REFORM AND COMPENSATION PROJECT					
Firearm Reform and Compensation Project. Enhancement of Firearms Management System to support surrender and compensation of firearms under National Amnesty	Contract for system development commenced 25 June 1996. 14 month maintenance agreement.	SPL World Group	$371,847	Provision of required system on time within Budget according to user requirements.	Achievement of major government policy initiative for a Safer Victoria. No internal resources available to perform functions within timelines

* Provision of services to all portfolios within the Department of Justice.

Transport: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 185)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Transport:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Transport is:

The provision of information technology services for the Public Transport Corporation (PTC) and the Roads Corporation (Vicroads) was outsourced to IBM Australia in 1994.

The government received five proposals from which two companies were shortlisted.

The selection and negotiation process was a complex and detailed exercise, involving a team from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Treasury, the departments of Transport, Finance, Industry and Employment, the PTC, and Vicroads. Also involved in the process were the University of Ballarat and the City of Ballarat.

The agreement provides for the successful company, IBM Australia, to take over the in-house computer operations of the PTC and Vicroads. It includes computer processing, data network and end user services, and maintenance and upgrading of computer systems. Included in the contract are the PTC and Vicroads' critical financial and resource management systems, Victoria's vehicle registration, driver licensing, rail freight and passenger services systems.

While the honourable member will appreciate that specific financial details of the agreement are commercial-in-confidence, the cost of the outsourcing is offset by savings of over $20 million which will be achieved on the cost of the PTC and Vicroads' information technology services over the five years of the initial contract. Additional savings were realised by the agencies not having to undertake an imminently necessary major computer upgrade.

The outsourcing also has enormous benefits for the state generally and the Ballarat community in particular. IBM constructed a new data complex in Ballarat which will provide 160 full-time jobs in the city and provide business opportunities for local suppliers. The company also agreed to funding a chair of computing at the University of Ballarat, 20 scholarship places at the university from the start of this year, and a trainee program for cadetships in information technology.

The successful completion of this project illustrates the government's commitment to ensuring outsourcing of public sector activities provides the best end result for the people of Victoria.

Small Business: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 186)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) —The answer is:

In relation to Small Business Victoria and the Liquor Licensing Commission no outsourcing of information technology has taken place since 3 October 1992.

Any information relating to the Department of State Development will be provided by the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology in his response to question no. 69.

Tourism: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 187)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Tourism:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

In relation to Tourism Victoria and the Australian Grand Prix Corporation no outsourcing of information technology has taken place since 3 October 1992.

Any information relating to the Department of State Development will be provided by the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology in his response to question no. 69.

Gaming: consultancies

(Question No. 192)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the period 1 November 1993 to 31 May 1994, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating the — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; and (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

The Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority and its predecessors, the Victorian Gaming Commission and the Victorian Casino Control Authority, have published in annual reports certain information relating to consultancies engaged in each financial year. To provide all of the details sought by the honourable member would involve considerable research, which cannot be justified given the available time and resources of the authority. Should the honourable member identify a specific consultancy or area of concern, every effort will be made to provide relevant information.

Dandenong, Cranbourne and Berwick: capital works

(Question No. 195)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of the electorates of Dandenong, Cranbourne and Berwick, respectively, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details of all capital works conducted, and new programs authorised, including — (i) project funding; (ii) expenditure approved; (iii) the date of funding approval; and (iv) expected completion dates?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

Decisions about capital expenditure are not based on electoral boundaries.

If the honourable member requires information about specific capital works I will be happy to consider his request.

Planning and Local Government: alcohol purchases

(Question No. 197)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

Since 3 October 1992 what are the details of all alcohol purchased by the minister or his office indicating in respect of each purchase the — (i) date; (ii) value; and (iii) item?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The following expenditure on alcohol was recorded:

Financial Year	Expenditure
1990-91	$1 531.58
1991-92	$2 871.00
1992-93	$852.96
1993-94	$209.65
1994-95	$92.80
1995-96	$242.90

Conservation and Land Management: entertainment

(Question No. 198)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details of all entertainment expenses incurred, indicating — (i) the total costs incurred by each section, including the minister's office; and (ii) itemised details of all expenditure in excess of $500, including the date incurred, cost, number of guests, purpose, and name of service provider, respectively?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

The information to answer the honourable member's question is not readily accessible.

The only way to access the information on entertainment expenses incurred since 3 October 1992 to date would be to undertake a manual search of receipts which are held in departmental and agency archives.

The time and resources required to do this would be excessive and, consistent with past practice, cannot be justified.

However, the honourable member may wish to narrow his inquiry and I will reconsider his request.

Conservation and Land Management: stress-related leave

(Question No. 199)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, for each year from 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details of all stress-related leave, indicating in the case of each section the — (i) number of days taken; (ii) estimated cost; and (iii) total number of staff in the section?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

Sick leave records do not provide the degree of detail required to determine which leave is stress-related and which has some other cause.

The only information available which relates to stress-related leave is that in respect of Workcover claims.

The figures for the Department of Natural Resources and Environment are:

Year	Number of Days	Cost
1992-93	1155	$194 362
1993-94	56	$10 232
1994-95	290	$17 293

With regard to the other agencies and authorities within the Conservation and Land Management portfolio, I am able to provide the following information:

One claim was submitted to the Royal Botanic Gardens but investigation revealed that the illness had not occurred during the course of employment with the Royal Botanic Gardens and the insurer rejected the claim in accordance with section 82(2)(a) of the Accident Compensation Act 1985.

The Environment Protection Authority has advised that for the 1994-95 financial year 86 days was taken on stress-related leave at a total cost of $11 759; none in the 1992-93 or 1993-94 financial years.

The Land Titles Office has advised that for the period from 3 October 1992 to date a total of 580 days was taken on stress-related leave at a total cost of $68 693.

Melbourne Parks and Waterways has advised that for the period from 3 October 1992 to date a total of 307 days was taken on stress-related leave at a total cost of $40 684.

Note: The Department of Natural Resources and Environment has been substantially restructured since a reply was given to the house by the Honourable G. Coleman MP on 21 March 1995 in response to a similar question asked by the honourable member.

Health: media research and public opinion polling

(Question No. 200)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details of all media research and public opinion polling conducted since 3 October 1992, including — (i) the title of each poll or item of research; (ii) the date approved and duration of the contract; (iii) cost; (iv) the personnel conducting the project; (v) whether it was put to tender; (vi) recommendations made; and (vii) any actions taken by the department or minister.

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

To provide the information requested would require an inordinate amount of time and resources, which are not available. Mr Theophanous may wish to submit a more focused and specific question on the matter.

Women's Affairs: staff

(Question No. 203)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Women's Affairs:

(a) What is the number and cost of staff working in her office?

(b) What is the number of staff working in each public relations unit under her control, indicating the — (i) total operating budget; and (ii) total promotional budget?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Women's Affairs is:

The information available in response to the honourable member's question is set out below:

(a) The Office of the Minister for Women's Affairs is combined with the Office of the Attorney-General and the Office of the Minister for Fair Trading. The staff in this combined office number 5.6 full-time employees and staffing costs for 1995-96 were $281 711. This compares to the budget estimate for 1995-96 of $280 971.

(b) There is no public relations unit within the Office of Women's Affairs or within the minister's office.

However, there is a corporate communications unit within the Department of Justice. It provides a strategic focus for internal communications, departmental publications and general public information for the Department of Justice, including the Office of Women's Affairs.

The 1996-97 tentative total budget for this unit is $330 000, representing salary and subsidiary expenses of $155 000 and operating expenses of $175 000. Display costs and related expenses are contained in the total budget and a promotional budget, as such, does not exist.

Another area of the department which has a publicity function is the public information branch within the Office of Fair Trading. However, this branch does not undertake work for the Office of Women's Affairs, and its functions are directed entirely to aspects of Office of Fair Trading and Business Affairs service delivery and consumer affairs issues.

Melbourne's Open House project

(Question No. 205)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In relation to Melbourne's Open House Project:

(a) What was the total cost of advertising and public relations for the project?

(b) What were the production and printing costs of the Agenda 21 brochure titled *Melbourne's Open House — Rediscover Your City*, indicating the number of brochures printed and the number distributed to date?

(c) What were the production and printing costs of the Agenda 21 booklet titled *Passport to Melbourne — Welcome* to *Melbourne's Open House*, indicating the number of booklets printed and the number distributed to date?

(d) What is the total cost to date of the Agenda 21 Melbourne's Open House advertisements printed regularly in the *Herald Sun*, the *Age* and all suburban and country newspapers?

(e) What is the total cost of the Agenda 21 Melbourne's Open House Special Supplement (8 October 1995) printed in the *Herald Sun*?

(f) What is the total cost of television and radio advertisements promoting Melbourne's Open House?

(g) What is the total staffing cost for the project, indicating how many staff were involved in — (i) preparation of the project; and (ii) the event on the weekend of 7 and 8 October 1995?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

(a) The total cost of advertising, public relations and related issues for this project includes: $12 009 on brochures and pamphlets, $14 355 on external public relations consultancy services (most of the work was undertaken by the Department of Planning and Development's Public Affairs Branch), $44 489 on advertising the event, $12 128 on the passport booklet and other operational costs of $80 226 totalling $163 207.

(b) 50 000 copies of the brochure *Melbourne's Open House — Rediscover Your City* were printed. Design and printing costs were $5139 and all copies were distributed.

(c) 30 000 copies of Agenda 21 booklet titled *Passport to Melbourne — Welcome to Melbourne's Open House* were printed at a cost for design and printing of $12 128 and all copies were distributed.

(d) The cost of the Agenda 21 Melbourne's Open House event advertisements placed in the *Herald Sun* and the *Age* was $36 111.

No advertisements were placed in the suburban newspapers for the Melbourne Open House event, although advertisements in the suburban press for the Victoria's Open House weekend, of which Melbourne's Open House was a part, included some details of facilities open to the public as part of Melbourne's Open House.

(e) The Melbourne's Open House supplement published in the *Sunday Herald Sun* on 8 October 1995 was free of charge and provided by the newspaper in support of the event.

(f) There was no paid television or radio advertising of Melbourne's Open House.

(g) The staff involved in the preparing for the event were from the Department of Planning and Development's Public Affairs Branch. Three additional staff were engaged during the two weeks leading up to the event. The combined cost of these staff was $4491.

Melbourne's Open House on 8 October 1995 was staffed by members of the Department of Planning and Development's Public Affairs Branch together with representatives of the organisations whose facilities were open as part of the event. Other staff were volunteers from the Australian College of Travel and Hospitality and the Melbourne City Council. The staff cost on 8 October 1995 was therefore minimal and involved only overtime payments for some of the staff involved.

Agenda 21 Quarterly

(Question No. 206)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

What are the details of all the issues of the *Agenda 21 Quarterly* produced to date, indicating for each issue — (i) the date; (ii) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (iii) the number printed; and (iv) the cost of production?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

Ten issues of *Agenda 21 Quarterly* have been published: December 1993, March, July and November 1994, February, May, September and December 1995, and February and May 1996.

10 000 copies of each issue have been printed at an average cost $7500 per issue. Copies are distributed as follows:

2200 to individuals and organisations in Australia and overseas;

4000 copies to 20 organisations for distribution and display through their facilities; and

3800 for distribution by the Department of Infrastructure Bookshop, Information Victoria and organisations whose facilities are featured in the magazine.

An additional 30 000 copies of the September 1995 issue were printed for distribution from the Department of Planning and Development's display in the Government Pavilion at the Royal Melbourne Agricultural Show and at sites participating in the Melbourne's Open House event. The total cost of the additional 30 000 copies printed was approximately $12 000.

An extra 41 000 copies were printed of the February 1996 issue for distribution at Victoria on Show. The cost of printing additional copies was approximately $20 000.

An extra 10 000 copies (costing $9600) of the May 1996 issue were printed for distribution at the Victoria on Show travelling regional exhibition.

Work and Family: Victoria's Approach

(Question No. 208)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In relation to the brochure *Work and Family: Victoria's Approach*:

(a) What is the total advertising and promotional cost?

(b) What is the cost of printing and distribution of the five brochures, and the quantity printed?

(c) How many brochures were mailed in response to advertisements in the *Herald Sun* and the *Age*?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

(a) Advertisements were placed in the *Age* and the *Australian* on 24 August 1995 and the *Herald Sun* on 26 August 1995. Advertisements were also placed in regional Victorian newspapers and 14 Victorian industry journals and newsletters. The total cost of advertising was $15 292.40.

(b) The total printing costs, including design layout and printing film, amounted to $33 848.00.

There were 25 000 sets of (five) brochures printed.

(c) Of the total number of brochures distributed, approximately 8000 brochures have been distributed in response to telephone requests which emanated directly from the advertising program.

Small Business October

(Question No. 209)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business:

In relation to the promotion of *Small Business October*:

(a) What is the total cost of advertising and public relations for this promotion?

(b) What are the production and printing costs of the leaflet titled *Small Business October — The Biggest Small Business Event Ever Held In Australia*, indicating the number of leaflets printed and the number distributed to date?

(c) What is the specific cost to operate the hotline promoting *Small Business October*, indicating the number of staff working and their cost, and the number of calls received?

(d) What is the cost to date of *Small Business October* advertisements printed in the *Herald Sun*, the *Age* and in all suburban and country newspapers?

(e) What is the cost of the *Small Business October* Business Supplement (1 October 1995) printed in the *Sunday Herald Sun?*

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

In relation to the promotion of *Small Business October* 1995 :

(a) The total cost of advertising was $140 225 ; public relations for the promotion cost $135 280.

(b) The production of the leaflet titled *Small Business October — The Biggest Small Business Event Ever Held In Australia*, was absorbed into the total cost of promotional material for the event, including letterhead (20 000) and posters. Total cost was $20 179. Some 10 000 leaflets were produced.

(c) The hotline supporting *Small Business October* was provided by SBV regular information line staff. Estimated cost of the hotline and support staff was $27 170. This is an additional cost to that identified in (a) above. The number of calls into the hotline was not recorded separately from normal inquiries.

(d) *Small Business October* advertisements printed in the *Herald Sun* and the *Age* cost $40 392. This amount is included in the calculation of total costs in (a) above. No costs were incurred with suburban newspapers.

(e) The *Small Business October* Business Supplement (1 October 1995) printed in the *Sunday Herald Sun* cost $79 677. This amount is included in the calculation of total costs in (a) above.

OHS plant safety regulations

(Question No. 210)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In relation to the occupational health and safety plant safety regulations campaign:

(a) What is the total cost of the plant safety regulations advertisements printed in the *Herald Sun*, the *Age*, the *Weekly Times* and the ethnic press?

(b) What is the cost of all television advertising promoting the regulations?

(c) What is the specific cost to operate the hotline promoting the plant safety regulations, indicating the number of staff working and their cost, and the number of calls received?

(d) What is the cost of promotional information guides printed and distributed?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology is:

As a consequence of the Accident Compensation (Occupational Health and Safety) Act 1996, the Victorian Workcover Authority and the Health and Safety Organisation merged on 2 July 1996. The former Health and Safety Organisation was the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for State Development. The merged organisation, the Victorian Workcover Authority, is the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Finance.

(a)	Total cost	$126 997.00
(b)	Total cost	$335 011.00
(c)	Cost of staff	$4974.75
	Number of calls received	1818
	Total cost of hotline	$15 944.72
(d)	Total plant publications (to date)	$233 345.00

Treasury and Finance: advertising

(Question No. 212)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within the Treasurer's administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in his ministerial portfolio for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

Given the breadth of the member's question and the amount of detail required to provide a full response, it is felt that the time and resources required to provide an answer cannot be justified in this instance.

For the total cost of advertising for the financial years from 3 October 1992 to 30 June 1994, I refer the member to the response provided in *Hansard* on 11 April 1995, page 881.

A list of the total expenditure for advertising for the financial years 1994-95 and 1995-96 has been provided.

Department/Agency	1994-95	1995-96
Treasury/Finance	***588 362.00	***658 191.00
State Revenue Office	160 424.00	147 826.00
Transport Accident Commission	*14 767,000.00	*17 776,000.00
Treasury Corporation of Victoria	**575 045.00	**309 892.00
Rural Finance Corporation	55 773.00	210 220.00

*Note — As part of the TAC's accident prevention and road safety initiatives to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on Victorian roads a number of advertising campaigns have been undertaken.

**Note — TCV uses the government-appointed media agency Leeds Media and Communications for advertising which is largely undertaken to promote TCV's retail product, *Government Bonds of Victoria.*

***Note — The amount expended includes recruitment advertising and advertising for tenders.

Finance: advertising

(Question No. 213)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in his ministerial portfolio for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

(i) No advertising campaigns were conducted by the former Department of Finance. The Victorian Workcover Authority and the former Health and Safety Organisation merged on 2 July 1996. The former Health and Safety Organisation was the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for State Development. The merged organisation, the Victorian Workcover Authority, is the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Finance. Answers are given separately for the authority and the former Health and Safety Organisation as follows:

Victorian WorkCover Authority

The Victorian Workcover Authority has conducted four advertising campaigns since November 1992. All four advertising campaigns were over $10 000.

The first campaign was for the provision of information to employers, workers, service providers and the community regarding:

legislative changes and consequent rights and obligations;

benefit levels/how the new premium system operates;

notification of change of insurer;

verification of claims costs and estimates of remuneration;

employer obligations for occupational rehabilitation; and

conciliation procedures.

The cost of this campaign in 1992-93 was $498 000 and in 1993-94 was $1.480 million. Following the effective information campaign in 1993-94, no costs were incurred in 1994-95.

The second campaign was to promote return to work for injured workers. The campaign was targeted at employers, doctors and workers.

The campaign was effective in changing Victoria's compensation culture to a return-to-work culture, resulting in a major reduction in the duration of claims. This has had a significant impact on:

elimination of the $2.1 billion deficit left from Workcare; and

a reduction in the operating costs of the scheme — which has saved employers $500 million annually.

The cost of this campaign in 1992-93 was $1.564 million. In 1993-94 the cost was $3.418 million and in 1994-95, $2.086 million. Cost for the period 1 July 1995 to 30 April 1996 is $1.07 million.

The third campaign was the amnesty campaign. This was targeted at employers who had failed to take out a Workcover policy and provided an amnesty period of one month, whereby, if they took out a policy in that period, they would avoid the normal penalties for not having a policy.

The amnesty campaign resulted in an additional $7 million in premiums in 1993-94 with an estimated ongoing additional premium of $3 million to $4 million annually.

The campaign, which ran only in 1993, cost $1 030 453.

The fourth and most important campaign is 'Safety — think it, talk it, work it' and is designed to prevent injuries in the workplace. Reduction of injuries will not only reduce costs for employers but will relieve workers from the pain and suffering caused by preventable injuries.

The prevention campaign began in 1993-94 and cost $142 000 in that year. With the emphasis now on prevention, the cost of the campaign increased in 1994-95 to $4.236 million. Cost for this campaign from 1 July 1995 to 30 April 1996 is $3.159 million.

A sub-set of this fourth campaign is the prevention pilot program in the Ballarat region where a range of advertising media was used to promote specific solutions for Ballarat region workplaces. This project is Operation Safety.

Cost for the Operation Safety advertising campaign which ran from November 1995 to December 1995 was $260 289.

Former Health and Safety Organisation

Since October 1992, Health and Safety conducted three advertising campaigns.

Farm Safety Campaign (March-June 1995)

Purpose: aimed at people working and living on, or visiting farms to raise their awareness about the risks to health and safety on farms and changing attitudes and practices.

Total cost $412 577

Plant Safety Campaign (May-June 1995)

Purpose: to inform clients of the existence of the new plant regulations and the opportunity created for self management of duties. The new regulation replaced 36 prescriptive and outdated regulations under four different acts. The campaign promoted the simplification of the new legislation for plant safety which should make it easier for business to implement and manage risk controls for plant.

Total cost $462 008

Explosives Amnesty (July, August, November, December 1995)

Purpose: to inform the community about the amnesty in order to increase community awareness of public health and safety risks associated with all types of explosives and to efficiently and significantly reduce the quantities of unwanted explosives in the community.

Total cost $37 774

(ii) The advertising budget for the former Department of Finance for 1992-93 and 1993-94 was $896 045 and $552 946 respectively. The total advertising budget for the 1994-95 financial year was $7 410 595. This figure includes the budget for the Victorian Workcover Authority.

Agriculture and Resources: advertising

(Question No. 214)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Agriculture and Resources:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in his ministerial portfolio for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources is:

The question is extremely broad and embraces advertising for a range of different purposes that are undertaken within the Agriculture and Resources portfolio.

The time and resources required to provide the full and detailed information sought would impose a cost and burden on government that cannot be justified.

If the honourable member has specific concerns I invite him to raise them so they may be given due consideration.

