



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING,
COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

(Reference: [Annual and financial reports 2013-2014](#))

Members:

DR C BOURKE (Chair)
MR A WALL (Deputy Chair)
MS Y BERRY
MS N LAWDER

TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

THURSDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2014

Secretary to the committee:
Mrs N Kosseck (Ph: 620 50435)

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

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Amended 20 May 2013

The committee met at 1.31 pm.

Appearances:

Rattenbury, Mr Shane, Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Corrective Services, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and Minister for Sport and Recreation

Community Services Directorate

Howson, Ms Natalie, Director-General

Sheehan, Ms Maureen, Executive Director, Service Strategy and Community Building

Forester, Ms Robyn, Director, Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

THE CHAIR: Welcome to this public hearing of the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services inquiry into the annual and financial reports of 2013-14. Today the committee will be examining the following components of the Community Services Directorate annual report: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, multicultural affairs, women and disability and therapy services. We are going to break for afternoon tea at about 3.20.

Minister and officials, could I confirm that you have read the privilege card lying on the table before you.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Do you understand the privilege implications of the statement?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

Ms Howson: Yes.

Ms Sheehan: Yes.

Ms Forester: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Before we proceed to questions, minister, would you like to make an opening statement?

Mr Rattenbury: Thank you, Dr Bourke. I will just make a few overarching comments, but I will keep it brief so that we can get to the questions fairly quickly.

In terms of the conduct of the portfolio, one of the key changes since we have last seen each other has been the election of the elected body. The actual election went very well, with a significant increase in voter numbers, up to 378 votes this time, which was substantially higher than last time. Each election it is going up, but this was quite a good jump. So we have some new members; many of you will know them and will have met them.

The consequence of having the elected body election in July was that both the whole-of-government agreement and the Aboriginal and justice agreement have been delayed in their preparation. The elected body put a view that they did not want to finalise those documents prior to the election; they wanted the new body to have the remit, essentially, to own those documents. Both I and, in the case of the justice agreement, Minister Corbell agreed. So with the arrival of the new body, the task has been to focus on getting those two agreements finalised as soon as we practically can.

The community consultation on the whole-of-government agreement has been a really important part of that development. It has drawn out the key community priorities, which can best be summarised as “strong families”. Within that, the factors identified in the consultation period, and there were seven of them the community particularly identified as priorities, were cultural identity, healthy mind and healthy body, feeling safe, connecting in the community, employment, education and leadership. These are the areas the agreement will now be particularly focused on—having those as the key points, key areas, for attention in the agreement, with performance indicators flowing out under those specific topics. As I have said to this committee before, I have been very keen to make sure that we deliver an agreement that is not only stating our values but also actually focusing the government on some key deliverables. We are making good progress in identifying measurable, deliverable outcomes. I hope to have that completed quite soon.

I would make two other observations briefly. The elected body is now in its third term. We are seeing an evolution in the conduct of that body and its relationship with government. The relationship is deepening. The elected body is now heavily recognised in government as being a key grouping to provide government with advice. The consequence of that and the tension there is that the pressure being put on the members of the elected body is increasing. They are more and more being asked to contribute for their expertise. That is something we are going to need to monitor through this term. Certainly the elected body raised this as a key issue when they met with cabinet recently. That is just one of the pressures that are emerging. We are going to need to monitor to get the balance right between their strong contribution and acknowledging the fact that it is a part-time exercise or role for them and they all have other jobs to go on with.

The last area is that we are seeing significant changes from the commonwealth in terms of funding and how the commonwealth wants to have partnership arrangements with key community organisations and with state and territory governments. I am not able to say anything really definitive today other than to flag with the committee that this is again an area that we will need to be flexible on as we see how the commonwealth rolls out its programs. I have a level of confidence that there will be good continuity there—I met with the commonwealth minister in the last few months to have some of those conversations—but it is an area we may see some changes in in the short to medium term.

I will leave my remarks there, chair.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, minister. I might kick off with a question. Perhaps you could tell us about the essential changes to the program in the transition from the chances program to the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job readiness

support program. And have you been able to maintain a continuous flow of people through the program since that change?

Mr Rattenbury: The short answer is that, yes, we have. As you know, there has been a change to the program. It was initially called chances but it has been renamed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job readiness support program. It is not quite such a handy acronym but I think it is a more accurate reflection of the intent of the program. The contracts are now in place with the successful tenderers, which will be the Northside Community Service. The tender was awarded late in the 2013-14 financial year. There is a program currently running, so there is continuity there. The program provides 12 months ongoing support, so we do not yet have any data on the outcomes.

THE CHAIR: Is that Northside—

Mr Rattenbury: Sorry; I am just reminded that the 12 months follow-up is the key difference perhaps between the old program and the new program, which I think was part of your question. As we have perhaps seen—I am reluctant to make the likeness—through through care, that 12 months follow-up, we believe, will be a really important component in terms of not only providing the skills and opportunities through the program but providing that continuous support afterwards to really reinforce the outcomes of the program.

THE CHAIR: Or, indeed, looking for further policy initiatives to deal with any identified issues that come up?

Mr Rattenbury: Certainly. Yes, that is a good point.

THE CHAIR: Just coming back, you said that the Northside Community Service was the successful contractor. Are they in a consortium with other agencies or NGOs?

Ms Howson: There are two organisations that are involved in the contract. Imagineering, as a registered training provider, is providing the training component. It is essentially a consortium. It is the head lead, if you like, on the contract itself.

THE CHAIR: Within that contract that you let, what were the criteria that Northside Community Service had to meet to satisfy that it was capable of running this program? I am perhaps not as aware as I should be of what other programs they run in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs.

Ms Howson: Northside were actually participating in a trial, so they had already had—

THE CHAIR: In the program formerly known as chances?

Ms Howson: When it was called chances; that is right. I would have to take the criteria on notice; I do not think we have that at hand. I would be happy to take that on notice and provide some detail for you on the criteria associated with the contract.

THE CHAIR: Perhaps, minister, you could remind us why the name had to change?

Ms Howson: I can do that, too, if you like. The reason the name was changed, and the service model has changed slightly, was that we thought the name reflected more of what the program was actually about—job readiness—and it was easier for people to understand what the intent was.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MR WALL: A supplementary.

THE CHAIR: Mr Wall, a supplementary.

MR WALL: While we are talking about employment programs, how many participants went through chances as it was and are now currently going through the program?

Ms Howson: You are talking about numbers in the trial program?

MR WALL: Yes.

Ms Howson: I have not got that specific number at hand.

MR WALL: If that needs to be taken on notice, that is fine. Also on notice, how many of the participants are now in employment?

Ms Howson: Yes.

MR WALL: A third one is slightly unrelated but still on the topic: with the rebranding of the program, how much money was spent on rebranding, changing promotion—

Ms Howson: I do not believe any money has been spent on the rebranding. We have simply changed the name of the program itself. I will take that on notice just to be certain, Mr Wall.

In terms of the data around numbers into employment, implementation is still in the early stages of this second—it is actually the third group that we have put through if you take into account the two waves that we conducted under the name “chances”. There was an evaluation done, so I can get that information for you in terms of the number of people in those first two programs that went into employment. We also measured numbers that went into sustained training or educational activities as a pathway to work. We can get that data for you.

MR WALL: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: A question?

MR WALL: A substantive. I just go back to your opening statement, minister, about the elected body and, more closely, the election that has recently been completed or was undertaken this year. Whilst I do agree with you that voter participation has

improved—and probably, in percentile terms, markedly from the previous election—the proportion of the Indigenous community in the ACT that is participating is still quite low. Has there been any feedback that you or the officers have received as to why there is still a low participation rate amongst the Indigenous community?

Mr Rattenbury: Let me start by just saying that the census population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT is around 6,000, but of course many of those are minors. We believe the electoral population is around 2,000. In that sense, in relation to the proportion, whilst it is still not enough, it is not 378 out of 6,000; it is 378 out of 2,000. It is up substantially.

I think the reasons for people not participating are numerous. One is that I think the credibility of the organisation and the value of its contribution are something the community is still warming to. I take the chance every opportunity I get to reinforce the value of the organisation to the government through the community. There are some people who—the honest answer is—are not registered to vote. They were worried that if they did register to vote for this, they would be chased up for not voting in a normal federal or ACT election, and they did not want to get themselves into that situation. That was some of the feedback we had. Are there any other particular reasons?

Ms Forester: Some of the other feedback that we did receive from potential voters was not knowing the candidates and not understanding what the whole elected body process was about—which is a bit of what the minister has referred to. That is an opportunity for us to ensure that from here on in we promote more and provide a bit of an education and awareness process around what the elected body is about and what the election process is about. And, as the minister has said, a high number of our community are minors; and particularly those that are coming into that 18, 19 or 20-year-old age group that are eligible to vote still do not understand what the elected body is all about. So that is an opportunity for us to take forward.

Mr Rattenbury: One other quick comment I would add is that I think the election was strongly contested this time. We had 14 candidates for the seven positions. That in itself was a positive sign. The candidates were quite actively campaigning. So it is a growing model in that sense.

MR WALL: I want to go to another part of it. Elections ACT had a number of polling places throughout NAIDOC Week to try and improve that turnout, but still, looking at them, close to half had four, five or fewer voters turning up. A number of them had no voters. What reassessment is done of the polling places that are selected to try and engage a higher number at each venue?

Ms Howson: Mr Wall, that is a really good question. We have reflected on what worked and what did not work in that last process. I know that Robyn can follow through with some more detail on this, but there are certain venues and timing around our presentation—opportunities missed, if you like, as well as some that worked really well. Robyn, do you want to follow up on the specifics?

Ms Forester: Yes. I think for us part of that assessment of those polling locations is really around where there are particular events or major activities happening and that

is where we got our increase in numbers. They are the sorts of things that we will take into consideration next time around. Some of the smaller venues, like the libraries and so forth where we did not get a high turnout of people, are really an indication that a lot of the community do not visit or do not conduct any activity at those particular locations. For us it is about looking at what opportunities are about, what major events are on where we have got a captive audience. And that was really clear, particularly with having the polling booth at the NAIDOC ball, the hostels luncheon and at NAIDOC on the peninsula. That is where we really need to concentrate our efforts to make sure that those opportunities are available for our community to be able to get out and vote.

Mr Rattenbury: One place where we did get a substantial vote was a polling station at the AMC, where we had about 39 votes cast out of a population of 55 to 60. So we had a particularly high participation rate in the AMC, which I was very pleased about.

MR WALL: I think the participation rate there was good. It is just interesting I think to reflect that four of them were ordinary votes by pre-enrolled and 34 were declaration votes. I guess it still goes to the fact that getting people on the roll is a challenge.

Mr Rattenbury: That was where some of that feedback was, “If I vote for this, do I get caught up in some of those other matters?”

MR WALL: They are stand-alone, are they not, the rolls?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

MR WALL: If you are on the roll for the Indigenous body you do not automatically go onto the territory and federal election roll?

Ms Forester: There is no cross-referencing. To vote at the ATSIEB elections you have to be eligible to be on the ACT roll, for instance, over 18 years of age and resident in the ACT.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: Have you been able to measure what sorts of outcomes you have had since the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body came to be till now? I know it is only a young organisation really, but have you been able to measure any outcomes to be able to communicate that to people in the broader community?

Ms Forester: I think we do a fair bit of communication out to the community and through government directorates on the work of the elected body. I think just the fact that they have been called on to provide input and feedback on a number of processes, whether it is within government or outside government, is a really good measure of what the elected body is doing out there.

Ms Howson: I think one of the really good examples is the blueprint for youth justice. That is an initiative that is now, I think, into its third year, and the design process and the advice that has been provided from the elected body in the implementation of that

blueprint has been quite material in influencing the way in which we have addressed the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. We are seeing that now flow through in some of the successes that we are having with that particular program. That is another example.

I also agree with Robyn's point that we could be more proactive in linking the influence of the elected body on policy with how that translates into outcomes for the community. I know that is something the elected body themselves are very interested in. Maureen, did you want to add to that?

Ms Sheehan: I think the elected body has been very successful at getting ACT government directorates to look at their own budget expenditure and to put a lens across that, which is: what outcomes are we achieving for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from our general expenditure? And I think we can see the evolution of processes that the elected body has created to make the bureaucracy more responsive. For example, the estimates processes that the elected body itself conducts have evolved over the years to really get that focus on where is the expenditure going and what sorts of outcomes is it achieving for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

Just because directors-general and directorates have to come and explain to the elected body their thought processes and their allocations, that in itself puts a discipline on thinking. That is a great improvement, because if you do not have that opportunity for reflection and to be able to feed that back to the elected body and then hear their feedback and improve your services over time, if you do not have that opportunity, then you do not actually make those improvements. Process is not the same thing as outcome, but without those sorts of reflective processes, you do not actually get to the better outcomes.

MS BERRY: I have another question on that. West Belconnen has a high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living out there. I do not recall there were any polling stations out there—there were?

Ms Forester: Yes, there was, at the child and family centre.

MR WALL: It got one vote.

MS BERRY: I think it is important. Once there is a presence and people start talking about it, that will obviously make a difference in the future. I had another question on this matter. No, it has gone. I will ask my substantive question. Sorry, I will come back to that when I remember what it was. Regarding NAIDOC Week, what other ways does the government showcase Aboriginal culture in this city outside NAIDOC Week?

Mr Rattenbury: I guess there are a range of ways. I will probably start rattling off a couple of examples and I will try not to be too lengthy.

MS BERRY: When we have talked about NAIDOC Week, it is always condensed into one celebration during the week when, really, we should be celebrating this all the time as much as we can.

Mr Rattenbury: I guess, big picture—and it is the longstanding position of the ACT government—the process of acknowledgement of traditional custodians is something that plays out. We all go to the events every day in every corner of the city. That is a constant, I guess, reinforcing of the role of the traditional custodians in this area. We, of course, have the showcase at the Multicultural Festival, which is another one day of activities but one that I think has quite a high profile and is one of Canberra's biggest events essentially.

