



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, PUBLIC WORKS AND
TERRITORY AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES**

(Reference: [Annual and financial reports 2009-2010](#))

Members:

MS M PORTER (The Chair)
MS C LE COUTEUR (The Deputy Chair)
MR A COE

TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

FRIDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2010

Secretary to the committee:
Mrs N Kosseck (Ph: 6205 0435)

By authority of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Submissions, answers to questions on notice and other documents, including requests for clarification of the transcript of evidence, relevant to this inquiry that have been authorised for publication by the committee may be obtained from the Legislative Assembly website.

APPEARANCES

Department of Territory and Municipal Services	112
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Amended 21 January 2009

The committee met at 2 pm.

Appearances:

Barr, Mr Andrew, Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Planning, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation and Minister for Gaming and Racing

Department of Territory and Municipal Services

Byles, Mr Gary, Chief Executive

Kelley, Ms Rebecca, Deputy Director, Sport and Recreation Services, Territory Services Division

Perram, Mr Phillip, Executive Director, Territory Services Division

Marsalek, Mr Michael, Business Manager, Territory Venues and Events, Territory Services Division

O'Leary, Mr Shane, Director, Sport and Recreation Services, Territory Services Division

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much for appearing at the public hearing of the Standing Committee on Planning, Public Works, Territory and Municipal Services inquiry into annual and financial reports 2009-2010 for Sport and Recreation Services and Territory Venues and Events. You are all familiar with the privileges card? Please indicate that you have no problems with that.

Mr Barr: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Minister, would you like to make some opening remarks?

Mr Barr: Thank you for the opportunity to appear today. I thought I would briefly run through some of the key highlights for Sport and Recreation Services for the 2009-10 annual reporting period. A \$2.2 million grants program was successfully managed; a \$450,000 national league team funding program, with new performance agreements with the ACT Brumbies and the Canberra Raiders; the implementation of a 60-place Australian school-based apprenticeship program for the sport and recreation industry over the next four years; an agreement with the Australian Olympic Committee which accredits ACTAS as an endorsed Olympic training centre; the successful delivery of the economic contribution study for the sport and recreation industry; continuation of the partnership with ACT Health and the Heart Foundation around active play and appropriate eating for children aged zero to five years; and a continuation of the non-potable water solutions for the priority sportsgrounds program, not least of which being a number of stormwater harvesting programs at the Hawker enclosed oval. It has been a significant year of achievement in Sport and Recreation Services.

I would like, at the outset, to take the opportunity to congratulate staff within that area of the department who have worked diligently to deliver some very good, long-term outcomes for community and elite sport in the territory. With that, Madam Chair, I look forward to your questions.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. I have one question and then I will go to

members. You mentioned the non-potable water solutions, which is mentioned at page 45 of the report. Could you tell the committee a little more about these solutions and where they have been applied?

Mr Barr: Members would be aware that in times past, when it did not rain as much in the city, we were confronting stage 4 water restrictions. We went through a major exercise of looking at all sport and recreation facilities in the territory to establish a priority system to ensure that, if we did move to stage 4 restrictions, we would be able to maintain a level of community-based sport and recreation.

We backed this strategy, which was entitled “where will we play?”, with a significant capital investment and dedicated a number of ongoing grants rounds to projects that ranged in size from on-site water tank installation at the Belconnen bowling club—and I know you are familiar with it; it is just around the corner from where you live, Madam Chair—to significant projects in the order of \$2 million in partnership with Capital Football, which, again, is not far from where you live. That is not to say that was the only factor. There were, indeed, other projects that were supported around the city that varied in size from small grants in the order of \$5,000, \$10,000, \$15,000 right up to \$2 million projects.

In addition, a number of studies were undertaken around much larger and long-term projects to use non-potable water sources for the better irrigation of large tracts of playing fields. I think the most significant project relates to the Tuggeranong Valley, about 26 hectares of sportsgrounds to be utilised through stormwater harvesting and another non-potable water source program that would access water from Lake Tuggeranong. We were also able to reconnect facilities associated with the Gordon district playing fields and the ponds there.

It has been an extensive program. I think Rebecca wants to talk about a couple of those aspects in Tuggeranong. That has been the big project. Committee members may be familiar with the North Canberra recycled water program that waters facilities like Reid, Braddon and extends up through the inner north. It is a similar-sized project that we are looking at for Tuggeranong.

Ms Kelley: As the minister mentioned, that project that we are developing at Lake Tuggeranong is part of the Canberra integrated waterways scheme and valued at approximately \$14 million. It encompasses a reticulation network that links Lake Tuggeranong with a staged approach to look at a non-potable supply to the key district playing fields within Tuggeranong and the south Canberra area. Within stage 1 we would be looking at the Kambah district playing fields and the Wanniasa district playing fields, with the potential in stage 2 of moving into Calwell.

The significant work that is attached to that is not only the reticulation work but also that pump and tank and filtration infrastructure at each of the end points to ensure irrigation uniformity and also that we are able to supply that water on site at the appropriate times to enable community usage. Where we are at with that project is that it is in its final stage of the draft feasibility report, so we are looking at working through a number of outstanding issues in relation to that report with a view that we start to look at the design of the pump and tank infrastructure early next year so we can get expenditure happening on further development of the project.

MR DOSZPOT: What sort of completion date do you have for that?

Ms Kelley: At this point in time we are looking at construction commencement in September-October next year. The tank-pump infrastructure would be the initial rollout of that program at this stage.

MR DOSZPOT: February of the following year?

Ms Kelley: February next year.

MS LE COUTEUR: Page 45 talks about synthetic grass. You have obviously installed it in a number of locations. Can you tell us a bit more about the performance of the surface? Is it as good as you thought it was going to be? Has it saved the amount of water you expected it to? How does it go financially?

Mr Barr: The feedback from the user groups is very positive. I am not one to cite advertising campaigns for other products, but I am sure you are familiar with the “I can’t believe it’s not butter” campaign. Some of these synthetic surfaces are of a quality that you cannot believe it is not grass, it is so similar in look and feel.

We now have the third generation of synthetic surfaces, which are the types we have been utilising in the ACT, both for community sport projects, for example Hawker enclosed, and the schooling system—for example, Kingsford Smith or the new facility that is a joint campus project between Holy Spirit and Gold Creek in Nicholls. They are all examples of this sort of technology. Having had personal experience of having played a game or two on these facilities, from a user’s perspective they are very good. I will need to throw to someone else for the detail around the water savings, though.

Mr Perram: If I could follow the line of popularity of use, after the opening of the synthetic field at Nicholls, there were more people on that field casually over that weekend and subsequent periods because of the synthetic grass. The structure of the synthetic grass as we put it in is that there is a childproof fence around it, so there is absolute protection particularly for younger children, and what we found was that people were using it as a picnic area because of the safety and no risk at all from thistles or weeds, particularly for babies and young children. It has been inordinately successful in that regard. Rebecca is probably best to discuss the water consumption.

Ms Kelley: The feedback we have had from Capital Football at this stage is that there is minimal water application other than some grooming of the surface that has to be undertaken, but other than that they have saved almost their entire water application that would otherwise have been expended on the turf. Feedback from the players has added value to that financial saving in the sense that they have had glowing feedback from participants about the playability of the field, the ball movement and those sorts of things, and many prefer it to the turf surfaces. There are now some interesting challenges we are having in terms of scheduling the field.

MR COE: I have heard some feedback about some players being worried about whether five or 10 years of use will cause serious strains on knees and other joints. Is there much by way of research to support that?

Ms Kelley: Victoria have undertaken a significant amount of research in relation to the synthetic surfaces, and the general finding of that research is that incidence of injury is not any different to any other turf surface. In fact, the hardened surfaces that we have seen come out of the drought restrictions are the surfaces where injury incidence has increased. There is probably not too much difference in terms of normal turf surfaces opposed to synthetic, that we are aware of.

MS LE COUTEUR: Are there issues in terms of summer versus winter, in terms of the playability? Does it overheat more in summer than a living grass, which transpires?