I am however, able, to provide the following information with regard to a number of agencies and authorities within the Agriculture and Resources portfolio:

Agency	Date	Purpose	Cost $
City West Water	Apr 1995-Jun 1995	Introducing City West Water campaign in local press	6862
Melbourne Water[1]	Oct 1995-Apr 1996	Care about the Bay community education program	294 500
Murray Valley Citrus Marketing Board	1992-93	Advertising budget for the financial year	520 000
Murray Valley Citrus Marketing Board	1993-94	Advertising budget for the financial year	580 000
Murray Valley Citrus Marketing Board	1994-95	Advertising budget for the financial year	682 500
South East Water	1.1.95-26.6.96	National Water Week campaign	20 000
Victorian Dairy Industry Authority[2]	3.10.92-30.6.93	Product-related advertising: Farmhouse, Rev, Big M	3 228 387
Victorian Dairy Industry Authority	1.7.93-30.6.94	Product-related advertising: Farmhouse, Rev, Big M	3 167 316
Victorian Strawberry Industry Development Committee	1993-94	Radio campaign for strawberries as a snack food	24 790
Victorian Strawberry Industry Development Committee	1994-95	Television campaign for wider consumption of strawberries	119 514
Yarra Valley Water	Jan to June 95	Water Service Guarantee	32 000
Yarra Valley Water	Jan to June 95	Customer information	10 500
Yarra Valley Water	Jan to June 95	Water conservation	47 500

Notes: The Melbourne Market Authority reported that expenditure on advertising campaigns (i.e, television, radio and print) has fluctuated and has not been a major component of its promotional budget.

Total expenditure on educational material, posters, videos, exhibits, sponsorship and media to the wider public and to growers has been as follows:

1992-93 $324 559

1993-94 $338 480

1994-95 $394 161

[1]From 3 October 1992 and prior to the disaggregation of the former Melbourne Water at 1 January 1995, there were four advertising campaigns including a Naturally Better television campaign, a water conservation campaign, and community education campaigns on changes to customer billing and the introduction of the sewerage disposal charge. The total expenditure on advertising by the former Melbourne Water was: $2.2 million for 1992-93; $1.7 million for 1993-94; and $840 747 for 1994-95.

[2]As from 1 July 1994, with the formation of Australian Milk Marketing Pty Ltd, no product-related advertising has been carried out by the Victorian Dairy Industry Authority.

Industry, Science and Technology: advertising

(Question No. 215)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in his ministerial portfolio for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

The member's question is extremely broad and embraces advertising for a range of different purposes that are undertaken within my portfolio. The cost and burden on government does not justify a detailed response to the question.

The member is invited, however, to submit a more focused question and details will be provided along the lines of the answer to question no. 208.

Small Business: advertising

(Question No. 216)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in the ministerial portfolio for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer is:

The honourable member's question is broad and embraces advertising for a range of different purposes across the portfolio. Such purposes may include advertising for recruitment, public tenders or submissions and fulfilling statutory obligations.

The time and resources required to fully reply to this historical question cannot be justified.

Police and Emergency Services, and Corrections: advertising

(Questions Nos 218 and 219)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in his ministerial portfolio for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections is:

I am informed that the time and resources required to answer detailed questions of this nature are not available. However, the honourable member may wish to narrow his inquiry and I will reconsider my response.

Rural Development: advertising

(Question No. 220)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Rural Development:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in his ministerial portfolio for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Rural Development is:

The member's question is extremely broad and embraces advertising for a range of different purposes that are undertaken in the portfolio.

The cost and burden on government resources does not justify a detailed response to the question.

Arts: advertising

(Question No. 222)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for the Arts:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in his ministerial portfolio for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for the Arts is:

Arts Victoria

(i) Development, publication and launch of the Arts 21 strategy (1994-95) $79 491

(ii) No advertising budget in these years.

State Library of Victoria

(i) Victorian Information Services Network, printing of brochures (1994-95) $2988

(ii) No advertising budget in these years.

Victorian Arts Centre Trust

(i) All of the centre's events, activities, and programs are promoted and advertised; costs incurred are covered by the annual advertising budget.

The time and resources required to provide the detailed information sought for each of these events, activities, and programs cannot be justified.

(ii) 1992-93, $629 950; 1993-94, $636 710; 1994-95, $534 250.

National Gallery of Victoria

(i) 1992-93 exhibitions:

Rubens and the Italian Renaissance	$42 360
Balenciagga	$10 000
Charles Blackman	$10 000
Hugh Ramsay	$15 000
Rembrandt to Renoir	$51 200

1993-94 exhibitions:

Van Gogh	$70 000
Worth to Dior	$20 000
Arthur Boyd	$10 000

1994-95 exhibitions:

Albrecht Durer	$11 600
Renoir	$90 000
Aboriginal Art	$10 000
Phillips Fox	$10 000
Sam Fullbrook	$11 000

(ii) 1992-93, $225 561; 1993-94, $201 500; 1994-95, $224 600.

Public Record Office

(i) The Eureka Travelling Display (1994-95)	$1222

(ii) No advertising budget in these years.

Geelong Performing Arts Centre

(i) All of the centre's events, activities, and programs are promoted and advertised; costs incurred are covered by the annual advertising budget.

The time and resources required to provide the detailed information sought for each of these events, activities, and programs cannot be justified.

(ii) 1992-93, $83 693; 1993-94, $103 507; 1994-95, $102 957.

Museum of Victoria:

(i) Imperial China: The Living Past (11.92-2.93)	$20 000
Gargantuans from the Garden (3.93-7.93)	$8000
Sportsworks (6.93-9.93)	$43 000
The Great Russian Dinosaurs (8.93-3.94)	$25 000
Special Effects (touring exhibition) (2.94-1.95)	$89 000
Antarctica: Secrets of the Frozen World (12.94-10.95)	$60 000
Sportsworks (touring exhibition) (2.95-6.95)	$10 000

(ii) 1992-93, $128 000; 1993-94, $125 000; 1994-95, $160 000.

Planning and Local Government: advertising

(Question No. 224)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in his ministerial portfolio for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years.

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The Department of Infrastructure and statutory authorities within the portfolio regularly advertise for the following purposes:

Advertisements on professional registration requirements.

Job advertisements.

Invitations to make submissions to reviews.

Public information.

Exhibition of planning scheme amendments and advertising of planning permits.

Announcement of reviews and the availability of reports.

Inviting tenders.

Sale of land by the Urban Land Authority and promotion of displays and services.

If the honourable member seeks additional information in respect of any particular advertisement, I will be happy to provide it.

Advertising expenditure has been as follows:

Office of Building	1992-93	$ 121 266.82	
	1993-94	$ 37 122.61	
	1994-95	$ 56 694.17	
Office of Local Government (including the Local Government Board)	1992-93	$ 28 943.00	
	1993-94	$ 62 807.00	
	1994-95	$ 69 015.00	
Office of Planning and Heritage	1992-93	$ 113 450.77	
	1993-94	$ 43 901.48	
	1994-95	$ 65 414.81	
Architects Registration Board	1992-93	$ 1 147.30	
	1993-94	$ 108.10	
	1994-95	$ 158.75	
Building Control Commission and associated bodies	1994-95	$ 20 194.00	
Docklands Authority	1992-93	$ 7 773.00	
	1993-94	Nil	
	1994-95	Nil	
Major Projects	1992-93	$ 35 000.00	(Approx.)
	1993-94	$ 17 893.77	
	1994-95	$ 54 932.00	
Melbourne City Link Authority	1994-95	$ 255 519.00	
Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainers Registration Board	1992-93	$ 58 974.00	
	1993-94	$ 170 257.00	
	1994-95	$ 196 468.00	
Urban Land Authority	1992-93	$ 3 806 000.00	
	1993-94	$ 4 073 000.00	
	1994-95	$ 4 775 000.00	

Gaming: advertising

(Question No. 225)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details of all advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 to date, indicating — (i) the purpose and total costs of each campaign; and (ii) the total advertising budget in his ministerial portfolio for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

There have not been any advertising campaigns since 3 October 1992 within the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority or its predecessors.

Treasury and Finance: advertising

(Question No. 229)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

What is the cost to date of advertisements titled 'Electricity Prices Continue to Fall' and 'Facts on Electricity — Dispel the Myths' printed in all daily, suburban and country newspapers, indicating — (i) dates when the advertisements were placed; (ii) placement of the advertisements; and (iii) to whom each contract was awarded and whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

(i) The total cost of advertising placement was $21 325.10.

(ii) Advertisements were placed between October and November 1995.

(iii) Advertisements were placed in the following papers: *Ballarat Courier, Bendigo Advertiser, Brimbank Messenger, Castlemaine Mail, Hume Observer, Frankston Standard, Moonee Valley Gazette, Geelong Advertiser, Heidelberger, Latrobe Valley Express, Sunraysia Daily, Mornington Mail, Mornington Flyer, Preston Post Times, Warrnambool Standard, Bairnsdale Advertiser, Cranbourne Times, Moreland Courier, Freepress Yarra Ranges, Albury Border Mail, Bacchus Melton Telegraph, Echuca Riverine Herald, Ringwood Croydon Mail, Knox News, Melbourne Times, Oakleigh Springvale Times, Shepparton News, Tatura/Kyabram Guardian, Werribee Banner, Western Times, Williamstown Advertiser, Phillip Island Star, Lake Sunshine Post, Great Sth Star, Mornington and Sth Peninsula Mail, Moreland Sentinel,* and *Wangaratta Chronicle.*

(iv) Placement of advertising was organised through the government-appointed media agency, Leeds Media.

Victorian Government Purchasing Board: media contracts

(Question No. 230)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

What total costs were incurred by the Victorian Government Purchasing Board in seeking to tender for new state government media buying contracts prior to extending the media buying contract with Leeds Media for six months?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

I am informed that as this is a matter which falls within the jurisdiction of the Minister for Finance, I would suggest that the question would be more appropriately directed to my colleague the Honourable R. M. Hallam, MLC.

Welcome to School campaign

(Question No. 233)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In relation to the Directorate of School Education's 1996 Welcome to School campaign:

(a) What is the budgeted cost of advertising and publications?

(b) What is the budgeted cost of promotional packaged information kits printed and distributed?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(a) and (b) Advertising nil; publications/packaged information kits $401 000 approximately, and distribution $283 000 approximately.

Premier and Cabinet: annual reports

(Question No. 234)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

I am informed that the total cost of annual reports for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years was as follows:

Department of Premier and Cabinet (Incorporating Office of the Governor, and Ethnic Affairs)

The total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 was $8037, $10 235, and $11 981 respectively.

Office of the Public Service Commissioner

The total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 was $1195, $2650, and $3890 respectively.

Office of the Auditor-General

The total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 was $10 535, $7910, and $14 810 respectively.

Office of the Ombudsman

The total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 was $7515, $5210, and $7019 respectively.

Victorian Relief Committee

The total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 was $15 259.

Multicultural Affairs: annual reports

(Question No. 235)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs is:

I am informed that the answer to this question has been incorporated in the Department of Premier and Cabinet response to parliamentary question no. 234.

Police and Emergency Services, and Corrections: annual reports

(Question Nos 236 and 237)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections is set out below:

The following annual reports have been produced by the portfolios questioned with the amounts being marginal costs of producing the report, that is, printing, artwork and associated costs, and does not include internal staffing and indirect costs.

REPORT	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95
Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board	$30,295	$29,950	$31,200
Country Fire Authority	$15,070	$21,200	$33,180
Adult Parole Board	$1,194	$1,190	$395
Victorian Prison Industries	$3,002	$17,472	$14,776
Police Review Commission (Victoria)		$585	$920
Victoria Police	$18,268	$25,491	$27,287
Police Board of Victoria	$1,240	$1,065	$1,090
Department of Justice #	$10,975	$19,390	$18,096✱ $5740✡

Tourism: annual reports

(Question No. 238)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Tourism:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

Australian Grand Prix Corporation (AGPC)		
1992-93	Nil	(AGPC did not exist)
1993-94	Nil	(AGPC did not exist)
1994-95	$4000	
Tourism Victoria		
1992-93	$10 370	
1993-94	$34 527	
1994-95	$15 737	

Agriculture and Resources: annual reports

(Question No. 239)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Agriculture and Resources:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources is provided in the table below:

Agency	**1992-93**	**1993-94**	**1994-95**
Agriculture	$44 000	$46 190	N/A
Agriculture, Energy and Minerals	N/A	N/A	$64 580
Australian Barley Board[1]	$22 568	$23 240	$19 006
Daratech Pty Ltd	$16 797	$2800	$8392
Energy and Minerals	$16 605	$17 750	N/A
Melbourne Market Authority	Figure not available	$32 542	$17 100
Melbourne Water[2]	$108 600	$74 900	$70 000
Murray Valley Citrus Marketing Board	$3950	$4038	$4480
Murray Valley Wine Grape Industry Development Committee	N/A	N/A	$7500
Victorian Dairy Industry Authority	$66 970	$62 774	$66 195
Victorian Dried Fruits Board	$6250	$3175	$2490
Victorian Meat Authority	N/A	$5162	$8878
Victorian Plantations Corporation	N/A	$27 642	$32 750
Victorian Strawberry Industry Development Committee	$674	$512	$523
Total	$286 114	$273 083	$301 354

Notes: 'N/A' indicates either that the entity did not exist at the time or was not then required to produce an annual report.

[1]The Australian Barley Board is a two-state authority and costs are allocated on a pro-rata basis between South Australia and Victoria according to the quantity of barley marketed in each state.

The figures quoted relate to the Victorian component.

[2]The former Melbourne Water was replaced on 1 January 1995 by City West Water Ltd, Yarra Valley Water Ltd and South East Water Ltd.

The Victorian Broiler Industry Negotiation Committee reported that the non-salary costs of annual reports did not exceed $100 in any one year and that salary costs would add an estimated $300 to $500 in each year.

The Tomato Industry Negotiating Committee advised that the total printing cost of each annual report for the committee is under $100 per year, plus the nominal half day for a Department officer to collate the material.

The Wine Grape Industry Negotiating Committee advised that the total printing cost of each annual report for the committee is under $100 per year, plus the nominal half day for a Department officer to collate the material.

The Northern Victorian Fresh Tomato Industry Development Committee reported that the cost of producing its annual report is negligible.

The Australian Food Industry Science Centre was only established on 1 July 1995.

Prior to 1995-96 the Veterinary Board of Victoria was not required to publish an annual report.

Prior to the recent process of amalgamation there were over one hundred small non-metropolitan water authorities.

To attempt to provide information relating to the cost of each annual report of these bodies would involve a significant outlay of time and resources and, consistent with past practice, cannot be justified.

Industry, Science and Technology: annual reports

(Question No. 240)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

The following response relates to the Department of Business and Employment, which was predecessor to the Department of State Development.

Department of Business and Employment

1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
$15 003	$19 186	$46 663

Exhibition Trustees

1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
$5960	$1440	$3000 (est)

Employee Relations Commission

1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
$829.40	$879	$1500

Melbourne Exhibition Centre Trust

1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Nil	Nil	$12.80

Discharged Servicemen's Employment Board

1992-93	1993-94	1994-95

Costs are negligible. Documents photocopied using in-house facilities.

Rural Development: annual reports

(Question No. 241)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Rural Development:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Rural Development is:

Albury Wodonga (Victoria) Corporation

The annual report for the Albury Wodonga (Victoria) Corporation is incorporated in the annual report produced by the Albury Wodonga Development Corporation, as is the report of the Albury Wodonga (NSW) Corporation, and it is not possible to identify costs separately.

Geelong Region Commission and Latrobe Regional Commission

These two organisations have been abolished and the information is not readily available.

Education: annual reports

(Question No. 242)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The total cost of annual reports 1992-93 to 1994-95 for the Department of Education and the Board of Studies was as follows:

1992-93	$24 929
1993-94	$74 716
1994-95	$49 402

The total cost represents full production costs of editing, designing and printing. It does not include salary and on-costs of departmental staff. The cost is for the following entities:

(i) Department of Education (responsible to both the Minister for Education and the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training); and

(ii) Board of Studies.

The increase in cost from 1992-93 to 1993-94 was due to general increase in production cost, significant increases in circulation and increase in quality of the report of the Board of Studies. These costs were reduced in 1994-95 through the introduction of a coordinated standard format for the reports.

Small Business: annual reports

(Question No. 243)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer is:

In relation to each agency now under my administration, the costs of annual reports were as follows :

1992-93	$
Small Business Victoria	7 800
Liquor Licensing Commission	2 663
1993-94	
Small Business Victoria	9 560
Liquor Licensing Commission	2 590
1994-95	
Small Business Victoria	13 690
Liquor Licensing Commission	2 621

Note: Information relating to the Department of Business and Employment covers a range of ministerial portfolios and will be included in the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology's response to question 240.

Sport: annual reports

(Question No. 245)

Mr THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Sport:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Sport is:

Sport, Recreation and Racing

1992-93	$5965	
1993-94	$3905	
1994-95	No individual Sport and Recreation Victoria annual report. See below.	

My portfolio also contributes to the production of the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism's annual reports for which the total costs are provided below.

1992-93	300 copies	$4347
1993-94	500 copies	$11 957
1994-95	100 copies	$31 747

(The 1994-95 cost included the reporting requirements for Arts Victoria and Sport, Recreation and Racing.)

Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust — National Tennis Centre

1992-93	$11 720
1993-94	$11 720
1994-95	$9030

Note: For the designated periods Olympic Park was not part of the portfolio's operations.

Victorian Institute of Sport

1992-93	$9600
1993-94	$9800
1994-95	$11 200

Professional Boxing Control Board

Reporting for this statutory body is included in the annual reports of Sport, Recreation and Racing for the years 1992-93 and 1993-94 and in 1994-95 as part of the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism annual report.

Martial Arts Control Board

The annual report for this statutory body is not sent to a printer. Each year the board produces a report of 4 to 6 pages, which is photocopied as required.

Greyhound Racing Control Board

1992-93	$1850
1993-94	$2169
1994-95	$2300

Harness Racing Board	
1992-93	$1085
1993-94	$1355
1994-95	$9936

Attorney-General, Fair Trading, and Women's Affairs: annual reports

(Question Nos 247, 248 and 250)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Attorney-General, the Minister for Fair Trading, and the Minister for Women's Affairs:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Attorney-General, the Minister for Small Business, and the Minister for Women's Affairs is:

The following annual reports have been produced by the portfolios questioned and amounts represent marginal costs of producing the report, ie. printing, artwork and associated costs, and does not include internal staffing and indirect costs.

REPORT	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Supreme Court of Victoria	$830* (1993)	$1,775* (1994)	$3,473* (1995)
County Court of Victoria	$900	$900	$2050
Magistrates' Court of Victoria	$200*✞ (1993)	$200*✞ (1994)	✓
Crimes Compensation Tribunal	$50✞	$50✞	$1,100
Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine	$5,600	$6,644	$8,044
Guardianship and Administration Board	$1,992	$3,775	$11,262
Equal Opportunity Board (now Anti-Discrimination Tribunal)	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000
Victorian Electoral Commission		$9,800	$25,885
Equal Opportunity Commission	$6,759✞	$8,588✞	$14,355✞
Women's Budget	$15,919.50	$10,586	$11,792
Victoria Women's Council		$1,800	$2,800✞
Victorian Financial Institutions Commission	$41,071	$36,294	$38,239
Lay Observer	$1,755 (1992)*	$2480 (1993)*	$2195 (1994)*
Office of Public Prosecutions	$2,350	$3,336	$11,230
Legal Aid Commission	$4,610	$6,980	$7,230
Freedom of Information	$3,100	$5,613	$1,106
Department of Justice#	$10,975	$19,390	$18,096⌘ $5740✡
Office of Fair Trading & Business Affairs	$3,330	$3,385	$5,800

✞ Estimate

✓The Magistrates' Court will not produce an Annual Report until the next financial year.

* Report produced in calendar, not financial, year.

This Report contains details of all agencies and authorities within the Department of Justice that are not listed separately.

⌘ This figure provided for the initial print run of 700 copies.

✡ This figure provided for a later print run of 250 copies to provide orientation material for prospective staff.

Treasury and Finance: annual reports

(Question No. 249)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

Department of Treasury

The cost of the annual reports was included with the overall cost of printing and publications, the time and resources required to provide the information for the years 1992-93 and 1993-94 cannot be justified in this instance.

Department of Finance

1992-93	$3450 (in-house).
1993-94	$10 701 (design/editing in-house).

Department of Treasury and Finance

1994-95	$24 455

Rural Finance Corporation

1992-93	$79 726
1993-94	$79 726
1994-95	$79 726

Treasury Corporation of Victoria

1992-93	$77 165.51
1993-94	$54 026.41
1994-95	$38 915.00

State Revenue Office

1992-93	$19 000*
1993-94	$19 000
1994-95	$47 000**

*The cost of the annual report is not available but is estimated not to be greater than the cost of the 1993-94 annual report.

**The higher cost in 1994-95 relates to the SRO using an external design house.

Transport Accident Commission

1992-93	$81 828
1993-94	$81 990
1994-95	$95 822

Arts: annual reports

(Question No. 251)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for the Arts:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for the Arts is:

Arts Victoria

1992-93	$12 300;
1993-94	$12 500;
1994-95	No separate report issued; report of operations included in Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism report.

Council of the State Library of Victoria

1992-93	$3400;
1993-94	$1100;
1994-95	$1200.

Victorian Arts Centre Trust

1992-93	No costs available
1993-94	$25 000;
1994-95	$39 040.

Council of Trustees of the National Gallery of Victoria

1992-93	$1080;
1993-94	$790;
1994-95	$3000.

Keeper of Public Records

1992-93	$2000;
1993-94	$3317;
1994-95	$6414.

Geelong Performing Arts Centre Trust

1992-93	Nil;
1993-94	Nil;
1994-95	$496.

