



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

(Reference: [Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2011-2012 \(No 2\)](#))

Members:

MS C LE COUTEUR (The Chair)
MR J HARGREAVES (The Deputy Chair)
MR B SMYTH

TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

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Secretary to the committee:
Dr A Cullen (Ph: 6205 0142)

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.

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Amended 9 August 2011

The committee met at 9 am.

BARR, MR ANDREW, Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation

SMITHIES, MS MEGAN, Under Treasurer, Treasury Directorate

BULLESS, MR NEIL, Executive Director, Finance and Budget Division, Treasury Directorate

GILL, MR TONY, Director, Roads ACT, Territory and Municipal Services Directorate

WHYBROW, MR MARK, Executive Director, Corporate Services, Education and Training Directorate

THE CHAIR: Good morning everybody, and welcome to this public hearing of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2011-12 (No 2). On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank you, Treasurer, and officials from the Treasury, Territory and Municipal Services and Education and Training directorates for appearing here today. In particular, the committee appreciate the fact that officials from the TAMS and Education and Training directorates are appearing at short notice. Thank you, Treasurer, and the relevant directorate staff for accommodating the committee's request that the appropriate officials be in attendance today.

I remind witnesses of the protections and obligations afforded by parliamentary privilege and draw your attention to the blue-coloured privilege statement that is before you on the table. Could you please confirm for the record that you understand the privilege implications of the statement?

Mr Barr: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. Can I also remind witnesses that the proceedings are being recorded by Hansard for transcription purposes and are being webstreamed and broadcast live. Before we proceed to questions from the committee, Treasurer, would you like to make an opening statement?

Mr Barr: Thank you, Madam Chair. Very briefly, the bill I presented to the Assembly in February predominantly provides funding for agencies in relation to the recently agreed enterprise bargaining agreements across the territory public service. However, as you are aware by the presence of officials from the TAMS and Education directorates, there are two additional capital works projects contained within this second appropriation.

I am sure committee members would be aware that in relation to the Malkara school there was provision made to refurbish the hydrotherapy pool. Upon some investigation, it became clear that a complete replacement would be required. So this second appropriation provides the additional authorisation for those works to be undertaken. In relation to Ashley Drive, the government felt it was prudent to begin stage 1 works and to provide an appropriation for that. I am sure we can consider the detail of those two issues, if that is the committee's wish.

MR HARGREAVES: I look forward to it.

Mr Barr: Indeed. Other than that, the bill is fairly straightforward, and I am happy to take questions.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Barr. The obvious first question is: why was it necessary to do an additional appropriation bill rather than accommodate this from the Treasurer's advance? It would have fitted, I think.

Mr Barr: I think it is outside the scope of the Treasurer's advance. Given that it is now a known, quantifiable amount, past practice has been to utilise further supplementary appropriations to manage these matters.

MR HARGREAVES: Is it not also convention or custom and practice that the Treasurer's advance should not be used where there is time to put a supplementary appropriation bill and that, six months through the year, it would be a good idea to do a full-on supplementary appropriation? Is it not also the case that a supplementary appropriation gives the parliament an opportunity to discuss the matter?

Mr Barr: That question almost answers itself.

Mr Hargreaves: Thank you very much, minister; I thought that was what you were going to say. Well done.

THE CHAIR: It is good to have a full answer. The majority of the money, as I understand it, is going to wages and salaries. Why did it take so long and why have we ended up with some fairly short-term arrangements? I remember last year there was a one-year bargaining period. It must cost both the government and the staff a lot more to actually do it as year-by-year blocks rather than for longer periods.

Mr Barr: The government's intention in entering into enterprise bargaining with the various bargaining agents, unions and individuals, noting that we operate under the commonwealth industrial relations system, was in fact to provide for longer term agreements. The usual rule-of-thumb has been around three years. Enterprise bargaining in this country, though, requires agreement of all parties in order to get outcomes.

In the context of previous enterprise bargaining rounds, and given the state of the global economy at the time, with the one-year arrangement it was felt that some progress should be made and that a pay rise should be provided. That pay rise was modest and in line with the government's fiscal objectives at that time. So it was agreed upon. It then meant, of course, that we had to return to the bargaining table earlier. We have done that and have successfully negotiated a further outcome. Depending, of course, on the particular enterprise bargaining agreement, there are varying lengths of agreement. The teachers' agreement, for example, is longer than the general public service agreement in this context.