Ms Kelley: There are some reported temperature increases on the synthetic, but from other states figures. We have not had it in play long enough in the ACT to have any significant evaluation of our own, to answer your question. In Victoria, the heat rises that have been reported are minimal and have not had any impact on participation.

MS LE COUTEUR: You said there were water savings, and presumably that is a financial saving, and there will be other financial savings with maintenance. How do the financial savings compare with the cost of establishing the artificial turf? Is that greater than the cost of establishing real turf?

Mr Barr: It would depend on the quality of the playing surface. For example, maintaining grass on, say, Canberra Stadium is expensive for that level of utilisation. It is possibly a question we could take on notice if you want a quite detailed breakdown of the different costs of establishing with different grass types. Suffice it to say that as a general rule there are higher upfront costs with a synthetic surface but then the recurrent costs are less. Obviously you do not have to mow a synthetic surface, for example.

MS LE COUTEUR: If you have that information, that would be interesting. Again you might be looking at other people's experience, but what impact does this actually have on the ecology of the soil underneath and stormwater impact? Is the water draining below or draining off? Do we have dead soil underneath? What is happening under there?

Ms Kelley: Significant work goes into that before there are the layers of the rubber absorption and the grass carpet, as they call it. The profile is engaged to cope with that soil drainage. In terms of ecological impact on any organisms and things within the soil, we would need to take that on notice. Interstate experience is that they have not had significant drainage issues. In fact some states, where there is appropriate gradient and profile, have actually put stormwater harvesting beneath the surface in order to catch some of the rainwater. That is something we would be looking at in the ACT as some sites, depending on the gradient and appropriate ability to capture the water.

MR DOSZPOT: I am interested in the actual community usage of areas that have synthetic grass. If these are fenced-in areas, are people from the community able to use them? Are they allowed to get over the fence and use them or is it only on special days?

Mr Barr: It would depend on the nature of the synthetic facility. The high-end ones that are for elite sport will be largely utilised so they will not get much access to them. I do not think Capital Football was having picnics on the Hawker one, but the facilities at schools are—

MR DOSZPOT: Hawker is enclosed. I do understand that. I am talking about the ones that are more accessible to the public.

Mr Barr: Yes, they are accessible. The fencing normally is there to prevent, for example, motor vehicle access so they are not doing burnouts. Yes, they are there and open for use. Sometimes the size of the synthetic surface varies, obviously, depending on whether, like at Gold Creek, there are two ovals next to each other. It is a very large facility. There are other synthetic surfaces in schools that are much smaller and so lend themselves to more informal rather than formal sporting activity.

MR DOSZPOT: My question is actually based on some inquiries we have had from the community about areas where schools are fenced off and they cannot get access to some of the activities in their—

Mr Barr: That is right. Indeed, I am familiar with that.

Mr Perram: I think we could say as a general rule that if it is in the control of sport and recreation it is available to the public as well as the schools. If it is in the purview of the school itself, it is normally enclosed so that there is limited access.

MR DOSZPOT: Sure, and I do understand that Hawker oval is fully enclosed so you would not have general public access to it.

Mr Perram: That is exactly right; whereas the one, for example, that the minister was talking about at Nicholls is used during the weekends. Over this winter it will be used for soccer as well because it is on sport and recreation ground and there is access from the other fields that are co-located.

MR COE: It is not necessarily clear, is it, whether they are sport and rec grounds or DET grounds?

Mr Barr: No, that is right. It can vary. There are some historical associations with schools.

MR COE: Yes, and maybe some signage might help.

Mr Barr: Yes, I appreciate that. I think in the end the signage will be more relevant around what accessibility there is rather than which department—

MR COE: No, it could say, “Public welcome” or something like that.

Mr Barr: Yes.

MR COE: I have got a question about the national elite team funding, but just before that, I understand that at the Harrison fields there are some club rooms. Who is going

to have control of those club rooms? I understand there might be some discussion about who is going to have access to them all year round and whether they will have to be shared between various clubs. Are you able to give an update as to where we are at with that?

Mr Barr: That project was delivered in partnership with ACT Cricket, which received a grant from Cricket New South Wales as part of a regional grants policy for that sporting body. It is going to be the home base for cricket in Gungahlin, so first usage rights, I suppose, go with ACT Cricket. But, of course, it is an accommodating sporting organisation which is happy to share facilities in the off season.

MR COE: So is cricket going to have exclusive access for 52 weeks a year or is it going to be shared with the soccer club and perhaps others?

Ms Kelley: The facility itself still falls within the assets of Sport and Recreation Services through our booking system. So that booking system will still apply to Harrison park. There has been great interest from soccer or football for usage in the non-cricket season. That is the sharing arrangement. We would be looking at it being primarily cricket during the summer period, with junior soccer applications for the winter period.

MR COE: The minister mentioned that there was some Cricket New South Wales funding. Is that arrangement going to be consistent with the terms of that funding?

Ms Kelley: Yes, it will be.

THE CHAIR: Before you go on to AFL and before we leave fields, I want to ask about the redevelopment of the Lyneham precinct and how that is going. It is flagged in the future directions paper on page 46.

Mr Barr: The first stage of that is now underway, so there is a lot of dirt being pushed around. You see a lot of engineering work going on there. That is a three-phase project. There are engineering works and there are works associated with netball and with the tennis centre that have been the subject of various grants through the budget process in the past few years. That precinct is the culmination of quite some years of master planning, I think going back to 2004, and then it started receiving budget allocations for the different phases of work from the 2008 budget, from memory. Rebecca, would you like to give an update on that work?

Ms Kelley: Certainly. The stage 1 works that the minister has just spoken of are very well progressed. Within that we have looked at tree removal and the stormwater works on that western side of the precinct. We are looking at the culvert and the coverage before moving on to, I guess, the remedial roadworks once the works are completed. That would include the additional car parking within that site closest to the hockey centre before it moves on. The works are on schedule. As the minister said, we will incorporate it into the netball side of the precinct in due course.

THE CHAIR: You say that it is on schedule. What is the estimated completion date?

Mr Barr: For stage 1 or all stages?

THE CHAIR: No, for the whole kit and caboodle.

Mr Barr: It is a number of years away.

THE CHAIR: A number of years.

Ms Kelley: It will be dependent on our future tender for construction processes. Those sorts of procurements still need to occur.

THE CHAIR: It is obviously a long-term project.

Mr Barr: Yes.

MR COE: On page 45 there is reference to the national elite team funding program. I was wondering how the commitment to GWS will affect that, if at all.

Mr Barr: No, it is not related at all. The Raiders, Brumbies, GWS partnerships are a quantum way above what is in that national elite team program. They are separate. We made a decision a couple of years ago to take the Raiders and Brumbies out of that.

MR COE: Sure. I do note they are not listed as recipients in—

Mr Barr: That program is unaffected by any other arrangements with other sporting organisations.

THE CHAIR: Mr Doszpot, do you have some questions?

MR DOSZPOT: Yes, thank you. Minister, can you tell us how negotiations with Sports House for the leasehold are going?

Mr Barr: Negotiations for the lease of Sports House?

MR DOSZPOT: Has there been an outcome regarding negotiations with ACTSport regarding lease terms?

Mr Perram: I do not have any update on that one, I am afraid.

Mr Barr: We can take that on notice.

MR RATTENBURY: I note on page 46 a reference to renegotiation of the performance agreements with the Brumbies and the Raiders. Are you able to tell us whether there are any significant changes to those agreements from the earlier versions that we might be interested in?

Mr Barr: Yes, there were notable and significant increases in funding for both teams and the length of the agreements. Obviously, they are much longer than was negotiated previously. The Raiders is a 10-year agreement, and the Brumbies, at their request, a six-year agreement. The reason for that is that it reflected their expectations

of further changes in the super rugby competition. They were content to pursue a six-year agreement.

There were elements of the agreements where the funding was indexed to inflation and various adjustments made. I issued press releases at the time. I am happy to provide that information again, if you would like. If your office is listening, all the details are on my website. It was reported on by the department. At the time, I recall there being a similar level of controversy, perhaps not quite as much as with the AFL, in relation to locking in long-term deals.