Council of the Museum of Victoria

1992-93	$11 000;
1993-94	$11 000;
1994-95	$35 000.

These costs are outsourced costs only; in-house costs, such as salaries, were absorbed within agency budgets.

Conservation and Land Management: annual reports

(Question No. 252)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within your administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

Agency	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Alpine Resorts Commission	$10 950	$20 000	$7 000[1]
Former Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	$26 342	$42 937	$44 910
Environment Protection Authority	$24 346	$34 164	$39 695
Land Conservation Council	$1255	$1590	$1550
Land Titles Office[2]	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Melbourne Parks and Waterways[3]	Not applicable	Not applicable	$8367

Office of Geographic Data Co-ordination[4]	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Office of the Surveyor-General[5]	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Office of the Valuer-General[6]	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Royal Botanic Gardens	$13 840	$10 824	$15 830
Trust for Nature (Victoria)	Not available	$479	$414
Zoological Parks and Gardens Board	$20 020	$16 088	$19 730
Total	$96 753	$126 082	$137 496

Notes:

[1]The commission's financial year ends 31 October and the report for 1994-95 is not yet finalised. It is expected that the cost will not exceed $7000.

[2]The Land Titles Office did not prepare a separate annual report for the period in question, but contributed information to that produced by the Department of Justice.

[3]Melbourne Parks and Waterways was established as a full statutory authority under the Water Industry Act 1994 and as such produced one annual report for 1994-95.

[4]The Office of Geographic Data Co-ordination was a part of the Department of Finance in 1992-93 and 1993-94 and of the Department of the Treasury and Finance in 1994-95 and has not produced an annual report in its own right.

[5]The Office of the Surveyor-General did not produce a separate annual report for those years, but contributed information to that produced by the Department of the Treasury and Finance.

[6]The Office of the Valuer-General advised that it has not produced a separate annual report for the period in question, but rather supplied a section within the annual report of the Department of the Treasury and Finance.

Planning and Local Government: annual reports

(Question No. 253)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

Department of Planning and Development, which included the report on the Office of Building, the Office of Housing, the Office of Major Projects, the Office of Local Government and the Office of Planning and Heritage.	1992-93	$32 003
	1993-94	$37 380
	1994-95	$47 540
Architects Registration Board	1992-93	$770
	1993-94	$553
	1994-95	$918
Building Control Commission	1994-95	$21 742
Docklands Authority	1992-93	$20 034
	1993-94	$17 425
	1994-95	$24 498
Historic Buildings Council	1992-93	$6000
	1993-94	$4613
	1994-95	$8966
Melbourne City Link Authority	1994-95	$45 992

Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainers Registration Board	1992-93	$5925
	1993-94	$6131
	1994-95	$6227
Urban Land Authority	1992-93	$43 000
	1993-94	$49 500
	1994-95	$66 000
Victoria Grants Commission	1992-93	$2818
	1993-94	$2050
	1994-95	$1560

The amounts given reflect the costs of printing and services provided by external providers. They do not include estimates of the costs of staff time involved in preparing the reports.

Finance: annual reports

(Question No. 255)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

Former Department of Finance		
1992-93	$3450	(Completed in-house)
1993-94	$10 701	(Design and editing completed in-house)
Department of Treasury and Finance		
1994-95	$24 455	
Office of the Regulator-General		
1994-95	$23 309	(Initial Annual Report)
Victorian Workcover Authority		
1992-93	$38 470	
1993-94	$41 280	
1994-95	$50 845	
Government Employee Housing Authority		
1992-93	Not available	
1993-94	$3440	
1994-95	$1920	

Documentation which would reveal the cost of the 1992-93 annual report of the former Government Employee Housing Authority has been archived. The time and resources to retrieve this information cannot be justified. However, the total cost is believed to be similar to the cost of the 1993-94 report.

Gaming: annual reports

(Question No. 256)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

The total cost of annual reports for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years was as follows:

	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Victorian Gaming Commission	$12 209	$5795	N/A
Victorian Casino Control Authority	$10 895	$2000	N/A
Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority	N/A	N/A	$11 990

N/A = not applicable

Please note that effective from 3 June 1994 the Victorian Gaming Commission and the Victorian Casino Control Authority merged to become the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority.

Tertiary Education and Training: consultancies

(Question No. 257)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training:

In relation to consultants engaged during the 1994-95 financial year costing less than $50 000, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned by the Office of Training and Further Education, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training is:

Information relating to consultancies for the period 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, regardless of cost and from 1 June 1994 to 30 June 1995 for those costing in excess of $50 000 is contained in the Department of Education annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Organisations or individuals are engaged to provide consultant services of a professional nature in respect to particular proposals. These consultancies by their nature are usually of short-term duration and are job specific. To provide the information requested in paragraphs (v), (vi) and (vii) would require an inordinate amount of time and resources which are not available. The Hon. T.C. Theophanous may wish to submit a more focussed and specific question on these matters.

The attached table lists consultancies costing less than $50 000 approved for the period 1 July 1994 to 23 November 1995, together with those costing in excess of $50 000 approved for the same period engaged by the following:

Office of the Secretary of the Department of Education (Higher Education)

Office of Training and Further Education of the Department of Education (including the State Training Board and Adult Community and Further Education Board).

This response does not deal with consultancies engaged by universities, TAFE institutes, the Council of Adult Education, regional councils of adult, community and further education or other post-secondary education institutions.

It should be noted that a number of the consultancy projects listed were carried out on behalf of and funded by the commonwealth government and national bodies.

(Information referred to in answer (5 pages) supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Education: consultancies

(Question No. 259)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In relation to consultants engaged during the 1994-95 financial year costing less than $50 000, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned by the Directorate of School Education and the Board of Studies, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The information requested by Mr Theophanous is incorporated in the answer to question no. 278.

Multicultural Affairs: advertising

(Question No. 260)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total advertising budget for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs is:

The answer to this question has been incorporated in the Department of Premier and Cabinet response to parliamentary question no. 300.

Multicultural Affairs: advertising

(Question No. 261)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details of advertising campaigns over $10 000 conducted from 3 October 1992 to date, indicating the purpose and cost of each campaign?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs is:

The answer to this question is incorporated within the Department of Premier and Cabinet response to parliamentary question no. 301.

Tourism: advertising

(Question No. 262)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Tourism:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what was the total advertising budget for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

Australian Grand Prix Corporation (AGPC)		
1992-93	Nil	(AGPC did not exist)
1993-94	Nil	(AGPC did not exist)
1994-95	$602 000	
Tourism Victoria		
1992-93	$843 000	
1993-94	$4 793 000	
1994-95	$4 185 000	

Tourism: advertising

(Question No. 263)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Tourism:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what are the details of advertising campaigns over $10 000 conducted from 3 October 1992 to date, indicating the purpose and cost of each campaign?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

Release of this detailed information would provide Victoria's competitors with commercially sensitive information, the release of which could jeopardise the essential work of the Australian Grand Prix Corporation and Tourism Victoria.

In broad terms, the response is:

Year	Total cost	Campaign details
Australian Grand Prix Corporation (AGPC)		
1992-93	Nil (AGPC did not exist)	
1993-94	Nil (AGPC did not exist)	
1994-95	$602 000	Promotion for the grand prix
1995-96 (to 30.4.96)	$1 407 573	Promotion for the grand prix
Tourism Victoria		
1992-93	$843 000	Goldfields campaign
1993-94	$501 000	Ski campaign (production and media)
	$4 292 000	'You'll love every piece of Victoria' campaign
1994-95	$550 000	Ski campaign (production and media)
	$3 635 000	'You'll love every piece of Victoria' campaign

Finance: advertising

(Question No. 265)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what was the total advertising budget for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

Former Department of Finance

Year	Budget
1992-93	$896 045
1993-94	$552 946
1994-95	$330 428

The Victorian Workcover Authority and the former Health and Safety Organisation merged on 2 July 1996. The former Health and Safety Organisation was the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for State Development. The merged organisation, the Victorian Workcover Authority, is the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Finance. Answers are given separately for the authority and the former Health and Safety Organisation as follows:

Victorian Workcover Authority

The total advertising budgets of the Victorian Workcover Authority for the financial years:

1992-93*	$2.3 million
1993-94	$6.1 million
1994-95	$6.3 million

(* Period covers Workcare and Workcover. The Workcover authority was formed on 1 December 1992)

Former Health and Safety Organisation

The following figures represent total media buying expenditure for the years listed:

1992-93	not available
1993-94	$159 966
1994-95	$758 167

Finance: advertising

(Question No. 266)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details of advertising campaigns over $10 000 conducted from 3 October 1992 to date, indicating the purpose and cost of each campaign?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

I refer the honourable member to my response to question 213.

Women's Affairs: advertising

(Question No. 269)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Women's Affairs:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what is the total advertising budget for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Women's Affairs is:

An advertising budget as such does not exist within the Office of Women's Affairs. If funds are required for advertising they are drawn from the operating budget.

Women's Affairs: advertising

(Question No. 270)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Women's Affairs:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what are the details of advertising campaigns over $10 000 conducted from 3 October 1992 to date, indicating the purpose and cost of each campaign?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the the Minister for Women's Affairs is:

No advertising campaigns over $10 000 have been conducted by the Office of Women's Affairs since 3 October 1992.

Police and Emergency Services, and Corrections: consultancies

(Question Nos 272 and 273)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections is:

The time and resources required to prepare a more detailed response to these questions are not available. Some information on consultants commissioned is usually included in annual reports (as is the case for the Department of Justice).

Tourism: consultancies

(Question No. 274)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Tourism:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating —(i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

Summary details of consultancies as provided for by the annual reporting provisions of the Financial Management Act 1994; that is, details of those consultancies over $50 000 and a list of the number of consultancies under $50 000, are:

Australian Grand Prix Corporation (AGPC)

3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993:

Nil (AGPC did not exist)

1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995:

Consultant	Purpose	Fee
Boris McLachlan Pty Ltd	Project management advice and services in relation to the capital works program	$183 250
CMPS&F Pty Ltd	Capital works project monitor	$75 000
Control Risks Pacific/Sedgwick Ltd	Risk assessment and risk management plan	$51 007
Daryl Jackson	Architectural and engineering design services	$309 700
Douglas Partners Pty Ltd	Geotechnical engineering investigative services	$68 206
Kinhill Engineers Pty Ltd	Project management, design and specialist FI services for Albert Park	$3 939 719

27 consultancies under $50 000.

Tourism Victoria

3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993:

This summary information can be found in Tourism Victoria's 1992-93 and 1993-94 annual reports.

1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995:

Consultant	Purpose	Fee
Tract Consultants Pty Ltd	To undertake a planning and feasibility study for the Great Ocean Road	$50 000

28 consultancies under $50 000.

Agriculture and Resources: consultancies

(Question No. 275)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Agriculture and Resources:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what the details are of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called.

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources is:

The information available is shown on the attached table. In accordance with Office of Public Sector Management, Department of Premier and Cabinet guidelines a consultancy has been interpreted as referring to consultancies which by their nature are short term and job specific, that is, the temporary engagement of an organisation or individual to provide services of a professional nature in respect of a particular project.

The hiring of casual, contract or temporary staff to work under direction or supervision in a department, agency or authority is deemed to be not a consultancy, but a contract.

'Cost' has been interpreted as referring to the actual cost in cases where the consultancy has been completed, or to the amount approved in cases where the consultancy is in progress. Only consultancies over $2000 are listed.

'Date' has been interpreted as relating to those consultancies which fall entirely or partly within the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993 and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995.

Since the honourable member's question relates to the period prior to the formation of the present portfolio of Agriculture and Resources, there are some differences in the way that the former departments, agencies and authorities collected or maintained information on consultancies. Every effort has been made to provide the honourable member with the information he requires in a comprehensive and consistent form.

Only the information readily accessible from consultancy registers has been supplied.

Time and resources are not available to provide comprehensive advice about recommendations made, action taken and tenders called for the consultancies which have been listed.

Should the honourable member require further information on a particular consultancy, I will be happy to consider his request.

The items are numbered for ease of identification.

Amounts have been rounded off to the nearest dollar.

(Information referred to in answer (6 pages) has been supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Industry, Science and Technology: consultancies

(Question No. 276)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

The member is referred to successive annual reports of the Department of Business and Employment and its agencies published since 3 October 1992 which provide information regarding external consultancies. I would be prepared to consider a more focused question on this subject.

Rural Development: consultancies

(Question No. 277)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Rural Development:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Rural Development is:

The time and resources required to fully respond to this question cannot be justified. However, the member is referred to successive annual reports of the Department of Business and Employment published since 3 October 1992, which provide a degree of information regarding external consultants.

Small Business: consultancies

(Question No. 279)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer is:

I refer the honourable member to the annual reports of the Department of Business and Employment, Small Business Victoria and the Liquor Licensing Commission for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95. Summary information regarding external consultants is included in these reports.

Planning and Local Government: consultancies

(Question No. 281)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The annual reports of the Department of Planning and Development and of the statutory authorities responsible to the Minister for Planning and Local Government for the years 1992-93 and 1993-94 include details of consultants engaged during those years, including for the period 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993.

The 1994-95 annual reports of the department and statutory authorities report on consultancies engaged in that year when the cost of engagement exceeded $50 000.

The following table supplements information available in the annual reports and details:

consultancies costing less than $50 000 engaged since 1 July 1994; and all consultancies engaged between 30 June and 23 November 1995.

If the honourable member seeks specific details in respect of any particular consultancy, I will be happy to provide them.

(Table referred to in answer (9 pages) supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Treasury and Finance: consultancies

(Question No. 282)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called.

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

Given the breadth of the member's question and the amount of detail required to provide a full response, it is felt that the time and resources required to provide an answer cannot be justified in this instance; however, a list of consultancies commissioned may be obtained from the annual reports of the department and it's agencies.

Health: consultancies

(Question No. 283)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

Attached is a summary of extracts from the Department of Health and Community Services annual reports for the years 1992-93, 1993-94, 1994-95 together with a listing of current consultancies available for the financial year 1995-96. These documents summarise the consultancies commissioned by the department for the periods requested.

The time and resources to individually collate and provide specific information in relation to parts (e) recommendations made; (f) action taken in regard to recommendations made and (g) whether tenders were called cannot, in all cases, be justified.

The honourable member is invited to review the documentation and submit more specific questions in relation to his inquiries.

(Summary referred to in answer (5 pages) supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Sport: consultancies

(Question No. 284)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Sport:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what the details are of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called.

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Sport is:

Sport, Recreation and Racing

(a)	Date:	14 November 1994
(b)	Cost:	$38 999
(c)	Purpose:	Disability research project
(d)	Cons:	Coopers & Lybrand 333 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000
(e)	Recomm:	
(f)	Action:	
(g)	Tenders:	Yes. Public tender

There are also a number of relevant consultancies that were entered into by the Corporate Resources and Policy Development areas of the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism which impact upon my portfolio. Details regarding these consultancies will be reported in the response to your similar question to the Minister for the Arts.

Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust — National Tennis Centre

1. Feasibility Study for Stage Two Development

(a)	Date:	24 February 1993
(b)	Cost:	$67 500
(c)	Purpose:	That a brief for a feasibility study for the Stage Two Development be prepared for consideration by the trust in time for its December 1992 meeting
(d)	Cons:	KPMG Consulting KPMG House, 161 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000

(e) Recomm: The proposed range of Stage Two facilities is extensive, with a number giving rise to marginal or new revenue streams or operating cost educations. Some components generate no income but are considered essential for the smooth running of the Open and the retention of the Grand Slam status.

(f) Action: The Stage Two Development was completed in time for the 1996 Ford Australian Open (construction period 10 months), the major components having been appraised as a part of the feasibility study.

(g) Tenders: Yes. Selective tender — 7 organisations

2. Enterprise Agreement Consultancy

(a) Date: 27 September 1995

(b) Cost: $14 000

(c) Purpose: To progress Enterprise Agreement

(d) Cons: Minter Ellison
40 Market Street, Melbourne, 3000

(e) Recomm: Consultancy still in progress

(f) Action: Consultancy still in progress

(g) Tenders: Yes. Selective tender — 5 organisations

3. Venue Service Contracts, Administrative Reforms

(a) Date: 26 October 1995

(b) Cost: $17 500

(c) Purpose: Venue service contracts, administrative reforms

(d) Cons: Andersen Consulting
The Tower, Melbourne Central, 360 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, 3000

(e) Recomm: A range of administrative reforms

(f) Action: A range of administrative reforms were implemented in accordance with the consultant's report.

(g) Tenders: No

Note: For the designate periods Olympic Park was not part of the portfolio's operations.

Victorian Institute of Sport

(a) Date: June 1995 - January 1996

(b) Cost: $19 600

(c) Purpose: To develop the VIS Business Plan, 1996-2000

(d) Cons: Coopers and Lybrand
333 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000

(e) Recomm: To facilitate the development of the plan

(f) Action: Business Plan completed January 1996

(g) Tenders: Yes. Selective tender

Professional Boxing Control Board

Nil

Martial Arts Control Board

Nil

Greyhound Racing Control Board

(a) Date: Mid 1993 (ongoing)

(b) Cost: $119 000

(c) Purpose: To advise the racing industry on matters relating to the privatisation of the TAB

(d) Cons: Macquarie Corporate Finance
101 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000

(e) Recomm: To provide a suitable arrangement and agreement for the racing industry

(f) Action: The arrangements produced a very positive result.

(g)	Tenders:	The choice of consultant was made by the racing industry, not this board.

Harness Racing Board

(a)	Date:	1 September 1993
(b)	Cost:	$35 000
(c)	Purpose:	To report on the organisational structure.
(d)	Cons:	Ernst and Young 120 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000
(e)	Recomm:	Change the organisational structure
(f)	Action:	New organisational structure
(g)	Tenders:	Yes

(a)	Date:	1 June 1995
(b)	Cost:	$105 000
(c)	Purpose:	An assessment of the board's business process
(d)	Cons:	Ernst and Young 120 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000
(e)	Recomm:	Change computer system and process
(f)	Action:	Investigate new methods
(g)	Tenders:	Yes

(a)	Date(s):	(i)	November 1992 to November 1993
		(ii)	1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995
(b)	Cost:	(i)	$ 66 490
		(ii)	$263 790
(c)	Purpose:	To advise the racing industry on matters relating to the privatisation of the TAB	
(d)	Cons:	Macquarie Corporate Finance 101 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000	
(e)	Recomm:	To provide a suitable arrangement and agreement for the racing industry	
(f)	Action:	The arrangements produced a very positive result	
(g)	Tenders:	The choice of consultant was made by the racing industry	

Conservation and Land Management: consultancies

(Question No. 285)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

The information available is shown on the attached table. In accordance with Office of Public Sector Management, Department of Premier and Cabinet guidelines a consultancy has been interpreted as referring to consultancies which by their nature are short term and job specific, that is, the temporary engagement of an organisation or individual to provide services of a professional nature in respect of a particular project.

The hiring of casual, contract or temporary staff to work under direction or supervision in a department, agency or authority is deemed to be not a consultancy, but a contract.

'Cost' has been interpreted as referring to the actual cost in cases where the consultancy has been completed, or to the amount approved in cases where the consultancy is in progress. Only consultancies over $2000 are listed.

'Date' has been interpreted as relating to those consultancies which fall entirely or partly within the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993 and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995.

Since the honourable member's question relates to the period prior to the formation of the present portfolio of Conservation and Land Management, there are some differences in the way that the former departments, agencies and authorities collected or maintained information on consultancies. Every effort has been made to provide the honourable member with the information he requires in a comprehensive and consistent form. I would also draw to the honourable member's attention the fact that information on consultancies undertaken on behalf of the entities which preceded and now constitute the present Department of Natural Resources and Environment has been published in the relevant annual reports for those years.

Only the information readily accessible from consultancy registers has been supplied.

Time and resources are not available to provide comprehensive advice about recommendations made, action taken and tenders called for the consultancies which have been listed.

Should the honourable member require further information on a particular consultancy, I will be happy to consider his request.

The items are numbered for ease of identification.

Amounts have been rounded off to the nearest dollar.

(Information referred to in answer (5 pages) has been supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Finance: consultancies

(Question No. 286)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; ((vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

A list of consultants engaged is published in annual reports of agencies within the finance portfolio. The time and resources required to provide the additional detailed information cannot be justified.

Tertiary Education and Training: consultancies

(Question No. 288)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training is:

The information requested by Mr Theophanous is dealt with in the answer to question no. 257.