There are differing reform priorities, of course, in terms of enterprising bargaining outcomes. I could talk at great length about some of the important public policy reforms that were achieved in the teachers' EBA, for example, while simultaneously delivering a level of parity for teachers in the ACT with other jurisdictions. It also

started an important reform in relation to the teaching profession, bringing that profession's industrial arrangements out of the 1970s and into the 21st century.

I still think there is a long way to go in that area but I do not have policy carriage of it. I am very familiar with the issues and will continue to champion further reform in that area. But I would like to acknowledge, in reaching agreement with the AEU on this particular occasion, that some significant achievements were made in terms of reform of the teaching profession.

Of course, that does not come without a cost. We recognise that. But in the context of new spending in education, I felt that the focus on improving the career path for teachers, having a system that rewarded the best and brightest and that provided for accelerated advancement was particularly important in the context of ensuring that the best people are attracted to the teaching profession and are in classrooms in the ACT, particularly in public education classrooms in disadvantaged areas.

That is how we are going to make the greatest difference in terms of improving educational outcomes. Quality teachers in front of classes is what will make that difference and you have to pay for that. That is certainly the outcome that we have achieved in the context of the EBA for the teaching profession.

THE CHAIR: How long is the current EBA for—not the education one but the—

Mr Bulless: Two years.

THE CHAIR: So the year we are in and next year.

Mr Barr: Yes. So our bargaining process will begin again for—

Mr Bulless: It goes to June 13.

Mr Barr: So the 2013-14 fiscal year.

THE CHAIR: In today's *Canberra Times* the Chief Minister was reported as making comments about wage restraint but it would appear from what you are saying that those comments are not terribly relevant for a year.

Mr Barr: Sorry?

THE CHAIR: Those comments would not be relevant for a year because she was talking about wage restraint—I mean, the comment might be misquoted in the *Canberra Times* but it did appear that she was talking about the public service as a whole and I appreciate that the Remuneration Tribunal is only a statutory officeholder—

MR HARGREAVES: Is there a question in here or is this a whole paragraph, Madam Chair?

THE CHAIR: There is a question.

Mr Barr: If I am understanding the question correctly, the position that the Chief Minister has put to the rem tribunal in relation to those public sector salaries that are determined by that tribunal is that any increases granted should not be greater than what has been granted to the ACT public service. In fact, there may be some capacity for the tribunal to allocate or to determine a pay increase less than that amount.

I do note in the context of recent determinations of the tribunal that that has generally been the case. Executive salaries and MLA salaries have not been rising as fast as salaries in other parts of the ACT public sector. That has been a determination independently arrived at by the tribunal. But undoubtedly we have the opportunity to put submissions forward and the government has done so on this occasion.

MR HARGREAVES: I am satisfied with the explanations around wage increases. It is just a natural evolution event. I am particularly interested, though, in the other ones—capital injections.

MR SMYTH: Can we knock off the wages first?

THE CHAIR: Actually, that is probably a good idea. If Mr Smyth has some wage questions, we will finish wages and then move on.

MR SMYTH: I have two questions to start with. I notice on page 5 of the document in the second paragraph, it says:

The Appropriation Bill 2011-2012 (No. 2) provides additional appropriation to agencies to permit the cost of Enterprising Bargaining outcomes and is limited to these items.

So are the two capital works items late additions?

Mr Barr: Sorry, are they—

MR SMYTH: Your document on page 5, second paragraph, says that this bill is only for only additional appropriations to agencies for EBA outcomes.

Mr Barr: Yes, that is right, but they are not additional appropriations.

MR SMYTH: So where do the funds come from?

Mr Barr: That is from unallocated or unspent capital that is being reprioritised to those projects.

MR SMYTH: Good; that is fine. The actual appropriation bill is a bill for an act to appropriate additional money for the purposes of the territory. So are we going back to a gold standard where bags of coin will be transferred between agencies? Surely money is the currency. Surely it should read “funds”.

Ms Smithies: In effect, what we are doing is transferring money.

MR SMYTH: Are you transferring money or are you transferring funds?

Ms Smithies: Well, we are transferring both, are we not?

MR SMYTH: No, I suspect you are not. You are either transferring funds that are listed in the appropriation between agencies or you are transferring physical money. Money is a physical thing.