Outside of that, there are all the other events that go on. The Southside Community Services art exhibition from the jail tends to have a high proportion of Indigenous artists participating—some of those sorts of programs. We have of course got Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week. Many of the government directorates have their reconciliation action plans which, again, see a series of events roll out. JACS, in particular, is very strong in that space.

Ms Howson: I think there is a commitment to notions of cultural awareness and promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as part of the Australian cultural landscape. And we see that flow through, for example, in our arts program and there is showcasing and workshops that feature many levels of the community. We also see that expressed through our involvement in national parks and environmental protection issues and our engagement with the Aboriginal community. There are some really excellent programs now being stepped out to inform the community about the Aboriginal understanding of land and the value and benefits in the landscape. Through a range of programs that are funded through government initiatives there is, I think, at a number of levels a cultural dimension.

We also have the cultural centre, of course, out at Yarramundi Reach, and that is a gathering place. Throughout the year, particularly in association with a number of these feature weeks where we can take the opportunity to leverage off broader media exposure, the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs is increasingly looking at linking activities at that place, which is something we are promoting as a safe place for the Aboriginal community to gather and meet and engage in celebration of issues of cultural importance to them.

THE CHAIR: Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: I am interested in the whole-of-government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agreement and, firstly, a summary of where is it up to after 30 June in tangible terms. Ms Sheehan talked about the elected body casting a lens over the department and other activities. What tangible difference are you hoping to see from having this particular agreement and could we have an update on that as well?

Mr Rattenbury: As I touched on in my opening remarks, there was a bit of a hiatus there on the agreement through that period of the election. But there are one or two key jobs the elected body have got to get on with now, as well as the justice agreement, aside from all their other work. We are now up to the stage of getting to a final draft. I hope to have it completed within this calendar year. That is certainly my aspiration, but that sits with the elected body to some extent as well. That is the progress.

In terms of tangible difference, again, as I touched on earlier, I think for me there are several things. One is the value statements that will go into the front of the agreement that guide the culture of government and, hopefully, spread through the community in a sense of the recognition of Aboriginal culture in the ACT and also the necessity of improving the quality of life and key indicators for many in our Indigenous community.

The other key difference, though, is that there will be a series of KPIs in the document and that is the bit that we are still finalising particularly at the moment, because it is a new feature. It is going beyond some of the value statements and those seven priorities I spoke of before that the community identified. Having the KPIs there I think is important. But what we have got is a document that the community has said, "These are the areas we really want you to focus on." My aspiration is that that is where government will focus its energy and will deliver against those performance indicators.

MS LAWDER: Will it be for a certain period?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, it will be a three-year agreement, for two reasons. One is in three years time we might want to refocus, and the other is to put a measure point on those indicators.

MS LAWDER: Will there be partway points of evaluation as well, or will it be at the end of that three years?

Mr Rattenbury: I would imagine in many ways the estimates process conducted by the elected body would be that measure point because it is built into the calendar. The directorates come before the elected body. So it is a key chance to check that. Obviously as the responsible minister, I will be keeping an eye on it as well and, where necessary, taking matters up with my cabinet colleagues across agencies.

MS LAWDER: Certainly in terms of the indicators, just this morning PAC was talking about the national partnership agreement on homelessness and the lack of indicators, if you like. I am interested to ensure that indicators in documents such as this are far easier to measure and report on.

Mr Rattenbury: It was one of my pet projects in my life in the NGO sector before this. Government agreements that are full of fine words and future promises do not necessarily deliver the outcomes we need. I bring that heritage to my current role. We have got to be realistic. There is a danger for government that if you put a target out there and you do not reach it, there is a public downside to that. I think it is also important to put targets there to make you strive for them. I would rather strive and fall a bit short than not have a target and get nowhere.

THE CHAIR: Minister, after a year of operation of the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, what advantages has it brought over the previous arrangements?

Mr Rattenbury: I have got an idea, or is that unfair?

Ms Howson: I can kick that off, if that is all right, and then Robyn can fill in the detail. Dr Bourke, thank you for that question. The intent of the new branch was to really refocus our central resources on improving relationships with the community—improving relationships, interrelationships, between the community and government. It was also to support the government as a whole to lift its, dare I say, cultural confidence. We might get into that discussion again. The third area of focus was to provide strategic policy advice to the minister on direction. I think in the year that has been it is evident—it is, again, hard to demonstrate—that our relationships with the community are much stronger than they have ever been. I would particularly suggest that is as a result of the consultation process that we have supported around the development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agreement.

That process went very well. We were led by the community in terms of the way we should engage, and we made it a two-phase process. We actually went back to the community to check that we had heard correctly what they were telling us. The feedback that we have had on that has been overwhelmingly positive. This goes to your question, Ms Lawder. What is also different about this agreement is that I think we see stronger ownership across the community for the direction that has been set out in that agreement.

Also, relationships across government have been built. Robyn and her team have invested a lot of time in that foundation work in establishing key contacts across government and ensuring that people understand the role of OATSIA and how they can assist different parts of government to achieve their objectives. Robyn, I think, could spend her entire week providing advice to other parts of government on how to engage effectively with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on how to understand issues.

In the area of cultural confidence, that is something that we particularly want to focus on this year in supporting the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate in the implementation of some very concrete measures around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment. In the area of strategic advice, of course, it is the agreement itself. Is there anything you would like to say?

Ms Forester: Just to add to that one of the positives for us as an office sitting within the directorate is our ability to be able to form those really good relationships with other directorates and also using that for them as a cultural lens when they are developing policies or programs that are going to affect the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. It is also about saying to them, “We’re here to assist but we’re not here to do the work for you.” It is about, in some ways, keeping the directorates on target for the work that they are doing to make sure that they remember Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business is everybody’s business and that they have OATSIA as a sounding board for them to come back and to run ideas and concepts through.

I think the major pieces of work that we have commenced since the office has been there, particularly around the whole-of-government agreement, have been really good pieces of work. As Natalie said, we have done that in two phases. Often our community is the most surveyed and most researched. They trawl our intellectual property and, whether it is government or community, often they do not go back and

say, “Is this actually what we have heard?” For us to have been able to do the second phase of gathering that information and then taking it back out to them and saying, “That is what we have interpreted you are saying,” has been a really good opportunity for us. If we did not have the office in the space that we have had it with the staff and the people that I have in my team, we may not have been able to do that as successfully as we have this past 12 months.

THE CHAIR: Employment was something that you mentioned before, Ms Howson. One of the key recommendations from our inquiry into the ACT public service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy was a revitalisation of the public service Indigenous staff network. Perhaps you could tell me more about how OATSIA has facilitated that and other coordination to increase employment in the public service.

Ms Forester: OATSIA are supporting the secretariat functions for the staff network which has been reinvigorated. They have an executive committee that is supporting the work around the staff network. They are due to have another meeting shortly. Since the network has been reinvigorated they have a champion and they have support from a number of executives across ACT government. I think the opportunities that are growing out of the revitalisation of the network are being able to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees do have a voice that is being heard and that they can actually start to input into their own recruit development and retention and recruitment aspirations.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MR WALL: Just as a follow-on: Ms Forester, in relation to the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, what portion of your time and officers’ time is spent liaising between other government departments on Indigenous issues against doing awareness building or proactive work in the community?

Ms Forester: I think that is all something that is intertwined—awareness building and working with other government directorates and providing advice. A huge percentage of my time is spent on doing that, along with my staff’s time.

MR WALL: What portion of your office’s resources would go towards dealing within the ACT government on issues?

Ms Forester: Of the total office?

MR WALL: Yes.

Ms Forester: I would say that probably 60 per cent of the staff time in my office is dealing with building awareness, cultural competency and working across government with other directorates, providing support and advice.

MR WALL: And the balance of the time?

Ms Howson: I think that is probably a difficult question.

MR WALL: I was wondering: is there a measure or some sort of performance indicator?

Ms Howson: We have not actually collected that data to be that precise. But I think it would be fair to say that, on balance, Robyn is saying there is an interrelationship because part of the support around cultural competency is to improve relationships with the community and building that bridge to the community, and how to consult effectively. The office certainly do not take responsibility for consultation on subject matter-specific issues but will provide guidance in establishing connections and contacts within the community for other parts of government to engage.

Last year was a foundation year for the branch and it would be reasonable to expect that more of their time was spent on establishing relationships with other government agencies to give them the authority, and authorising environment, to support engagement with the community. Robyn and her team largely do, dare I say it, almost certainly more than the office hours in terms of their engagement. As with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the public service, they are also leaders in the community. It is very difficult to separate their time spent with neighbourhoods and communities for work or non-work purposes. That is the great value of having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the public service, because they can bring that depth of experience, and their connections with community as leaders is beneficial.

MR WALL: I have a substantive question, minister. I know it is a bit of a crossover between this area and JACS, but the Aboriginal Justice Centre that closed—what are the continuing arrangements in place? Or am I best directing that to the Attorney-General?

Mr Rattenbury: Probably. In the broad, the attorney has taken the lead on that. I have been engaged in some discussions. Again, in the way Robyn just spoke of, it has been a bit of a generic discussion and advice about looking at it from a whole-of-community perspective. The attorney has put in place a number of arrangements for particular services to continue, such as the friends scheme when somebody had been arrested—those very specific roles that the justice centre had. There is work going on to seek to establish a replacement organisation, an Indigenous-led replacement organisation. I think it speaks to an issue that I am mindful of, that is, we need to make sure we do preventative work with a range of our community providers to make sure they have the governance skills and the capabilities to not get to the place the justice centre got to. That is a broader challenge that we have to get on top of.

MR WALL: I will direct further questions to the A-G.

Mr Rattenbury: On the specifics, I think that would be best, yes.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: Ms Forester, during other committee hearings I think we have talked about how you reach out to people in the community about what is going on. A lot of it was word of mouth, but it was looking at different ways that it works for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to get engaged. Has there been any more work on

that?

Ms Forester: We continue with the word-of-mouth process, but we also continue to provide as much information, whether it is through paper format or through electronic format, as possible. The office provides information to the various networks on behalf of other community organisations and so forth. If there are things happening, we help to publicise and advertise that to community. We are looking at revamping our own internal communication strategy so that we can get information out more broadly right across government and through the community.

MS BERRY: I have been asking questions about it, but congratulations on the turnout for the vote as well. I think it is great to get more people involved. I do not really have any other questions.

THE CHAIR: Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: I have a question relating to page 136 of the annual report—recommendations from the Select Committee on Estimates 2012-2013 and the ACT government response to recommendation 105. I am not sure if you are able to answer this, but it is around whether there has been any new Aboriginal housing capacity. Secondly, it says that, following the election of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, the government will commence a review of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act. I would be interested in an update on that.

Mr Rattenbury: I will take the second one and then I will defer to Ms Howson on the housing issues. Certainly in terms of the review of the act, there have been discussions around suitable terms of reference for that and we are close to getting that finalised. It has been one of those bedding down exercises where it was deferred prior to the election, to let the new elected body take it on and lead it, and they have very much been in the process of getting their feet under the desk, so to speak, and the two agreements. In a sense, it has been a little down the pecking list, but we are getting on with it. I expect to have the terms of reference finalised, again, this calendar year certainly.

On the housing issue, I believe Ms Sheehan is going to answer the question.

Ms Sheehan: Thank you for that question, Ms Lawder. As the committee probably knows, I was responsible for Aboriginal housing for some time, so it is something particularly dear to my heart. As Ms Lawder would know, some work was commissioned from the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, basically doing a research synthesis of what was known about successful models of the provision of Aboriginal housing around the country and what could be learnt from that. That research was undertaken in conjunction with the elected body. The elected body was very keen—and this goes back to the idea of making all expenditure accountable for the provision of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders—to make sure that in the provision of housing it was not just designated Aboriginal housing, but it went across all forms of tenure of housing in terms of what could be provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: affordable rental, private rental, home ownership, affordable home ownership and so on.

Arising from that work, the desktop synthesis occurred. It became clear from that that the best way to ensure failure of a housing organisation, whether it is an Aboriginal housing organisation or a community housing organisation, is lack of volume. So it would be the wrong thing to try to establish another Aboriginal housing organisation to manage a small amount of housing. Some further work is being done now to look at working in partnership with larger Aboriginal organisations in terms of how they might be able to assist. The biggest organisation is, of course, Aboriginal Hostels. We are looking to do some more work with Aboriginal Hostels to see what they might be able to do to assist us. We will continue to look particularly at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander home ownership and what might be able to occur there.

More work is being done. I think it is very important for the committee to understand that it was never the intention, particularly of the elected body, to use the work as a basis to establish a very small housing organisation with a very small amount of stock. Experience right around the country would tell us that that is not an effective way to provide housing. We want to take a successful approach, which is to let us work with a large, successful organisation and let us look at tenure right across the continuum.

THE CHAIR: Our time has expired, I am afraid. It is now 2.15. We are going to take a five-minute break and then hear from Minister Burch as we move on to multicultural affairs and women.

Short adjournment.

Appearances:

Burch, Ms Joy, Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Disability, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Racing and Gaming, Minister for Women and Minister for the Arts

Community Services Directorate

Howson, Ms Natalie, Director-General

Chapman, Ms Sue, Deputy Director-General

Sheehan, Ms Maureen, Executive Director, Service Strategy and Community Building

Manikis, Mr Nic, Director, Community Participation Group, Service Strategy and Community Building

Wensing, Ms Veronica, Manager, Office for Women, Community Participation Group, Service Strategy and Community Building

Starick, Ms Kate, Executive Director, Disability ACT

Baumgart, Mr Richard, Director, Disability ACT

Evans, Jacinta, Ms, Senior Manager, Therapy ACT

THE DEPUTY CHAIR: We are just waiting for the chair, but we might kick off. There is a privileges statement in front of everyone which I am sure you are all already familiar with.

Ms Burch: Yes.

THE DEPUTY CHAIR: Minister, did you have an opening statement?