Arts: consultancies

(Question No. 289)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for the Arts:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for the Arts is:

Date	Cost $	Purpose/Action taken	Name and Address	Whether tenders were called
Oct 94	8,000	Survey audience appeal of performances and shows - Changed types of shows	Brian Sweeney & Assoc 232 Dorcas Street South Melbourne Vic	No

National Gallery of Victoria

15/7/93	5,000	Air conditioning report - Partial implementation of modifications.	Lincolne Scott 121 King Street Melbourne	No
3/6/94	5,000	Power generation report - Standby generator purchased.	Lincolne Scott 121 King Street Melbourne	No
July 94	1,175	Conservation report into the Gallery building - Partial implementation.	Alcom Lovell & Assoc 35 Little Bourke Street Melbourne	No
July 94	900	Review expenditure on communications - Refunds claimed.	Bell Horizon PO Box 152 South Yarra Vic	No
Dec 94	26,174	Review of Workcover payments - Refunds claimed.	E W Smith and Assoc 9 Queens Square Sandringham Vic	No
March 95	20,126	Recruitment of National Gallery Director - Appointment made.	Russell Reynolds & Ass 600 Bourke Street Melbourne	No
Sept 95	18,325	Recruitment of Director, Development, National Gallery - Appointment made.	SACS Consulting Group Level 37 Rialto Towers 525 Collins Street Melbourne	No

State Library of Victoria

March 93	49,700	Professional search for new Director of State Library - Appointment made.	John Peebles Assoc P/ L 1 Macquarie Place Sydney NSW	No

Victorian Arts Centre Trust

Date	Cost $	Purpose/Action taken	Name and Address	Whether tenders were called
30/6/95	32,193	Specialist advice concerning BASS and their employment of new staff.	Accountancy Link 600 Bourke Street Melbourne	No
30/6/95	30,570	Professional advice concerning BASS privatisation - Matter concluded.	Arthur Andersen 360 Elizabeth Street Melbourne	No
20/10/95	14,400	Review structures and management of National Gallery and Victorian Arts Centre building services - Internal reviews undertaken.	Corporate Facility Management Resources P/L 1 Spring Street Melbourne	No

Arts Victoria

11/11/92	5,700	Develop and deliver training programs on "Dealing with Change" and "Managing Change".	Glenda May and Assoc 64 Carpenter Street Brighton Vic	Yes
1/5/93	2,500	Conduct five "Dealing with Change" training programs.	Glenda May and Assoc 64 Carpenter Street Brighton Vic	Yes
10/6/94	10,000	Examine and report on appropriate methodology for the valuation of State cultural collections - Collections being valued	Professor G Carnegie Professor P Wholnizer Deakin University Geelong Vic	Selective tender
10/6/94	1,200	Implement Financial Management System training package.	Price Waterhouse Urwick Management Consultants 215 Spring Street Melbourne	No

Museum of Victoria

April 93	6,000	Provide a sampling methodology and statistical analysis with a view to obtaining collection management information	Monash University Wellington Road Clayton Vic	No; sole supplier of specialist methodology
April 93	3,570	Monitor and negotiate possible purchase of vessel Kista Dan, and survey and assess options for siting, utilisation, sponsorship, etc.- acquisition did not proceed.	Les Reading 22 Downey Road Dewhurst Vic	No
April 93	16,000	Review audience appeal of Antarctica exhibition.	Environmetrics Locked Bag 2116 North Sydney NSW	Yes
May 93	11,000	Effectiveness study of general visitor programs at Scienceworks; develop and forecast visitor numbers.	Victoria University Centre for Hospitality and Tourism Research Ballarat Road Footscray Vic	Yes
July 93	19,120	Conduct a strategic review of the Museum of Victoria - improved communication systems pursued.	Western Pacific Communications Level 4, The Gateway 312 St Kilda Road Melbourne	Yes

Museum of Victoria (continued)

Date	Cost $	Purpose/Action taken	Name and Address	Whether tenders were called
July 93	20,400	Development of NASMA project - Project continuing.	Art Exhibitions Australia 98 Cumberland Street Grosvenor Place The Rocks, NSW	Federal body; tenders not required.
Aug 93	5,512	Review of internal communication systems - System improvements adopted.	Transition Management 39 Manningtree Road Hawthorn Vic	Yes
Oct 93	3,420	Prepare an architectural functional brief for the proposed Museum of Victoria	Pru Sanderson 15 Canterbury Road Albert Park Vic	No
June 94	26,700	Feasibility study to package and market the Museum's expertise and collection data in electronic formats; and set up a collaborative network of interactive multimedia publishers - Significant advances in multimedia development.	AIMS Pty Ltd 52 Dow Street South Melbourne Vic	Yes
July 94	11,375	To assess visitor patterns of 20 Victorian tourist venues including the Museum's campuses.	Environmetrics Locked Bag 2116 North Sydney NSW	No; sole supplier for unique service
Nov 94	48,500	Segmentation study of metropolitan population based on a likelihood to visit the Museum - Identified a range of different audiences.	Yann, Campbell, Hoare and Wheeler 11 Princes Street St Kilda Vic	Yes
Nov 94	14,750	Audience assessment of the pumping station at Scienceworks - Exhibition content reviewed and developed.	Environmetrics Locked Bag 2116 North Sydney NSW	Yes
Feb 95	5,500	Provide a sampling methodology and statistical analysis with a view to obtaining collection management information. Stage 2 of project.	Monash University Wellington Road Clayton Vic	No; sole supplier of specialist methodology
June 95	4,800	Review of the Museum's Public Affairs Division - Division restructured.	Stateside Trading 29 Munro Street East Hawthorn Vic	No; supplier familiar with Museum's operations.
Aug 95	13,785	Review of Museum's management structure and the collection management function of the Division of Research and Collections - General implementation of revised structure.	Stateside Trading 29 Munro Street East Hawthorn Vic	No; supplier familiar with the Museum's operations.
Sept 95	4,000	Provide a sampling methodology and statistical analysis with a view to obtaining collection management information. Stage 3 of project.	Monash University Wellington Road Clayton Vic	No. Sole supplier - specialist methodology
Oct 95	13,000	Independent advice on engineering services for the new Museum - Plans adjusted where appropriate.	Kinhill 441 St Kilda Road Melbourne	Yes

Gaming: consultancies

(Question No. 290)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993 and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

The Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority and its predecessors, the Victorian Gaming Commission and the Victorian Casino Control Authority, have published in annual reports certain information relating to consultancies engaged in each financial year. To provide all of the details sought by the honourable member would involve considerable research which cannot be justified given the available time and resources of the authority. Should the honourable member identify a specific consultancy or area of concern, every effort will be made to provide relevant information.

Energy Victoria News

(Question No. 292)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Agriculture and Resources:

What are the details of all issues of *Energy Victoria News* produced, indicating — (i) how many issues were produced; (ii) the date of each issue; (iii) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (iv) the number printed; (v) the cost of production; (vi) by whom it was printed; and (vii) whether tenders were called.

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources is:

(i) *Energy Victoria News* was first published as *Solutions* in August 1987 as the official newsletter of the then Victorian Solar Energy Council (VSEC). VSEC became the Renewable Energy Authority Victoria under the Renewable Energy Authority Act 1990 and adopted the trading name Energy Victoria. In January 1994 the newsletter adopted the name *Energy Victoria News*. It is produced on a quarterly basis and to date eight issues have been published. Under its old name *Solutions* approximately 24 issues were produced.

(ii) Issues are dated to correspond with the seasons on an annual basis. The first issue of *Energy Victoria News* appeared in summer 1994. This has been followed by one issue per season since.

(iii) 2500 copies of *Energy Victoria News* are produced per issue. Of these, 2360 copies are distributed in the categories below. The remaining copies are available to individuals and organisations who visit the Energy Information Centre. The cost of distribution on average is $1725 per issue. This price includes addressing and postage costs.

Current distribution by category and number:

Category	Number
Building Industry — architects, designers, builders, engineers, real estate agents	679
Education — secondary schools, tertiary institutions	525
Energy Sector — electricity, gas, Energy Information Centre	175
Federal Government — contacts	19
General — interest groups/individuals	37
Industry — industry associations, energy consultants, product manufacturers/suppliers, renewables industry contacts	320
Local Government — building/planning sections, conservation officers	294
Media — magazines, newspapers, radio, television	72
Other government	39
State government — contacts, Department of Energy and Minerals, heads of departments, members of Parliament	192
Targeted groups	8
Total	2360

(iv) The number of copies printed per issue is 2500: that is 10 000 per year.

(v) Production costs per issue are on average $5150. This includes design, typesetting, film and printing. Production costs for the year average $20 600.

(vi) *Energy Victoria News* has been produced by Ideograph Design (81 Asling Street, Gardenvale, Victoria 3185) since January 1994. This company designs and typesets each issue and contracts out the printing to Patterson Press (Richmond, Victoria 3121). Under its prior name *Solutions*, the newsletter was designed and printed by Oberon Printing P/L (8D Adina Court, Tullamarine, Victoria 3043) during 1992 and 1993. Prior to the middle of 1992, *Solutions* was designed and printed by Lenoval Printing (125 Hawke Street, West Melbourne, Victoria 3003).

(vii) Quotations are called for each year for the financial period 1 July-30 June.

Quotations are obtained from at least three companies and the production of *Energy Victoria News* is offered to the most competitive submission.

Sport: *Active State*

(Question No. 293)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Sport:

What are the details of all issues of *Active State* produced, indicating — (i) how many issues were produced; (ii) the date of each issue; (iii) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (iv) the number printed; (v) the cost of production; (vi) by whom it was printed; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Sport is:

(a) **How many issues were produced?**
6 issues.

(b) **The date for each issue.**
Spring 1993; Autumn 1994; Summer 1994; Autumn 1995; Winter 1995; and Summer 1995-96.

(c) **Details of distribution, including numbers and cost.**
Active State is distributed via mail to:

Mailing Lists	Quantity
Regional sports assemblies — 30 per assembly	300
State sporting associations	92
Sport service organisations	14
Water safety organisations	3
Universities	3
Libraries	5
Local government	224
MLAs	88
MLCs	44
Other government regional offices	50
Local agencies	50
Leisure centres	100
Commonwealth and other state government departments	20
Disability agencies	50
Recreation associations	30
Quasi-non government agencies	20
Women's sport and recreation agencies	35
Older adult recreation networks	22
DAST agencies	3
Minister's office	30
Victorian state government departments	31
Media	35

SRV corporate sponsors	10
Statistical working group	14
Exemplary schools	30
SRV camps	250
Key camp user groups	100
Camping Association of Victoria	20
Information Victoria	20
Subtotal (Mail-outs) 1700	
Sport and Recreation Victoria — program areas, display cases and public inquiries.	800
Grand Total	2500
Costs: mail-out cost of 85 cents per copy x 1700 mail outs	$1445

(d) **Number printed.**

2500 per edition

(e) **The cost of production.**

Spring 1993; Autumn 1994	$14 230
Summer 1994; Autumn 1995; Winter 1995	$23 490
Summer 1996	$9453

(f) **Printer.**

Spring 1993; Autumn 1994

G.T. Graphics — 34 Stanley Street, Collingwood.

Summer 1994; Autumn 1995; Winter 1995

Lithocraft Graphics — 123-133 Thistlethwaite Street, South Melbourne.

Summer 1996

D&D Printing — 107 Palmer Street, Richmond.

(g) **Tenders.**

Tenders were called for a contract to engage a consultant to coordinate and implement all stages of production for *Active State* including obtaining and editing material, provision of graphic design and supervision of printing.

Arts: publications

(Question No. 294)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for the Arts:

In respect of the publications *Victoria: the State for the Arts 21* and *Arts 21 News*, what are the details of all issues produced, indicating — (i) how many issues were produced; (ii) the date of each issue; (iii) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (iv) the number printed; (v) the cost of production; (vi) by whom it was printed; and (vii) whether tenders were called.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for the Arts is:

Victoria: the State for the Arts 21

(i) One issue;

(ii) November 1994;

(iii) distributed to government, the arts industry, and, upon request, to the general public. 12 000 copies distributed to date at an estimated postage cost of $1800.

(iv) 16 000 copies printed;

(v) $49 462;

(vi) Buscombe Printers;

(vii) yes.

Arts 21 News

(i) Four issues;

(ii) August 1995, November 1995, December 1995, March 1996;

(iii) distributed to government, the arts industry, and, upon request, to the general public. 11 800 copies distributed to date at an estimated postage cost of $500 per issue;

(iv) 3000 copies printed per issue;

(v) approximately $5000 per issue;

(vi) The Type Factory;

(vii) no.

Small Business Victoria

(Question No. 295)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business:

What are the details of all issues of the newsletter *Small Business Victoria* produced, indicating (i) how many issues were produced; (ii) the date of each issue; (iii) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (iv) the number printed; (v) the cost of production; (vi) by whom it was printed; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer is:

(i) Over the period March 1993 to 30 June 1996, 10 issues of the newsletter *Small Business Victoria* were produced.

(ii) 1993 — March, May, July, September
1994 — January, April, June, September
1995 — February, September
1996 — nil

(iii) The newsletters were distributed via a mailout to government agencies, small business operators and industry associations (approximately 3000) and at events and seminars as a communications vehicle. The cost of the mailout was $2400 in 1993 and $2700 in each of 1994 and 1995.

(iv) The average print run was approximately 6000.

(v) Total production cost of the ten issues was $66 840 over three years.

(vi) The firm responsible for writing, editing, design, production, typesetting and printing was Hallmark Editions.

(vii) In accordance with internal expenditure guidelines concerning expenditure of this magnitude public tenders were not called.

Rural Development: *Country Link*

(Question No. 296)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Rural Development:

What are the details of all issues of the magazine *Country Link* produced, indicating — (i) how many issues were produced; (ii) the date of each issue; (iii) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (iv) the number printed; (v) the cost of production; (vi) by whom it was printed; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Rural Development is:

(i) Twelve.

(ii) March, June, November 1991; May, September 1992; October 1993; June, September 1994; January, May, September 1995; and February 1996.

(iii) *Country Link* is produced free of charge, mainly to businesses, local governments, economic development bodies and individuals in regional Victoria. The means of distribution include mail out, through regional offices, regional development functions and general handouts.

The number of each mail out is approximately 2000 at a cost of $1/copy for postage and handling. This cost is included in the total cost of production.

(iv) Approximately 3000 per issue, with the exception of the September 1994 issue for which an additional 5000 were printed and distributed free of charge at the Royal Melbourne Show.

(v)

Edition		Amount
1991	March	$29 000
	June	$24 650
	November	$24 650
1992	May	$25 170
	September	$19 540
1993	October	$19 540
1994	June	$21 500
	September	$20 700
1995	January	$18 700
	May	$18 700
	September	$18 720
1996	February	$15 000

(vi) Printing of *Country Link* is included as part of the production of the magazine, which also includes researching, writing, design and production, and distribution. Editorial control is retained by Business Victoria. The first seven issues were produced by Buchan Communications, the next four by Currie Communications and the latest (February 1996) by Publicity Press, which is also contracted to produce the next two issues.

(vii) A tendering process has always been followed with the exception of the September 1995 edition which was given to Currie Communications to produce without tender because the future direction of *Country Link* was then under review.

Schools of the Future Supplement

(Question No. 297)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

(a) What is the cost to date of the *Schools of the Future* supplement of the Directorate of School Education printed regularly since 3 October 1992, in — (i) the *Herald Sun* and (ii) all suburban and country newspapers?

(b) What is the specific cost to operate the Education Line, indicating the total number of staff employed and total staffing costs?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(a) (i) $534 000 approximately.

(ii) $631 000 approximately.

(b) There are two officers operating the Education Line. Total staffing costs are $91 200.

Board of Studies newsletters

(Question No. 298)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

What are the details of all issues of the Board of Studies newsletters produced, indicating — (i) how many issues were produced; (ii) the date of each issue; (iii) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (iv) the number printed; (v) the cost of production; (vi) by whom it was printed; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(i) Sixteen

(ii)

Newsletter Number	Date of each issue
No. 1	June 1994
No. 2	July 1994
No. 3	October 1994
No. 4	December 1994
No. 5	13 February 1995
No. 6	27 March 1995
No. 7	8 May 1995
No. 8	19 June 1995
No. 9	14 August 1995
No. 10	4 September 1995
No. 11	23 October 1995
No. 12	8 November 1995
No. 13	19 February 1996
No. 14	25 March 1996
No. 15	19 April 1996
No. 16	27 May 1996

(iii) Westernport Printing distributed the June Newsletter, as they had the Directorate of School Education schools on database. The cost to distribute 794 400 Newsletters was $39 413. Distribution for this issue was to all parents of primary and secondary school students, tertiary institutions, District Liaison Principals (DLPs), Members of Parliament (MPs) and interested individuals. R L Polk & Co Pty Ltd distributed the July, October and December newsletters in 1994.

The distribution of the 14 500 newsletters to primary and secondary schools, tertiary institutions, DLPs, MPs and individuals who had requested to be on the mailing list cost $1500 per issue.

Following calling of tenders, Wares Business and Mailing Service Pty Ltd was granted the current distribution contract for the Board of Studies newsletter. 14 500 newsletters are distributed to primary and secondary schools, tertiary institutions, DLPs, MPs and individuals who have requested to be on the mailing list at a cost of $705 for each issue.

(iv) Issue No 1 — 794 400 copies
Issue Nos 2-16 — 14 500 copies each

(v) Issue No 1 — $119 413
Issues 2-4 — $2 100 approximately
Issues 5-16 — $2 140 approximately

(vi) Australian Government Publishing Service

(vii) Tenders were called.

Grand prix: advertising

(Question No. 299)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Tourism:

In relation to the Melbourne grand prix advertising campaigns:

(a) What are the details to date of all campaigns over $10 000, indicating the purpose and cost of each campaign?

(b) What was the total advertising budget for the 1994-95 financial year?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

This detailed information would provide the Australian Grand Prix Corporation's competitors with commercially sensitive information, the release of which could jeopardise the essential work of the corporation.

However, in summary:

(a)

Year	Total cost	Campaign details
1994-95	$602 000	Promotion for the grand prix
1995-96 (to 30.4.96)	$1 407 573	Promotion for the grand prix

(b) $602 000

Premier and Cabinet: advertising

(Question No. 300)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what is the total advertising budget for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

Department of Premier and Cabinet (Incorporating the Office of the Public Service Commissioner, and Ethnic Affairs)

The total advertising budget for the Department of Premier and Cabinet for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 was $0, $35 000 and $35 000 respectively.

Office of the Auditor-General

The advertising budget for 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 was $3000, $2000 and $7000 respectively.

Office of the Governor

The Office of the Governor did not set advertising budgets for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years.

Office of the Ombudsman

There were no specific budget allocations for advertising for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years.

Victorian Relief Committee

There were no specific budget allocations for advertising for the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years.

Premier and Cabinet: advertising

(Question No. 301)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details of advertising campaigns over $10 000 conducted from 3 October 1992 to date, indicating the purpose and cost of each campaign?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

Department of Premier and Cabinet (incorporating Multicultural Affairs)

Details	Cost $
DPC contribution, in conjunction with the Department of Business and Employment, to industrial relations community awareness program	200 000
Newspaper inserts *Victoria on the Move*	133 174
Letterbox drop for *Victoria on the Move* during late 1994	309 129
Advertising for Victoria's Open House exhibition held in October 1995	258 984
Letterbox drop for *Visions of Victoria* during November 1995	361 748
Advertising for opening of the Melbourne Exhibition Centre during February 1996	116 482
Total	**1 379 517**

Office of the Public Service Commissioner

There have been no advertising campaigns over $10 000 undertaken by the Office of the Public Service Commissioner since 3 October 1992.

Office of the Governor

There have been no advertising campaigns over $10 000 undertaken by the Office of the Governor since 3 October 1992.

Office of the Ombudsman

There have been no advertising campaigns over $10 000 conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman since 3 October 1992.

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

There have been no advertising campaigns over $10 000 conducted by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office since 3 October 1992.

The Victorian Relief Committee

There have been no advertising campaigns over $10 000 conducted by the Victorian Relief Committee since 3 October 1992.

Schools of the Future Showbag campaign

(Question No. 302)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In relation to the promotion of the Schools of the Future Showbag campaign commenced at the start of 1995:

(a) What was the total cost of advertising and publications for the 1995 campaign?

(b) What was the total cost of promotional packaged information printed and distributed promoting the 1995 campaign?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(a) and (b) Advertising $94 000 approximately, packaged information/publications $473 500 approximately and distribution $175 500 approximately.

Electricity, gas and water industry reform

(Question No. 303)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In relation to the restructure of the electricity, gas and water industries since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details of all publications produced to date, including — (i) title; (ii) date of issue; (iii) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (iv) number printed; (v) cost of production; (vi) purpose of production; (vii) by whom it was printed; and (viii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

The government has prepared and issued a series of information booklets and leaflets on various aspects of GBE reform.

Paragraphs (i), (ii), (iv), (v) and (vii) are dealt with in the chart below, which gives details of publications specifically relating to the restructure of the electricity, gas and water industries.

In response to (iii), these publications are generally distributed over time, on request, without charge. When a publication is first produced, quantities are sent to interested parties — for example the reforming GBE, MPs, government departments, consumer and business groups.

In response to (vi), the information is prepared so the public and other interested parties may be kept informed about the government's intentions and activities in GBE reform.