Ms Smithies: So the terminology of the Financial Management Act still talks about “money”.

MR SMYTH: Well, maybe we should fix that.

Ms Smithies: And “money” and “funds”, in most cases, can be used interchangeably.

Mr Barr: We will put that on the territory’s microeconomic reform agenda, Brendan, as a high priority for you.

MR SMYTH: That might be your great and only achievement, minister. Let us take one agency; let us take the Assembly, for instance. I see that on page 15 the approp is \$40,000. There is “wage parameters” and there is “wage parameters”, and they add up to \$40,000. If so, why is the total additional expenses \$71,000? You have got \$49,000 for non-territory expenses on page 16 and \$22,000 for territory expenses on page 24.

Ms Smithies: Sorry? So there are two lots of appropriations to do with the direct wages and salaries costs.

MR SMYTH: Yes.

Ms Smithies: And the difference between the amounts being appropriated and the costs will be the additional costs borne by the organisation in relation to employee entitlements.

MR SMYTH: All right. If that is the case, on page 16 you have got additional appropriation for \$46,000 for employees and \$3,000 for super. But on page 24 you have got \$20,000 for employees and \$2,000 for super.

Mr Bulless: Mr Smyth, those amounts are not appropriation; they are a cost or an expense. As the Under Treasurer referenced, they can be related to the previous EBA flow-throughs and also as a result of the 2010-11 audit outcome. So there will be adjustments flowing through as well. So it is a combination of factors. It is not related to appropriation directly.

MR SMYTH: Okay. If that is the case, why is the treatment for the Assembly different to the treatment of Shared Services? If you look at Shared Services on pages 132 and 133, it is treated in a different manner. Is that because there are no additional expenses?

Mr Bulless: Are you talking about in terms of employee expenses or another line item?

MR SMYTH: Employee expenses.

Mr Bulless: On page 132 or 133?

MR SMYTH: It is on 132.

Mr Bulless: So page 132 is the revised outputs for the Shared Services Centre.

MR SMYTH: Right.

Mr Bulless: Page 133 is the variations from budget reflected in the budget review. If you go to page 137, that is the revised operating statement as presented for the Shared Services Centre.

MR SMYTH: Okay. So why are they presented differently? Shared Services seems to be presented in quite a different way.

Mr Bulless: In terms of variations, we only flow the variations that have occurred between the budget and the budget review. So if there have been no variations in line items, we do not show them.

MR SMYTH: Okay.

Ms Smithies: I think the Financial Management Act, in a sense, requires that we pick up authorised changes since the budget time, so it may well be picking up instruments that have been signed off by the executive but also, as Mr Bulless alluded to, issues around what has flown out of the 2010-11 outcome. Also, this, in a sense, is a pigeon pair to the midyear review, so the financial statements will have been updated for things like the capital works reprofiling and rollovers of projects from 2010-11 into 2011-12. In a sense, it is a recast of the budget from the budget day.

MR SMYTH: But you are only showing the bits where it is affected?

Mr Barr: Yes.

Mr Bulless: Could I also make the point, using the Shared Services example, that the Legislative Assembly Secretariat has funds appropriated for its function. Shared Services is operated on a user charge approach across government. So it charges other agencies, which is why there is no GPO there.

MR SMYTH: That is why you do the breakdown of the four output classes there?

Mr Bulless: Yes.

MR SMYTH: Chief Minister and Cabinet, on page 50: what is the reason for the deferral of the \$828,000 for the centenary program in 2011-12?

Mr Bulless: You are talking about the last line item there under “technical adjustments”?

MR SMYTH: Yes.

Mr Bulless: I can't give you an exact reason but generally the reprofiling amounts that have been put through the supplementary appropriation and budget review relate to advice from agencies around the timing of payments.

MR SMYTH: Can you check that and confirm it?

Mr Barr: We will get some information for you.

MR SMYTH: I will not go through all of these. I will put most of these on notice. On page 163 there is a deferral of \$600,000 for the Australia forum project. Why is that being deferred?

Mr Barr: Again, that relates to timing of payments. I understand that there have been 13 expressions of interest to undertake that work. That tender is being assessed at the moment. So it will be a question of when payments are made, in which fiscal year. But I will get further confirmation of that.