There are always some members of the community who do not believe in any government support for sport or any government support for elite sport. I acknowledge that. I disagree but I recognise that there is that element, and that view is a legitimate one to hold.

MS LE COUTEUR: Given that the Brumbies have not done the development they were looking to do at their current site, is there scope for the agreement to be renegotiated? What impact will this have?

Mr Barr: They are entirely separate matters. The performance agreement relates to matches at Canberra Stadium and various sponsorship arrangements. It is not related to their land assets.

MS LE COUTEUR: There will not be any increase in funding in any way, given their planned development has not proceeded as they had initially hoped?

Mr Barr: I suppose that is a matter, in terms of their future redevelopment prospects, that will be brought back to the Assembly. As I am sure you are aware, ACTPLA recommended against a territory plan variation in relation to Griffith oval.

MS LE COUTEUR: That is basically what I am referring to.

Mr Barr: It has supported a territory plan variation in relation to the former South Canberra Bowling Club. Whether we will be bringing forward such a variation is another matter. We need to separate the issue of the Brumbies' training base and their headquarters from their performance agreement to play at Canberra Stadium and the various sponsorship elements and community participation requirements that come with that performance agreement.

MR RATTENBURY: On the question of forward planning, the segues are there. I was interested in the Crawford report which came out some months ago. In light of that report, could you give us your views or analysis of what impact that is going to have for ACT sport?

Mr Barr: At a national level, the debate has stalled somewhat in the context of the federal election campaign and changes in ministers. We have, I understand, a sports ministers council meeting scheduled for February of next year in Adelaide.

The other overarching factor is that the COAG review of ministerial councils appears to have abolished the sports ministers council. We can continue to meet as sports

ministers but the number of ministerial councils has been significantly rationalised from 50-odd, or 48, to about 11 or 12. That does not necessarily mean that sports ministers will not gather but it will not be under the COAG umbrella, I suspect.

COAG has to finally sign off on that but that is the recommendation that will be put forward. It will curtail the number of ministerial councils. I suppose, from the perspective of being on eight or nine of them, I am not so fussed about there being slightly fewer but we will progress some of those discussions around Crawford in February. Unless anyone else has anything they could usefully add, that is where it is.

Mr O’Leary: As the minister said, there is no doubt that, as a result of a meeting with the Australian Sports Commission earlier this week, the February ministerial council meeting is the date to reignite considerations in relation to the Crawford report. The fact that there has been a disruption due to the federal election is the reason they are putting it forward at this time.

MR DOSZPOT: Do you have any personal direction on the Crawford report?

Mr Barr: Not that I am sharing with the committee this afternoon. It is very kind of you to offer the soapbox but, no, I have said all I am going to say on the Crawford report.

MR DOSZPOT: Is there a media release coming out?

Mr Barr: It is already on the public record from when the report first came out.

THE CHAIR: On that same subject, the Crawford report talks about the business review of ACTAS which was completed in 2009. Would you like to talk about where that has gone?

Mr Barr: I am happy for Rebecca to respond.

Ms Kelley: Certainly. The business review of ACTAS really focused on a review of internal operations and the structure that was in-house in order to optimise and stretch the resources we had available for the servicing of our high-performance athletes. ACTAS currently has 143 scholarship holders. There is still quite a bulk of athletes. You will be familiar with the fact that we had six medallists at the Games amongst that mix. That is the calibre of those athletes. On the maintaining of accreditation with ACTAS as a training centre and on the sports science and physical preparation side of things, the review was critical to make sure we had the resources in place.

The key recommendations out of that looked at the review of our physical preparation team and how that was best placed in terms of bringing together the sports science components of the academy. That includes our nutritional services, our psychological services and our strength and conditioning services. There has been quite a lot of work into streamlining that group of staff within the structure and, thereby, our services have been streamlined.

We have looked at the record keeping and, I guess, the data management we have with respect to each of those athletes. We have a new athlete lodging database in

place that really is a tracking mechanism that utilises the most modern communication methods for our athletes. Anyone within the ACTAS staff can log into that and update information pertaining to each athlete and can communicate by text messages and those sorts of things.

The review looked at the marketing of ACTAS and how it is placed. The key finding was that we do need to have some greater commercial outcomes for ACTAS, whether that be sponsorship or different agreements developed with national sporting organisations. A couple of successful arrangements have come out since the review was completed. One of those is with Netball ACT. Instead of having a set ACTAS program like we have had in the past, we now have a commercial servicing agreement for netball so that they maintain their own sport-specific program and they have a fee-for-service arrangement with ACTAS for the delivery of their gym work, their agility work and other specific things that they utilise on the field.

The final component was really about culture and how ACTAS see themselves. It is an issue that a lot of institutes and academies have. Some of them sit outside government. Some of them sit within government. For ACTAS to operate effectively, they needed to have a better integration with Sport and Recreation Services. We have certainly achieved that. That is through sharing of our marketing resources and website. We have that shared across head office of Sport and Recreation Services, the CIT location of the ACTAS head office and the gym at Lyneham.

All in all, it has been a successful review. We are continuing to work on the action plan as it relates to those specific areas.

MS LE COUTEUR: The report refers to a study to look at the long-term site options for the Civic Olympic pool. What are the government's objectives in looking at the options and—

Mr Barr: In relation to Civic?

MS LE COUTEUR: Yes. You mention studying the long-term site options for the Olympic pool.

Mr Barr: We are looking at a couple of elements really. Obviously the infrastructure there is ageing—

MS LE COUTEUR: Yes. I can remember it as a child.

Mr Barr: Yes, and in need of some renewal. In recent times, of course, what was famously known as the “Duby dome” was replaced. I am not going to claim ownership of the new dome; I do not think it needs to be “Barr dome”. We are looking at long-term aquatic needs for the city, with an anticipated increased residential population within the CBD itself, but then also looking at a holistic approach to swimming facilities in the territory around a major facility that would effectively be our state swimming centre, a territory swimming centre—looking at what competition requirements might be et cetera. Suters have been doing that work for us and I know it is well advanced, with an expectation of a final report in the very near future.

Mr Perram: It is later this year, hopefully. There are two components. The first one is the Suters report on this; also Suters are doing the full aquatic study related to the ACT, to marry in the amount of water, as the minister was saying, related to what should be in Civic.

MS LE COUTEUR: That will be looking, from what you are saying, at all the pools? One of my supplementaries was going to be: where are we up to with Gungahlin? That is part of this.

Mr Barr: In relation to Gungahlin, early in the new year—I have decided after Australia Day—we will go out with options to the community; effectively the two options for that centre. I think it is best to wait until after that holiday period rather than try to start a consultation in the middle of school holidays. I acknowledge that people would have issue with that if we were to start in January or to do anything immediately before Christmas. So in late January, early February of next year we will put forward some options for Gungahlin.

We have in terms of the aquatic study and thinking of the territory of course indicated a desire for a facility in the Molonglo Valley and will look at that; I imagine 2012-13 would be the time frame for that. There remains an issue in relation to year-round access in the Woden Valley south area. That has certainly been raised by Swimming ACT, amongst Woden Valley Community Council and amongst other stakeholders. There is an issue there about what might be an appropriate solution in relation to Phillip pool. There are a range of options, obviously the cheapest of which would be to have a dome similar to the Civic pool placed over the existing Phillip pool. We know you can do that for about \$2 million. A more substantive redevelopment starts to push that price tag into the tens if not twenties of millions of dollars.

The Woden Valley Community Council have identified a potential site for a new facility adjacent to Edison Park. That would certainly require a public-private partnership and effectively rezoning the existing pool site. You would have to package up some sort of deal with a developer to achieve that sort of outcome. So, once this territory-wide review is complete, once we get an answer on Civic and Gungahlin, when that is resolved, the nature of the facility at Molonglo and its perhaps even potential incorporation into Stromlo Forest Park and then Woden—they are the areas we will be focusing on most specifically.

The refurbishment of the Lakeside Leisure Centre in Tuggeranong and the extra lanes added at Erindale certainly have in the last few years upgraded facilities in the Tuggeranong Valley, and obviously CISAC is relatively new in Belconnen as well.

MS LE COUTEUR: Will this review be public?