In response to (viii): (a) public tenders are required where the cost exceeds $50 000; (b) this does not apply to any of the jobs listed below; and (c) for amounts between $2000 and $50 000 three written quotes are called.

a) Electricity (title)	b) Date of issue	d) No. printed	e) Printing cost	g) Printer
Electricity Supply Industry in Victoria - A Competitive Future - Summary (12pp)	October 1993 (DTF)	2500	$2323	Lane Printing
Electricity Supply Industry in Victoria - A Competitive Future (80pp)	October 1993 (DTF)	2500	$8905	Lane Printing
Reforming Victoria's Electricity Industry Stage 2 (36pp)	February 1994 (DTF)	4900 (includes 4 reprints)	$9389	Lane Printing; Alphagraphics
Reforming Victoria's Electricity Industry - A Summary of Reforms (110pp)	December 1994 (DTF)	8850 (includes 3 reprints)	$33946	Lane Printing
The Privatisation of the SEC: Your 20 Questions Answered (Booklet 16pp)	March 1995 (DPC)	15,250	$7175	Fast Impressions
Choice of Electricity Supplier 1 MW users (16pp)	May 1995 (ORG, DTF)	2000	$1604	Alphagraphics
Tariff Order Briefing Pack (8 A4 sheets)	May 1995 (ORG, DTF)	2000	$950 (cost shared by ORG)	Snap
Reforming the ESI - A Brighter Future for All Victorians	November 1995 (DTF)	600	$2700	Snap
Assorted fact sheets (14 A4 sheets)	November 1995 (DTF)	110	$77	Snap
a) Water (title)	**b) Date of issue**	**d) No. printed**	**e) Printing cost**	**g) Printer**
Reforming Victoria's Water Industry - A Competitive Future (36pp)	October 1993 (DTF)	630 (includes 1 reprint)	$1428	Fast Copy; Alphagraphics
Reforming Vic's Water Industry - A Plan for Reform of Non-Metropolitan Urban Water Authorities (12pp)	March 1994 (DCNR, DTF)	3000	$2952	Kwik Copy; Alphagraphics
Reforming Victoria's Water Industry - Working Group Report on Rural Drinking Water Quality (48pp)	July 1994 (DCNR, H&CS)	700	$1120	Gooch and Harrod Commercial Printers
Reforming Victoria's Water Industry - Report on Effluent Standards	July 1994 (DCNR, EPA)	1050	$4840	Graeme Shaw Printing Services
Five new water businesses in Melbourne (2pp)	September 1994 (DTF)	4000 (includes 1 reprint)	$1987	Tudor Printery, through D. Hauser & Associates

Reforming Victoria's Water Industry - The Restructured Metropolitan Industry (36pp)	January 1995 (DTF)	2300 (includes 1 reprint)	$3678	Lane Printing
Reforming Victoria's Water Industry - Regional Structure for Non-Metropolitan Urban Water Authorities (54pp)	June 1995 (DCNR, DTF)	5000	$12382	A & G Fine Printing
User Pays - A Fairer System of Water Charging (2pp)	May 1995 (DTF)	2000	$994	Spectra Litho, through D. Hauser & Associates
a) Gas (title)	**b) Date of issue**	**d) No. printed**	**e) Printing cost**	**g) Printer**
The Gas Industry in Victoria - A Competitive Future Information Paper No. 1 (28pp)	September 1994 (DTF)	3000 plus 100 extra covers (includes 2 reprints)	$5846	Lane Printing; Alphagraphics

Tertiary Education and Training: consultancies

(Question No. 304)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training:

In relation to consultancies engaged during the 1994-95 financial year costing less than $50 000, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned by the Office of Training and Further Education, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training is:

The information requested by Mr Theophanous is dealt with in the answer to question no. 257.

Education: publications

(Question No. 306)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details of all publications produced, indicating in each case — (i) the title; (ii) the date of issue; (iii) the cost of printing each issue and the number printed; (iv) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (v) by whom it was printed; and (vi) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

To provide the information requested would require an inordinate amount of time and resources which are not available. Mr Theophanous may wish to submit a more focused and specific question on the matter.

Tertiary Education and Training: publications

(Question No. 307)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details of all publications produced, indicating in each case — (i) the title; (ii) the date of issue; (iii) the cost of printing each issue and the number printed; (iv) details of distribution, including numbers and cost; (v) by whom it was printed; and (vi) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training is:

To provide the information requested would require an inordinate amount of time and resources which are not available. Mr Theophanous may wish to submit more focused and specific questions on this matter.

Premier and Cabinet: staff

(Question No. 308)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Premier:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Premier is:

Agency	Financial Year	No. of staff
Department of Premier and Cabinet	1992-93	235
	1993-94	190
	1994-95	176
Office of the Public Service Commissioner	1992-93	28
	1993-94	29
	1994-95	39
Office of the Governor	1992-93	31
	1993-94	27
	1994-95	27
Office of the Ombudsman	1992-93	25
	1993-94	22
	1994-95	22
Victorian Auditor-General's Office	1992-93	160
	1993-94	147
	1994-95	141
The Victorian Relief Committee	1992-93	12
	1993-94	9
	1994-95	10

Treasury and Finance: staff

(Question No. 309)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

The information required by the member may be obtained from the annual reports of the department and its agencies.

Finance: staffing levels

(Question No. 311)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer is:

The information being sought by the honourable member is readily available in the published annual reports of the agencies within the finance portfolio.

Agriculture and Resources: staff

(Question No. 312)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Agriculture and Resources:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources is provided in the following table:

Agency/Department	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Daratech P/L	83	88	72
Melbourne Market Authority	47	50	37
Veterinary Board of Victoria[1]	1.27	1.27	1.54
Victorian Dairy Industry Authority	100	80	65
Victorian Dried Fruits Board[2]	3/24	2/23	2/37
Victorian Meat Authority[3]	N/A	4	4
Victorian Plantations Corporation[4]	N/A	98	105
Melbourne Water[5]	3996	2742	962
South East Water Ltd	N/A	N/A	508
City West Water Ltd	N/A	N/A	322
Yarra Valley Water Ltd	N/A	N/A	483
Barwon Rural Water Authority (RWA)[6]	N/A	427	395
Central Gippsland RWA	N/A	233	210
Central Highlands RWA	N/A	223	214
Coliban RWA	N/A	188	176
East Gippsland RWA	N/A	67	64
Glenelg RWA	N/A	20	17

Goulburn Valley RWA	N/A	122	111
Grampians RWA	N/A	103	84
Kiewa Murray RWA	N/A	65	65
Lower Murray RWA	N/A	102	102
Mid Goulburn RWA	N/A	49	47
Otway RWA	N/A	41	45
Ovens RWA	N/A	57	45
Portland Coast RWA	N/A	30	20
South Gippsland RWA	N/A	50	50
South West RWA	N/A	68	63
Western RWA	N/A	89	83
Westernport RWA	N/A	23	24

Notes:

[1] Figures are full-time equivalent.

[2] These figures identify permanent/casual staff respectively of the Victorian Dried Fruits Board.

[3] The Victorian Meat Authority commenced in July 1993.

[4] The Victorian Plantations Corporation commenced operations on 1 July 1993.

[5] City West Water Ltd, Yarra Valley Water Ltd and South East Water Ltd commenced operations on 1 January 1995, following the disaggregation of the former Melbourne Water.

[6] Prior to the recent process of amalgamation there were over 100 small, non-metropolitan water authorities. Most of the successor bodies listed above were established during the 1994-95 financial year, some as late as February 1995. The information provided above under the 1993-94 financial year incorporates that which related to the predecessor bodies. To attempt to provide information relating to the staffing levels of each of these bodies for earlier financial years would involve a significant outlay of time and resources and, consistent with past practice, cannot be justified.

Information on the staffing levels for the entities which preceded and now constitute the present Department of Natural Resources and Environment have been published in the relevant annual reports for those years.

Planning and Local Government: staff

(Question No. 313)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

Office	30.6.93	30.6.94	30.6.95
Architects Registration Board of Victoria	3.6	3.6	3.6
Building	430	240.92	239.83
Building Control Commission	-	-	34
Docklands Authority	9	8	7
Local Government	64	59.49	62.8
Major Projects	21	14.2	16
Melbourne City Link Authority	-	-	12

Planning and Heritage (including staff supporting the former Historic Buildings Council)	267	264.87	225.05
Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainers Registration Board	24.05	24.31	27.31
Urban Land Authority	41	38	39

Small Business: staff

(Question No. 314)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer is:

In relation to each agency now under my administration, staffing levels were as follows :

	Total Staff (*1)
30 June 1993	
Department of Business and Employment	34.8
Small Business Victoria	54.6
Liquor Licensing Commission	74.2
Total	163.6
30 June 1994	
Department of Business and Employment	31.9
Small Business Victoria	50.2
Liquor Licensing Commission	72.2
Total	154.3
30 June 1995	
Department of Business and Employment	35.1
Small Business Victoria	43.5
Liquor Licensing Commission	61.4
Total	140.0

*1 Staff, in full-time equivalents, on payroll as at 30 June each year excluding statutory appointees.

Industry, Science and Technology: staff

(Question No. 315)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer is:

Further to the answer provided on staffing levels in response to questions nos 80 and 143, I advise that further information is readily available from successive annual reports of the following bodies:

Department of Business and Employment
Employee Relations Commission
The Exhibition Trustees
Melbourne Exhibition Centre Trust.

Education: staff

(Question No. 319)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The information relating to the staffing levels in each department, agency and authority is contained in the Department of Education annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Police and Emergency Services, and Corrections: staff

(Question Nos 320 and 321)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Corrections is:

I am informed that the information available in response to the honourable member's questions is available from the annual report of the Department of Justice and from the respective annual reports of the agencies and statutory authorities in the Justice portfolio for each of the financial years in question. Where agencies have become corporations, statutory authorities or have been subject to machinery of government changes between 1992 and 1995 the annual reports issued will have changed accordingly.

Arts: staff

(Question No. 322)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for the Arts:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for the Arts is:

Agency	Financial year	Staffing level (FTE at year end)
Arts Victoria	1992-93	20
	1993-94	25
	1994-95	25
Public Record Office and Office of Library Services	1992-93	41
	1993-94	43
	1994-95	42
Museum of Victoria	1992-93	253
	1993-94	301
	1994-95	272
National Gallery of Victoria	1992-93	171
	1993-94	187
	1994-95	199

State Library of Victoria	1992-93	296
	1993-94	296
	1994-95	290
Geelong Performing Arts Centre	1992-93	19
	1993-94	21
	1994-95+	21
Victorian Arts Centre Trust	1992-93	410
	1993-94	396
	1994-95	396

Multicultural Affairs: staff

(Question No. 325)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs is:

The answer to this question in incorporated within the Department of Premier and Cabinet response to question no. 308.

Conservation and Land Management: staff

(Question No. 326)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, for the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management is:

The answer is provided in the table below, with breakdowns where available:

Agency/Department	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Alpine Resorts Commission[1]	81	65	60
Environment Protection Authority	294	311	300
Land Conservation Council	14	12	11
Land Titles Office	581	486	438
Melbourne Parks and Waterways (formed 1 July 1994)	N/A	N/A	306[2]
Former Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	3424[3]	3107	2688
Office of Geographic Data Co-ordination	118	84	64
Office of the Surveyor-General	133	123	102
Office of the Valuer-General	103[4]	104[5]	58[6]
Royal Botanic Gardens	103[7]	99[8]	119[9]
Trust for Nature (Victoria)[10]	10.6	12.4	13.6
Zoological Parks and Gardens Board	248	251	261

Notes:

[1] Alpine Resorts Commission figures given in the table relate to full-time and permanent staff. Seasonal staff totals for the commission were 89, 106 and 115 for the same periods.

[2] Comprises 254 full-time, 3 part-time, 17 term and 32 casual employees.

[3] The figures for the former Department of Conservation and Natural Resources reflect the total work force, including, for example, staff on leave without pay, etc.

[4] Comprises 93 full-time and 10 part-time employees.

[5] Comprises 92 full-time and 12 part-time employees.

[6] Comprises 49 full-time and 9 part-time employees.

[7] Comprises 87 full-time, 12 temporary and 4 part-time employees.

[8] Comprises 78 full-time, 17 temporary and 4 part-time employees.

[9] Comprises 95 full-time, 10 temporary, 7 part-time and 7 casual employees.

[10] Figures are full-time equivalent.

Tertiary Education and Training: staff

(Question No. 327)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training is:

Staffing levels in the Office of Training and Further Education (OTFE), Adult Migrant Education Service and Office of the Secretary for the periods requested are as follows:

Date	Total Staff		
	Office of Training and Further Education	Adult Migrant Education Service	Office of the Secretary ***
30 June 1993	199	340**	40
30 June 1994	171	342**	36
30 June 1995	190*	325**	43

* Increase in numbers from 1994 caused by the transfer of 19 staff to OTFE from Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

** These figures do not include teaching staff seconded from the Directorate of School Education.

*** Includes staff in the Office of the Secretary engaged in co-ordination of higher education activities and in other co-ordination and administrative activities for the Department of Education as a whole.

This response does not cover staff of TAFE institutes or universities which are self-governing bodies responsible for their own day to day administration.

Gaming: staff

(Question No. 328)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Gaming) — The answer is:

Details relating to staffing levels for the three financial years requested are as follows:

Year	Total staff
1992-93	101
1993-94	135.8*
1994-95	130.7*

* Full-time equivalents

Sport: staff

(Question No. 329)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Sport:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Sport is:

The type of information being sought is readily available from successive annual reports of the following bodies:

Sport, Recreation and Racing
Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism
National Tennis Centre Trust
Victorian Institute of Sport
Greyhound Racing Control Board
Harness Racing Board

Tourism: staff

(Question No. 332)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Tourism:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

Australian Grand Prix Corporation		
	1992-93	Nil (the AGPC did not exist)
	1993-94	Nil (the AGPC did not exist)
	1994-95	23
Tourism Victoria		
	1992-93	95
	1993-94	103
	1994-95	110

Larundel Laundry: linen services

(Question No. 333)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

In respect to the supply of linen services by the Larundel Laundry to Kew Cottages, Melbourne Juvenile Justice Community Centre, Ernest Jones Clinic, Footscray Psychiatric Centre, Royal Park Psychiatric Hospital, Brunswick Community Health Centre, North East Metropolitan Psychiatric Service, Kingsbury Training Centre, Heidelberg Clinic, VATMI Industries, Janefield Training Centre, Coburg Community Centre, Mental Health Institute and Pentridge Hospital:

(a) What is the average charge per kilo of linen for these facilities in obtaining their linen service through the Larundel Laundry?

(b) What is the average charge per kilo of linen that is or will be paid for laundry services as each facility switches to alternative laundry providers?

(c) What is the total increase per annum for each facility, as a consequence of each facility switching to alternative suppliers?

(d) In the case of each facility, will the increased laundry charges be made within existing budget or will additional funds be allocated?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

(a) The average charge per kilo of linen for these facilities in obtaining their linen service through the Larundel Laundry is 98 cents. However this rate has subsidised by both Disability Services and Psychiatric Services within the department. Both divisions contributed $165 000 each per annum towards the operation of the laundry enabling a discounted rate to apply to the users.

(b) The average charge per kilo of linen depends upon what alternative arrangements each service has been able to make. Disability Services, for instance, is in the process of tendering for their services. The figures quoted as part of this tendering process will be subject to commercial in confidence and will only be known when the tendering process is complete.

(c) The total increase per annum for each facility as a consequence of each facility switching to alternative suppliers is not known to the department at this point in time and would not normally be known for those agencies outside of the department.

(d) Any increases to the department will be absorbed within the department's budget. Other agencies will make their own arrangements.

Larundel Laundry: stock and equipment

(Question No. 334)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

In respect of the sale of the Larundel Laundry stock and equipment:

(a) What is the name of the successful tenderer?

(b) What financial checks were carried out on the successful tenderer?

(c) Was the successful tenderer's expression of interest accepted after the closing date for expressions of interest; if so, why?

(d) What price is to be paid by the successful tenderer?

(e) Has the successful tenderer signed the contract; and if not, what is the reason for the delay?

(f) Given this sale, why is the Larundel Laundry stock being used by the Austin Hospital and on whose approval?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

(a) The name of the successful tenderer is Sunkirk Pty Ltd.

(b) The successful tenderer was requested, prior to being selected as the preferred tenderer, to provide details of funding arrangements for the purchase of assets.

The successful tenderer satisfied this request by providing letters of comfort from two financial institutions which demonstrated that the necessary finance would be available to cover the tendered price.

(c) Yes. The successful tenderer's expression of interest, along with a number of others, was accepted after the closing date for expressions of interest on the basis that no tender submissions had been received and the deadline for tender submissions would not be extended due to the late receipt by some organisations of the request for tender.

The expression of interest date was a date set to provide a framework to the process. It is not expected to be a formal cut-off point. The crucial date to ensure the integrity of the process is the tender submission date. At the time of Sunkirk's expression of interest, no tender had been received. Further, all tenders were received by the due date, therefore the integrity of the process was maintained. By allowing additional parties to lodge expressions of interest after the due date the department was able to maximise the number of tenderers and the financial outcome.

(d) The price paid by the successful tenderer was $650 000.

(e) The successful tenderer has signed the contract.

(f) The Kew cottages have made interim arrangements for their laundry services whilst they complete the tendering process. Over the first week of this transition to their interim supplier, all laundry stock at Kew cottages was cleaned by the Austin and Repatriation Medical Centre laundry service (Stericlean). This meant that some of the stock being cleaned in the first week belonged to the Larundel Laundry. This stock has since been returned to the Larundel Laundry.

Larundel Laundry: closure

(Question No. 335)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

In respect to redundancy payments to be made to staff employed within the Larundel Laundry as a result of the closure of that laundry:

(a) What will be the total redundancy payments including superannuation?

(b) What will be the average redundancy payment, including superannuation, per staff member?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

(a) The total redundancy payments including superannuation to be paid to the Larundel Laundry staff were $2 050 606.63.

(b) The average redundancy payment including superannuation per Larundel Laundry staff member was $73 235.95

Electricity: prepayment meters

(Question No. 336)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In regard to the government's position on the use of prepayment meters by electricity consumers:

(a) Does the government support the use of these meters for domestic electricity consumers; if so, what process will it use to allow prepayment meters?

(b) How will prepayment meter customers be able to access the competitive market after the year 2000?

(c) How will prepayment meter households, eligible for concession, be able to access the Energy Relief Grants Scheme and the Winter Energy Concession?

(d) What concession will these consumers receive for prepaying their bill rather than paying after consumption?

(e) Will the government ensure that consumers do not have to pay for their prepayment meters and that they will not be compulsory for customers who do not pay promptly?

(f) What role will the Regulator-General play in this process?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

(a) The Tariff Order, gazetted on 30 June 1995, provides that a licensee proposing to implement a prepayment scheme in respect of the supply of electricity, which would include prepayment metering technology, must first obtain the prior written approval of the Regulator-General.

(b), (c) and (d), and (e) The Regulator-General will consult with the Customer Consultative Committee established by the Office of the Regulator-General, and other interested groups to ensure that relevant issues are addressed and procedures adopted in the introduction of debit or prepaid meter cards or other prepayment schemes.

(f) The Regulator-General is responsible for coordinating the development, issuing and review of any standards or procedures, and regulation of the introduction of debit or prepaid meter cards or other prepayment schemes.

Electricity: tariff levels

(Question No. 337)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In regard to the setting of tariff levels:

(a) What was the bad debt level of the pre-reform SECV?

(b) How is bad debt to be factored into the tariff and charge setting process by the Regulator-General?

(c) Have the utilities introduced an interest rate penalty in the new round of contestable customer contracts to improve cash flow?

(d) What proportion of the latest tranche of contestable customers do not have an appropriate meter to record their energy demand and consumption as well as the losses that they incur on the power quality which is paid by the franchised customers?

(e) What is the relationship between bad debt and finalised accounts and how many finalised accounts of the electricity retailers contribute to utility bad debt?

(f) What money, if any, has the Regulator-General spent on consultancies to allocate costs in deciding the levels of flow on of cost to consumers?

(g) What policy, if any, has the Regulator-General made on the imposition of security deposits on customers?

(h) How will the Regulator-General determine equity in this situation?

(i) Are consumers finding out about utility policy changes before or after they are implemented; if so, how?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

The 1992-93 annual report of the SECV shows the following amounts in respect of bad debts which were written off to the Profit and Loss Statement as expenses:

Bad debts	**Consolidated June 1993 – $000**
Class of Debtor	
Electricity	
Domestic	5249
Non-domestic	3840
Total	9089
Other	552
Total	9641
Bad debts recovered	1612

(b) Until 31 December 2000, the Tariff Order gives direction in setting price determinations. Post 2000 the Regulator-General will determine appropriate policies for the treatment of various distribution expenses, such as bad debts, in the setting of prices.

(c) Contract provisions agreed to between the distribution businesses and contestable customers is a matter of commercial negotiation between the parties.

(d) The government is not aware of difficulties in supplying meters to contestable customers.

(e) Statistics of this nature are not kept by government.

(f) None.

(g) and (h) The Statement of Government Policy, made under the Office of the Regulator-General Act 1994 and gazetted on 3 October 1994, requires each distribution company by way of licence condition to develop and publish its own security deposit policies, practices and procedures which will be at least equal to those of the former SECV. The Office of the Regulator-General monitors and reports on compliance by the distribution companies with the standards, policies, practices and procedures.

(i) The distribution and retail licensees must give advance notice of changes in terms and conditions as part of their licence conditions.

Electricity: quality of supply

(Question No. 338)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Treasurer:

In regard to quality of supply in the electricity industry, what are all the details of work that the government has, is, or will commission to define, monitor and assess quality of supply?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Treasurer is:

Licences issued by the Office of the Regulator-General require the licensees to observe certain standards in relation to the quality of supply. The office monitors the licensees' compliance with those standards.