MR SMYTH: I have a number of others that I will put on notice, so that we can move on to the two capital works. I have a final question on this. Were any of the agencies asked to absorb these costs?

Mr Barr: In relation to the EBA?

MR SMYTH: In regard to the EBA, yes.

Mr Barr: To absorb fully?

MR SMYTH: Yes.

Mr Barr: No.

MR SMYTH: There was no attempt made to look for the funds inside the departments?

Mr Barr: To fully absorb the cost of the wage increases, so the 3½ per cent?

MR SMYTH: Yes.

Mr Barr: No, not 3½ per cent.

THE CHAIR: Mr Hargreaves?

MR HARGREAVES: Can we go to the capital works now?

THE CHAIR: Yes.

MR HARGREAVES: I thought the explanation about the Malkara pool was okay. My colleagues may ask questions. But I am like that. I thought, "Toss out the refurb

and put in a replacement; sounds like a great idea.” I don’t want to ask questions on that.

Mr Barr: On Malkara; but you are interested in Ashley Drive?

MR HARGREAVES: Yes. You might be surprised to know, Mr Smyth, that I might have an interest in one of the major roads in our electorate.

MR SMYTH: I think I promised it before you promised it, John.

MR HARGREAVES: Yes, but I used it before you did, because I got my licence before you.

Mr Barr: Why am I reminded of an episode of *The Muppets*, and those two blokes on the balcony who sit there and have a conversation?

MR SMYTH: Because you obviously don’t get out enough. You need to expand your horizons, Andrew.

THE CHAIR: Can we return to comments about the road.

MR HARGREAVES: Yes, this is about stage 1 of Ashley Drive. I think we are talking about \$7 million.

THE CHAIR: It says \$7 million, yes.

MR HARGREAVES: There is a revised funding profile of \$300,000, which comes out, as I see it, in this financial year. It is over 300 grand. Presumably that is because of the forward design work. Also, tell us what exactly we are getting for the \$7 million. Where does it start? Does it start at Sternberg and end at Johnson?

Mr Gill: This project first shot up in the budget process in 2010-11 when a feasibility study was funded for \$150,000. That feasibility study basically has been completed and it has identified a package of stage 1 and stage 2 works. That was presented to the Tuggeranong Community Council last year and members were present at that meeting last year. There was a general understanding of what was proposed.

The staging basically is staging north of Erindale Drive, which is stage 1, and south of Erindale Drive, which is stage 2. It primarily involves addressing what has been known as, I suppose, a road congestion problem for quite a number of years. Hence, this is why it eventually gets onto a program to be addressed. It involves four intersection improvements and some duplication of road works between those intersections.

The intersections to be upgraded include Sternberg-Bugden, Sternberg-Ashley, Ashley-McBryde and Erindale-Sternberg. Those are the four intersections. The sections of roads between those will be duplicated. Basically, it is a good capacity improvement. The reason why it was not progressed immediately—it was identified in 2010-11 as a feasibility study—is that there had been a master plan undertaken by the planning authority in the subsequent year and also there has been a review of the

public transport requirements in the Erindale centre. That has taken place last year. So it seemed timely to go forward with these works now that have been identified for some time.

MR HARGREAVES: You have identified in there a couple of intersections that have been clogged intersections for decades. I heard you say the intersection of Bugden and Sternberg. That is a ripper—an absolute ripper. There is not a lot of room there to duplicate the thing unless you want to take some back yards—

Mr Gill: We are not going to duplicate that intersection. We propose to put in traffic lights at that intersection. We can actually control that movement from Bugden Avenue, which basically does have an influence on the major intersection. It also gives us a bit of through route for other people.

MR HARGREAVES: When I hear you refer to the traffic signals, I am very interested to know where they are going to go. As I understand it, beyond the intersection of Newman-Morris and Taverner Street in Oxley there are no traffic lights other than on Drakeford Drive in the valley. So this is a new approach, which is a welcome one, because the John Hargreaves memorial traffic lights at Taverner Street—

Mr Gill: I would not say that it is a new approach, Mr Hargreaves. I say that basically it is reflecting the volume of traffic actually using the area and the fact that traffic signals provide better capacity and better flexibility, particularly when you are looking at public transport.

MR SMYTH: Can we just run through the intersections? So where Bugden and Sternberg intersect will become a T-intersection with traffic lights and the roundabout goes?