Mr Barr: Yes. All of the key stakeholders—Swimming ACT, the Royal Lifesaving Society and the various people who have an interest in swimming at a territory-wide level and distribution of facilities—have been involved and, yes, it will of course be a public process and will continue to be.

MR RATTENBURY: Is there any intent to relocate the Civic pool? Is that part of the

study?

Mr Barr: Not so much in relation to the swimming study but there are clearly other studies and other organisations that are eyeing off that site. I think of the Australia forum, for example. So that will obviously have to come into consideration once all of the information is on the table. But perhaps it starts to move more into the planning portfolio than directly into sport and recreation.

There are a couple of things I would say: firstly, there will be a requirement for a major swimming facility in the CBD, so if it is not on the existing site we would have to find an alternative site within close proximity to the CBD. There are a number of different sites being considered for the Australia forum but it at this stage is not a well-developed concept but it is a concept. It is not as if they are lodging development applications and are ready to construct it. It will clearly require a commitment from the federal government and a significant commitment from the private sector. So we have to continue our work on aquatic facilities and recognise that that existing site would be the obvious location for a facility but have some other options in case it ends up being the preferred site for Australia forum and if that project gets the green light.

MR RATTENBURY: Do the terms of reference for what is currently underway include seeking alternative sites?

Mr Barr: It certainly looks at that range of options, but the primary focus is on what is possible on that existing site.

MR COE: I have a question about the technical amendment to Crace and Casey, also Kingston—in particular the removal of sports fields. What communication have sport and rec had with ACTPLA?

Mr Barr: Sport and rec initiated the—

MR COE: regarding—

Mr Barr: It is a sport and recreation initiative.

MR COE: I would like you to explain that process.

Mr Barr: Sure. Who would like to talk about community recreation irrigated parks? We have talked about this before over a number of years. Let us resume this conversation.

Ms Kelley: The concept of the community recreation irrigated parks really has, as the minister alluded to, been the culmination of years of discussion within the sporting industry, and our tracking of usage rates within our sports bookings database shows a trend of lower usage of our singular neighbourhood ovals, which are typically about 2.5 hectares in size. They fit as part of a model of sportsground provision that we have in the ACT, starting with our large district playing fields which are typically around 10 hectares in size, the enclosed ovals which are our premier competition sites and then the neighbourhood ovals. That combines with the provision of school ovals and

the like.

The neighbourhood ovals, as you would be aware, through our water restrictions process and things along the way, ranked as the lower priority asset; so they are the ones that have been turned off in the past to meet those restrictions due to the fact that the feedback from sporting interests has told us they are a lower priority. This stems from changing trends within the sports industry. The larger district playing fields have far better efficiencies for the delivery of community sport through the application of resources, with condensed hands on the ground, with parents just having to go to one site rather than drive to various venues each weekend. There are a plethora of reasons why district playing fields are preferred by our industry.

We also were aware that within that model those sportsground provisions do provide for organised sport and, within the realm of sport, active recreation. It is often the active recreation side of things that does not have the specific facility provisions, so that is where the concept of the community irrigated park and the associated amenities started to develop.

So what we are talking about there with CRIP, which is the acronym, is still a flat space of green irrigated space but really not at the 2.5-hectare level; it is really at the one-hectare level. It would still provide for the informal application of sport—junior run-arounds and a whole range of boot camps and fitness applications—but it is also having a far greater outcome for communities because it is catering for that active recreation component, those people who do not necessarily want to engage in organised sport but like taking the kids down to be physically active and want to build that into their lifestyle. That is where the CRIP offers a whole range of amenities that we do not see at other sites, whether it be the half basketball courts, the cricket net combined with tennis hit-up walls and the playground, all in the one site adjacent to green irrigated flat space. That is something that we currently do not have in the ACT.

MR COE: When did this policy come about? When was the main crux of this work done?

Ms Kelley: I guess following on from 2008, stemming from our work on the drought and the associated work we had to do looking at the prioritisation of our sportsground assets and how we could look at that. And with the increase in water price we really had to look at the increased water bill and how we could gain greater sustainability around our sportsground assets. The CRIP also offers us, we anticipate, a halving of the normal maintenance for a ground.

MR COE: When was ACTPLA advised that this was the direction that should be taken with regard to Crace?

Ms Kelley: It was not ever a concept we said should be taken; it was very much a hand-holding thing with ACTPLA from the word go in terms of how could we get a better provision. The opportunity for Crace arose with the developer, CIC, when they first came to ACTPLA with the understanding that they had the remit to deliver a neighbourhood oval on site. That is when they came to us talking about the basic sportsground unit that has been rolled out in the past. We discussed with them the option of an alternative model to look at this grant of provision for active recreation.

They were very excited about it, given that it is a pilot, something new and something innovative, that they thought would be a fantastic addition to their development within Crace.

MR COE: When did CIC approach you?

Ms Kelley: I would have to get the date specifically for you, but it would have been in 2008 when we commenced the discussions.

MR COE: So if it was December 2008, it is more than two years since that communication. Has ACTPLA been sitting on this for two years, or did TAMS not give enough information to ACTPLA for it to actually make this call? Why has it taken this long, and how many people had to buy in Crace before they found out they were not going to be near a playing field?

Mr Barr: They are near a playing field, tennis hit-up wall, cricket practice nets, playgrounds—

MR COE: Community recreation irrigated parkland is not the same, is it?

Mr Barr: No, it is an enhancement of a neighbourhood oval. The green space is bigger, as I understand it, than Charnwood neighbourhood oval, and in addition it has all of these other facilities. I have tabled in the Assembly, I think twice now, the proposed facility for Crace.

This has to be the biggest political beat-up of a non-issue I have seen for some time. I cannot fathom how—or I can, because it has come from Brendan Smyth—an enhancement to sport and recreation facilities, how additional facilities, can be seen as a negative and how a suburb that has 25 per cent open space compared to some neighbouring suburbs that have seven per cent can be seen as a bad thing as well. I take my hat off to Mr Smyth for his capacity to raise a scare campaign, but he is wrong and when this facility is completed and when people see what will be provided I am very confident that it will be seen as a very good model for active sport and recreation enhancement. I think a lot of neighbourhood ovals would benefit from having these sorts of facilities associated with them, like somewhere to have a barbecue in the shade, like some playground equipment, like some additional sport and recreation facilities that accommodate a variety of different needs and can be used in an informal way rather than just simply thinking that sport and recreation facilities are only for organised sport. There is so much more that can occur at a community level.

MR COE: The 25 per cent footprint is only part of the story. The actual amount of open space, or the actual area of the playing field per resident, is also quite important. Would you please take on notice, given the projected population of Crace, and the existing population of Palmerston and the other neighbouring suburbs that you referred to, how much open space there is—

Mr Barr: We would be happy to compare it with the rollout of such facilities in suburbs over a period of time so that we can compare populations in new suburbs. You are really plucking things out. My favourite—

MR COE: Not just the suburbs, but the projected population—

Mr Barr: You would understand that suburbs go through life cycles. As I was going to say, my favourite example of a suburban life cycle is the suburb of Dickson. When it was established in 1971, it had about 3,300 residents; now it has about 2,100. The associated sport and recreation facilities that were established at that time, with a population of 3,300, would be equivalent to the sort of infrastructure provision we are talking about in Crace. You must recognise that over time there will be demographic change within a suburb. If we are going to do this comparison, we need to do peak population comparisons with suburbs historically as well, not just a snapshot—

MR COE: There are significant density issues as well. Dickson in 1971 is significantly different in density to what Crace will be, with apartments.

Mr Barr: The difference will be number of persons per household in Dickson in 1971—

MR COE: And the size of each dwelling is important.

Mr Barr: The dwellings will be larger in Crace because that is a trend in this city at the moment—we have fewer people in much larger properties. This is a planning debate that I am very happy to have, as you are aware—

MR COE: No—

THE CHAIR: Mr Coe, for Hansard we need you to talk one at a time. You are consistently talking over the minister when he is trying to answer questions. Can you let him answer the question and then you can follow up. We do need you to talk one at a time, for Hansard.