Ms Burch: Yes, I do. I am mindful of time through the afternoon and I will combine my opening statement across disability, therapy, women and multicultural affairs, if I may.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss those portfolios. If I can start with disability and therapy, 2013-14 has been a very big year of change and preparation. The national disability insurance scheme successfully commenced on 1 July this year and is already providing people with a disability with more choice and control over their supports and services.

This is a massive project, and an equally massive level of preparation has been involved. Both the ACT and the commonwealth are investing \$21.8 million to prepare the sector and families, including over \$7 million for the enhanced service offer which provided grants to more than 1,300 people with a disability. This investment also includes \$4.5 million of sector development activities, including workshops, community conversations and grants to help organisations and people with a disability to get ready for the NDIS.

During this period of change, the ACT NDIS task force has been actively engaging with people with a disability and service providers to ensure that they are supported during the transition to the NDIS. Part of the NDIS preparation has been the government's gradual withdrawal from supported accommodation services by June 2017 and the withdrawal of specialist disability services within Therapy ACT by

December 2016. Disability ACT and Therapy ACT are supporting people with a disability during this change to ensure continuity of support.

Disability ACT continues to work towards improving outcomes and approaches for people with a disability through the ACT government's policy framework, *Future directions: Towards challenge 2014*, which is now in its final year.

The highlights in 2013-14 include the engagement of 86 teachers and over 2,500 students in the everyone everyday disability awareness program and the Connect and Participate Expo held in March that attracted over 6,000 Canberrans.

In 2013-14 Therapy ACT continued to provide therapy services for children from birth through to eight years with developmental delay and people from birth to 65 with disability. Some 4,787 clients were provided with therapy services and 90 per cent of respondents to the Therapy ACT satisfaction survey were satisfied overall with the services they received.

With regard to my responsibilities as Minister for Women, we have refreshed the women's information service to support its work in providing individualised information and referral. During the period from July last year to June this year women's information responded to 7,886 support requests, 3,823 of which were phone requests, 18 per cent were face-to-face appointments, 30 per cent were requests received via email or post, and a further 3.5 were requests received through either the library or the internet. Over 260 women attended 14 development courses or support groups.

As Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I am happy to say that our commitment to multiculturalism is strong and evident in initiatives such as our annual multicultural grants; support to the community language sector; the work experience and support program; and, of course, our grand community event, the National Multicultural Festival. I firmly believe that we celebrate our multicultural community deeply in this city, and we support many of the organisations and associations across our city.

I will leave it at that. I am happy to take, and look forward to, questions.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Recently you held a one Canberra, many faiths symposium in the Assembly. Minister, what was the thinking behind the symposium? Who attended? What were the outcomes? I shall take it from there.

Ms Burch: The thinking came about because there has been a lot of negative press and a lot of concern across our multicultural community with heightened awareness where we have gone to a high alert status, there are conversations within the federal house about banning the burqa, and there was just a narrative and a sentiment that there needed to be a clear sign from this government and this community that we support our entire community regardless of their background and faith.

I held two breakfast meetings, one with our Muslim leaders and then, as a second follow-up breakfast meeting, one with our multifaith leaders. What was clear from that was recognition by those groups that we the ACT government support them and we support them proudly. But there was general agreement that it would be timely to

have a very public affirmation of that support across our community regardless of faith and regardless of culture. It was in that conversation that we recognised that we have a multicultural community, a multifaith community, but we are one community, one Canberra. Hence the title of that symposium was pulled together.

We invited a range of stakeholders from our seniors groups and from the various multicultural association groups. We were limited by what we could fit in the reception area. I made a very clear and deliberate decision to hold it here, because that was part of that public narrative—that from the parliament of our community we would stand as one and support all in our community with that positive statement. I think it was successful.

We are putting together a reference group or a facilitation group that will follow through on some of the actions that will come from that. That will be co-chaired by Azra Khan, from the Monash Canberra Islamic Centre, and by John Hargreaves, who is a former minister for multicultural affairs. We will provide a full write-up of that, and outcomes, and we will make very clear who is on that group and how we will move forward for that. Given that it was held last Thursday, I imagine that the write-up will probably be out in the next week or so. Nic? Possibly, yes.

I think it was very successful. The quiet conversation I have just had with Mr Manikis indicated that the feedback has been incredibly positive and supportive from those who attended and from others who were not able to attend.

THE CHAIR: You mentioned a couple of leaders. Has the rest of the membership been finalised yet?

Ms Burch: It is being finalised, and we hope to have that finished by next week. Once we have bedded that down, we will make a public statement about who that is. As to some of the ideas that came out of it, there was a call from the Muslim community to participate in Foodbank and discussion about how they get out in the community and support various volunteering activities, whether they are delivering meals on wheels or whether it is being part of the Foodbank service.

The other one was about how we have faith exchanges, how we open our mosques and have open days. There was a very successful open day at different mosques recently. It was about how we embrace and connect to existing structures such as Neighbourhood Watch and how we have an exchange from the Buddhist, the Baha'i, the Jewish or the Christian communities across our Muslim community as well. The faith leaders recognise that it is important for them in their faiths to recognise and value other faiths and open up their doors so that people can have an exchange of information.

THE CHAIR: You were talking about Muslim participation within broader philanthropy community organisations. What sort of recognition is there of existing philanthropy and charitable works within the Muslim community that are already being done there?

Ms Burch: I do not think we promote—we or the community themselves—as well as we could the good works they do internally across different faiths. I also think back to

the Multicultural Festival, where there were many associations providing free drinks. I remember a shopping cart getting pushed around the Multicultural Festival. It was a hot day. This is what they did as part of their faith, supporting community and doing good gestures. Maybe one of the outcomes that this group will have will be about how we can better promote those different philanthropic or volunteering activities that different groups do.

I was pleased to see Maureen Cane from Volunteering ACT be a member of the audience of that symposium and recognise that volunteerism is a great way to make those connections across community.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Minister, with regard to the Multicultural Festival and the procurement processes for marquees, I understand that the supplier for this year's festival hire has gone into administration. That is my understanding. No?

Ms Burch: We had a contract. We have cancelled that contract and we have got an agreed arrangement with a new provider for the 2015 festival.

MR WALL: Who is the new provider for 2015?

Ms Burch: Is that public knowledge? It is not public yet. We are finalising.

MR WALL: Still finalising negotiations? As far as the former supplier is concerned, what financial validity checks and scrutiny are undertaken of the tender proposal when it is submitted?

Ms Burch: I might go to Ms Sheehan, who can go into that detail.

Ms Sheehan: The tenderer approach in ACT government is that every tenderer has to provide information about their financial status, and there is a risk management plan for a tender process itself, so the tender panel has to do a risk assessment which is a risk to the territory of engaging any particular provider. This is always the case in a tender process.

With respect to the tender for the contract that you have just referred to, the issue there was not that the tenderer was financially not viable but that, subsequent to entering into a contract with the ACT government, that organisation applied to go into voluntary administration. The result of that was that, once it was terminated as an organisation, it could no longer provide services under a contract with the territory. So the issue was never the financial viability of the organisation; it was simply an inability to provide a service under the contract, because the organisation would no longer exist.

MR WALL: Those analyses that are undertaken during a tender process—are they carried out by Shared Services or the directorate?

Ms Sheehan: They are carried out by the members of the tender panel. Sometimes Shared Services would be a member of the tender panel; sometimes it would not. It

would depend upon the nature of the contract, the value of the contract and so on.

MR WALL: In terms of that contract, I understand that it was a three-year agreement.

Ms Sheehan: That is right.

MR WALL: How is the payment structured for the three years services, and are we in arrears?

Ms Burch: Are we out of money?

MR WALL: Yes.

Ms Burch: No.

Ms Sheehan: No. It was annualised. The process is that we go to the procurement board to get procurement authorisation for a period of time and a value. The procurement board gave us authorisation to enter into an arrangement for three years, but it is an annualised amount. We would set a price each year, and then, if it was necessary to negotiate a variation, we could do that. For example, if we take marquees, if we had a need for a greater number of marquees or a greater number of stalls because we had more stallholders, then, on an annual basis, we would have a negotiation with the provider to increase or to decrease the number of stalls, and all of that is included within the contract itself.

MR WALL: The former provider was an interstate company. What consideration was given to local service providers or local small businesses for the Multicultural Festival?

Ms Sheehan: There is a requirement around value for money, so there is a preference for local providers. That is contained in the policies of Shared Services, but it still has to be with value for money. So it is not possible—I think the committee would understand this—to allocate a loading for a local provider and say that because the provider is local we are prepared to pay 10 per cent more or 20 per cent more. But value for money is very important. It might be that in the value-for-money consideration—this is something that the tender evaluation panel would be very careful about—if it is an interstate provider and they quote a particular price but then somewhere in the quote say, “And in addition to that, we want a 10 per cent loading to bring our infrastructure down from another jurisdiction,” then obviously you would take that into account in the value-for-money consideration. So it might be that in fact interstate providers sometimes price themselves out of the market. Of course, it is always on a case-by-case basis that you make these sorts of assessments, but value for money and quality services have to be at the core.

MR WALL: When you say “value for money”, there needs to be a tangible balance. If two tenders are put in and the scope of what they are providing is identical—there is a slight variance in cost, say, one, two, three per cent, one is a local supplier and one is from interstate—how are they assessed against each other?

Ms Sheehan: The assessment criteria for every tender are set out in the request for

tender. Of course, it varies on a case-by-case basis. But it is part of the public documentation. All of the documentation is available on the Shared Services website. All tenderers are aware of what the selection criteria are. It is not mysterious for the tenderers. It is not as if they put up a tender for particular service but they are not quite clear about what the selection criteria are. It is all in the public domain.

MS BERRY: A supplementary on the Multicultural Festival: have you got any changes in mind for this Multicultural Festival that will be different from the last Multicultural Festival?

Ms Burch: It is an ever-moving feast and there is always something new to keep the attendants interested. Do you want to give a snapshot?

Mr Manikis: Yes, certainly. For next year the plan is well and truly going ahead and what we are looking to do in February 2015 is utilise the space in East Row. In other words, ACTION buses will be relocating for that weekend, and hopefully we will be able to spread the footprint out further. That is the physical footprint. It is becoming a bit more elongated.

MS BERRY: Will that be more people or just—

Mr Manikis: The applications that have come in have indicated that there will be more stalls, but not significantly more. But what that means is more space on the ground that we can put those stalls on and, therefore, alleviate some of the congestion, hopefully going into East Row, up Alinga Street, up to Northbourne Avenue and then along East Row to Bunda Street from London Circuit. We are putting some stages in there as well.

There are some new components. We have got a lot of overseas interest and cultural groups coming in through the embassies now where the respective ministries of culture in their respective countries are supporting groups to come in. So there will be an enhanced international program. Also from interstate, we are getting a lot of interest, particularly from Victoria and a little more from Sydney as well. The applications for performances and cultural activities from our local community are also increasing.

I think what you will find is that we will still have our community showcases. We will add the Bengalis. They are very keen to come in. Traditionally they go with India in the city. They have asked for a slot for themselves on the Sunday. Euro Street, which is down Ainslie Avenue usually, have had more interest from European high commissions and embassies. Therefore, they will come out into Civic Square and take up that space.

The festival is really changing and evolving. But what it does is reflect the interest and the demand of the community itself and our diplomatic missions here. We have got the Indonesian embassy here who are very keen to build on what they did last year. They were quite significant participants last year. They are taking a 24-metre stall and want to bring three hours of cultural performance from Jakarta and other places in Indonesia. The Deputy High Commissioner of Malaysia was in the other day. He wants to do what Indonesia did last year. The Egyptian ambassador rang me the other

day as well. He is very keen to do something, some cultural groups from Egypt, of all places. The Sri Lankan High Commissioner was in to talk about cultural groups from Sri Lanka coming in.

I talk about that as: is it Canberra being the most livable city? That is starting to reverberate around the embassies. And what the embassies are doing is promoting Canberra within their countries and capital cities as well. So the festival got front page of the *Jakarta Post* when the embassy was participating in the festival last year. There was the same thing in Russia as well. In Moscow we got media space in their number one newspaper. We have also got Greece and Spain indicating that they will come through. But these are through the community groups who have got contacts with those countries of origin.

All in all, it is going to be quite a showcase of our cultural diversity, not just our cultural diversity but also a bit about Canberra being open for business as a cosmopolitan city. What we are also looking to do is put postcards into cafes and what have you around western Sydney and the middle of Sydney, not only promoting it through the window of our embassies internationally but also on our doorstep, which is 2½ hours down the highway, trying to get people to come along as well. That campaign will kick off in December some time.

These are all new initiatives that we are toying with for the festival. It is not just the party itself but it is the strategic offshoots and advantages that we can gain from the event itself going forward. We always keep an eye on that and we have got a very talented team that sits there and thinks about these things, within our budget. The minister towards the end of the year, or November, will be announcing headline acts and new sponsors that have come on board. The business sector is also taking note of the event. And we do have some pretty good headline acts as well that will add to the event itself.

Having said all that, I should also say that the most important part is that other dimension of the festival, the community showcasing the cultural diversity and traditions that exist here in Canberra. We have had a record response and we do support the groups through our multicultural grants to refresh their commitment, their costumes and cultural performance attire, so to speak. And all that seems to be bubbling along quite well.

MS BERRY: I will not ask you to give away names of any headline acts, but will the stage be in the same place as it was last time? That was a little challenging for parents to endure.

Ms Burch: Which stage?

MS BERRY: The Timomatic one.

Ms Burch: Stage one, the Timomatic one.

MS BERRY: That was the only one I really endured with my children. I enjoyed it too, but it was—

Mr Manikis: We are very mindful of the bottleneck through there, but it is a festival in that city space, Garema Place essentially, and we really are limited on how we can move stages around. Because we have got East Row and Alinga Street, what we need to do is have that thoroughfare there right through from Bunda Street all the way up through to Northbourne Avenue. So we are going to make sure that that happens by putting the stage around the corner, close to the chess pit, further down from the chess pit towards the shops there, facing towards the chess pit. That will be our stage one, which will then give much more space for the audience as well as that flowthrough all the way through.