Mr Gill: Yes.

MR SMYTH: All right. Where Erindale Drive hits Sternberg, what will be done at that intersection?

Mr Gill: Traffic lights there.

MR SMYTH: So there will be two sets of traffic lights.

Mr Gill: Yes. There is a report that is available. It may well be that the committee accesses the report and has a look at the detail.

MR HARGREAVES: Yes; that would be great.

MR SMYTH: That is okay. So that becomes a set of traffic lights. Moving further west, the intersection of Ashley and Sternberg—

Mr Gill: Ashley and Sternberg will be signalised.

MR SMYTH: So three sets of traffic lights. Then coming down Ashley and

McBride?

Mr Gill: Ashley and McBryde will be signalised.

MR SMYTH: And the intersection of Erindale and Ashley?

Mr Gill: Erindale and Ashley will be just upgraded.

MR SMYTH: The roundabout will be upgraded?

Mr Gill: Yes, it will be upgraded because the approaches will have two lanes to the roundabout. The intersection capacity will be improved.

MR SMYTH: All right; and then the short section of road between the roundabout at Sternberg-Erindale and Ashley-Erindale—

Mr Gill: That will be duplicated.

MR SMYTH: So four lanes?

Mr Gill: Two lanes in each direction, yes.

MR SMYTH: And then moving west again, once you go through the upgraded roundabout, the plan to bring Ricardo down onto Erindale, that is not included in this?

Mr Gill: That is a featured part of the master plan but not a part of this proposal.

MR SMYTH: It is not a feature of this. I had a concern raised with me yesterday by a resident that said that the footbridge over Erindale—she was told it was to be removed. Is that the case?

Mr Gill: No, there is no proposal to remove the footbridge.

MR SMYTH: I thought that was strange. So the section of Ashley between Sternberg and Erindale, will there be extra lanes in there or is it the assumption that the traffic lights will fix the traffic flow there?

Mr Gill: The section of Sternberg between Ashley and Erindale?

MR SMYTH: No, the section of Ashley between Sternberg and Erindale.

Mr Gill: That will be duplicated, yes.

MR HARGREAVES: At the moment, between McBride and Erindale Drive, that is already duplicated, in a sense. It is a divided road, anyway.

Mr Gill: Sort of. It will formalise that arrangement.

MR SMYTH: There will be extra road capacity.

MR HARGREAVES: There is no duplication from McBride up to Sternberg, and presumably that is going to be just one sweep.

MR SMYTH: All right. And then Ashley, south of Erindale Drive, that bit will be stage 2?

Mr Gill: That is a future stage.

MR SMYTH: And when is stage 2 proposed?

Mr Gill: Stage 2 has not got a time frame at this point in time. It is in the order of \$25 million to complete the section from Erindale down to Johnson Drive, including duplication and some signalisation of various intersections.

MR SMYTH: So stage 2 is in the vicinity of \$25 million?

Mr Gill: That is the order of the project.

MR SMYTH: Is that including the \$7 million for this one?

Mr Gill: Yes.

MR HARGREAVES: That is another \$32 million, minister. Guess what? That is a regularly featured figure, is it not?

Mr Barr: Yes, I appreciate the joke, John. Yes, I do remember.

MR SMYTH: One of the problems for residents in the afternoon coming down Erindale Drive as they approach the roundabout is the ability to turn left. There are often long periods where, in some cases, cars extend hundreds of metres back up the hill. How will that be affected by this? Will there be extra turning capacity there?

Mr Gill: The traffic lights will basically deal with that. The problem with the movement you are talking about is that the dominant movement is turning right, which basically-

MR SMYTH: No, turning left.

Mr Gill: Turning left, yes.

MR SMYTH: Turning left to get into-

Mr Gill: Yes, there is no gap in that traffic stream, so the traffic lights will generate gaps and it will just manage it better.

MR SMYTH: Because it will modify the cross-traffic, it will allow-

Mr Gill: It will provide the gaps, and safety.

MR SMYTH: So there is not an intention of having an extended turning lane there?

Mr Gill: There will be a left-turn facility, but it will not be hundreds of metres. It will be a typical free left lane at traffic lights.

MR SMYTH: That is okay. What effect will it have on the lights at Ricardo, if they go in?

Mr Gill: There has been an overall assessment in the report. I would have to take on notice that specific question.