Mr Barr: If I can clarify the request, you would like a comparison of the amount of open space—open space or recreation space?

MR COE: The land covered by CRIP.

Mr Barr: So recreational space in Crace for anticipated population compared with other suburbs at their peak initial populations in other periods of Canberra history.

MR COE: That can be the starting point. You might like to be helpful first up and provide adequate information in the very first instance, and the world might then be a better place.

THE CHAIR: Mr Coe, we might just—

Mr Barr: I would seek you to clarify, for the benefit of the officials, exactly what you are asking.

MR COE: Very good.

THE CHAIR: Did you have another question? Mr Doszpot, do you have a supplementary?

MR RATTENBURY: I had not quite finished on swimming pools. Is now a good time to come back to it?

THE CHAIR: Yes.

MR RATTENBURY: It does not really matter. I am happy to leave it.

THE CHAIR: Mr Doszpot, where was your question—

MR DOSZPOT: I have a sort of related question. It is somewhat related.

Mr Barr: Somewhat related?

MR DOSZPOT: It is related to our discussions in estimates when we talked about the number of community sporting fields—the 41 community sporting fields—that were taken off-line, if you recall since 2002.

Mr Barr: Yes.

MR DOSZPOT: How many of those have been brought back on-line since our discussions in estimates?

Mr Barr: I will probably need to take that on notice. I recall there were about six that we were able to announce. I know Ngunnawal was one of them.

MR DOSZPOT: I am happy for you to take it on notice.

Mr Barr: We can do that. It perhaps leads into the next question, which I am sure is coming, in relation to what will then be the priority. I have asked sport and recreation to look at priorities for restoration of ovals now that water restrictions have been raised. I can advise the committee that the priorities will be for facilities associated with schools and in terms of the greatest distance to travel to an existing already watered field. Logic says you work through the process that way. Of course, we would resurface using more water efficient grass. Couch will be the—

MR DOSZPOT: That was my next question; thank you. Keep going; you are on a roll here.

Mr Barr: I will work my way through! Perhaps I can sum it all up by saying that common sense will apply in this program. Of course, there are budgetary implications associated with that but, in my view, the priorities should be fields associated with schools and the geographic distribution—those areas where people have the furthest to travel to an accessible field at the moment.

MR DOSZPOT: Thank you. I am impressed with your ESP.

THE CHAIR: Mr Rattenbury, we will go to your swimming pools question.

MR RATTENBURY: I notice on page 125 of volume 2 of the annual report, which is where some of the performance indicators are, that, once again, the satisfaction level with the pools was somewhat below target. It was about the same last year. The footnote in last year's annual report made specific mention of the ageing of the Canberra Olympic pool as detracting from the overall results. However, last year's annual report also stated that there had been quite some money spent on upgrading Civic pool. We do not see any commensurate increase in the customer satisfaction level this year. Are you able to give some insight into why it has not gone up or why the satisfaction level remains approximately where it was?

Ms Kelley: There is the feedback that we received through those satisfaction surveys through the CERM group that collect that data for us. They were looking at the validity of our samples and the level of satisfaction among the cross-section of the community or users that we might be capturing through that survey. Whilst we acknowledge that the satisfaction rates are as you note—the status quo—we are working with pool managers right across Dickson, Manuka, Tuggeranong and Civic to look at their distribution strategies and, I guess, intersect with the community or their users to get that greater feedback so that we might be getting a better reflection of satisfaction.

Notwithstanding your comments that investment in the pools should be correlating to a higher level of satisfaction, management is aware of that and is persisting to work on it. I guess there is not really a ready answer why we are not seeing that correlation at this point in time.

MR RATTENBURY: What is the nature of the dissatisfaction, if it is possible to answer that question?

Ms Kelley: A lot of the dissatisfaction that we have had related to some of the conditions of the amenities. That has been addressed with the management groups. We also had a fairly extensive pool audit undertaken. That raised a number of issues that have been addressed individually. They are, I guess, the regular maintenance routines that the management was undertaking. They range from amenity management right through to water quality and the gamut of things in between. We would be anticipating that in the next round of surveys we would, hopefully, be seeing a reduction in the amount of dissatisfaction.

MR RATTENBURY: I must confess my interest here is as a regular user of the Civic pool. The water quality does seem to be an ongoing and persistent point of complaint amongst quite a few users. Have measures been put in place to address that?

Ms Kelley: It is very timely that you ask that because we are actually having sand cleaning undertaken at the moment. Given the age and nature of the filtration system that is there at the moment, over the last six months we have been looking at what we can do about the water quality control there. We have had experts come up from Victoria to look at our filtration system. The very short answer is that it was dirty sand within the filtration system. To be, I guess, quite crude about it, that process of cleaning is being undertaken at the moment. We are anticipating that will solve the

issue, from all the advice that we have received. So stay tuned.

MR RATTENBURY: I look forward to the improvement.

THE CHAIR: Minister, I would like it if people could take a question on notice about the apprentices. I was just wondering about those 60 places—not exactly where everyone is but the different kinds of apprenticeships and whether these people are moving on or remaining with us. What is happening?

Mr Barr: I know that Sports Medicine Australia, the ACT branch, took some apprentices on. I went out and met with them at the launch of that program. That is one organisation. We will get the details of the others.

THE CHAIR: I would be interested to see that detail.

Meeting adjourned from to 3 to 3.11 pm.

THE CHAIR: I welcome everybody back.

MR RATTENBURY: Madam Chair, before we go on to TVE, can I ask one more sport question while I think the right people are still at the table?

THE CHAIR: Fine, if the right people are still at the table.

MR RATTENBURY: I hope the right ones are here. On page 125 the report indicates delays in funding for capital projects and an underspend essentially in the program's budget for the year. Could you tell us about those projects—which of them have been delayed?

THE CHAIR: Or if you cannot, if the officials are not here, it could go on notice, I suppose.

Mr Barr: Who would we like to come forward?

MR RATTENBURY: I actually thought Mr Perram would have the answers so—

Mr Perram: I have not got the final detail in respect of each of the programs that have been delayed.

THE CHAIR: Can we take it on notice?

MR RATTENBURY: I am happy for it to be taken on notice.

Mr Barr: We will take it on notice.

Mr Perram: I think that is best.

THE CHAIR: We will take it on notice so that we will not disturb anybody. Thank you very much. Minister, on Territory Venues and Events, on page 47 it mentions a number of events that have happened over the period. It says that 28 major events

were hosted across the three major sporting venues. I recall attending some of these events, including the world mountain bike championships, which I know you were particularly pleased about. How does this compare with previous years and can we expect a similar array of events in the future?

Mr Barr: Sure. Obviously across the three venues there are a number of now regular hirers and the significant difference going forward will be an increase in super rugby matches as a result of the move to the super 15 competition and the three conferences. What will be significantly different at Canberra Stadium in the future is that rather than having New South Wales, Queensland and the Western Force every two years, in fact we will have those matches played in Canberra every year.

The restructured super rugby competition involves effectively a home-and-away schedule where the five Australian teams will play each other in each of the cities. So we will have blockbuster matches against New South Wales, Queensland, the Western Force and the new Melbourne Rebels every year in Canberra. That will clearly be not only a boost to the number of games at Canberra Stadium but I think we can anticipate, given previous crowd levels—and those matches against other Australian teams are the biggest crowd drawers—and can optimistically look to an increase in crowd numbers for Brumbies matches into the future.

I know Canberra Stadium is always looking to diversify the range of events held, and there has been some innovation there in terms of motor sport and other sorts of events that can occur both inside and outside of the football season—the capacity to construct such tracks and facilities and to bump them in and out, even within the football season, is now possible. So that will enable the use of Canberra Stadium for some other sorts of activities.

Manuka clearly will be hosting more AFL matches from 2012 and I think the prospect of an expansion in the domestic twenty20 cricket competition. Initially it goes to eight teams and we are unlikely to be part of that, but in a few years hence a 10-team, city-based competition—

MR COE: The new concept is based on expansion, isn't it—insofar as the franchise—

Mr Barr: Yes, a move away from a state-based competition to a city-based one. But there is a prospect for increased high-level cricket at Manuka. I suppose in the context of decisions about facility upgrades having that prospect of extra content, it would then justify capital investment in the infrastructure at Manuka.