THE CHAIR: Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: I go back to the interfaith symposium. Congratulations, minister, on the symposium. It was very worth while, from what I could read of the tweets while I was in the Assembly. I am interested to know which faith groups and cultural groups were invited as well as those which actually attended. Are you able to provide us with such a list?

Ms Burch: There were a range of people invited. All the members of the Interfaith Forum were invited—seniors groups. There was quite an extensive list, but we were also limited by my absolute determination to have it in the reception room here. So it was limited by space as well.

Mr Manikis: The idea behind the one Canberra symposium, as the minister has stated, is that it is not just the Muslim community that have a mortgage on social cohesion; it is the responsibility of the total community. The invitees were from the union movement, the business sector, the regional community service organisations and obviously the Interfaith Forum who have members from all religious groups, including the Pagan Awareness Network which belongs to that group, ironically. However, you can get an idea now that the executive of the schools congress were invited.

MS LAWDER: I was just interested. There were a couple of faiths that were not represented, and I just wondered whether they had been unable to send a representative or perhaps they were not—

Ms Burch: Some people were just not able to get there as well. If you look at our Indian community, FINACT would represent 24 organisations. Not necessarily for this but oftentimes I will put out an invite to FINACT if room is a challenge and just hope that internally they get the invites out and work out that process.

But whether people were at the symposium or not, they are able to participate in the follow-on activities. That was not the end of it. “If you were not there, you will miss out.” This will definitely go out to all sorts of groups and there will be a very public call about how do we get the action. It was not just a great morning for talk. There has to be concrete action out of this.

It is also linked to the next iteration of our multicultural framework. I think it is on on 29 November over in the Theo Notaras building. We will get some community members together and do that first conversation about what is the next framework,

what is the next multicultural framework. There was the discussion paper, that start-up discussion paper, that was released at the symposium. That is a process that will allow people to make connections and say, “What are some of the activities that we really have to see and how do we make those links to the broader community such as volunteering groups and others?” We are busy, the community groups are busy, and oftentimes such as this you need to take a chance to stop and look over your own horizon and over your own cultural group or faith-based group and see how you make connections more broadly.

We are certainly in a challenging time. I do not think anyone can read a paper without knowing that some within our multicultural community are feeling anxious and concerned. This is a time for all of us to work together to say we will support everyone and everyone has the right to be respected and hold their faith and belief.

THE CHAIR: We might move on to women’s affairs. We will start at that end of the table and work back this way. Ms Lawder, again.

MS LAWDER: Minister, since the closure of the Women’s Information Referral Centre last December, can you outline—

Ms Burch: Relocation rather than closure.

MS LAWDER: What has been the financial saving to the Office for Women since the centre closed?

Ms Burch: I might ask one of the officials. Ms Chapman can answer that.

Ms Chapman: Certainly the most obvious saving was the rent on the premises in London Circuit. The other savings were to do with not publishing in hard copy the women’s calendar and going online with that. I cannot tell you how much exactly that was, but that was certainly an efficiency that we put in. But the reality is, in terms of the fundamentals of the programs and things that we have operated, they are all operating as they used to, with a couple of exceptions. Some of them are operating much more in an outreach fashion now and are using the facilities we have outside the Theo Notaras building, through the child and family centres, but also through the Theo Notaras building, where we have got a good library. We have got facilities there for women to drop in if they want to.

The women’s return to work program is continuing, and that is done out of the Theo Notaras building, the same staff, but they work also fortnightly out of the CFCs. We have made some savings, but we are actually reshaping it so that we get a much broader coverage across Canberra itself.

MS LAWDER: So the savings from, for example, rent and the calendar online—have they been reinvested within the office?

Ms Chapman: Yes. We have put some resources into the Rape Crisis Centre to help us with running some programs for women suffering from domestic violence. We have some interesting programs there. We have, for example, a walk-in group, which sounds a bit unusual but it is a group that brings women together who can just be with

each other in a non-threatening environment and so on. We have tried to use what savings we have in a different way.

I should also add, because we have put it into the Community Participation Group more fully, that we have been able to save some staffing that we have then moved out to other places so they can be backed up—so somebody else is there to answer the phone, for example—who have been trained up on the information that they can refer women to. There is always somebody in the office in the Community Participation Group. We have made efficiencies across that whole group to give a bit more support, I suppose, in a different way.

MS LAWDER: So all the people who had previously been employed at the Women's Information Referral Centre are still employed within the Office for Women?

Ms Chapman: No. The Women's Information Referral Centre was not part of the Office for Women. It was a unit of its own. Some of the women who were employed in the referral centre in London Circuit have been absorbed into the Community Participation Group and are working out of there. The return to work program is one of those. Two of the women who were working in London Circuit have found jobs in two other parts of the organisation. One has gone to Housing. She has actually put a women's lens onto the housing policy area, which is, I think, a really useful, practical thing for her to do.

MS LAWDER: Thanks.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: I have a supplementary, chair, regarding the work that women are doing out in the communities through the child and family health centres. How often does that happen, and how do women know about it?

Ms Chapman: On the website we have certainly talked about this new model and what is available and where it is available. That is the first place. If people look that up, they will find out. In the child and family centres themselves we have information now in each of those centres. Appointments can be made there, if they want to make an appointment to see somebody, and one of the staff will go out fortnightly usually. They can make appointments, of course, here in Theo Notaras as well if they want to. There are all kinds of ways of finding out the information about who is where. If you are on a return to work program, for example, the return to work program officer will work with you, wherever it suits you, if you are having that service. That is something that they arrange the bookings through just by phoning the return to work officer.

MS BERRY: Thank you. Could you update the committee on the strategy to prevent violence against women and children?

Ms Chapman: I can, but my colleague Veronica Wensing can do that in much more detail. One thing I would say is that it is a jointly managed committee between JACS and CSD. We have started a series of roundtables to build up information and evidence and to connect a whole range of organisations, committees and councils across Canberra who all should have an interest in and play a role in that particular

part of our business. That is starting to roll out now. In fact, I attended one last week. There is a lot going on there. I will ask Veronica to talk about that.

Ms Burch: Can I just add into that that I had a visit from the CEO and the chair and from ANROWS, the Australian national research body, looking at violence against women. They were very interested in the ACT and the fact that you have the Office for Women and JACS working in such strong partnership to do all we can to prevent violence against women. The ownership around that work in supporting women when they are going through the law and order aspect of it and court was of strong interest to them. I would not be surprised if they come back and further explore what we do to try and get a sense of how they can inform other jurisdictions of that partnership.

Ms Wensing: We are about midway through the ACT prevention of violence against women and children strategy, which was the period 2011 through to 2017. At the end of 2014 it is a good opportunity to look back and reflect on what has been achieved as a result of the first implementation plan of the strategy and a good starting point for developing the second implementation plan of the strategy.

The key achievements, if you like, that have occurred under the first action plan for the strategy include the partners in prevention function held at the National Press Club, with over 170 business leaders encouraging each and every one of them to consider how violence against women affects them as employers. Each of them was asked to make a personal and organisational commitment on what they were going to do towards the prevention of violence against women.

Out of that event, several other things have flowed, not least of which is the development of a set of media guides around respectful reporting on sexual violence and domestic and family violence and incorporating education in the journalism curriculum at the University of Canberra around respectful reporting of these matters. We have done numerous women's safety assessments, including at the National Multicultural Festival, in order to assess safety for women around public events.

The ACT government has introduced domestic and family violence leave in its latest EBA negotiations. Several RED—respect, equity and diversity—contact officers have been trained in how to see the indicators of whether a colleague is experiencing violence, how to support them appropriately and how to guide them towards specialist counselling and support. We have funded a number of public awareness raising campaigns, not least of which is the summer of respect campaign.

Referring back to what the minister was saying about the joint work between the Justice and Community Safety Directorate and the CSD, those campaigns have been jointly funded and have started usually at the end of October, in line with Reclaim the Night, and extended right through generally to International Women's Day in early March. That is done deliberately so that it takes in the Christmas holiday period, but it also takes in the orientation period at universities where we know that young people are at higher risk particularly of sexual violence.

Some of the things that have been funded through the Audrey Fagan violence prevention grants have been the development of coasters and posters, tote bags and things that appeal to young people that have really strong messages—things like

“consent or conviction” or “there’s nothing sexier than consent”. Last year the Women’s Centre for Health Matters developed an animated YouTube video which has had thousands and thousands of views and is targeted at young men around how to be respectful in their relationships with women.

As I said, we have commenced consultation to develop the second implementation plan of the strategy. Consultation was held with key representatives from each ministerial advisory council and advisory board across ACT government. Again, in order to stress, I guess, the importance of the issue of violence against women and how it intersects with their work, they have each been asked to go back and talk to their councils. Both the Domestic Violence Prevention Council, which is the council that answers to the Attorney-General, and the Office for Women are working together and have offered our support to any or all of those councils in those discussions. We are asking, essentially, for them to come back to us with some really practical suggestions about what should go into the second implementation plan.

More public consultation was held this week over a period of hours where some initial ideas have been presented for further discussion and deliberation. There is an intention to meet bilaterally with some of the key stakeholders who have been unable to attend those public consultations to ensure that we have got their voice in the second implementation plan. We are also working with the commonwealth Office for Women with regard to consulting with women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We will be working with them to undertake a series of what they call kitchen table discussions, which are smaller and safer discussions, for women from diverse backgrounds. And, of course, we are looking at the ACT contributions to the Senate inquiry into the prevalence of domestic and family violence that is currently underway.

All of those things will be used to inform the second implementation plan. We are very cognisant of the changing environment in terms of the introduction of the human services blueprint and the introduction of the NDIS. The actions that will be developed under the second implementation plan will be bearing in mind the shifting environment around the issue.

MS BERRY: Thank you. How does the work that you are doing on this strategy flow through into education, particularly for young people, sex education and respectful relationship education?

Ms Wensing: We have worked quite closely with the Education and Training Directorate. The Education and Training Directorate are represented on the government’s group overseeing the implementation of the strategy. We have been to discuss the issue with the safe schools task force. As a result of that discussion, we were asked to provide a keynote presentation at the education directorate’s conference where they bring together students from all schools. We have also funded a number of initiatives that are operating within the schools. The YWCA respect, communicate, choose program and the white ribbon program have also been occurring in ACT schools, as has the sexual assault prevention program for secondary students.

Ms Burch: What I am just showing is that at this year’s violence prevention awards we have different categories. Under the education category it went to the Canberra

Rape Crisis Centre for the sexual assault prevention program in secondary schools. We work closely with the Education and Training Directorate but also with the service sector. We have active collaboration and invite them in to run some projects and programs within our schools.

MS BERRY: I have just one more question on that. The Senate committee inquiry into domestic violence—I saw recently that there has been an increase in the number of reports of domestic violence. Is that the same in the ACT as it appears to be across Australia? Do you think it is for the same reasons that they have identified—that is, hopefully, it is just more people reporting?

Ms Burch: Coming forward.

Ms Chapman: Yes, we do believe that. We do not know absolutely because it could be for a whole range of reasons, but certainly the people in the industry believe a good proportion of the increase is because there is a lot more conversation about it and the community at large is taking more responsibility to deal with it in the community rather than assuming it is not something they should think about or talk about. We believe a good proportion of it is actually better reporting and people feeling empowered because they know that people are going to be doing something as a result of it.

THE CHAIR: I will take a supplementary as well. Minister, perhaps you could tell us how the prevention of violence against women and children strategy articulates with the overall strengthening of the vulnerable families strategy. It seems there should be some intersections.

Ms Burch: There clearly is a connection. If you have violence within a family, the women and the children are impacted and they could, indeed, be very vulnerable participants. Whether it is in direct services through CSD or whether it is in housing support, there are a whole range of activities that need to come into that early intervention and those vulnerable points in that cycle of abuse.

Ms Howson: Thank you, Dr Bourke. You are talking about strengthening families as part of one of the flagship initiatives under the human service blueprint?

THE CHAIR: Yes.

Ms Howson: The very essence of that particular program is that we start with the family and the individuals in that family and address the issues of priority for those families. So inasmuch as domestic violence or family violence more broadly is an issue for that family, they would be supported through their lead worker to make the right connections to the right service at the right time to have those issues supported and addressed.

THE CHAIR: Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Is the ACT women's microcredit program still continuing or has that now been amalgamated into the broader microcredit program?

Ms Sheehan: Yes, it does continue. There was, in the last budget, an additional amount of money provided by government for that sort of targeted assistance for women and disadvantaged people to gain more economic independence. There was a much better outcome to amalgamate those sources of funds and to run one program through Lighthouse, so that is what has occurred. It has been a very successful program.

MR WALL: What is the total pool of funds that are available?

Ms Sheehan: I am going to say \$800,000, but I will need to check.

Ms Burch: Certainly with the microcredit for women's program it is my understanding that it is almost self-funding now. The initial amount of money that was put in has been paid back. The women are paying back their microloans incredibly quickly and it is just an extraordinarily successful program of support. I am not quite sure if the committee has an interest; we can give you the amount of money but also a list of some of the successful programs undertaken in the last 12 months or so.

MR WALL: Please.

THE CHAIR: Do you have any at your fingertips that you could tell us about that this program has achieved?

Ms Howson: This is in a different program. I am sorry; we look a bit disorganised, but it is actually Minister Gentleman's initiative.

THE CHAIR: Okay.

MR WALL: So it has all been amalgamated under one microcredit scheme now, has it?

Ms Howson: Yes, it has.

MR WALL: It is in the annual report as an ACT women's microcredit program which ceased funding in the previous budget, which is what I first asked. It has all been amalgamated into a broader—

Ms Burch: No, we have not stopped the program. The women are still accessing the microcredit system.

MR WALL: With broader criteria now of—

Ms Burch: Yes, and it is still through brilliant ideas through Lighthouse.

Ms Sheehan: Yes, it is; through Lighthouse, yes.

MR WALL: That is all right. We will direct those to Mr Gentleman when he comes for the balance of CSD.