Hospital network boards: staff secondment

(Question No. 346)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Youth and Community Services:

How many and what staff have been seconded to each hospital network board in the past 12 months and at what cost?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

No staff have been seconded to hospital network boards in the past twelve months. Network boards are legal entities, and people on the boards are appointed under statute. Several hospital employees are appointed to boards, but none are 'seconded'. ('Seconded' is a specific term which means transferred from normal work to undertake alternative work.)

Health: legal staff and consultancies

(Question No. 350)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

(a) What is the number of staff and cost of the Legal Affairs Unit or units in the Department of Human Services?

(b) What contracts with outside lawyers have been entered into in the 1994-95 and 1995-96 financial years for legal services listing — (i) the person/firm; (ii) the date; (iii) the contract sum; (iv) the amount paid; and (v) a brief summary of the work?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

(a) There is currently a staffing allocation of 34 FTE in 1994-96 with a budget allocation of $2 291 700. Included in the staff allocation are legal officers and staff responsible for freedom of information, delegations and the Ombudsman review.

(b) The Department of Health and Community Services, after conducting a public tender process, entered into contracts with eight firms of solicitors for the provision of legal services from 17 October 1994 to 16 October 1995.

The firms are:

Brian Ward and Partners
Eales and McKenzie
Garland Hawthorn Brahe
Hunt and Hunt
Mallesons Stephen Jaques
Russell Kennedy
Victorian Government Solicitor
Wisewoulds

The Victorian Government Purchasing Board has now approved the renewal of the appointment of the eight legal firms to provide legal services to this department for two years until 21 October 1997.

Legal services are paid for on a case-by-case basis so there is no specific contract amount. In the time and resources available it has not been possible to provide figures on all work done by each of the panel firms and the amount paid for that work. Nor has it been possible in the time and resources available to list every kind of work carried out.

Health: consultancies

(Question No. 351)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

What consultancies have been entered into in the past 12 months giving — (i) the name of the consultant; (ii) the date of the consultancy; (iii) the total contract amount of the consultancy; (iv) the sum paid to date; and (v) a brief summary of the work to be done?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

Attached is a summary of consultancies commissioned by the department for the period 1 July 1995 to 31 December 1995.

Consultancies commissioned by the department for the period 1 January 1996 to 30 June 1996 are currently in the process of being collated and finalised for inclusion in the 1995-96 annual departmental report and as such are unavailable for presentation at this stage.

Full detail relating to these periods will be available following the tabling of the department's 1995-96 annual report in Parliament.

(Summary referred to in answer (6 pages) has been supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

City Link: land acquisitions

(Question No. 363)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of the City Link project, what land or interest in land is still to be acquired for the project, indicating the — (i) address; (ii) name of the owner; and (iii) proposed timeline for acquisition?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

Complex tables relating to the above question and question no. 365 have been provided to Mr Theophanous and copies placed in the parliamentary library. One of these tables contains a listing of property which identifies land that has been acquired for the City Link project. The listing also indicates whether each parcel of land is owned by the state or is privately owned. In the majority of cases, owners are public authorities.

The listing of property contains information relating to parts (i) and (ii) of this question. In relation to the names of individual owners, the names of the former owners are in some cases on the public record. Provision of the names of other individual owners is beyond the publicly provided information and would breach individual privacy.

The *Government Gazette* reference for land specified by address is also contained in one of the tables. The cost of land and compensation is subject to longstanding procedures under the Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986. While settlement has been reached in some cases, negotiation is occuring on a number. Where settlement has been reached, it is considered to be a breach of privacy to provide figures on individual cases.

City Link: surplus land

(Question No. 364)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of the City Link project, what land has been acquired which is surplus to the needs of the project, indicating the — (i) address or location; (ii) size; (iii) value; (iv) timetable for disposal; and (v) name of the former owner?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

The only land that has been acquired is that required to enable the state to fulfil its obligations under the concession deed as ratified by Parliament. It should be noted that when construction is completed, some land may become surplus.

It should also be noted that, in some cases, the Melbourne City Link Authority may temporarily occupy land instead of acquiring it.

City Link: land acquisitions

(Question No. 365)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of the City Link project, what land and/or interest in land, both public and private, has or will be acquired for the project, indicating the — (i) street address; (ii) vendors, transferors or previous owners name; (iii) date of acquisition; (iv) *Government Gazette* reference; (v) cost of the land or interest; and (vi) cost of the compensation component?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

Complex tables relating to the above question and question no. 363 have been provided to Mr Theophanous and copies placed in the parliamentary library. One of these tables contains a listing of property which identifies land that has been acquired for the City Link project. The listing also indicates whether each parcel of land is owned by the state or is privately owned. In the majority of cases, owners are public authorities.

The listing of property contains information relating to parts (i) and (ii) of this question. In relation to the names of individual owners, the names of the former owners are in some cases on the public record. Provision of the names of other individual owners beyond the publicly provided information would breach individual privacy.

The *Government Gazette* reference for land specified by address is also contained in one of the tables. The cost of land and compensation is subject to longstanding procedures under the Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986. While settlement has been reached in some cases, negotiation is occuring on a number. Where settlement has been reached, it is considered to be a breach of privacy to provide figures on individual cases.

City Link: concession fees

(Question No. 366)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Finance, for the Minister for Planning and Local Government:

In respect of the concession fees payable to the state government under the Melbourne City Link contract, what are the details of the total nominal value of these concession fees over the life of the project and on what basis, and over what different time periods, have these calculations been made?

Hon. R. M. HALLAM (Minister for Finance) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Planning and Local Government is:

Details on concession fees are set out in section 3.1 of the concession deed.

Concession Fee amounts payable by Transurban to the state are:

from the date of the commencement of the concession period until the end of the twenty-fifth year after the date which is six months earlier than the link expected completion date an annual concession fee of $95 600 000;

from the date of the commencement of the twenty-sixth year after the date which is six months earlier than the link expected completion date until the end of the thirty-fourth year after that date an annual concession fee of $45 200 000; and

if the concession period is extended, then from the date of the commencement of the thirty-fifth year after the date which is six months earlier than the link expected completion date until the termination of the concession deed, an annual concession fee of $1 000 000.

As set out in the arrangements, the payment of concession fees can be satisfied by Transurban issuing concession notes. These notes can be encashed by the government at the earlier of:

the end of the concession period;

or when the following conditions are satisfied:

the real post-tax equity rate of return exceeds 10.0 per cent; and

the value of concession notes that are encashed in any one year does not exceed 30 per cent of the distributable cash flow.

These conditions relate to the profitability of the project, but are set at relatively low levels. If these conditions are met, Transurban does not have the option of deferring paying the concession notes.

Gaming: Community Support Fund

(Question No. 367)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Gaming:

In respect of the Auditor-General's report no. 40 of May 1996, page 27, paragraph 4.19, if during the period October 1992 to date, the Premier 'initially committed the government to provide financial assistance to external parties, without specification of the source of funding' and, if funds were subsequently obtained from the Community Support Fund, as described by the report:

(a) Which projects were funded in this or similar manner, indicating — (i) the date and amount of funding in each case; (ii) whether a departmental assessment of the application(s) occurred prior to or after the Premier's commitment of funds; and (iii) whether the grants were recommended by a department; if so, which department?

(b) Was the Sky Show Down Under, Rialto Theatrette Projects interest free loan of $1010 million and the *oneAustralia* America's Cup Syndicate non-refundable rights fee of $1.5 million funding from the Community Support Fund approved by the Premier in the same manner as referred to in paragraph 4.19.

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) — This question was asked of the Minister for Gaming. However, the Premier is the minister responsible for the Community Support Fund. The answer supplied by the Premier is:

(a) The Sky Show Down-Under Project and the Port Phillip Bay Bid grants were funded in the manner indicated in paragraph 4.19 of the Auditor-Generals Report No. 40.

In addition to the following details, information regarding the processes for the allocation of funds to these projects can be found in paragraphs 4.108 and 4.110, respectively, of the report.

Rialto Sky Show Down-Under

(i) $1 016 178 loan approved 28.9.94.

(ii) Appraisal of project, with regard to whether the project was appropriate for funding from the CSF, was provided in June 1994.

(iii) Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism.

Port Phillip Bay Bid

(i) $1.5m. approved 23.1.95.

(ii) Appraisal of project, with regard to whether the project was appropriate for funding from the CSF, was provided in January 1995.

(iii) Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism

(b) Refer to the response to (a).

Nursing home beds: closure

(Question No. 370)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

In respect of state government nursing home beds in each year from 1992-93 to 1995-96, what was the total number of state government nursing home beds and, of those, how many were closed or are proposed for closure?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

The figures for state government operational* nursing home beds are as follows:

1993	5318 beds	as at November	Source: commonwealth
1994	4765 beds	as at October	Source: state
1995	4316 beds	as at October	Source: state
1996	4251 beds	as at August	Source: state

This constitutes a reduction of 1067 state nursing home beds over the three-year period.

The reasons for this reduction are:

nursing home beds were relinquished to allow for the conversion to CAM/SAM funding (approximately 500)

reclassification of Association of the Blind nursing home beds from 'state' bed classification to 'charitable' classification (approximately 300); and

redevelopment of the funds previously used for nursing home bed services into other aged care services, for instance, acute care and rehabilitation services and community-based care (approximately 270).

In 1992 state nursing home beds accounted for 32.5 per cent of all beds (private, charitable, state) in Victoria. The 1996 figures indicate that state nursing home beds now account for 24.6 per cent of all beds. This proportion is more in line with the national average of 16 per cent for state involvement in nursing home services.

The private sector figures for the period 1993-96 reflect an increase of approximately 1400 nursing home beds resulting in the total number of beds available to Victorians increasing by approximately 300 beds.

*Operational: This term refers to the number of beds that are approved by the commonwealth, are currently in use and receiving CAM/SAM funding. The number of beds granted an approval in principle, not in use and not receiving funding, have not been included.

Nursing home beds: sale

(Question No. 371)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

(a) Which state government nursing homes or state government nursing home beds have been subject to sale, transfer, contracting out or tender to a private or non-government service provider since October 1992 to date, indicating in each case which service providers expressed interest and which provider, if any, was successful in its bid?

(b) What sale price for property, buildings, fittings, bed licences and goodwill and what other fees were paid to the state government in respect of each sale, transfer, contracting out or tender and from which service provider was each payment received?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

(a) The initial pilot at Bairnsdale Regional Health Service for the transfer of 100 state nursing home beds has been finalised and contracts with the selected operator for build-own-operate developments have been signed.

Three firms were short-listed: Care Providers Victoria Pty Ltd, Croft Health Care Ltd, and Hytons Nominees Pty Ltd trading as NASAH Management Services. Croft Health Care Ltd was the successful applicant and the organisation is in the process of constructing two new nursing homes at Bairnsdale and Paynesville for 60 and 40 nursing home beds respectively. It is anticipated that the homes will be completed and ready for occupancy by November 1996.

It is proposed that five other transfer projects will be progressed during this financial year:

Latrobe Regional Health Service: Moe and Morwell campuses — 80 beds in total

Western Health Care Network, North West Hospital campus — 180 beds

Warrnambool and District Base Hospital — 45 beds

Mildura Base Hospital — 70 beds

Hamilton Base Hospital — 30 beds

(b) There is no sale price. The contract is made on the basis that the costs of closure to the state are being met to the extent possible by the operator to whom the beds are being transferred.

In the pilot project at Bairnsdale Regional Health Service, as a result of the nature of the project, the majority of staff will continue with the new operator and the costs of closure where calculated accordingly. In other cases, where it may be appropriate or necessary to transfer nursing home beds to other parts of the state where there is a lack of nursing home beds, the costs of closure will need to include any costs for staff redundancy packages.

Electricity, gas and water utilities

(Question No. 374)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Small Business, for the Minister for Fair Trading:

(a) What have been the changes in number and type of electrical, gas and water utility inquiries and complaints since 1991?

(b) How is a complaint defined?

(c) How many of the complaints are repeats by the same consumer?

(d) How many of the complaints are common to a particular utility?

(e) What are the number of complaints for each utility by cause?

(f) How many of these complaints have resulted in actions against each utility compared with the number of complaints that have been rejected by cause?

(g) What difference has the Office of the Regulator-General and the Electricity Industry Ombudsman had on the level and number of utility complaints of the Office of Fair Trading, and what is the direction of referrals?

(h) How many complaints have been referred to the Office of Fair Trading from the Electricity Industry Ombudsman and the Regulator-General?

(i) What action has the office taken to make the public aware of the changes in administrative arrangements since 1992?

(j) What mechanisms are in place for the office to effect the regulatory regime and how often has it been used?

(k) Has the Regulator-General requested any details of complaints against utilities; if so, how often has he done so?

(l) What has been the Regulator-General's response to the complaints?

(m) Who is responsible for determining the quality of supply for electric, gas and water utilities, and who is responsible for monitoring the quality of supply?

(n) What standards are currently in force and what protection do they give consumers?

(o) Who is responsible for determining the conditions of supply for electric, gas and water utilities and what are the penalties for failure to meet the conditions of supply?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Small Business) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Fair Trading is:

(a) What have been the changes in number and type of electrical, gas and water utility inquiries and complaints since 1991?

The utilities environment has changed significantly since 1991. In 1994 the Office of the Regulator-General was established to administer regulations for regulated industries. Responsibility for electricity was assumed by the Office of Fair Trading from November 1994 until February 1996 which saw the establishment of the Electricity Ombudsman, Victoria. The Office of Fair Trading has handled water complaints since February 1995. Prior to that, complaints were handled by the Ombudsman's office. Due to the changes in the utilities area since 1991 it is not possible to identify changes in the number or type of electricity or water complaints since that time. The most common complaints against utilities relate to account disputes of electricity, gas or water. There has been no discernible change in either the type or number of complaints against Gascor, trading as Gas and Fuel, since 1991.

(b) How is a complaint defined?

In relation to utilities, a complaint is a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction about an action, a proposed action, or a failure to act by a supplier of goods or services or its employees, including failure to observe its published policies, practices or procedures.

(c) How many of the complaints are repeats by the same consumer?

These statistics are not kept by the Office of Fair Trading.

(d) How many of the complaints are common to a particular utility?

The majority of complaints in relation to electricity, water and gas concern pricing or account disputes. Such complaints are common to all utilities. Pricing complaints are made up of disputed accounts, overcharging or incorrect charging, comparisons with quoted prices and industry pricing policies. Complaints about quality comprise the unsatisfactory performance of a service, an unsafe product, damage to a consumer's property and unsatisfactory repairs. Complaints about contracts concern non-adherence to the terms of a contract, disputes concerning charges or cancellation, or harsh and unconscionable conduct.

(e) What are the number of complaints for each utility by cause?

In March 1995 a new computer was installed at the Office of Fair Trading. Prior to that time arrangements for recording of complaints do not enable reliable information on the number of complaints by cause to be obtained.

Formal complaints lodged with the office since the installation of the new computer system (1 March 1995 to 30 June 1996) are:

	Electricity (to 26 Feb '96)	Gas (Piped)	Water and Sewerage
	129	101	103
Complaints from 1 March 1995 to 30 June 1996 by type are:			
Price (incl. disputed accounts)	65	91	82
Quality	30	5	7
Contract	21	2	8
Representations	2	1	0
Other	11	2	7
Total	129	101	94

(f) How many of these complaints have resulted in actions against each utility compared with the number of complaints that have been rejected by cause?

The Office of Fair Trading has not had reason to take action against any supplier of electricity, water or gas. While, after investigation, some complaints have been found to be not justified, the majority have been conciliated to the consumers' satisfaction. The office does not reject complaints lodged with it; however, since February 1996 it has referred electricity complaints appropriately to the Electricity Industry Ombudsman.

(g) What difference has the Office of the Regulator-General and the Electricity Industry Ombudsman had on the level and number of utility complaints of the Office of Fair Trading, and what is the direction of referrals?

The Office of the Regulator-General does not handle individual consumer complaints but refers water and gas complaints to the Office of Fair Trading and electricity complaints to the Electricity Industry Ombudsman since 22 February 1996. The Office of Fair Trading reports to the Regulator-General regularly on complaint numbers and trends in the water industry.

(h) How many complaints have been referred to the Office of Fair Trading from the Electricity Industry Ombudsman and the Regulator-General?

The Electricity Industry Ombudsman has not referred any complaints to the Office of Fair Trading and statistics in relation to the number of referrals from the Office of the Regulator-General have not been collected. Any complainant who contacts the Office of the Regulator-General is referred to the Electricity Industry Ombudsman.

(i) What action has the office taken to make the public aware of the changes in administrative arrangements since 1992?

The Office of Fair Trading provided information on the changes to administrative arrangements in the electricity and water utilities to all of its inquiries officers and the workers in funded community groups. As an observer on the Office of the Regulator-General's Customer Consultative Committee, the office has regular monthly contact with committee members such as the Consumer Advocacy and Financial Counselling Association, the Consumers' Federation of Australia, the Victorian Council of Social Service and Environment Victoria as well as other government departments and representatives from peak industry and business associations. The Office of the Regulator-General has produced a pamphlet on its role and function which includes a section on customer complaints which refers complainants to the Office of Fair Trading. The five electricity distribution businesses (before the beginning of the Electricity Industry Ombudsman scheme) and the three metropolitan water suppliers also provided their customers with either a pamphlet or a copy of the water customer charter containing the contact details of the Office of Fair Trading.

(j) What mechanisms are in place for the office to effect the regulatory regime and how often has it been used?

The role of the Office of Fair Trading is to report to the Regulator-General, both formally at the monthly Customer Consultative Committee meetings and informally as required, on complaint trends in the water industry and to identify any systemic complaints or other matters that may need to be addressed by the Regulator-General.

(k) Has the Regulator-General requested any details of complaints against utilities; if so, how often has he done so?

The Regulator-General has asked the Office of Fair Trading to report complaint details in the water industry at the monthly Customer Consultative Committee. Before the beginning of the Electricity Industry Ombudsman scheme, the Office of Fair Trading also reported on complaint details in the electricity industry on a monthly basis.

(l) What has been the Regulator-General's response to the complaints?

The Regulator-General has been appreciative of the reporting mechanism established with the Office of Fair Trading.

(m) Who is responsible for determining the quality of supply for electric, gas and water utilities, and who is responsible for monitoring the quality of supply.

This part of the question does not fall within the area of responsibility of the Minister for Fair Trading and would more appropriately be answered by the Treasurer, to whom the Regulator-General reports.

(n) What standards are currently in force and what protection do they give consumers?

This part of the question does not fall within the area of responsibility of the Minister for Fair Trading and would more appropriately be answered by the Treasurer, to whom the Regulator-General reports.

(o) Who is responsible for determining the conditions of supply for electric, gas and water utilities and what are the penalties for failure to meet the conditions of supply?

This part of the question does not fall within the area of responsibility of the Minister for Fair Trading and would more appropriately be answered by the Treasurer, to whom the Regulator-General reports.

Grand prix: equipment storage

(Question No. 375)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Tourism:

Will she provide details of the storage of the Albert Park grand prix equipment at a three-hectare site in Melbourne's western suburbs, including — (i) who was awarded the contract; (ii) the total cost of the contract for the storage; and (iii) the total security costs?

Hon. LOUISE ASHER (Minister for Tourism) — The answer is:

(i) The relevant party is Mayne Nickless Ltd;

(ii) and (iii) The total cost of the contract for the storage and the total security costs are covered by a confidentiality clause prohibiting the parties from disclosing such information.

Wednesday, 9 October 1996

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Housing: redundancies

(Question No. 52)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Housing:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Housing is:

The Office of Housing is part of the Department of Human Services and the figures provided below relate to the Office of Housing.

Redundancy payments for department-run services were introduced by government in November 1992. Actual targeted separation packages (redundancies) were not applied until the 1993-94 financial year. In respect of the financial years 1991-92 to 1995-96 re-employment occurred only in the 1994-95 financial year.

Re-employment of redundant officers only occurs in limited circumstances to fill short-term vacancies where technical skills are required to assist in the transition to new service delivery arrangements, or to positions which receive a lower remuneration. The position initially vacated by the redundant officer is not refilled and full cost savings are therefore achieved.

Year	Total number of persons re-employed (EFT)	Total amount of redundancy payments made
1994-95	2	$36 462.48

Aboriginal Affairs: redundancies

(Question No. 73)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

In relation to each agency under the minister's administration how many persons who have been made redundant have been subsequently re-employed under contract for each of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96 and what was the total value of the redundancies paid to those persons in each of those years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is:

Redundancy payments for department-run services were introduced by government in November 1992. Actual targeted separation packages (redundancies) were not applied until the 1993-94 financial year.

No officer of the Aboriginal Affairs Division of the Department of Human Services has been made redundant and subsequently re-employed under contract for any of the financial years from 1991-92 to 1995-96.

Housing: senior staff

(Question No. 87)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Housing:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Housing is:

For the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 the Office of Housing was part of the then Department of Planning and Development and staffing statistics were reported under that department.

Under the machinery-of-government changes in April 1996 the Office of Housing became part of the Department of Human Services. Staff transferred to the new department included central resources staff not previously included as part of the Office of Housing.

Therefore the staff levels reported are based on the current definition of the Office of Housing and include an estimate for the central resources staff previously reported under the Department of Planning and Development.

Financial year*	Staffing levels (EFT)	No. of executive officers in dept.	%
1992-93	1435	17	1.18
1993-94	1298	17	1.31
1994-95	1162	17	1.46

* as at 30 June in each year.