MR COE: Such as lights?

Mr Barr: For example, yes. I think lights are cricket's number one priority and would probably be number two on AFL's list, although a very close second. More seating is AFL's priority. We will need to look at that in the context of the master planning work that we have done for Manuka. There are a range of different options and in a little over a week, around 3 am next Friday, we will know whether Australia has won the right to host the 2022 football world cup and that then would trigger the ACT and federal government commitment of something in the order of \$270 million in

today's dollars for a new rectangular stadium. If we are unsuccessful, we will need to look at what infrastructure upgrades are necessary at Manuka and Canberra Stadium to enable them to keep pace with changes in major venues.

Just to wrap up on the Stromlo Forest Park, we will be looking to see that venue continue to host the sorts of major national and international championships in mountain bike and cross-country areas of sport where it is a world-class facility. We will want to continue to host major events there. That is the future. The success of the world mountain bike championships during the annual report period I think gives us confidence that not only is the venue world class but the economic returns from investment in bringing events to Stromlo are there for the city.

THE CHAIR: Did you have a supplementary, Mr Coe?

MR COE: I have one on Manuka oval but then there will be others.

THE CHAIR: We will go to Ms Le Couteur first then.

MS LE COUTEUR: The Loxton report has clearly had an impact on Territory Venues and Events. Were you involved in setting it up? How was your involvement in it?

Mr Barr: I think its impact on TVE is marginal because the events area—and Loxton was primarily focused on—

MS LE COUTEUR: Festivals and events?

Mr Barr: Yes, that are run through CMD, through TAMs but not the TVE area, or through DHCS. It was a whole-of-government review but the sorts of events that are run through TVE were not really part of Loxton's review. It reflects a distinction between the venues and sport-related events as opposed to more general and community events. I met with Mr Loxton, primarily as tourism minister because he was looking at one or two events that Capital Tourism run. I think there is a common misunderstanding about what Loxton was primarily looking at.

Its impact on tourism or TVE was actually quite minimal. His recommendations really related to delivery of events at a community level across a range of other departments. Most of the events that fall under my ministerial responsibilities are in the major category rather than in the smaller, community-based category. That is the distinction. While Loxton was covering major events, that was not his primary focus or the reason for his review.

MS LE COUTEUR: So you are not going to be particularly involved in the process from here on?

Mr Barr: I will certainly have an input into the whole-of-government discussions. Loxton made a series of recommendations that would have impact in relation to major events but that is only a small portion of the 118 recommendations within his report. They do not relate in large part to this area.

MS LE COUTEUR: One of his major recommendations was that a brand Canberra be developed and marketed. I realise it is probably to do with you as minister for tourism, but as far as TVE is concerned would that be relevant? I am assuming that it would be.

Mr Barr: Yes, it would, to the extent that we would be part of that whole-of-government brand Canberra exercise, but the ministerial responsibility for that sits with the Chief Minister's area, not with me. That goes to one of the issues that Allan Hawke will consider as well in the context of his review, obviously, in light of discussions with the government.

In some other jurisdictions, Victoria for example, they break this down by having a minister for major events. All of the minor events then remain within the other portfolios. That is an administrative way of dealing with, for example: is it appropriate for multicultural affairs to continue to deliver a multicultural festival and for Territory Services to continue to deliver those municipal-level events like the teddy bears picnic and dogs day out? They are not major events in the context of tourism or, as we are appearing today, Territory Venues and Events.

Those distinctions are drawn in other jurisdictions. I have got some sympathy with that approach because I think it gives a clearer delineation of responsibility for major events that are perhaps externally focused and that we will look at bringing people to the city for, in addition to accommodating them. It is local versus more community-based events that are terrific events but are not designed to attract tourism because there would be very similar events, presumably, conducted in every Australian community over the course of the year.

THE CHAIR: Mr Coe?

MR COE: Thank you. With regard to Manuka oval, could you tell us what proposals might be on the short list for consideration, given the 2012 AFL matches, such as capacity, transport, parking, the works?

Mr Barr: The master planning exercise identified a range of different options for redevelopment at Manuka. I think it was pretty clear from the community feedback that there was a strong desire to maintain the village-type atmosphere at Manuka. The proposals that might see it look like a mini MCG in terms of fully enclosed stands I do not think attracted much support at all. That sort of model I do not think is supported. You would not need a 25,000 or 27,000-seat colosseum-style venue.

The AFL and cricket are looking at 18,000, 19,000 or 20,000 as the sort of capacity. It is currently about 14,000 or 14,500, depending on the number of standing room areas that are available. Most of the interest in terms of hire is for more seats, more undercover seats, improved corporate facilities and, from cricket's perspective, a media facility that is behind the bowler's arm rather than side on. They would be the four main areas.

Lighting, obviously, would give a great deal of scheduling flexibility for the AFL but equally, I think, is a prerequisite for the twenty20 cricket. The ballpark costings for that, if you look at what the Tasmanian government spent at Bellerive to get lighting,

you are looking at something between \$4 million and \$6 million, depending on the lighting technology that is utilised. Then there is the issue of the technology and what the community reaction may well be to lights.

MR COE: The Adelaide oval saga.

Mr Barr: Lighting technology has improved tremendously in terms of minimising the spillover outside the playing surface. I think also there has been perhaps some further development in that area and redevelopment in that area that makes it more of a night-time precinct than it was before. Some of the concerns that I understand have been expressed in the past against lighting and night-time events you would think would be lessened by the fact that there is lighting at night-time.

MR COE: What about the number of towers? Has that been considered, whether you need four or six?

Mr Barr: No, we have not got to that level of detail yet. Some of this will also be linked to the grandstand redevelopment. You can have lighting incorporated into the roofing.

MR COE: You would need to get the height.

Mr Barr: That needs to be considered in the context of—

MR COE: On the seating design, has the AFL expressed any view whether the perimeter of the seating has to be higher for wind purposes?

Mr Perram: None of the negotiations have talked about any influence of wind. They were quite comfortable with it. As the minister said, their main concern is in relation to seating. They are happy to offer to us their modelling that they use for corporate versus public versus covered as far as a commercial return is concerned.

MR COE: Are the player facilities up to speed?

Mr Perram: Yes.

Mr Barr: The surface has somewhat of a slope. If you sit at ground level—

MR COE: The player facilities?

Mr Barr: Under the Bradman stand, yes. They play matches there now. The Bradman stand is fine. The Hawke and Menzies stands are the ones that are showing their age.

MR DOSZPOT: Just a supplementary on the lighting. You mentioned the new technology available and that it could possibly short cut some of the angst of the people living nearby. Has a feasibility study been done on the extent to which that new technology would assist with the lighting plans?

Mr Barr: Those sorts of issues have been looked at in the context of the master planning work and what is occurring in other similar venues. As I said, Bellerive is

the most recent. But then there has also been some work done in some areas of Sydney—I will not call them “municipal” because they are a higher level than that—where there are facilities close to residential areas that are being lit up in a more significant way than a district playing field. They are more substantial lighting towers than that. There are contemporary examples around the country that we can look at. As I said, we will not make decisions on that initially until after next week when we know the outcome—

MR DOSZPOT: I have a slight issue with the timing, regardless of what happens—not “regardless”. Should the decision come our way, there is still a long lead time as to the building of any alternative options and when they may be available. Obviously cricket is very dependent on some work being done. Consequently, I am asking: should we be doing some feasibility studies on lighting, for starters, which is pretty critical to their plans?

Mr Barr: Certainly. I want to clarify that the issue really relates to what expenditure split you would have between Manuka and Canberra Stadium if the bid is not successful. If it is not successful then we know we require infrastructure upgrades and improvements at both of our existing major venues. I would argue that Manuka’s case is more pressing than Canberra Stadium’s in the short term. Obviously if you were building a new rectangular facility then there would be very little benefit in investing heavily at all in Canberra Stadium over the next decade. You would do what is necessary to maintain it as a venue over the next 10 years, but you would not be sinking tens of millions of dollars into an asset that you were going to replace by 2018 or 2019.