Ms Sheehan: And I will answer it in a better way tomorrow.

Ms Burch: She will come prepared.

THE CHAIR: Minister, the ACT women's awards have been reinvigorated. Could you tell us about the outcomes most recently and what we can look forward to later in the year?

Ms Burch: With the women's awards, we have done a review with that and we are looking to continue that. This year was the first for ACT Woman of the Year, Young Woman of the Year and Senior Woman of the Year. Nominations for the announcement next year opened on 1 August and will close on 2 December this year. We will announce those winners in March. It is associated with the International Women's Day celebrations.

Going to the recipients of this year's awards, this year being the first time we moved to these three categories, the ACT Woman of the Year was Katrina Fanning, who has done an incredible amount of work, and it is great to recognise an Indigenous woman under that category; the Young ACT Woman of the Year was Dr Kate Eisenberg, who does some great work in our hospital system; and the Senior Woman of the Year, as I was very pleased to announce, was Sue Salthouse, who is a great advocate, particularly for people with a disability and women with a disability. She has been very active on our NDIS task force and with information, making sure we get that gender lens right with our disability response through this.

All of that will come out early next year. Perhaps Veronica can talk a bit more about women's grants.

Ms Wensing: Yes. The women's grants programs—

THE CHAIR: The awards.

Ms Wensing: The call for nominations for the women's awards is open and has been open for a longer period of time in order to attract a broader group of women. It is promoted through Facebook and other social media as well as generally through the minister's media release and other publications coming from the Office for Women. Obviously it is on the Office for Women website as well. Nominations have not yet closed. Once they do, there will be an assessment or a panel to consider those nominations. The successful women will be announced around International Women's Day in March 2015.

Ms Burch: Can I just make a correction? I think I made reference to them closing on 2 December. That was actually the time for 2013. The nominations opened in March this year and close at the end of this month. I do apologise for giving you wrong information, chair.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. What kind of event is being planned to announce these awards?

Ms Burch: A similar event to next year. I was just looking to Veronica from the

Office for Women. She is probably already organising lots of activities. The approach we have taken over the last couple of years to celebrate International Women's Day is to recognise women in the ACT. We took some time to work with the Ministerial Advisory Council on Women about reconfiguring those awards. But they also go to support the thinking of our girls in schools. I know I went to the CSIRO where they had girls from schools in the labs and talking to the women scientists there. They had a great morning, thinking big, thinking: "Yes, I do like science. Do I like chemistry? How can I make a career out of this?" In the last couple of years I have hosted a lunch for schoolgirls at CIT and had guest speakers. Last year there was an electrician who is now a CIT trainer and someone who took out an award for what I will call home decorating, but I know there is a much more sophisticated term for that.

THE CHAIR: Interior design.

Ms Burch: Interior design. There you go. I knew I would find it eventually. Thank you for that. Again, it is about showing these young women that you can have a career, balance your family life and think big, dream big.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: Minister, in your opening statement you talked about the number of women who have accessed services from the women's information service.

Ms Burch: Yes.

MS LAWDER: What is the trend of that compared to previous years? More women assisted? Fewer? What channels may be getting more popular or less popular?

Ms Chapman: I think that as a general kind of answer to that I can say that we have probably had fewer walk-ins than we might have had in London Circuit, notwithstanding that we have got Theo Notaras, which is just down the road. You can either get in the lift or go up the stairs. We have certainly had a lot more contact hits on the internet, through the internet. And we are getting many more contacts around the calendar; because the calendar is updated all of the time, it is actually relevant for people and they are using that a lot more.

It is kind of swings and roundabouts. Because we are rolling out the outreach approach, we have not quite got the data collection as simplified as it might be. So we probably are not picking up the number of people who are coming into a CFC—using that as an example—and taking information; they are doing it themselves, so they are not necessarily asking for that information from an individual. We are trying to find a way to collect that as well, because that gives us an indication about how far our reach is outreaching. The fact that we have to keep filling up the information slots indicates that people are doing something, but we have not quite got that nailed yet.

We believe that using the internet and what is, in a sense, a live, up-to-date website is addressing most people's needs for information. They can obviously still phone if they want to. As I said, we have got it embedded now, so there are lots of people who can back up the phone system. And because we are going out and people are seeing people from the women's information area, it becomes a thing where they think,

“Well, I will pop in and I will talk to them,” or, “I will make an appointment.” It is building. We are changing the service model, so it does take a little time.

MS LAWDER: What about courses—the number of women seeking to do courses? How are the numbers going?

Ms Chapman: We had 240 people actually attend, but I do not have in front of me the number of people who attended courses last year. We might have to take that on notice. We could probably get back to you before the end of the day on that. I was trying to check that while Minister Rattenbury was on and I just could not find it. I will check that.

MS LAWDER: As I understand, there may be some women who access services through ACT court order mandate. How has the change of your service delivery model affected that, if at all?

Ms Chapman: I have to say that I do not believe it is affecting it at all. From memory—again, this is my memory—we only had about five last year, and I suspect it is about the same number again this year. We will double-check that. But the fact is that if they need support, we can help them with that; it is not that that service does not exist anymore.

Ms Burch: And the bulk of the services that were offered in London Circuit continue to be offered.

Ms Chapman: Absolutely.

Ms Burch: With domestic violence support, though, we are contracted, and we have funded the domestic violence service and the Rape Crisis Centre to provide that. They are the experts. They have a deeper connection into other support structures, and that is how we have made that change.

Ms Chapman: But if you looked at what was offered, if you just looked at a list of all of the things that were offered from the first London Circuit site to the Theo Notaras site and the outreach, you would see that basically they are identical right now. We are trying to develop that and again change the service model to address what people are saying to us they want and where they want it. So if you looked across the board, you would see that there is probably only one thing that has changed, and that is a thing that was called thinking Thursdays, which we believe the various directorates could do for their own public servants rather than going through the women’s information area. So it is basically the same fundamentals, and where we are delivering them and ultimately how we deliver them will be changing over time.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: Ms Wensing, you mentioned the ACT government including domestic violence in the ACT government agreement for ACT government employees. The ACTU last week announced that they wanted to have that included for all employees. I understand that there have been a couple of little hiccups in the implementation of that, with how people access it, privacy and things like that. But overall, what are your

views on all employees being able to access domestic violence leave so that they can have leave to attend crisis support, leave to attend court or whatever leave they need?

Ms Wensing: I think it is vital.

Ms Howson: I think that is a matter for the minister or government to comment on rather than a public servant, Ms Berry.

Ms Burch: Sorry, your question was?

MS BERRY: I guess it is just that the ACT government has included domestic violence—

Ms Burch: Twenty days leave per annum for employees experiencing domestic or family violence, yes.

MS BERRY: So that is a group of people who work in the ACT who can access leave?

Ms Burch: Yes.

MS BERRY: If that was spread across all employees across the ACT, what is your view on the ACTU's application to have that included? Sorry, I have put you on the spot, minister.

Ms Burch: You have indeed, Ms Berry. It is important that organisations and employers generally support women who are experiencing domestic violence. Whether it is through leave or whether it is just having a supportive workplace and flexible working arrangements really is a matter for them, for the employing structures. The various unions will, no doubt, put cases forward. But it is as much about having their work colleagues recognise the difficulties that these women are facing and providing a supported environment. That can go to organisational education. One of the good outcomes of the partners in prevention lunch was organisations that were historically not members of the women's sector standing up and going, "Actually, this is part of our problem as well." When you look at one in three or one in five women experiencing violence, it is in every workplace—not just government, not just women's organisations; it is in everybody's workplace. So beyond the conditions of leave and various EBAs, workplaces need to stand and take responsibility to make sure they have got a safe, respectful and supportive workplace.

MS BERRY: We are all part of the community after all.

THE CHAIR: The committee will adjourn for a short break.

Sitting suspended from 3.22 to 3.36 pm.

THE CHAIR: We will reconvene to deal with disability and therapy services, output class 1. Minister, can you briefly outline the progress to date in the transition to the NDIS, please?

Ms Burch: The transition to date I think has been very successful, and for no small reason, because of the preparation and the thinking that have gone into it since the announcement. The ACT signed up to be part of a trial for the national disability insurance scheme until that trial started on 1 July this year. Again, I want to thank the officials, and also those on the task force and the expert advisory panel, who all made a collective contribution to make sure that that transition works.

We have a transition plan that has a focus on ages and stages—that means that those who are aged 64 will be some of the early ones moving into the NDIS, because 65 is the cut-off out of the NDIS into aged care support—and also a focus on those little ones. Now is the time for families with children under the age of four to go into the NDIA to have a conversation and make sure that their little ones have the appropriate planning in place. Of course, we are also looking at school leavers, because that is another important stage—so at the end of this year, as we move through, as teenagers move out of school, they will be supported.

We have worked very closely with the sector and there have been significant funds going into the sector and sector development. But also the conversation started with mainstream services as we move through this transition phase and how those clients and community members that are not accessing NDIS are supported through mainstream services. I will ask Maureen Sheehan and Kate Starick to talk more on that.

Ms Sheehan: Thank you, and thank you very much for that question. As the minister said, it would not have been possible for the National Disability Insurance Agency to open its doors and start receiving clients if we had not had the opportunity to do really intensive planning beforehand. We really benefited greatly from the experience of the other trial sites, which had opened their doors 12 months before the ACT. Those trial sites had experimented with different models of phasing their clients in, so we were able to look at the pitfalls of those different phase-in models and to get the best of all possible worlds for the phasing in of clients in the ACT.

In the other sites they had trialled in New South Wales, people had come in according to what service provider they were getting a service from. The pitfall there was that there was a plan to move in expected numbers of clients for each service provider, but then it turned out, not surprisingly perhaps, that people had a number of service providers. The agency and the state and territory governments were expecting a certain number of clients to come through the door with a service provider, but they brought lots of service providers with them. In Victoria they were transitioning according to the program that clients were in. Of course, clients were in numbers of programs, and sometimes the clients did not even know that the service they were getting was a particular program. So that had its pitfalls. In Tasmania there was a specific cohort, school leavers. And in South Australia it was young children.

We took advice from the expert panel in the ACT. We said, “What do you think is the best way to phase people in?” They said, “It seems to us that if you are taking a person-centred approach, ages and stages will be the way to go because it is a point in time for the individual.” The individual brings with them all of the services that they are using at the moment, all of their community supports. That seems to us to be the best way to go about it.

Based on that experience in the other jurisdictions, we had to do an actuarial assessment about the cost of bringing people in—the whole person with all of their supports at different times—because, bearing in mind that our contributions scale up over time, there is no sense bringing in so many people according to a particular model that you bankrupt yourself in the first month. The scheme has to be sustainable.

We engaged KPMG to do a very intensive actuarial assessment for us based on different phase-in options. When we came to reaching agreement with the commonwealth, we were in the best position of any jurisdiction, because we had the most person-centred approach, which was to bring in according to ages and stages; we had very good client information; and we had very good actuarial assessments about what the costs of different options would be.

As the minister said, it is all in the preparation. When you are moving a whole system, as the ACT is, from a restricted system, with restricted resources, where people cannot get all the services they need and fewer people are getting a service than actually should be receiving a service—if you are moving into a completely different system, if you do not have good information, if you do not have good planning, things will not go smoothly. We were very lucky to have that extra year.

THE CHAIR: Minister, in your answer before you mentioned young children and bringing those into the NDIS as well—I think under fours?

Ms Burch: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Could you tell us what work is being done to inform their parents of what the NDIS is going to be able to offer children in this age group?

Ms Burch: Certainly we have released the transition plan, so all members of the community should be able to look at the ages on a quarterly basis, almost on a month-by-month basis. This is the time for those early years, the pre-school years, to move in. There is a combination of the NDIA making contact with families and Therapy ACT and Disability ACT making contact with families and advising them, if it is a known client, where they sit within that phase-in process. Again, Ms Sheehan and Ms Starick can talk to that.

But there are other opportunities. Back in March I made mention of meet the provider. There was an expo held a couple of months ago now, and also on the 17th of this month there is an opportunity to meet the six selected providers, selected through a tender process from the NDIA. They have been secured for the early intervention program—again for those under four, those pre-preschool years.

Ms Sheehan: One thing that we do know in the ACT is that we are building up to 5,075 people to receive a service under the national disability insurance scheme, whereas at the moment our data shows—our data is not perfect, but as far as we can tell—somewhere between probably 3,000 and 3,500 people getting a service. That means that there are some people who do not have a service; we need to think about where they are—where are they sitting and how we can get the information out to them.

With small children, it might be that, particularly with newborn babies, they are getting a service in the health system. As the minister said, we reach out to people where we think we might find them. We are, of course, working very closely with the health system. A very successful governance model that we have for rolling out the national disability insurance scheme involves a project board which has the directors-general—Ms Howson, as Director-General of Community Services Directorate, but also the director-general of health and the director-general of education. We are working very closely with both of those directorates, and we are looking at where children might be if they are not receiving a service in the disability system—how we can then make contact with those children and their families. The health system is a good way of making contact with those very small children who might have only just got a diagnosis or perhaps do not even have a diagnosis yet but whose parents are starting to be a bit concerned that perhaps they are not meeting their milestones.

Getting that out—having that outreach approach—is absolutely essential. Having said that, with our preparation, we have learnt from other jurisdictions that having access to information about existing clients was not straightforward. In other jurisdictions there were privacy concerns about passing information between state-based providers and the national agency. Again, we benefited from the lesson there, and that was that the national agency then used its powers under section 55 of its own legislation to write to every provider in the ACT and require them to provide information about all of their clients.

The NDIA was then in a position to get a consolidated list of anyone who was getting a service and to then write to those individuals or the families on behalf of children and say, “You’re currently getting a service; we’d like you to come in for an assessment” or “We’d like to come out to you and assist you with an assessment to see what services you might be entitled to under the NDIS.” Again, being able to learn from what has not worked in other jurisdictions and see how we can lift our game here has been absolutely a real benefit for us.