The figures for the year 1995-96 are currently being consolidated and are not yet available.

Aged Care: senior staff

(Question No. 88)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Aged Care:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Aged Care) — The answer is:

Aged Care is part of the Department of Human Services. Prior to the machinery-of-government changes it was part of the Department of Health and Community Services and the figures provided below relate only to departmental staff of the Department of Health and Community Services. Given the integrated management structure, it is not possible to extract figures only for Aged Care. Therefore the total number of direct employees of the department and the number of senior executive service staff employed for the department as a percentage of the total number of staff in the department is provided.

Year	Total no. of staff (EFT) for dept	No. of executive officers in dept	Executive officers as a % of total
1992-93*	12 546	106	0.84%
1993-94*	12 007	101	0.88%
1994-95*	11 919	104	0.87%

* as at 30 June in each year

The figures for the year 1995-96 are currently being consolidated and are not yet available.

Youth and Community Services: senior staff

(Question No. 92)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Youth and Community Services:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Youth and Community Services is:

Youth and Community Services is part of the Department of Human Services. Prior to the machinery-of-government changes Community Services was part of the Department of Health and Community Services and Youth Affairs was part of the Department of Business and Employment. The figures provided below relate only to departmental staff of the Department of Health and Community Services. Given the integrated management structure, it is not possible to extract figures for Youth and Community Services only. Therefore the total number of direct employees of the department and the number of senior executive service staff employed for the department as a percentage of the total number of staff in the department is provided.

Year	Total no of staff (EFT) for dept	No. of executive officers in dept	Executive officers as a % of total
1992-93*	12 546	106	0.84%
1993-94*	12 007	101	0.88%
1994-95*	11 919	104	0.87%

* as at 30 June in each year

The figures for the year 1995-96 are currently being consolidated and are not yet available.

Aboriginal Affairs: senior staff

(Question No. 109)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is:

Aboriginal Affairs is part of the Department of Human Services. Aboriginal Affairs became part of the Department of Health and Community Services at the commencement of the 1993-94 financial year.

Year	Total no. of staff (EFT) in Aboriginal Affairs	No of executive officers in Aboriginal Affairs	Executive officers as a % of total
1993-94*	36.54	1	2.7%
1994-95*	36.27	1	2.7%

* as at 30 June in each year

The figures for the year 1995-96 are currently being consolidated and are not yet available.

Youth and Community Services: senior staff

(Question No. 110)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Youth and Community Services:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Youth and Community Services is:

Youth and Community Services is part of the Department of Human Services. Prior to the machinery-of-government changes Community Services was part of the Department of Health and Community Services and Youth Affairs was part of the Department of Business and Employment. The figures provided below relate only to departmental staff of the Department of Health and Community Services. Given the integrated management structure, it is not possible to extract figures for Youth and Community Services only. Therefore the total number of direct employees of the department and the number of senior executive service staff employed for the department as a percentage of the total number of staff in the department is provided.

Year	Total no. of staff (EFT) for department	No. of executive officers in department	Executive officers as a % of total
1992-93*	12 546	106	0.84%
1993-94*	12 007	101	0.88%
1994-95*	11 919	104	0.87%

* as at 30 June in each year

The figures for the year 1995-96 are currently being consolidated and are not yet available.

Health: senior staff

(Question No. 111)

Hon. B. T. PULLEN asked the Minister for Health:

In respect of each agency under the minister's administration what has been the total number and percentage, respectively, of senior executive service or equivalent level staff employed compared with the total number of staff in the agency, in each of the past four years?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

Health is part of the Department of Human Services. Prior to the machinery-of-government changes it was part of the Department of Health and Community Services and the figures provided below relate only to departmental staff of the Department of Health and Community Services. Given the integrated management structure, it is not possible to extract figures for Health only. Therefore the total number of direct employees of the department and the number of senior executive service staff employed for the department as a percentage of the total number of staff in the department is provided.

Year	Total no. of staff (EFT) for dept	No. of executive officers in dept	Executive officers as a % of total
1992-93*	12 546	106	0.84%
1993-94*	12 007	101	0.88%
1994-95*	11 919	104	0.87%

* as at 30 June in each year

The figures for the year 1995-96 are currently being consolidated and are not yet available.

Education: consultancies

(Question No. 129)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, for the period 1 June 1994 to 31 May 1996, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of the consultant; (v) recommendations made; and (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

Information relating to consultancies costing in excess of $50 000 for the period 1 June 1994 to 30 June 1995 is contained in the Department of Education annual reports for the financial years 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Organisations or individuals are engaged to provide consultant services of a professional nature in respect to particular proposals. These consultancies by their nature are usually of short-term duration and are job specific. To provide the information requested in parts (v) and (vi) would require an inordinate amount of time and resources which are not available. Miss Gould may wish to submit a more focused and specific question on these matters.

(Summary referred to in answer (9 pages) has been supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Education: outsourcing

(Question No. 130)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, for the period 1 October 1994 to 31 May 1996, which functions/activities have been outsourced, indicating the — (i) selection process; (ii) total cost involved; (iii) names of all the successful persons/companies; (iv) performance agreement and the terms of such agreement; and (v) estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The information requested concerning (i), (iii) and (v) is in the following table. Information on the total cost involved in (ii) cannot be released as it would be in breach of commercial confidentiality. Performance agreements (iv) are specific to each contract arrangement and the information requested would require an inordinate amount of time and resources which are not available.

It needs to be noted that the bulk of the reduction in staffing within the Department of Education and the financial savings to the system that were achieved as a consequence of this, had occurred prior to the period specified in the above question. Most of the benefits realised in the period between October 1994 and May 1996 took the form of improvements in service.

(Tables referred to in answer (11 pages) supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Education: class sizes

(Question No. 135)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

Will the minister provide:

(a) Mean, mode and median figures for 1996 class sizes in Victorian government primary and secondary schools?

(b) An update of tables 5 and 6 in the *Summary Statistics Victorian Schools*, February 1994 publication?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The requested information is provided in the following tables.

Size of classes in primary schools, February 1984-1996

	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
	Percentage of classes in size groupings												
Size (students)													
Over 40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
36 - 40	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	-	-	-	0.1	0.1	0.1	-
31 - 35	9.4	5.8	3.9	3.1	2.8	2.7	2.5	1.9	1.5	3.6	7.2	7.6	8.2
26 - 30	43.2	42.5	41.1	40.2	39.9	39.0	40.0	39.7	38.2	44.6	54.5	56.4	54.9
21 - 25	30.7	33.1	36.1	37.7	38.4	39.6	37.8	41.3	40.8	36.9	27.9	27.9	28.3
16 - 20	10.8	11.2	11.1	11.5	11.4	11.5	10.4	10.4	10.3	8.4	5.9	5.2	5.2
11 - 15	4.4	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.5	5.1	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.9	3.6	2.3	2.3
10 and under	1.4	2.0	2.4	2.1	1.9	2.0	4.3	1.7	4.2	1.5	0.8	0.5	0.5

					Number of students per class								
Mean class size	25.5	24.3	24.0	24.0	23.9	23.9	23.5	23.9	23.4	24.5	25.7	26.0	26.0
Standard deviation	5.2	5.1	5.1	4.9	4.8	4.8	5.5	4.5	5.3	4.6	4.3	3.9	4.1
Mode	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	27	27
Median	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	27	27

Size of secondary English classes in government schools by year level, February 1995-1996

		Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
	Mean	22.7	23.0	22.9	22.7	21.5	20.6
	Standard deviation	3.7	3.9	3.8	4.2	4.5	4.6
1995	Minimum	2	2	2.5	2	3	1
	Maximum	29	30	29	30	33	31
	Number of classes	1 728	1 698	1 743	1 662	1 607	1 364
	Mean	22.8	23.0	22.9	22.7	21.4	20.6
	Standard deviation	3.7	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.6	4.7
1996	Minimum	2	4	4	2	2	1
	Maximum	33	33	33	35	36	32
	Number of classes	1 656	1 641	1 738	1 694	1 591	1 367
	Mode	25	25	25	25	25	23
	Median	24	24	24	24	23	22

NOTE: Many secondary schools have English classes with students from more than one year level. The year level of the classes in this table refer to classes that have students of that year level, for example year 7 classes may have students from other year levels in them.

Education: year 12 retention rates

(Question No. 136)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

What are the details of government school year 12 retention rates for each year since 1992 in each DSE region and in each labour force region as defined by the commonwealth Ministry of Education, Employment and Training and Youth Affairs?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The apparent retention rate for government schools based on the February census is supplied in the following table for each Department of Education region. To provide the information requested by labour force regions would require an inordinate amount of time and resources which are not available.

The apparent retention rate has been declining since 1993. This trend was consistent across Australia. The national schools statistics collection held in August showed that in 1995 the apparent retention rate for Victorian government schools was the second highest in Australia and below only that of the ACT.

Government schools apparent retention rates by DoE region, February 1992-1996 (per cent)

Region	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
North-West Metropolitan	85.3	87.0	84.8	79.9	79.9
South-East Metropolitan	91.2	94.1	88.9	84.1	82.6
Barwon-South Western	75.6	74.7	68.0	68.0	67.4
Central-Highlands Wimmera	73.3	72.2	67.7	68.6	70.5
Loddon-Campaspe Mallee	80.8	78.7	72.1	72.5	72.3
Goulburn-North Eastern	75.7	78.6	70.2	66.1	67.8
Gippsland	77.9	76.6	75.4	67.1	62.7
All government schools	84.6	85.9	81.3	77.3	76.7

Apparent retention rate refers to the year 12 enrolment expressed as a proportion of the year 7 enrolment five years earlier. The term 'apparent' retention rate reflects that retention rates are influenced by factors not taken into account by this measure such as students repeating year levels, interstate and overseas migration, transfer of students between education sectors or schools and students who have left school previously returning to continue their school education.

Education: transition rates

(Question No. 138)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

What are the details of transition rates for each school sector for the years 1994-95 and 1995-96 as per the information provided in table 20 of the February 1994 publication *Summary Statistics Victorian Schools*?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

The requested information is shown in the following table.

TRANSITION RATES BY YEAR LEVEL AND SECTOR, FEBRUARY 1994-95 TO FEBRUARY 1995-96 (Per cent)

Year Level	1994-95	1995-96
	Government	
Prep-1	98.7	99.9
Year 1-2	98.5	99.3
Year 2-3	98.6	99.1
Year 3-4	98.8	99.3
Year 4-5	98.5	99.3
Year 5-6	98.8	99.4
Year 6-7	90.8	91.3
Year 7-8	99.2	100.3
Year 8-9	98.9	100.4
Year 9-10	95.9	97.6
Year 10-11	92.6	94.1
Year 11-12	80.4	84.1
	Catholic	
Prep-1	99.5	99.9
Year 1-2	99.5	98.9
Year 2-3	99.5	99.6
Year 3-4	99.7	99.4
Year 4-5	99.2	99.0
Year 5-6	99.6	99.8
Year 6-7	97.9	98.8
Year 7-8	99.2	99.3
Year 8-9	97.7	97.6
Year 9-10	97.1	97.2
Year 10-11	93.0	92.6
Year 11-12	90.3	90.3
	Independent schools	
Prep-1	102.0	105.3
Year 1-2	105.2	105.7
Year 2-3	108.2	110.4
Year 3-4	110.0	110.9
Year 4-5	115.9	116.5
Year 5-6	111.3	111.0

Year 6-7	177.2	176.1
Year 7-8	101.5	101.1
Year 8-9	104.2	102.7
Year 9-10	105.3	104.3
Year 10-11	103.7	104.0
Year 11-12	98.0	97.1
	Non-government	
Prep-1	100.0	101.0
Year 1-2	100.6	100.3
Year 2-3	101.2	101.8
Year 3-4	101.8	101.9
Year 4-5	102.8	102.9
Year 5-6	102.4	102.5
Year 6-7	118.0	118.7
Year 7-8	100.1	100.0
Year 8-9	100.2	99.6
Year 9-10	100.3	100.0
Year 10-11	97.2	97.3
Year 11-12	93.5	93.2
	All schools	
Prep-1	99.1	100.2
Year 1-2	99.1	99.6
Year 2-3	99.4	99.9
Year 3-4	99.7	100.1
Year 4-5	99.8	100.4
Year 5-6	99.9	100.3
Year 6-7	99.4	100.0
Year 7-8	99.5	100.2
Year 8-9	99.4	100.1
Year 9-10	97.4	98.5
Year 10-11	94.3	95.2
Year 11-12	85.0	87.5

Transition rate refers to the proportion of a year level that progresses onto the next year level. It is the enrolments in a particular year level expressed as a proportion of the cohort enrolled in the previous year level one year earlier.

Commonwealth-state housing agreement

(Question No. 159)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Housing:

In light of discussions with the commonwealth government about the commonwealth-state housing agreement:

(a) Will the current level of public housing stock be maintained?

(b) Will any agreement with the commonwealth ensure that all public housing rents are directed into public housing and not into consolidated revenue?

(c) Is the government committed to providing public housing in areas that provide strong local employment opportunities?

(d) Will the government ensure that income remains the dominant criterion in assessing eligibility for public housing?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Housing is:

(a) Discussions with the commonwealth are not yet concluded.

The Prime Minister has written to the Premier identifying further work, to be done jointly with the states, that needs to be done before the actual shape of future arrangements can be negotiated. This work is expected to also outline any transitional arrangements beyond 1997-98 for capital funding and the terms and conditions of a move to recurrent funding.

Victoria, along with other states, will consider its position prior to consideration of this work at the Council of Australian Governments meeting in November. I am thus unable to indicate the impact of these arrangements on the level of public housing stock in Victoria at this time.

(b) Equally, for the reasons outlined above, in the absence of details of the terms and conditions being offered by the commonwealth, it is unknown as to what future rental policy will be, including payments to consolidated revenue.

(c) The ongoing provision of public housing will be on the same basis as current policy viz. provision of housing appropriate to people's needs. Where such needs include access to employment opportunities, this will be a factor in the provision of housing assistance.

(d) Housing assistance will focus on those most in need. Traditionally, low income has been a surrogate measure of housing need and whatever the new arrangements, it is expected that income will remain a key determinant. Other factors, such as homelessness, inadequate housing, special modifications within housing and coordination of housing and support are also important in assessing housing need.

Met and V/Line patronage

(Question No. 163)

Hon. PAT POWER asked the Minister for Roads and Ports, for the Minister for Transport:

Since 1990-91, what have been the separate patronage figures for each financial year for the Met and V/Line, providing, where the basis of calculation has changed, a written description of the changed method of calculation and a continuing breakdown of figures to allow for a like-with-like comparison over the years to 1994-95?

Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Minister for Roads and Ports) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Transport is:

The following information is provided in respect of patronage levels on the Met trams and trains:

Year	Met Train[1] (000s)	Met Tram (000s)	V/Line Passenger[2] (000s)
1990-91	106 772	107 659	not available
1991-92	108 911	112 037	6 663
1992-93	105 895	100 858	6 615
1993-94	100 955	104 037	6 516
1994-95	105 360	108 851	6 712
1995-96	109 239	114 142	7 016

[1]Met Train:

Prior to 1 July 1991 Met Train's patronage was defined in terms of station entries. From July 1991 for more consistent comparisons with tram and bus patronage, the Met Train's definition was redefined to be vehicle boardings, with the exception of boardings due to interchange at major stations between city loop and non-city loop trains.

[2]V/Line Passenger:

Since 1991-92, V/Line passenger patronage has been calculated by counting all boardings on all rail and coach services. Prior to 1991-92, V/Line passenger patronage was based on journeys, which were estimated using information supplied by the ticketing system then in operation. The current method of counting more accurately reflects the number of passenger journeys undertaken.

In order to provide a consistent time series the services that were operated prior to 1994-95 and are no longer operated have not been included in the boardings figures. These are Adelaide and Sydney interstate trains and the privately managed Shepparton and Warrnambool services. Frankston-Stony Point and interstate road coach patronage are included in the numbers.

The honourable member will note the vastly increased patronage, which illustrates the public's approval and endorsement of the coalition government's initiatives in transport.

Aboriginal Affairs: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 172)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is:

(i) **The selection process**

DHS programs source the majority of IT products and services through the DHS Information Technology Branch. This branch advertises all requirements for corporate IT services publicly, and evaluates proposals according to Victorian Government Purchasing Board guidelines. Major contracts are in place for the supply of computer hardware and software. Data telecommunication services are purchased from Telstra. Voice telecommunication services are purchased from Telstra and Optus. Most software development projects are outsourced and approximately 60 per cent of the DHS IT branch staff are contractors. All contractor appointments are subject to the same public process described above.

In addition, a tender was issued in May 1994 by the former Department of Planning and Development (DPD) for the outsourcing of 'end-to-end' IT services, including all operational services, application maintenance, application development and enhancement. The tender was issued to selected companies following evaluation of responses to a public call for expressions of interest. From April 1996, the housing component of the former DPD was amalgamated with the former H&CS to create DHS.

(ii) **Total costs involved**

The costs of DHS IT purchasing from third-party suppliers are embedded in a small team of salaried staff, supplemented by external expert consultants as required, with the cost of the external services ranging up to $100 000 in any one financial year.

The total costs involved in the DPD outsourcing over the 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years, exclusive of staffing costs, were approximately $300 000. This was expenditure for external consultancy advice during the outsourcing process, for example, legal, tender evaluation, etcetera.

The total value of the DPD outsourcing contract is approximately $43 million over a five year period. Approximately 70 per cent of this expenditure will now be incurred by DHS. In addition, the proportion of the annual central budget of the former H&CS, over the years since 1992, which is spent on the purchase of third-party IT products and services, has grown from 52 per cent to 75 per cent. The total DHS central IT expenditure on outsourced IT services now exceeds 80 per cent.

(iii) **Names of successful companies**

The third-party providers of IT products and services to DHS include Hewlett-Packard (computer servers and operating systems software), Datacraft (network equipment), Computer Associates (database and application development software) and a large range of IT companies specialising in the development of application software.

Andersen Consulting was the successful tenderer for the DPD outsourcing (contract signed April 1995, commencement of delivery of services May 1995). Andersen is the head contractor and supports application development and maintenance of the corporate systems, and provides full facilities management services via a subcontractor.

(iv) **The performance measures**

Third-party provision is subject to formal contracts, with an emphasis on fixed-price service delivery. Contract IT staff are managed using the DHS performance management plan model.

Some 175 performance measures apply to Andersen Consulting outsourcing arrangement each month.

A performance point regime applies to each instance of unsatisfactory performance to determine $ rebates. The performance point regime takes into account the degree of under-performance as well as consistent under-performance over a number of months.

Liquidated damages can be used in place of performance points regime where necessary.

Regular independent audits are provided for to ensure quality assurance of service delivery and also that contractual obligations are fulfilled.

(v) **Estimated savings and benefits**

Savings are in the form of avoided costs related to the increasing sophistication and complexity of the department's network and communication requirements. The benefits achieved are:

departmental business units are now more accountable directly for information technology costs and these costs are more transparent to them;

a greater range of IT services are provided by the DPD outsourcer than under previous in-house arrangements;

improved quality of service delivery against contracted targets with rebates of payments where service does not satisfy these targets;

recruitment and retention of scarce IT skills is now the responsibility of the outsourcer.

Education: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 173)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

Facilities management

Project	(i)	(ii)	(iii)
Unisys A Series Processing	public tender and consequential negotiation from Vicomputing sale	$818 000 p.a. (1996-97)	Hansen Corporation

(iv) Facilities availability, on-line response time, batch processing time.

(v) Estimated savings of $590 000 p.a.

Applications Development Projects

Project	(i)	(ii)	(iii)
IMS — Finance expenditure reporting	public tender	$16 200	Computer Power
CASES — Local payroll	public tender	$40 300	Valchris Computer Services
CASES — CMIS 1	expression of interest & selective tender	$80 340	DWS
CASES — Accounts receivables	expression of interest & selective tender	$102 000	William Buck
Global Budget — stage 1 (analysis)	public tender	$18 750	Synthesys
Global Budget — stage 1 (develop)	public tender	$201 000	Synthesys
CASES CMIS 2	certificate of inexpediency	$79 736	DWS
CASES — Student absences	public tender	$54 500	DWS
Electronic census — stage 1	public tender	$23 750	Synthesys
Electronic census — stage 2	contract extension	$18 500	Synthesys
Overseas students program — stage 1	public tender	$21 450	Synthesys
Overseas students program — stage 2	contract extension	$21 500	Synthesys

(iv) Development of system in accordance with specification, schedule and budget.

(v) The benefit is flexible availability of appropriate expertise to meet project requirements as they arise.

School staff training projects

Project	(i)	(ii)	(iii)
Windows for Workgroups for Schools of the Future	public tender	$199 000	Ipex ITG Pty Ltd
Windows for Workgroups and CD — Rom for Small Schools	selective tender	$31 000	DyCom Business Systems Pty Ltd

(iv) Effectiveness ratings by trainees.

(v) The benefit is availability as required of additional training resources when internal staff fully utilised delivering training in school administration software system.