MR DOSZPOT: I guess that is a moot point: when will the additional facility potentially be available—

Mr Barr: That is right.

MR DOSZPOT: and what do other sports need in the interim?

Mr Barr: Indeed. Manuka will require upgrading regardless of the outcome of the football world cup bid. The amount of money and the timing are obviously contingent on the outcome of the football world cup bid. If it does not go ahead then I think I would be in a reasonable position to argue that the ACT government, having committed \$100 million over a 10-year period towards a new rectangular facility—if we do not get that then I go to my colleagues and say: “Well, you were prepared to commit \$100 million for a new stadium. Will you commit the same money over the same period to upgrading our existing infrastructure if we do not get the football world cup bid?”

MS LE COUTEUR: Can I ask a bit more about the transport arrangements at Manuka Oval? Currently there are issues with car parking and congestion. You are planning on more use of the oval. Are you doing any work with ACTION to get people on a bus?

Mr Barr: I think what is needed now in this city is the sort of mind shift around access to our major sporting events that has occurred in Brisbane, for example. Prior

to upgrades to what I will call Lang Park—under the sponsorship arrangements they have probably got another name at the moment—I understand there used to be about 80 per cent access by private vehicle. Through a partnership with transport, by incorporating free public transport into the ticket price—so if you are the holder of a ticket for the match you get free transport—they have turned that around to 80 to 90 per cent of people attending matches going by public transport.

I think we need a similar change in terms of people accessing Manuka. The fact that parking is limited is, in fact, a good thing. There is then a requirement on the hirer and the government to incorporate into a ticket package free public transport to and from the venue. You can do a range of park and ride activities from each of the major town centres. If matches are being played on Saturday or Sunday afternoons, there will be ample parking around all of our interchanges. If you can have a free ride to the match, I think that is a much better transport model than thinking that you can surround each of these venues with 10,000 cars.

MS LE COUTEUR: No, absolutely—

Mr Barr: That certainly is a challenge at Canberra Stadium where the mentality is: we will surround this stadium with 10,000 or 15,000 cars.

MS LE COUTEUR: So would you be seeing a commitment from the government to actually provide more buses?

Mr Barr: Yes.

MS LE COUTEUR: As well as making it part of the ticket price, is it—

Mr Barr: We need to work with the hirers to incorporate free public transport so that when you purchase your ticket to the match it will get you free transport. The sensible thing to do here is to have park and ride arrangements to the venue at all of the major interchanges.

MS LE COUTEUR: Will that extend down to western Sydney when we have the Greater Western Sydney matches? Otherwise, we are going to end up with a procession of people driving even further.

Mr Barr: In terms of tourists coming to the matches?

MS LE COUTEUR: Presumably people from western Sydney will come to Canberra for the matches.

Mr Barr: Yes, that is around New South Wales as well.

MS LE COUTEUR: So rather than all of them driving—

Mr Barr: The experience has been, in many instances, that the accommodation providers within walking distance of the venue are very heavily booked during that period. A lot of tourists will drive to their accommodation, park and then walk to the ground. Or they park in Manuka, in the shopping precinct, grab lunch or dinner, a

drink or whatever, and then go to the match. It is that sort of activity we want to encourage.

The great advantage of Manuka's location is that it is part of the village of Manuka, whereas Canberra Stadium is isolated. Bruce is encroaching but, in terms of a commercial precinct, there is not a huge amount out at Canberra Stadium, whereas when matches are played at Manuka, all of the venues and businesses around benefit. There are a lot of accommodation houses in Manuka, Griffith and Kingston. You will find that a lot of the tourists do their park and riding by parking at their accommodation venue and then walking to the match.

MS LE COUTEUR: Particularly from western Sydney and the surrounding areas, I think there will be quite a few people who will drive up for the matches.

Mr Barr: They will certainly charter buses, supporter buses, that will drop people to and from. The Swans have done this. They have brought their supporters down, held a lunch at one of the clubs or venues and then bused people to the match, because the parking is limited. If you are coming from Sydney, it would be ingrained in your thinking that you would never drive to a game. You just cannot.

MS LE COUTEUR: You cannot; that is right.

Mr Barr: And if you are coming from Melbourne—

MS LE COUTEUR: You cannot.

Mr Barr: Exactly. For those people, this is not a mind shift at all. They find it quite odd that you would ever drive to the football. Only prime ministers and premiers do that sort of thing.

MR DOSZPOT: I have a supplementary.

THE CHAIR: You have got a supplementary, Mr Doszpot, and then we are going to Mr Rattenbury.

MR DOSZPOT: Thank you. Mr Barr—and this is totally outside of what could be if certain things happen; I am talking about the current situation—parking is a problem. Parking is an even bigger problem for people with a disability. In terms of your current plans, can I ask what plans have been taken into account for disabled parking?

Mr Barr: Certainly there are arrangements with the Manuka services club and Rotary around—I think it is Montgomery fields—the two closest multi-parking venues. Accommodation is made for people with a disability. If there are particular specific needs—

MR DOSZPOT: Designated disability parking?

Mr Barr: Yes, and then if there are people with specific needs around wheelchairs, for example—

MR DOSZPOT: Within the stadiums?

Mr Barr: Yes, and also, obviously, utilising the taxi services where people can be dropped off inside the gates—provision is made and assistance is available. I think the hirers have a particular interest in that and often go to quite extensive lengths to ensure that spectators who may have—

MR DOSZPOT: I just want to flag with you that there is a lot of concern from the disability community regarding current facilities for disabled people. It relates not only to parking but also, as you have already mentioned, to the fact that once they get inside the ground there are some issues there.

Mr Barr: In terms of vantage points, sure.

MR DOSZPOT: It is an old stadium. It was not designed to take into account some of the specific needs—

Mr Barr: Yes. I think you see in the design of some of the new stadium infrastructure there is specific provision for people in wheelchairs or otherwise. There are spots where there is not fixed seating and they have excellent vantage points to view matches. That certainly is a requirement in terms of the design of the new infrastructure and new stands. It is a good point.

MR DOSZPOT: I am also suggesting, even prior to any of that work being done, that something be done about having some more designated and marked areas for disability?

Mr Barr: Sure. I am happy to take that on board.

MR RATTENBURY: I want to move on to Stromlo Forest Park if I may. Page 49 of the annual report talks about the future directions for TVE and about developing commercial options for Stromlo Forest Park. Can you give us an update on what is happening?

Mr Barr: Sure. A draft master plan has been prepared. I am currently considering that and a range of options. We have talked in the past about on-site accommodation, about developments at the top of Stromlo, in relation to partnerships with ANU, the Smithsonian and a range of other parties that might be interested in providing some enhanced facilities at the top of the mountain. On-site accommodation is clearly an issue. Rod, do you want to continue?

Mr Florence: Yes. We have a draft of the master plan for the Stromlo Forest Park. It has not been up to the government for formal consideration. One of the things we were looking at through the master plan was the feasibility of a gondola development from the base of Mount Stromlo to the summit of Mount Stromlo and low-cost accommodation primarily aimed at the visiting schoolchildren market, Mondays to Fridays during school term. Then at the weekends and school holidays that accommodation would be used by visitors to Stromlo park for event-type use and for people visiting relatives.

One of the things we are looking at is potentially exploring a relationship with the Australian National University about the summit of Mount Stromlo. As the minister mentioned, they are looking at a partnership model now with the Smithsonian Institution, although I believe that information is not widely known currently. They would be looking at establishing a museum, a space and aeronautical museum, on the summit of Mount Stromlo.

One of the benefits for them would be having a gondola to get visitors up there. It would be a major tourist attraction and it would probably have the Smithsonian's name attached to it. We have been looking at the feasibility of that process. One of the things we would be proposing to government would be that a commercial investor would come in. A gondola would have probably a \$13 million price tag, or something similar, so certainly it is not a cheap item. So one of the things we are looking at is the potential for commercial external investment in that sort of facility.

THE CHAIR: On the subject of money, on page 47 at the bottom of the list it says that Canberra Stadium is still self-funded and that in spite of the economic conditions actual revenue was not affected. How do you think that was achieved?