THE CHAIR: Minister, how do you maintain continuity of service through this transition period when you have got staff leaving organisations and moving to other agencies?

Ms Burch: There is a very much a focus on workforce, workforce development and supporting workforce into this transition. The call for specialist disability services to cease in Therapy ACT from the end of this year, though, as Ms Sheehan has explained, does not mean that there will not be the need for mainstream therapy support. So we do need to reconfigure what that service will look like.

But with our disability services, the framework agreement we have reached with staff goes to some strong support about their professional development, their training to position themselves for a community sector or other employment. Workforce analysis that we see is that whilst people leave Therapy ACT—they have done so for many years and they will continue; there is a standard rollover of staff—we lose and we recruit. So there is no lessening of our service offerings through workforce changes. Ms Howson or Ms Starick?

Ms Howson: I might start, minister. As the minister has said, it is an issue that we are very cognisant of. The workforce planning that we are doing is in step with the phasing approach. We are walking with our clients in the context of them entering into the national disability scheme, going through that planning process and then determining their future direction.

Our workforce planning is in step with that approach. The fact that the government has made an announcement and given such a long lead-in time to actual full withdrawal from service gives us ample time to plan and manage that transition well. Our disability service, in particular, is rolling out a program which we call “my life, my choice”. Staff in our supported accommodation service, as I said, are working with each household as they go through a planning process. Many of the staff are making decisions about where they see themselves in the future. Of course, our overall objective is to ensure that our staff continue to work within the disability sector. Marrying that to the memorandum of understanding that we have struck with the unions allows us a number of opportunities to assist staff to make a transition and make a choice to stay in the sector; many of them, I think, may make a decision to stay with clients where that relationship is working well. So we are supporting them to consider where they might go next, which organisation they might work with, and step down that approach.

Of course, we need contingencies. There are risks with that approach; it is not going to be perfect. We have some flexibility in the way that the workforce is structured. At the moment Disability ACT has relied on a fairly large casual workforce; we will reduce our reliance on that casual workforce as we see our numbers of clients decrease.

We are also reconfiguring our management structures as people leave. That, again, is a gradual phasing-down approach. I think the other thing I would like to say in that regard is that other contingencies will come into play in terms of a focus on recruitment and retention. We will be a bit more proactive about securing the services of people that are in critical operational positions for periods of time.

Therapy ACT is a very good example where we just continue to recruit specialists and allied health professionals. Not a lot has changed in terms of the pattern of that workforce. And our turnover at this point is reasonably in line with what we have seen as a normal pattern of turnover in that sector. Do you want to add anything, Kate?

Ms Starick: I think the only thing I would like to add is that the MOU has provided a very good vehicle for creating some flexible approaches that allow employees to engage with community providers whilst still maintaining a relationship with ACT government. And we are working through that. I think it is enabling us to positively keep people within the disability sector.

THE CHAIR: Minister, are you able to be specific about numbers of separations and the level of movement that is happening in this area?

Ms Burch: Ms Howson.

Ms Howson: At this stage our separation rates, as I mentioned, are pretty much in line

with what we are familiar with—certainly less than 10 per cent overall. I think it is around nine. Kate can take those questions. What we are also finding is that we are seeing that some of those separations are in positions where we have already been able to flag with staff that those positions will become redundant. It is part of this whole workforce planning process and tied in with the MOU process where there is ample notice given. At the moment we are stepping down some of our staff in core areas like finance and policy, those areas, as opposed to front-line positions.

Our numbers in Therapy ACT, again in terms of that turnover and the flexibility that Ms Starick spoke about, are such that staff do not necessarily have to leave. We are able to offer them secondments to other organisations to get a sense of their experience in a non-government environment. And we are able to backfill those people reasonably easily.

Ms Starick: For Therapy ACT specifically, we are at 92 per cent staffing. The exits that we have had from Therapy ACT have been people who at this point were on a form of leave already. They were on some long service leave or had taken leave without pay and were currently filling positions. That is about on par with our occupancy rates for this time of year.

In Disability ACT, we are, again, above 90 per cent in our staffing but, again, we have a much more flexible workforce where we have a greater casual pool as well as a relationship with agencies who provide casual staffing as well. We are still maintaining the quantum and the quality of our services.

THE CHAIR: Ms Lawder, a supplementary.

MS LAWDER: I just want to check: have there been or will there be any calls for redundancies as a result of the withdrawal of the early intervention services?

Ms Howson: There have not been any forced redundancies.

MS LAWDER: Will there be?

Ms Burch: The staff are employed by the Education and Training Directorate. They hold an Education and Training Directorate position. As has been mentioned, some staff are choosing to explore opportunities in the community sector and seeking a secondment or leave without pay to explore that. Education and Training staff will also be able to do that.

THE CHAIR: A supplementary, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: What is the current FTE for Disability ACT and Therapy ACT?

Ms Starick: The total workforce number as at the beginning of this financial year is 536.

MR WALL: That is across both areas?

Ms Starick: Across both Therapy and Disability.

MR WALL: And as we approach the end of 2016 and the end of the transition to the NDIS, what is the anticipated profile of staffing looking like?

Ms Starick: I will have to take that on notice. Towards the end of 2016?

MR WALL: At the end of the transition period?

Ms Starick: At the end of the transition period, Disability ACT will still be providing supported accommodation. Supported accommodation will be provided until June 2017. Therapy ACT will also be providing services until the end of 2016. Again, there is work underway that Minister Burch has talked about, the child and development service. So the services will continue. How they continue across government in our partnership with Health and education will be different from what they currently are now. We also expect that during that period there will be community services that develop and that Therapy, in their partnership with those different services, will have staff that are working in Therapy ACT or providing new services that are provided for early intervention in the community.

THE CHAIR: A substantive question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: I will continue on with the child and development service that was just raised. As it was announced by you, minister, it was a collaboration between Therapy ACT and other areas of government. Can you give us bit more information about how it is going to operate, who is going to be involved and what the scope of services provided is likely to be?

Ms Burch: I think this was first mentioned in my statement to the Assembly on the early intervention services and a supplementary question from you asking some other detail. Ms Evans can go into the detail of this, but this is part of the transition into the NDIS and government's decision to withdraw from specialist disability services, but also understanding that there continues to be a need for providing a response to many in our community. The framework we are putting that within is this child development unit or child development framework, and Ms Evans can go to some of the work and the partnerships that we will have across government in that.

Ms Evans: This is a service that is looking at mainstream obligations of the government when the NDIS is picking up the more specialist services. It is about having an integrated service that meets the needs of families and children and it will be consolidating some of the services we have currently got in place across Health, Education and Training Directorate and Community Services Directorate, specifically around the assessment of children, so that we can know whether they would be eligible for funding under the NDIS or whether, in fact, families need to be concerned at all about their development. At the moment, families can come into the health system or into Community Services Directorate, for instance, through a drop-in or a child and family centre visit or they might be assessed through Education and Training Directorate where the educational psychologist might do a Griffith assessment.

What we are looking to do is bring all those different assessment services into one

place, which will form the child development service. It will still have the kinds of entry points that it currently does in terms of a family might visit a child and family centre or a speech pathology drop-in, but it will mean there is a clear pathway for that family then either to the NDIS or into the range of other mainstream services that exist in the ACT.

MR WALL: It will primarily be doing that diagnosis and referral either to another service provider or over to the commonwealth into the NDIS scheme?

Ms Evans: That is correct. That is the primary focus. Of course, it will provide a continuity of service for children who are not eligible for the NDIS. We are not quite sure yet how that is going to manifest for those children who do not meet the threshold, for instance, and who have got early developmental delays. This service will make sure those families have some support.

MR WALL: And that is going to be run under—

Ms Evans: Community Services Directorate.

MR WALL: So it will see the elements that are under different directorates, as you mentioned, coming in under one?

Ms Howson: I think this is a very good example of where the ACT government is actually joining up its service offer a lot more effectively, and elements of this services support will be funded through different directorates and their appropriation. The overall service offer will make sense to the community. They will not have to go out and discover where these various services sit in parts of government. This child development service model, particularly with the opportunity for access and referral, makes it easy for families to do that.

MR WALL: And when will the service be up and running?

Ms Howson: Next year.

Ms Sheehan: Yes, from 2015 in what we are calling stage 1, because obviously Therapy ACT will be still providing its services in 2015. In 2015 some aspects of the assessment service will be co-located and some aspects of the intervention service will be co-located. But the full service offering will be from 2016.

MS LAWDER: As a supplementary, in terms of the responsibilities that will be retained by Disability ACT or CSD more generally and those that may go to NDIS, do you have a diagram as to who will be doing which bits? It might be by age or stage as well?

Ms Sheehan: That is a really important question. In deciding what is in the scope for the national disability insurance scheme, there had to be extensive work done on what constitutes a mainstream service, because the idea of the NDIS is that it provides reasonable and necessary supports for people who have a lifelong disability and for whom otherwise it is a responsibility of all mainstream services to make a reasonable adjustment in their service offer and their service delivery so that people with a

disability can receive that mainstream service.

Everyone might think it is really straightforward, what is inside the national disability insurance scheme and what is a mainstream responsibility, but it has been far from obvious to all of us. I think that is why there has been a bit of confusion. The point we are at at the moment is that we now understand, which we did not a year ago, that those diagnostic and referral services that Therapy ACT undertakes in an NDIS environment are actually considered to be a mainstream health service. So the NDIS is really challenging us to put a different lens on our existing services to understand what is a mainstream responsibility that the ACT government will have in perpetuity, because it is essentially a health assessment service, and then what is something that goes beyond a mainstream diagnostic service and then becomes a reasonable support under the NDIS.

What we could do, with the minister's agreement, is provide you with the documentation. It is called the applied principles. They have been agreed by COAG, and they are actually being refreshed at the moment. The applied principles set out what is a mainstream responsibility, and you will be able to see that. And then you will be able to see where the Therapy ACT diagnostic services sit, then what goes across into the responsibility of the NDIS, and hopefully that is quite clear. And it needs to be refreshed all the time because, as we keep saying, we are just in the trial stage at the moment and, as I said a year ago, none of us were really clear about how much of the diagnostic services would be NDIS and what would be mainstream health. We are refreshing it now. We are learning from the trial sites about how it will all work.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry, a substantive question.

MS BERRY: I have a supplementary, first, on Therapy ACT. I think there has been a bit of concern, because of people's emotional connections and their own experiences with Therapy ACT, about the fantastic work that they have already been doing for children and families across the ACT. I just want to make it clear and absolutely clarify: Therapy ACT does not finish until 2016, but the diagnostic work that you are talking about that already happens will stay with Health—that will not change? This is the hearing and—

Ms Howson: You are right. Therapy ACT, as it is currently understood, will cease to offer services from December 2016. In the lead-up to that point, we need to essentially unpick mainstream services that are part of what we currently offer through Therapy ACT from the specialist services which will be funded through the national disability insurance scheme. That is what has led to the development of this child development service, which will be our expression of the mainstream services, including diagnostics. That will be a combined service offer which will incorporate services that are currently provided by Health, education and CSD through Therapy ACT.

MS BERRY: Children are referred to Therapy ACT by early childhood centres.

Ms Howson: Yes.

MS BERRY: Currently, but that will finish and then they will go to whoever else is providing that service or transitioning into 2016.

Ms Howson: The child and family centres will still be an important point of contact for people, but what we will be improving is the connection between child and family centres and the child development unit. In fact, over time we would expect to have the child development unit have some of its services available through child and family centres, but we will not be moving there in this first stage.

Ms Burch: The clarity needs to be around intake assessment. That will always remain a mainstream service. This is where some of the confusion has been. We have made the decision to withdraw from specialist disability services in June or December 2016, but we will always have a role, as a government, in assessment. The referral could be into other mainstream services for short-term support or to the NDIA for assessment. If they are eligible, they are provided a package of support through the NDIA and then the families can go and purchase that support response from a range of community providers in town.

I think that is an important point. It is only specialist disability services—those programs that are being provided by ETD—at the end of this school year; by Therapy ACT by the end of 2016; and by group home support in 2017. We have collectively got a responsibility to be very clear about what ends when and what services and what response the government will always maintain in supporting our community. That is one of the frustrating things for me. The misinformation that is being put out about that and continues to be put out about that has been frustrating for me. It does nothing but create anxiety within the community.

MS BERRY: That seems fairly clear, what you said to me just then. In fact, the services are not ending; they are just changing.

Ms Burch: They are changing. Disability services will go into the community sector. Again, they will not end; they will be offered by the community sector and not by government. The education and training early intervention programs will not end; they just will not be served and delivered through ETD. They will be delivered through community providers. That is a very important point of clarification. I would ask all members but particularly Mr Wall to make sure that he gets his facts right when he puts comment out in public.

MR WALL: But the government-offered services are, in fact, ending—correct?

Ms Burch: The services are moving to a community provider, but therapy services are not ending this year.

MR WALL: If you read the press release, minister, that I put out, it was a lower case “t”.

Ms Burch: It was—

THE CHAIR: Mr Wall, let the minister answer.

MR WALL: Lower case “t”.

Ms Burch: Mr Wall, through your media release—and it is still online—people are assuming that your words are saying therapy services end this year. I would just say, given that it is a very concerning time for transition, that we all have a collective responsibility not to create that confusion amongst the community.

MR WALL: I am certainly not putting confusion out there. I am simply seeking clarification in the answers.

Ms Burch: I would ask you then to refrain from saying therapy services end this year, because they do not.

MR WALL: I never made reference to Therapy ACT ending this year.

Ms Burch: Therapy services, to many people, is Therapy ACT. You interchange those words, and I just simply ask you to be aware of it. I have brought it to your attention, and I hope that you will provide clarity from here on in, Mr Wall.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry, a substantive question.

MS BERRY: Thank you, chair. On the packages that people have been applying for, last year when we spoke about this it was still a bit grey and people were still trying to work out how that was going to work. Is there an update on the packages now? How many people have sought packages or how many packages have been agreed to? What sort of feedback have you had from those people who have been doing that through the NDIA?