Housing: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 174)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Housing:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Housing is:

(i) **The selection process**

DHS programs source the majority of IT products and services through the DHS Information Technology Branch. This branch advertises all requirements for corporate IT services publicly, and evaluates proposals according to Victorian Government Purchasing Board guidelines. Major contracts are in place for the supply of computer hardware and software. Data telecommunication services are purchased from Telstra. Voice telecommunication services are purchased from Telstra and Optus. Most software development projects are outsourced and approximately 60 per cent of the DHS IT branch staff are contractors. All contractor appointments are subject to the same public process described above.

In addition a tender was issued in May 1994 by the former Department of Planning and Development (DPD) for the outsourcing of end-to-end IT services, including all operational services, application maintenance, application development and enhancement. The tender was issued to selected companies following evaluation of responses to a public call for expressions of interest. From April 1996, the housing component of the former DPD was amalgamated with the former H&CS to create DHS.

(ii) **Total costs involved**

The costs of DHS IT purchasing from third-party suppliers are embedded in a small team of salaried staff, supplemented by external expert consultants as required, with the cost of the external services ranging up to $100 000 in any one financial year.

The total costs involved in the DPD outsourcing over the 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years, exclusive of staffing costs, were approximately $300 000. This was expenditure for external consultancy advice during the outsourcing process,
for example, legal, tender evaluation, etc.

The total value of the DPD outsourcing contract is approximately $43 million over a five year period. Approximately 70 per cent of this expenditure will now be incurred by DHS. In addition, the proportion of the annual central budget of the former H&CS, over the years since 1992, which is spent on the purchase of third-party IT products and services, has grown from 52 per cent to 75 per cent. The total DHS central IT expenditure on outsourced IT services now exceeds 80 per cent.

(iii) **Names of successful companies**

The third-party providers of IT products and services to DHS include Hewlett-Packard (computer servers and operating systems software), Datacraft (network equipment), Computer Associates (database and application development software) and a large range of IT companies specialising in the development of application software.

Andersen Consulting was the successful tenderer for the DPD outsourcing (contract signed April 1995, commencement of delivery of services May 1995). Andersen is the head contractor and supports application development and maintenance of the corporate systems, and provides full facilities management services via a subcontractor.

(iv) **The performance measures**

Third-party provision is subject to formal contracts, with an emphasis on fixed-price service delivery. Contract IT staff are managed using the DHS performance management plan model.

Some 175 performance measures apply to Andersen Consulting outsourcing arrangement each month.

A performance point regime applies to each instance of unsatisfactory performance to determine $ rebates. The performance point regime takes into account the degree of under-performance as well as consistent under-performance over a number of months.

Liquidated damages can be used in place of performance points regime where necessary.

Regular independent audits are provided for to ensure quality assurance of service delivery and also that contractual obligations are fulfilled.

(v) **Estimated savings and benefits**

Savings are in the form of avoided costs related to the increasing sophistication and complexity of the department's network and communication requirements. The benefits achieved are:

departmental business units are now more accountable directly for information technology costs and these costs are more transparent to them;

a greater range of IT services are provided by the DPD outsourcer than under previous in-house arrangements;

improved quality of service delivery against contracted targets with rebates of payments where service does not satisfy these targets;

recruitment and retention of scarce IT skills is now the responsibility of the outsourcer.

Tertiary Education and Training: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 175)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training is:

No outsourcing of information technology has occurred in those parts of the Department of Education under the administration of the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training since 3 October 1992. The response does not, however, cover any outsourcing activities that may have been undertaken by TAFE institutes, universities or other post-secondary institutions as these are self-governing bodies responsible for their own day-to-day administration.

Youth and Community Services: information technology outsourcing

(Question No. 176)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Youth and Community Services:

In respect of the outsourcing of information technology in each department, agency and authority within the minister's administration, since 3 October 1992 to date, what are the details in each case of — (i) the selection process; (ii) the total cost involved; (iii) the names of all successful persons and/or companies; (iv) the performance measures; and (v) the estimated savings and benefits of the outsourcing?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Youth and Community Services is:

(i) **The selection process**

DHS programs source the majority of IT products and services through the DHS Information Technology Branch. This branch advertises all requirements for corporate IT services publicly, and evaluates proposals according to Victorian Government Purchasing Board guidelines. Major contracts are in place for the supply of computer hardware and software. Data telecommunication services are purchased from Telstra. Voice telecommunication services are purchased from Telstra and Optus. Most software development projects are outsourced and approximately 60 per cent of the DHS IT branch staff are contractors. All contractor appointments are subject to the same public process described above.

In addition, a tender was issued in May 1994 by the former Department of Planning and Development (DPD) for the outsourcing of end-to-end IT services, including all operational services, application maintenance, application development and enhancement. The tender was issued to selected companies following evaluation of responses to a public call for expressions of interest. From April 1996, the housing component of the former DPD was amalgamated with the former H&CS to create DHS.

(ii) **Total costs involved**

The costs of DHS IT purchasing from third-party suppliers are embedded in a small team of salaried staff, supplemented by external expert consultants as required, with the cost of the external services ranging up to $100 000 in any one financial year.

The total costs involved in the DPD outsourcing over the 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years, exclusive of staffing costs, were approximately $300 000. This was expenditure for external consultancy advice during the outsourcing process, for example, legal, tender evaluation, etc.

The total value of the DPD outsourcing contract is approximately $43 million over a five year period. Approximately 70 per cent of this expenditure will now be incurred by DHS. In addition, the proportion of the annual central budget of the former H&CS, over the years since 1992, which is spent on the purchase of third-party IT products and services, has grown from 52 per cent to 75 per cent. The total DHS central IT expenditure on outsourced IT services now exceeds 80 per cent.

(iii) **Names of successful companies**

The third-party providers of IT products and services to DHS include Hewlett-Packard (computer servers and operating systems software), Datacraft (network equipment), Computer Associates (database and application development software) and a large range of IT companies specialising in the development of application software.

Andersen Consulting was the successful tenderer for the DPD outsourcing (contract signed April 1995, commencement of delivery of services May 1995). Andersen is the head contractor and supports application development and maintenance of the corporate systems, and provides full facilities management services via a subcontractor.

(iv) **The performance measures**

Third-party provision is subject to formal contracts, with an emphasis on fixed-price service delivery. Contract IT staff are managed using the DHS performance management plan model.

Some 175 performance measures apply to Andersen Consulting outsourcing arrangement each month.

A performance point regime applies to each instance of unsatisfactory performance to determine $ rebates. The performance point regime takes into account the degree of under-performance as well as consistent under-performance over a number of months.

Liquidated damages can be used in place of performance points regime where necessary.

Regular independent audits are provided for to ensure quality assurance of service delivery and also that contractual obligations are fulfilled.

(v) **Estimated savings and benefits**

Savings are in the form of avoided costs related to the increasing sophistication and complexity of the department's network and communication requirements. The benefits achieved are:

departmental business units are now more accountable directly for information technology costs and these costs are more transparent to them;

a greater range of IT services are provided by the DPD outsourcer than under previous in-house arrangements;

improved quality of service delivery against contracted targets with rebates of payments where service does not satisfy these targets;

recruitment and retention of scarce IT skills is now the responsibility of the outsourcer.

Learning assessment project

(Question No. 202)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In relation to the learning assessment project, what was the total cost of the 1994-95 program, indicating the — (i) total advertising and public relations cost; (ii) specific cost to operate the LAP hotline unit, the number of staff employed, and the number of telephone calls received; (iii) cost of all radio advertising promoting the LAP; (iv) cost of newspaper advertisements and inserts; (v) number of promotional booklets printed, their cost, and the number distributed; and (vi) cost of opinion polling research on the LAP?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(i) $786 000 approximately was spent on public information and education related to the learning assessment project. The amounts detailed in parts (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) are included in this total.

(ii) The cost of telephone calls was approximately $1000. No extra staffing was involved. Approximately 3000 calls were received.

(iii) $175 000 approximately.

(iv) $357 000 approximately.

(v) Two information booklets on the LAP were produced by the Board of Studies namely: *Learning Assessment in Primary Schools* and *Understanding the LAP*. The first booklet cost $33 000 approximately and there were 225 000 copies distributed. The second booklet cost $90 000 approximately and 250 000 copies were distributed. An informational videotape called *Introducing the LAP* was also produced at a cost of $49 000 approximately. The Directorate of School Education produced 2900 LAP information kits. The cost was $17 000 approximately and 2700 kits were distributed.

(vi) $64 000 approximately was spent on market research on the LAP (this included research on the kinds of information on results parents wanted to have).

Classrooms of the Future program

(Question No. 226)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In relation to the promotion of the Classrooms of the Future program:

(a) What is the total cost of the program for 1995-96?

(b) What is the budgeted cost of advertising, publications and public relations?

(c) What is the budgeted cost of all radio advertising?

(d) What is the specific cost to operate the hotline, the number of staff working, and the number of calls received?

(e) What is the cost of promotional packaged information printed and distributed?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(a) $479 000 approximately.

(b) $159 000 approximately.

(c) $310 000 approximately.

(d) There is no specific hotline promoting Classrooms of the Future program. The general education hotline answers inquiries about a wide range of educational issues. The number of calls received to date for Classrooms of the Future program, which was launched on 9 October 1995, is 310.

(e) $10 000 approximately.

Housing: annual reports

(Question No. 254)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Housing:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what was the total cost of annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Housing is:

From October 1992 to March 1996, the Office of Housing was part of the Department of Planning and Development, which also comprised the offices of Planning and Heritage; Major Projects; Building; and Local Government.

Annual report costs for the Department of Planning and Development for the three financial years were:

1992-93	$32 003
1993-94	$37 380
1994-95	$47 540

The amounts given reflect the costs of printing and services provided by external providers. They do not include estimates of the costs of staff time involved in preparing the reports.

Education: consultancies

(Question No. 278)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

Information relating to consultancies for the period 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, regardless of cost and from 1 June 1994 to 30 June 1995 for those costing in excess of $50 000, is contained in the Department of Education annual reports for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Organisations or individuals are engaged to provide consultant services of a professional nature in respect to particular proposals. These consultancies by their nature are usually of short-term duration and are job specific. To provide the information requested in parts (v), (vi) and (vii) would require an inordinate amount of time and resources which are not available. Mr Theophanous may wish to submit a more focused and specific question on these matters.

(Summary referred to in answer (8 pages) has been supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Housing: consultancies

(Question No. 287)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Housing:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, for the periods 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993, and 1 June 1994 to 23 November 1995, what are the details of each consultancy commissioned, indicating — (i) date; (ii) cost; (iii) purpose; (iv) name and address of consultant; (v) recommendations made; (vi) action taken in response to any recommendations; and (vii) whether tenders were called?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Housing is:

The annual reports of the Department of Planning and Development for the years 1992-93 and 1993-94 include details of consultants engaged during those years, including for the period 3 October 1992 to 30 October 1993.

The 1994-1995 annual report of the department reports on consultancies engaged in that year when the cost of engagement exceeded $50 000.

The following table covers consultancies engaged by the Office of Housing and the Resources Division, which serviced the whole Department of Planning and Development. It supplements information available in the annual reports and details consultancies costing less than $50 000 engaged since 1 July 1994 and all consultancies engaged between 1 July and 23 November 1995.

It does not include the large number of technical consultancies engaged in relation to specific building and development projects undertaken by the Office of Housing.

If the honourable member seeks specific details in respect of a particular consultancy, I will be happy to provide it.

Consultant	Project	Cost $
Lewis & Coleman Services	Housing assistance planning services to the inner urban region for 94-95.	32 250
Aldbourne Associates	Undertake a series of CHP consultations in Melbourne and rural Victoria and develop a Victorian community housing plan	35 850
KPMG	Preliminary investigation of the data integrity of the department's property and tenancy systems	16 500
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu	Technical service review	31 279
AGB McNair	Conduct of pilot customer satisfaction focus group	2 870
BEF Consulting Pty Ltd	Design, develop and document the Home Finance Division asset cash flow model	19 200
KPMG	Preparation of property services business plan	22 666

David Caple & Associates	CAD workstation review	500
National Security Education	Internal audit investigation	41 497
Price Waterhouse	Review FBT liability	4 500
Towers Perrin	Actuarial assessment of superannuation liability of Office of Housing	5 130
GBL Consulting	Separation of tenancy and property management functions (ongoing — cost indicates payments to November 1995)	9 752
Neville Barwick Associates	Research, develop and document a proposal for the future management of rental housing associations as part of the community housing sector	65 696
Systems Intellect	Review of the expenditure limits for acquisition of public housing (stage 1 component)	65 000

Directorate of School Education: contracts

(Question No. 305)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Education:

(a) What functions performed within the Directorate of School Education prior to 3 October 1992 are now performed on a contract basis?

(b) How many contract arrangements are currently engaged, indicating in relation to each arrangement the — (i) worth of each contract; (ii) organisation engaged; (iii) total cost; (iv) performance measures; and (v) period of contract?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Education is:

(a) The functions which were performed within the Directorate of School Education prior to 3 October 1992 and are now performed on a contract basis are:

cleaning of schools
conference organisation
curriculum development[1]
financial audits of schools[2]
fleet management
insurance and risk management
legal and legislative services
materials preparation and distribution
occupational health and safety support to schools
various information technology functions
Workcover minor claims administration

[1]In some parts only.

[2]Some secondary school audits were undertaken on a contract basis prior to October 1992.

(b) It is believed that information on (i) worth of each contract and (iii) total cost (of each contract) would be in breach of commercial confidentiality and cannot therefore be released. Performance measures (iv) are specific to each contract arrangement. The information requested would represent an inordinate amount of time and resources which are not available. Information on (ii) the organisation engaged and (v) period of contract is set out below.

(Information referred to in answer (6 pages) has been supplied to honourable member and copy tabled in parliamentary library.)

Youth and Community Services: staff

(Question No. 317)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Youth and Community Services:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Youth and Community Services is:

Departmental staff are not grouped by ministerial responsibility. Total departmental staffing levels are included in the reply for the Minister for Health (question 157) as the senior minister for the department.

Grants are made available under my authority to a number of non-government agencies. However, as these agencies are generally not included under the public sector classification by the Public Service Commissioner the department does not monitor their staffing levels. These agencies receive funding from many sources and therefore it would be inappropriate to include them in public sector statistics.

Health: staff

(Question No. 318)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

The staffing levels, expressed in equivalent full-time (EFT) terms, include departmental employees and staff in public hospitals and other health agencies in receipt of grants from the then Department of Health and Community Services. Departmental staff provide services to all areas of the department and cannot be directly allocated to individual ministers.

A number of public hospitals provide a range of services — for example, acute care, aged care, mental health. An accurate disaggregation of staff between these services is not accessible from the consolidated payroll reports available to the department.

Financial Year*	Departmental Staff (EFT)	External Agency Staff (EFT)	Total Staff (EFT)
July 1992	14 124	57 310	71 434
1992-3*	12 546	52 341	64 887
1993-4*	12 007	50 214	62 221
1994-5*	11 919	50 286	62 205

* as at 30 June in each year

Notes:

The data for 1994-5 includes 1573 staff from the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, which was transferred from the Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs to state administration from January 1995.

External agency data includes 1500 EFT at 1 July 1992 employed by public hospitals under section 97 of the Mental Health Act. The number included at June 1995 is 1651.

Housing: staff

(Question No. 323)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Housing:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within her administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Housing is:

For the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 the Office of Housing was part of the then Department of Planning and Development and staffing statistics were reported under that department. Under the machinery-of-government changes in April, 1996 the Office of Housing became part of the Department of Human Services. Staff transferred to the new department included central resources staff not previously included as part of the Office of Housing. Therefore, the staff levels reported are based on the current definition of the Office of Housing and include an estimate for the central resources staff previously reported under the Department of Planning and Development.

Financial Year*	Staffing levels (EFT)
1992-3	1435
1993-4	1298
1994-5	1162

* as at 30 June in each year

Aboriginal Affairs: staff

(Question No. 324)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Health, for the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer supplied by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is:

The staffing levels, expressed in equivalent full time (EFT) terms, are for the Aboriginal Affairs Program in the then Department of Health and Community Services. These levels are also included in the reply to question 318.

Financial Year*	Staffing levels (EFT)
1992-3	37.27
1993-4	36.54
1994-5	36.27

* as at 30 June in each year

Aged Care: staff

(Question No. 331)

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS asked the Minister for Aged Care:

In respect of each department, agency and authority within his administration, what are the details relating to staffing levels for the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Aged Care) — The answer is:

The majority of the staff within my administration are employed in public hospitals and aged care centres providing aged care, palliative, rehabilitation and geriatric services. Consolidated payroll budget reports for these agencies do not provide a dissection of staff across programs.

The Department of Human Services and previously the Department of Health and Community Services operates on the basis of a fully integrated structure. Staff therefore cannot be grouped under ministerial responsibility. Total departmental staffing levels including public hospitals and other agencies are included in the reply for the Minister for Health (question no. 157) as the senior minister for the department.

Staff employed by non-public sector agencies — in receipt of grants from the department — for example, local government receiving home and community care grants are not included. The department does not collect information on staffing levels from these agencies as in most instances the grants made form only part of the income of the agencies.

Human Services: department head

(Question No. 347)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

(a) What is the total cost to government of the salary package of the Secretary to the Department of Human Services?

(b) What maximum salary bonus is payable to him?

(c) How much salary bonus has accrued to the secretary which is not yet payable but has been recorded as part of the bonus payable in the future?

(d) How much salary bonus has accrued to the former secretary, Dr J. Paterson?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

The total remuneration package for the secretary is $220 000 per annum. This amount includes provision for the employer contribution to superannuation and the cost of access to a government vehicle.

Contracted executive officers are eligible for a performance-related incentive payment of up to 20 per cent of their total remuneration package amount, assessed annually. The incentive payment is payable only if the executive completed the contract term or is terminated.

Information relating to executive performance assessments is regarded as personal and confidential to the individual concerned. It is therefore not considered appropriate to disclose the amount of incentive payment accrued by the secretary or former secretary.

The Department of Human Services annual report will contain information, as required under part 7 of the Financial Management Act 1994, on the total annual remuneration paid to the accountable officer during the 1995-96 financial year. This information will include the former secretary.

Hospitals: nursing staff

(Question No. 368)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

What total number of nursing staff were employed in the Victorian public hospital system in each of the years from 1990-91 to 1995-96, indicating in each year, what percentage of nursing staff were full-time, part-time, casual or agency staff, respectively?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

	YEAR											
	1990/91		1991/92		1992/93		1993/94		1994/95		1995/96	
Nursing (Labour Category)	EFT	%	EFT	%	EFT	%	EFT	%	EFT	%	EFT	%
Full-time or Part-time	21,727.66	98.57	21,172.89	97.84	19,138.88	97.89	18,448.56	96.99	18,619.92	97.52	18,904.11	97.0
Casual or Agency	314.19	1.43	467.54	2.16	414.45	2.11	571.60	3.01	473.45	2.48	577.77	2.9
TOTAL NO. OF NURSES:	22,041.85	100.00	21,640.23	100.00	19,553.31	100.00	19,020.16	100.00	19,093.37	100.00	19,481.88	100.0

Notes:

1. The above data is equivalent full time staff as at 30 June in each year, not the average number of staff employed during the year (Data includes SEN's and RN's). It also includes nursing homes and aged care centres which are included in the consolidated payroll reports for public hospitals.

2. Data on split between full-time/part-time staff is not available from the consolidated reports available to the Department.

3. "Nurses - Casual or Agency" comprises those staff paid under Award 44 - Nurse Bank and Award 45 - Agency Nurses.

4. 1994/95 and 1995/96 data includes nursing staff of the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital which was transferred from Commonwealth to State administration from January, 1995. 1995/96 data includes nursing staff who transferred to public hospital employment as part of the mainstreaming of Mental Health Services from 1 July 1995 and who are included in the total public hospital employment figures.

5. Mental Health Services staff employed by hospitals under Section 97 of the Mental Health Act but who have elected to maintain their status as public servants are excluded from the above table. A breakdown of these staff by labour category is not available for the years prior to 1995/96.

Hospitals: staffing levels

(Question No. 369)

Hon. M. M. GOULD asked the Minister for Health:

In each of the years from 1990-91 to 1995-96 what total number of — (i) catering staff; (ii) cleaning staff; and (iii) all other allied health workers, were employed in the Victorian public hospital system, indicating in each year what percentage of the staff were full-time, part-time, casual or agency staff, respectively?

Hon. R. I. KNOWLES (Minister for Health) — The answer is:

The following data has been extracted from the consolidated payroll budget reports available to the department and reflects the classifications by hospitals for salary purposes. The data includes nursing homes and aged care centres which are included in the consolidated payroll reports for public hospitals.

The staffing figures, in equivalent full-time numbers, are as follows:

Staff category	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Cleaning	1798	1611	1243	1126	1148	1031
Catering	6933	6480	5128	4580	4325	4023
Other	5287	4893	3942	3740	3681	3765
	14 018	12 984	10 313	9446	9154	8819

Note:

The June 1996 figures include some 271 staff transferred from the commonwealth in January 1995 when the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital was transferred to the state.

Since October 1992 most of the services provided under the Mental Health Act have been mainstreamed into the state public hospitals. In total some 3651 EFT staff transferred with these services. However, 2305 EFT of these staff elected to maintain their status as public servants under section 97 of the Mental Health Act. The catering, cleaning and other allied staff who are still public servants have been excluded from the above table for comparative purposes. However, the table includes those mental health staff employed under public hospital awards.