Mr Byles: Mr Marsalek is the Business Manager of Territory Venues and Events and I will ask him to speak to that question.

Mr Marsalek: A lot of the revenue contracts we have at Canberra Stadium are fixed—signing and advertising and that sort of stuff—and a lot of the time to CPI and on an annual basis. With the Raiders and the Brumbies, which is the other source of income if you like, the crowd attendances kept on coming. This is just a personal opinion. Even though there was an economic downturn, people still wanted some entertainment so they kept on going to the rugby and the league. That is basically why the revenues have not been affected.

Mr Barr: I understand that when the Raiders and the Brumbies win too, more drinking occurs—more celebration, hence more revenue.

Mr Marsalek: Yes. When they win, a bit more drinking occurs. The crowds have fluctuated over the years, obviously, as they do, but it really has not affected our revenue at all.

MR DOSZPOT: What is the situation regarding negotiations over the long-term ownership of the Canberra Stadium?

Mr Barr: It is somewhat linked in again to outcomes around the football world cup and progress in relation to exchange of letters between ministers.

MR DOSZPOT: Why would that be?

Mr Barr: A new facility—

MR DOSZPOT: I understand that if we do not get a new facility you still want to hang on to the Canberra Stadium?

Mr Barr: Yes and no. There are a number of issues that need to be considered. Obviously if we owned the facility or had a long-term lease over it in terms of accounting matters, there is the question: is investment in the facility capitalised—

MR DOSZPOT: It is a familiar story, isn't it?

Mr Barr: You are certainly familiar with this. It is not dissimilar in terms of the accounting treatments. It is almost then a question: what is the level of rent that one might pay; what are the sorts of arrangements? We really are on hold on that until next week and then, depending on the outcome of that, we can move forward. But it is again linked to this question of what level of upgrade and how best to manage that, so we will have to look at what is in the best interests of the territory in terms of what sort of long-term lease we would enter into. Obviously the longer the term, you can then capitalise your expenditure.

That is essentially where it is at in terms of the politics of it. I have obviously spoken to my counterparts in the sports portfolio through the Sports Commission. Ultimately, though, the commonwealth finance department becomes involved as well, so there is a little bit of—

MR DOSZPOT: Is there a current valuation on what an outright purchase of the stadium would involve?

Mr Byles: We are in the process of getting a valuation but we have not got that information yet. I believe the Sports Commission have also done their own valuation but I do not know what that amount is.

MR COE: Surely it must be listed as an asset of the federal government.

Mr Marsalek: We are not a party to their numbers—

MR DOSZPOT: The annual report—

MR COE: Yes. That is right. I would have thought—

Mr Barr: That information may be obtainable in terms of how they value it. We can take that on notice.

MR DOSZPOT: I would have thought it would be a fairly important part of the negotiations that—

Mr Barr: Ultimately it will be, but we are not at that point, yet.

Mr Byles: We also need to consider that, while the asset is owned by the commonwealth, we pay all the capital upkeep on that. It was the territory government that invested heavily before the Olympics there. So, while they may have a valuation for insurance purposes, there are then issues about the real value.

MR DOSZPOT: I think any value added to it would obviously sit with the commonwealth and that would be sitting within their annual report at the moment,

I would think. I agree with your statement but I do not see that it follows from a commercial point of view.

Mr Barr: We will see if we can—

MR DOSZPOT: I would love to see them.

MR COE: Has there been any thought about selling naming rights to Manuka Oval to help with the funding of the \$2½ million?

Mr Barr: We did offer some naming rights to hirers, and some match day rights have been taken up in the past.

MR COE: But of the actual facility?

Mr Barr: We certainly can consider that. Now that there is more content there might be some value in that.

MR COE: So that is on the table for discussion?

Mr Barr: It certainly can be.

MR COE: I want to go to transport to Canberra Stadium. Have bus priority measures been discussed, especially in relation to Ginninderra Drive? Certainly for the rugby league final it was a nightmare for people travelling by bus. Have you received any feedback about how that went and whether there can be any changes?

Mr Barr: I recall receiving a Facebook message from someone I know who had their iPhone, expressing their view. Obviously with a crowd of that size all seeking to leave at the same time there are going to be some traffic management issues. Part of this goes to the number of private vehicles that encircle the stadium. I recognise it is an issue, and I think we can do more to prioritise bus access to and egress from the ground before and after the match. If you make that public transport experience better and more convenient than driving your car there, then you might anticipate getting that shift we have talked about. I am very happy, though the running of ACTION and buses does not sit with me, to lobby for that. I have raised it with the chief executive.

MR COE: The measures on the eastern side of the stadium are actually pretty reasonable for buses; it is probably more Ginninderra Drive and getting into the stadium.

Mr Barr: I certainly recall having at least one conversation about whether we had a dedicated bus lane to get all the buses out post-match. It is a relevant issue and one that we will give consideration to for the coming football season.

MR DOSZPOT: I understand the land around Canberra Stadium that you would be looking to acquire for any new purpose is also owned by the commonwealth?

Mr Barr: Some of it, and then there is some land within the institute precinct or adjacent to the institute precinct that is ACT government owned but that the Sports

Commission has some interest in. The concept of land swaps as part of an overall package has been the subject of some discussion.

MR DOSZPOT: How much would be territory and how much would be commonwealth land?

Mr Barr: I could not tell you off the top of my head, though I could certainly show you on a map of the precinct.

MR DOSZPOT: With the estimates that have been given for the overall plan for the area, does that include the purchase of land that is required?

Mr Barr: One of the redevelopment options that was considered in the master planning process was constructing a new stadium in the eastern car park of the existing stadium, and that would remain a live option in the context of a successful football world cup bid. I have asked for some other consideration to be given as to whether there are other sites where you would construct a new rectangular stadium. There are certain attractions to locating such infrastructure within the CBD, such as in Melbourne and Brisbane. You then do not have to invest in transport infrastructure, because it already exists. You save yourself \$20 million or thereabouts if you can locate it in the CBD. You obviously have to have a suitable site within the CBD. The advantage I see in that is the spillover impact for surrounding businesses, where all the accommodation is, picking up on the discussion earlier with Ms Le Couteur about where interstate visitors would go. If you have 30 hotels within walking distance of a centrally located venue, then that is going to be a better way of accessing the venue.

MR DOSZPOT: Is the ANU one of those possibilities?

Mr Barr: I am not sure that there is much land left there that they would have available, but I would certainly be happy to consider that. You could seek to reclaim some land, for example by building over Parkes Way. There are a range of possibilities. There are obviously sites within close proximity to the CBD, or we could, as I say, look to reclaim some land. You could only really do that as part of a major redevelopment—as we were talking about, the \$300 million option.

MR DOSZPOT: And we have things like the Australia forum—

Mr Barr: Indeed. One of the things there would be in common between a major stadium and a major convention centre is the back of house servicing because you are effectively providing so many thousand meals. All of that infrastructure could be shared between a convention facility and a stadium. We need to have all those options on the table, and if we are getting it we can start some really serious work on it.

MR DOSZPOT: I am trying to understand how the estimates for the costs that have been arrived at through this new project can be done if we do not know the value of the current cost of purchasing where Canberra Stadium is, or the land we need to acquire. It is a fairly simple question—

Mr Barr: Sure, but the issue is that with a new stadium as part of the football world cup the commonwealth would be the majority owner, because they are putting in the

most money. It would be their asset as well. I am assuming they are not going to spend \$200 million to our \$100 million and give us the asset. All those issues need to be worked through. At the moment the preferred site is the circus car park adjacent to the existing one for a brand new stadium, but I think we should keep open the option of another location, at least through the initial round of thinking

MR COE: Does Canberra Stadium receive any of the feed-in tariff?

Mr Barr: No.

MR COE: Would you be able to apply that, to a medium level, in the next round?

Mr Perram: The position given to us is that because it would be ACT funds being invested it would be illogical. The answer is that it is not impossible, but that is the advice that has been given to us at this stage.

THE CHAIR: We will get further questions to you as soon as we can. Thank you, minister and officials, for attending this afternoon.

Committee adjourned at 3.57pm.