Ms Burch: There are two. We can provide a level of information, but the packages of that information actually sit with the NDIA. It is my understanding that they provide quarterly or monthly reports. We may be aware of our client base that we are told are moving in to have that assessment, but a lot of that information is actually the province of the NDIA. Ms Starick might have some information on that.

Ms Starick: The information that we have to date is that 103 participants have an agreed plan. That is as of the end of the first quarter. We get quarterly updates through the NDIA around the rate of plan approval.

MS BERRY: Because the service providers are still working on how they are offering whatever services, are the packages complete or are they waiting on other people to come along to provide a particular service to people?

Ms Starick: It is a planning conversation between the planner, the individual and, in some circumstances, their guardian or family member, and in some instances a provider may come in in a supportive role. The planning conversation is about the outcomes and goals that are important in a person’s life and then the reasonable and necessary supports that a person may need to achieve those goals and aspirations in their life. For example, if employment or economic participation is the goal, then there are a range of supports that a person might consider to reach that goal.

Generally, the plan will consist of a fixed portion, that is, when a piece of equipment or a housing modification is specified, then the funding that is allocated to that must be spent on that piece of equipment or housing modification. Then there is a flexible portion. This acknowledges that an outcome can be reached in different ways, depending on a person's circumstances, and it is certainly something that we found in the enhanced service offer.

If the goal in a person's life is employment, the way that a person might attain that goal could be anything from supported transport to and from their place of work, to training or to assistance to attend work. That would be considered a flexible portion. There is a financial amount that is attributed to that and there is an acquittal process that goes with it that the NDIA have as well.

That is the first part, which is agreeing to your plan. The next stage—again, I am talking about the NDIA's process here as we know it—is that the plan is then activated. The person and/or their guardian will work with providers to establish a support plan or a support that meets those goals. Once that is agreed, that then means that the plan is activated. So it is a two-stage approach.

MS BERRY: I look forward to hearing how—

Ms Starick: If I could just clarify my statements earlier on staffing? I would like to clarify that if we take an FTE, there are 432.8 FTEs across Disability ACT and Therapy ACT. My apologies, chair.

MS BERRY: I look forward to further updates on how it is all being implemented, because I think it is a very exciting time for people.

Ms Starick: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: I have a question about the sector development for the NDIS, which is on page 18 of the annual report. It talks about assisting 60 providers to assess their level of readiness; they have got the NDIS toolkit. Then 20 organisations were offered a governance and financial management package and 18 organisations were offered a business investment package. What visibility does the government have of what came out of those grants, and are you able to share some of the outcomes? I think I asked this last year: what is happening with peak bodies and systemic advocacy groups rather than service provider organisations?

Ms Burch: It is like what we refer to as tier 2 groups. The Deafness Resource Centre has some clinical support, but it is also an advocacy and information service. Ms Sheehan might go to the sector development area.

Ms Sheehan: Thank you for that question because it enables me to say something about a peak, which is National Disability Services. National Disability Services had developed, prior to the announcement of the NDIS but I would say in anticipation of the NDIS, a toolkit which was really a self-assessment tool for organisations. It is not a tick and flick self-assessment tool. We have been able to roll that out to 60 providers

in the ACT. The providers did a training session—I think a one-day training session—with National Disability Services. This is being rolled out across the country by National Disability Services and is funded by the commonwealth. The cost of that was about \$5,000 per participant. You do the training and you get the tool, but then you get ongoing assistance if you have questions about how to use the tool. That enabled organisations to do a self-assessment about how they thought they would go in an NDIS environment. Then at that point our \$20,000 packages kicked in.

Those packages were to do work that the tool identified that you needed to do as a provider if you wanted to move into the NDIS environment. Some of the obvious things would be—and I think we have brought these to the attention of the committee before—what are your unit costings and what would you need to charge in your current structure to provide those services. It is well known that the National Disability Insurance Agency has a price list. If you find that your organisation cannot provide services for the prices that are being paid, you are in a lot of trouble. So it was really wonderful to have those \$20,000 packages to start to address the needs of organisations. We were very fortunate that, through the community sector reform program, the \$20,000 packages had been established.

When we did get funding from the commonwealth to start to assist providers—because initially the commonwealth, which we have certainly supported, wanted to focus on people with a disability—and the money was available to work with the providers, we were able to quickly pick up on those packages which had been developed. There was a panel of financial management consultants or, really, business consultants; so organisations could choose which provider they wanted to work with their organisation.

We have been able to roll that out to 20 providers through the NDIS sector development, but we already had access to services for 20 providers through that initial sector reform program. Many of the providers that took the benefit of that first money were actually disability providers; so 40 organisations have had the opportunity to access those \$20,000 packages. The next step up was the \$50,000 packages to really, I would say, start to implement the things that have been identified through that first toolkit assessment and then the \$20,000 packages, and another 20 organisations have had that \$50,000 package. I know that you have experience working in this sector, Ms Lawder. It is more money than we have ever seen, really, to assist community organisations. We are very grateful for the access to those funds through the commonwealth.

What have we seen coming through? I have mentioned pricing and costing. It is about what business models do the organisations need to have and do the boards need to restructure; do the boards have the right governance structure? It is really quite thoroughgoing, and it can go bottom up—that is, what are your unit costings right up to what is the governance that you need in an organisation that now has to operate in a private sector market model, a fee-for-service model.

Organisations have a period of time to use that \$20,000 and then start to report back to us what they are finding. The commitment we have made to the sector is that we do not want to be reinventing the wheel, and nor do they. We will be identifying common themes and trends that come out, and then, hopefully, looking to use some more of

our sector development dollars to identify some products that address those trends and themes.

So first off, it is going into the organisation and helping the organisation to see what it needs, but then identifying the common themes and then doing something more general so that you are getting a better bang for the commonwealth buck, so to speak.

Ms Burch: We are quite happy to provide a list of organisations that have received those grants.

MS LAWDER: Is there any ability for knowledge sharing? Are people able to see what others have done and perhaps use some of their packages?

Ms Sheehan: Yes, absolutely. Through the NDIS, as the minister was saying, things are being identified. And organisations are really happy to identify what they are doing. For example, last week Northside Community Service at the time of having its annual general meeting relaunched its new brand—interestingly, still called Northside Community Service, because their clients said that was the name they liked. In looking at their business model and doing some market research around how they should move forward and how they should sell themselves to the community, and wanting to move into the NDIS environment, they used one of those \$20,000 packages to have that look at themselves. Other organisations are doing the same sort of thing.

As I said, as people come to the end of using their \$20,000 and we start to get that information through, we will be sharing the information. And organisations, through their peaks, are happy to share that information as well.

Ms Lawder, I did not answer the question about advocacy services. In the NDIS environment, individual advocacy for a person who is eligible for an NDIS package can be purchased as part of your package. That was an important thing for us to understand. I am happy to say that ADACAS, which is a disability and aged care advocacy organisation, has received one of our \$20,000 packages to look at its business model on the basis that, although it will continue to do general systemic advocacy which does not form part of the NDIS, people with a disability, including a mental illness, might identify—and this makes tremendous sense, I think—that in the future at some time they will need some very individualised advocacy, perhaps to tell their story to the NDIA or to tell their story more generally in the community. Particularly, say, if you have a psychosocial disability, there will be periods when you are really quite well, and when you are really well you will be able to say, “I know that when I’m unwell I will need some individual advocacy.” So you will identify in advance that when you are unwell that is the sort of thing you would want. That is something that you can buy with your package in tier 3.

For systemic advocacy, though, that is not something that naturally sits within the NDIS; it is something that more naturally sits within what we are calling tier 2, basically information and referral services. Systemic advocacy is information and referral but also capacity building. The thing about systemic advocacy is that it can build the capacity of organisations to understand the needs of people with a disability and to change their culture to one of control and choice. That is something that we

would be able to fund as part of tier 2 services.

Tier 2 is still up in the air, so to speak, because we are really waiting for a national settling of what tier 2 services would look like once we move to the full scheme. We would be hoping that, once we have got the scheme operating nationally, you would be looking for some national provision of information, referral and capacity building. That means that there would be access to more of that sort of thing for organisations and for people with a disability in the ACT.

We are already seeing the amalgamation of some of those tier 2 services in the ACT. For example, with services for people with a vision impairment, there has recently been an amalgamation of a number of those services. And there was a function over in the Griffin Centre not so long ago at the same time as an expo of aids for people with vision impairment. The organisations took that opportunity to amalgamate and to market themselves as their rebranded organisation.

We would imagine that we would see more of that. It is obviously up to organisations to make that decision, but that is a good example of where organisations have decided to do that. Of course, organisations that are interested in that sort of amalgamation are well placed to make further applications for those business development packages.

One of the commitments that we have made to the sector is this. We did not say, “There’s only this amount of money for the \$20,000 packages. Everyone has to apply by this date and then we’re cutting it off and that’s the end.” It has been a continuous assessment model. As more of the commonwealth funds become available, we will have the ability to keep taking applications from organisations—organisations, I need to say, who are on the path of going towards the NDIS or quite genuine in wanting to make an assessment.

The minister is just reminding me—

Ms Burch: The funding contract arrangements for different organisations.

Ms Sheehan: Yes. Tier 2 organisations have received their funding grants through to the end of this financial year, 2014-15. At the moment we are working with the commonwealth and with tier 2 agencies in the ACT to have a look at where we think the national policy is likely to land and then what the funding arrangements should be for tier 2 services in the ACT into the future. In an ideal world, the commonwealth would have settled its position by now, but we are not quite at that point. But we will be in a position to put something to the ministerial council in December, with a view to going to COAG in about, I think, March—the next COAG meeting is close to there—with a position on what the tier 2 services look like.

It is a bit tight, we understand. But we are working as hard as we can with those services. As I say, they are already on the front foot themselves, looking at how they can adapt to the new environment and doing a really good job of it.

Ms Burch: With some of these changes with the advocacy groups, and tier 2, for the other trial sites the urgency is not there because they are small parts of a larger system. The buffer is certainly there for them to muddle on through, so to speak, but for us it

is an absolute reality; we are the only jurisdiction within a two-year period to get our entire system through. This is something that I raise every time I meet with the chair and the CEO of the NDIA and every time there is a meeting of disability ministers with tier 2. With some of these impacts on the ACT, we will be the first—in many of these transition elements—because of the nature of our trial site.

THE CHAIR: Minister, just going back to the ESO grants, that was an investment of \$7.7 million for people with disability to apply for additional services or support. Minister, what are some of the lessons learned and experience gained as a result of that investment ahead of the NDIS?

Ms Burch: It was a great opportunity for us to make a connection to the broader community about how people can think outside the square, so to speak; to look at what service provision is in town; and really to look over the horizon about what other service provision is out there and who they can access services from. And also, from round 1 and round 2, we definitely put a gender lens on to make sure that women were not disadvantaged in any way, shape or form with access to the ESO. I might again let Kate talk about it. It was a great success. Certainly we had people who have not had any services at all for the first time be supported; that is a great outcome.

Ms Starick: Thank you, minister. Thank you, Dr Bourke, for the question. There were a number of lessons learned for the ESO, some that we were expecting to learn, or information that we were expecting to gain, but also some information that we were grateful, I think, to gain.

The first one, I would say, is the experience of people with disabilities in planning and taking a whole-of-life approach for planning. We knew that people's planning horizons are often informed by the types of services that are available to them at this point. So it did take the planning component, which was essentially the application for the grant. We did recruit individual planners to assist people to do that. That was of great benefit. The plan itself actually generated benefits. We heard from some people who were not successful in a grant but, because of the planning, actually made connections and thought about things that were in their immediate community—for example, connecting with local arts groups or local networks. Just sitting down and thinking about it meant that they acted on those things. So the benefit of a plan was very good. And, of course, people can use that information and take it to their conversation with the planner with the NDIA. That was the first lesson.

The second lesson was that people were seeking supports as part of the Canberra community. This means experiencing community at the right time and the right place in the right way, in the same way that you and I experience community—not going bowling or to a disco at a 3 o'clock on a Tuesday, which is enjoyable for some people. It meant that people wanted to access hobbies, go to recreational activities with mainstream sports clubs, and access fitness opportunities through gyms and things like that. They wanted support in training, such as opportunity to go to CIT, and opportunities to take part in the social life of Canberra. We have a great range of social clubs—which, of course, were at our expo that we had last year—and people are seeking support to participate in those. That was very important, and a very important message for providers.

One of the other lessons that we learned was about providers developing the skills in communicating and packaging up their service offer so that if somebody came to them seeking support in a particular area, they could work with that person to create a support package that was suitable to them. That is different from offering the world, because not every provider can offer the world; it is around focusing on what you can provide and how you can work with this person. Again, that was information that we used in developing our sector development packages for providers.

Another lesson that we learned is that not only did people need support in planning but they needed support in actually activating those plans. This is again good information for the agency. Even from the point at which people applied and the time they had their grant, their circumstances may have changed, so they may have just needed people to guide them through making contact with providers or organisations and then purchasing. We did continue the individual planners through that role, and I think that was of great benefit.

Another lesson that we learned was that, similarly, with aspects of the trial, there are areas where it is difficult—we created the enhanced service offer to be as close to the eligibility criteria of the NDIS as possible. But there are areas of grey. For example, when does a clinical service become a health-type service and when is a therapy service a specialist disability support service? That was a lesson that we learned.

There are about a million lessons, but I think the two final lessons are these. The first one is that we expected many more people to ask for their funds to be paid directly to a provider. Over 90 per cent of the applicants chose to self-manage. That is incredibly high. If you look at the NDIA statistics, the self-management component is very low. However, consistent with the anecdotal feedback that we are getting, people are comfortable self-managing an aspect of their care and support and funding; it is a larger question. I think there is considerably more effort and time required, and it is more daunting, to manage the entirety of your support package.

The final one was: go where the people are. Through the enhanced service offer we had people based out in the community, in the places where people went to seek information or to meet other people. Through that, we had a significantly larger proportion of people with psychosocial disability, people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds apply for the grants than when you compare it to the demographics of people currently accessing disability services. I think they would be the main lessons.