MR SMYTH: And the roundabout remains at Ashley-Erindale. What effect has been calculated on the wait times on people in the morning coming up Ashley?

Mr Gill: There is some information in the report. Again, there is a general improvement by investing this money. The report suggests a good return on public investment.

MR HARGREAVES: When do you expect the second stage to start and finish?

Mr Gill: It is yet to be considered in the budget process.

MR HARGREAVES: Soon. According to Mr Quinlan, “soon”.

Mr Barr: We will await advice from the appropriate minister, who I am sure will bring forward a bid in the budget process, or a future budget process. Shall we get the officials up from Education to talk about the pool?

MR SMYTH: Was it considered to reprofile money from other projects to cover this money?

Mr Barr: That is what has happened. There is no new appropriation.

MR SMYTH: This is actually coming from other delayed projects?

Mr Bulless: Mr Smyth, in terms of the work that is being undertaken this year in relation to both the Malkara pool and Ashley Drive, that is being funded through underspends or reprofiling in the current program for 2011-12. As a result of that, we will need to increase the appropriation next year to cover those payments.

THE CHAIR: Is there any more on roads?

MR SMYTH: So we will get a copy of the report, and that includes plans?

Mr Gill: We will make a copy of the report available.

Mr Barr: Yes. In fact, if you would like to letterbox it to everyone in Wanniasa-that has already been done, apparently.

THE CHAIR: Gentlemen, are there any pool questions?

MR HARGREAVES: No, the pool is fine.

MR SMYTH: Actually, could we have a run-through of what is happening with the pool and timing?

Mr Barr: So there will be water in the pool. We can be assured of that.

MR SMYTH: It would be a shame to miss Mr Whybrow's excellent explanation.

Mr Barr: Mr Whybrow, please tell us about the pool.

Mr Whybrow: In summary, the 2011-12 budget appropriated \$1.83 million for, as the Treasurer has said, a refurbishment of the hydrotherapy pool. The additional appropriation is for a full rebuild of the pool. It provides an extra \$1.22 million, approximately a 66 per cent increase for that process.

If I can take people back, the initial basis of the project occurred after an experience of a refurbishment at the Turner hydrotherapy pool. On 16 February 2010 the directorate had an engineering company do a report around the status of the building. It came to the directorate's attention in September. In the initial start-up process, we engaged a specialist consultant to investigate the condition and also to ensure that national standards were met for the new construction. That specialist report came to the department in September 2011 and made a recommendation that because of the poor condition and the extent of non-compliances, a total rebuild should occur.

Part of the detail is that the existing pool has been demolished. We are in the process of the rebuild now. It is very much a priority because of the lack of service at the moment. We do have the construction process working on a six-day cycle at the moment.

MR HARGREAVES: I can recall that the hydrotherapy pool at Turner was rather innovative, if my memory serves me correctly, in terms of the hoist arrangements to put people in and out of the pool. Are we talking about the same age cohort for Malkara as would apply at Turner, in the sense that they are not, generally speaking, adults; they are generally children or early teenagers?

Mr Whybrow: Yes. My understanding is that it does actually have multiple use. It is not only students. It has after-hour use as well. So those requirements need to be built for a maximum rather than a general requirement.

MR HARGREAVES: What sort of hoist arrangements are being put in?

Mr Whybrow: I do not have the detail of the hoist arrangements but I would be sure that the current build is around meeting those national standards. I suspect that would mean issues around capacity to lift large weights, if I can put it that way. Given the nature of the population at the moment, there are extreme situations that need to be coped with.

MR HARGREAVES: I would be interested in the detail about that.

Mr Whybrow: Detail about the capacity of the lifting?

MR HARGREAVES: Yes, of the hoist.

Mr Whybrow: I can take that on notice.

MR HARGREAVES: I am aware, from my own experience, that dead weight and live weight are completely different issues. Some people who have—

MR SMYTH: There is such an opening there.

MR HARGREAVES: Mr Smyth, of course, being the expert in dead weight, will no doubt have a question in a minute.

Mr Barr: You set yourself up, Brendan.

MR HARGREAVES: I am interested in that. This question is not for Education but I might very well be interested in whether or not the hydrotherapy pool in the hospital, the new arrangement from the Calvary perspective, actually has the same specifications around hoist arrangements. If not, you might like to share that information with your Health colleagues.

Mr Whybrow: Yes, we will get that detail to you. I will undertake to provide that detail to the Health Directorate as well.

MR HARGREAVES: Thank you very much.

MR SMYTH: On page 256 of the document that was provided it lists the amount of \$1.22 million as both a policy adjustment and a technical adjustment. Can you explain how it can be treated in that way?

Mr Whybrow: Yes I can. If I go back to an earlier statement by the Treasurer, this is a policy adjustment that provides funds for the 2012-13 budget. As you will see, there is a list of technical adjustments there. It is, as the Treasurer said before, about managing the cash flows of the individual projects. The directorate has a strong history and demonstrated ability to provide its capital works programs in total. It does that through changing priorities during the year. So in that total list, there are some projects that have been brought forward in a cash spend and some that have been pushed back in a cash spend. That is because, given our best planning arrangements, during the year there are delays in some projects. There are opportunities to speed up others. That is what we have taken through spending our money in total.

To give you an understanding of that statement I made before, over the last two years the directorate has had in the order of a \$200 million capital works program. It has delivered between 90 and 95 per cent of that program each year, and that has very much been about adjustments to priorities within the year.

MR SMYTH: The \$1.8 million that was appropriated in 2011-12, will that be spent in 2011-12?

Mr Whybrow: Yes.

MR SMYTH: And this is the additional to complete it?

Mr Whybrow: This is an additional amount.

MR SMYTH: Is there any extra capacity in the pool or is it just a replacement of the exact dimensions—

Mr Whybrow: It is actually a larger pool.

MR SMYTH: It is a slightly larger pool. How much larger?

Mr Whybrow: I may have that detail. No, I just have the information that it is a larger main pool with access ramp and a spa pool. It is about the demolition; it is mainly about new plant rooms, water filtration, heating systems, changes to the pipeworks, storage. So there are disability toilets, change rooms and a staff workstation area. That is a summary of the changes. Would you like details of size and capacity?

MR HARGREAVES: Capacity of the pool, before and after.

THE CHAIR: When is it going to be finished?

Mr Whybrow: As I said, we have a six-day time frame. While we are aiming for 30 June, our probable completion date will be around September this year.

THE CHAIR: Are there any further questions?

MR SMYTH: None for Mr Whybrow but I do have a final question. On page 278, under the Gambling and Racing Commission, there is a line there that says “net effect of correction of an error”. What was the error?

Mr Barr: I think Mr Bulless has some information.

Mr Bulless: Mr Smyth, it would be a small adjustment that has been picked up through the audit process. We can give you advice on it, if you would like.

MR SMYTH: If you would, thank you. I will put my other questions on notice.

MR HARGREAVES: On the hydrotherapy pool, I am aware that in fact they have a significant—this is going to sound silly but it is not—effect on the clothing of the therapists that go into the pool, because of the nature of the chemicals contained in that pool, because of the nature of conditions that patients have when they go in the pool. So it is a completely different construct of the water than you would find in either a public pool or your own. I am aware that the swimwear that therapists have actually deteriorates quite rapidly, much more rapidly than otherwise intended. Is there an impact on the extent to which we provide protective clothing for our therapists in the pool?

Mr Barr: The ever-disappearing swimming cossie?

MR HARGREAVES: That is it.

Mr Barr: This is a new fact.

MR HARGREAVES: Well, there you go.

Mr Whybrow: Not that I am aware of, Mr Hargreaves.

MR HARGREAVES: All right. You can check it for yourself; I know the answer.

MR SMYTH: Some swimming costumes are not designed for use in chlorine pools.

THE CHAIR: As our time is drawing to a close, we will conclude. I believe there will be some questions on notice. It would assist the committee considerably in doing a timely report on this—

Mr Barr: If we can get to them as quickly as possible. It would be my pleasure, Madam Chair, with the usual caveat that if the questions are multipart, it will involve a huge amount of time and resource. But if they are easy to answer questions, we will answer them as quickly as humanly possible.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much.

Mr Barr: It has been entertaining and informative, as always, Madam Chair. I thank the committee for their consideration of the bill.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. When available, a copy of the proof transcript will be forwarded to witnesses so that they can make any corrections of factual errors which may have been transcribed. I declare this public hearing adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 9.40 am.