MS BERRY: I have a supplementary on that. I have been sitting here reflecting on the jargon that we are using and wondering how that is being broken down for people who are seeking support and seeking to have packages. Anyone?

Ms Howson: That is a really good point to make. And it just goes off the back of Kate's comment about one of the lessons we learned was around: go where the people are. That has got a communications dimension to it as well, ensuring accessibility to information in a form that makes sense for people. These are lessons we will pass through to the NDIA, but we also need to take it on board in terms of explaining some of the complexity around mainstream service offers and how that is changing.

MS BERRY: And this is what you are saying about all the lessons that you have learned. It is such a huge change, and quite a wonderful change, I think. Going through that change is one part of it, but understanding what you are actually committing to is a whole other part of it. I am still getting my head around the jargon as well, but I can imagine it must be really difficult for somebody who is having to move from a different support system into the NDIS. It must be a bit confronting.

Ms Howson: It is. And it is a really important lesson for the bureaucracy. We have to learn it over and over again. I think we get captured by our own language.

Ms Burch: With the NDIA and the planning sessions that they go in for, the information I have seen is that the planning process is getting done quicker, which reflects the activity in other sites as well. But again, it is just ensuring that when people move into the NDIA their plan is not chiselled in stone; they can come back and review it. A lot of people are anxious, and they may just go, “I’ll get a little bit that’s different, but the bulk of it I want to remain the same.”

But after 12 months or two years or three years, they are more comfortable and the other service offerings develop and are more visible. So people can change. I think that is something that, again, collectively, we need to assure individuals and families that the plan is a step, it gets you a package, but as your circumstances change, as your confidence changes, your plan will reflect that change as well.

Ms Sheehan: In terms of the jargon and how people shut down when they hear the jargon and then that means that they cannot really understand what is on offer, one of the reasons that we wanted to have the NDIA co-located with our gateway out at Belconnen was that people that come into the gateway are highly likely to not have a disability service at the moment. They might have a housing service or they might have a housing need or a homelessness need or they might, as we were co-locating with the children, youth and family support system, come in for another sort of service for their adolescent but actually perhaps need a disability service.

The idea is that if everything is together, it seems to us to be more user friendly. The minister was able to sell that to the commonwealth as well, which is why they agreed to come and co-locate with us with our other services.

What I would say is that hopefully it starts to demystify things to the extent that our jargon is making it a mystery to people what they can actually have. If they can come to a place where they would normally go, which is what Ms Starick was saying before, come to get the thing that they thought that they wanted and get something else as well, and then try to put it all together as part of their plan—a mainstream thing that they have got an entitlement to, as anyone else in the community does, this extra thing, which is something from the national disability insurance scheme—hopefully it is less mysterious and is more accessible and then we can start to not describe it in those mysterious and crazy ways.

Ms Howson: If I just could add to that, while we recognise the problem, we are activated around it. A significant part of the sector development funding is going into preparing people with a disability for that transition to the national disability insurance scheme. There are a multiple range of opportunities and, because of the

complexity, many opportunities to have a conversation. Ms Starick can elaborate, but I think it is work that we are doing using peer groups to have conversations in informal settings, lots of forums where people can seek information, go away and think about it, come back and ask further questions.

We are constantly modifying our written material on the back of questions that we are receiving, producing frequently asked questions sheets and using, for example, an Aboriginal liaison officer embedded within Gagan Gulwan to have community conversations about the disability insurance scheme and continuing to have that conversation with people in that community in a way that they are comfortable with and with an organisation they trust—multiple avenues to address that issue of complexity.

Ms Burch: The other side of that is the telling the stories once. The use of digital storytelling, I think, is strengthening and very useful where the clients themselves—we used the word “video” but realised that was very old school—use a digital platform where they tell their own story. They tell about their lives, their ambitions, their aspirations, what they want, and then it is really up to the service providers to understand that person and start to offer what they want in response to that as well. It is more than just filling out forms and looking at a list from the NDIA about the services that are registered. There are 20-plus providers that are already registered. But it is about how they tell their story in their language and then providers responding to them. I think that is another important part of that as well.

MR WALL: Minister, as we approach firstly 2016 when therapy services cease being operated by the government and transition to the community sector, and then supported accommodation as that transitions across, I was just wondering how those transition processes will occur and how they might be different to, say, the early intervention transition that has just occurred.

Ms Burch: With group homes, for example—and there are already group homes now—residents in group homes are moving through the NDIA. Some are taking opportunities for other service offerings. We have said that they can stay with our existing services until 2017 and then, over that period, we will introduce them and make connections to community providers. Some households will choose to live differently. Some households will choose to live as a group and just have a different provider. Perhaps Ms Sheehan or Ms Starick can talk about that. But the family development service is an important part of the transition out of Therapy ACT as well.

Ms Sheehan: If I could go first of all to the issue of the group homes, as the minister was saying, the ACT government has deliberately made a distinction between the time at which someone who lives in a disability group home, or it could be a Disability ACT or a community group living arrangement, goes into the National Disability Insurance Agency, gets their package and the time when that person starts to operate with that package. That is different from when Disability ACT will transition out of service provision.

The government is giving people a chance, giving them a bit more time to make a decision about whom they would want to provide their service. So at the time when individuals are in our phase-in—we were so pleased that the agencies saw the sense of

this; whole households are assessed at the same time—groups that want to live together have got that ability to get their assessment together and then pool their resources. At the point in time when people get their assessment, if they want to then move to a community provider to have their services provided, they can make that decision then and there. They do not have to stay with Disability ACT through to 2017. If they want to go then, that is a decision they can make.

We have actually been having some really constructive discussions with the National Disability Insurance Agency that if some people will not be assessed, say, for another year, if they were interested in making the move now, would the agency be interested in helping us bring those people forward so that they could go at a time that suits their needs. I think in that spirit of people being able to choose who provides their service and choose a life that they want and the sorts of things that help them achieve what they want, then the government is giving people as much time to make the decision as they want but also supporting them to jump sooner, be an early adopter, if that is what they wish.

MR WALL: So the NDIA has agreed to facilitate households that are already, say, six, 12, 18 months ahead of schedule to enter into the scheme and transition to another service provider?

Ms Sheehan: What they are doing is discussing with us how they will do it. That is a work in progress. They are not in a position to say right now, “We’ll swap people out if they want to.” But what they are saying is that they see the absolute sense of there being a system where the government will transition to the community sector over time. They want to support that move. So they are working with us on how that might happen. And that is very exciting for the families that have already said, “We would like to transition as quickly as we can.” It is that spirit of it being a trial. As the minister said, we are the first jurisdiction to be moving our whole system.

The agency will trial lots of innovation in the ACT because we are all leaving in two years and it is an opportunity for them to really support us to do things differently, which is what they have done, for example, in the early intervention services, which is very exciting.

Ms Burch: With the NDIA taking responsibility for bulk purchasing those six providers. That is the first time the NDIA have done that.

Ms Sheehan: Yes. And the minister had pushed that discussion with the head of the agency and the chair of the board in conversations around the ministerial meeting last December where they were just putting their toe in the water and saying, “Maybe there’s the opportunity to actually support control and choice by block funding some services so that people can then choose from those services.” The minister said, “Let’s see if we can advance this argument.” They have been able to do that in the ACT, and that is really exciting.

MR WALL: With the supported accommodation, if a household chooses to go from having the ACT government provide the service in the interim until 2017 and goes to another service provider, is there going to be any change to the property they have access to, because that still remains the property of Housing?

Ms Burch: We have been doing a lot of work with tenants in sorting through their tenancy arrangements. If they are in a home and they are comfortable in that property, they will stay there.

MR WALL: Another issue that has been raised with me by supported accommodation providers—and I am sure it is one that is facing the government in the interim while you continue to provide this service—is the scenario where, say, you have a group home with three residents, each with their individual package. If one of those residents then decides that they would like to access an alternative service, how is that vacancy in the property going to be managed? Given that it is obviously not such an issue for government as you have got an abundance of resources compared to what some of the community organisations have, when a vacancy arises in a property, how is that going to be managed? Obviously it is not a simple case of just putting an ad in the paper and getting the first person that calls up.

Ms Burch: I think it is worth while, though, also just putting some reality check in about the level of group homes. I think it is about 30 per cent. It is about 30 per cent of group homes across the ACT at the moment that is managed by the government. The bulk already are out in the community sector.

Ms Sheehan: It is not straightforward how that is going to be managed, and the reason for that is that it just depends on the intentions of all the people concerned.

Ms Howson: I would actually say that that is an issue that the community sector deal with today. There will be transitions in the make-up of individuals within a group home setting and the way in which a service provider would manage the transition of a person that wants to leave a particular group setting to an alternative and the way in which they replace that vacancy today would inform the way that might happen into the future.

MR WALL: Obviously the concern exists that the likelihood of this happening will potentially increase as the NDIS offers that freedom of choice to an individual, whereas currently there is a limited supply of supported accommodation and often there is a reluctance to change accommodation providers simply because the options do not exist to pick and choose where you want to be.

Ms Howson: That is a really good observation, and that is what Ms Sheehan was alluding to. It is not straightforward, and we are working our way through these issues and essentially what principles will prevail in the way that we are working.

MR WALL: When would an answer to that scenario be available to the committee?

Ms Howson: I think it is a case-by-case scenario, to be frank. It is one of these things that, if we are taking a person-centred approach, the bottom line is that anyone that currently has a service will continue to have that service, and if people choose to change their arrangements, then we would have to work with them at a pace that is reasonable to be able to meet their needs and also make sure that the needs of the others that are affected by that decision are also taken into account.

Ms Starick: If I could add to that, the community providers and the peak organisations in the ACT have started to look at this. As Ms Howson said, this has been something that community providers and government have been working through for some time. But there is an accommodation framework and a group that have got together to look at how we in the ACT can look at accommodation and how we manage accommodation options that are available now but also how we can look at some more innovative housing options in the ACT that allow for some flexibility, that are not just reliant on a group home model.

Providers are, in effect, doing what we were hoping would occur, which is forming some informal alliance and problem solving. That work is ongoing and there are many options on the table. But some other options that have come up under the accommodation framework are some other models of support, such as home share, which is a model where you are not reliant on sharing just with a person with a disability but that there is actually some rent relief to share with a person without a disability. This is being promoted and developed through Housing ACT.

There is the link model, which is about developing a supportive network around individuals in the community so that they can live as independently as possible, even to the point where, in the annual report, we flag project independence, which is actually a model of accommodation or housing that will enable individuals to gain equity in a property or in their accommodation. I think to a degree this has been accelerated by that possibility that people will now have greater access to reasonable and necessary supports. There are new options that are developing.

Ms Sheehan: It is a real limitation of our current system that there has been very little opportunity for people to separate out the management of their tenancies and their housing from the support that they receive. It is a feature of most of the models that it is one in, all in. “I come to Disability ACT and they provide my accommodation and they manage my tenancy.” And in the new environment—and it was an excellent question before—what happens to my house in the new arrangement? In the new arrangement there will be that opportunity to separate out tenancy from support. When you do not do that, it is very easy to think that there is no other way of doing it and that it is quite catastrophic if one person moves out.

In fact, in the new environment, once you break up the tenancy and the support, pretty much anything is possible because you can start to get your housing in a different way; you might get your support in a different way. At the moment, everyone in the house gets their support from the same provider. In the new environment it might be that lots of the things that are in your plan do not need to be brought into the house from a single provider because it might be that you are going out to your employment and it does not matter who is supporting you. The person that supports you in your employment does not have to be the provider that supports the other person in the house for their employment. If what you want to do is go to TAFE, it does not matter if you all go to different TAFEs. So once you break that nexus between the support in your life and the tenancy, then you start to see, I guess, the way that the NDIS really changes the world.

MR WALL: Just to go back, the first question that I asked was two-pronged—about the supported accommodation and how that transition is going. I think we have

covered that. But with Therapy ACT, how is that transition going to occur? Is it going to be similar to the early intervention services where it will be a tender process through the NDIA or are you anticipating more of a natural—

Ms Burch: It is more of a natural transition as people go into the NDIA and move into community provision. Ms Evans, perhaps you can talk to that.

Ms Evans: Yes. We have two years. During that time, people are phasing across to the NDIS and picking up their supports and services through other providers. The great benefit of having that time and this pool of very specialised staff is that they are already starting to link in with non-government organisations and with other providers, so families can start to choose other providers and, in some cases, have the staff who have been with Therapy ACT with them for a number of years now moving across into other providers. It will be a much more natural transition in the sense that we are not governed in the same way that perhaps the early intervention programs were, by the school term or by the school year. It is usually by the goals that a family sets. We can let people finish that occasion of service before they might be discharged, which would have been a normal process anyway.

MR WALL: So instead of early intervention where there was a line drawn in the sand and it said “as of this date forward it will be relying on other service providers”, therapy is going to be transitioned gradually?

Ms Evans: Over the two years.

MR WALL: It will be gradual over the next two years?

Ms Howson: Yes. And because of the NDIS, there will be a lot of other people in the community that will gain access to resources that were not necessarily available through Therapy ACT because of our limited and defined resource. In that transition we will see other providers increasing their capacity, and I think we will see that market grow a bit more cohesively and in response to the needs that families have.

MR WALL: Just one final one: how will the equipment loan scheme continue through Therapy ACT as we go through this phase-in and beyond 2016?

Ms Evans: The equipment loan scheme will stay with the child development service at this stage. We have had the preliminary conversations with the NDIA; we are finding that they are quite open to the idea that equipment loan would have a costing or a value to it within someone’s package. We have started that piece of work; it will continue across 2015. We are looking at that being a valuable resource across the whole community. It is not just Therapy ACT therapists who use that for their trialling of equipment with their families; it is also NGOs. Colleagues in Health will use the children’s equipment scheme to look at their trial of equipment.

So with that resource we are looking at how we will support that financially through both funding through the NDIS where people are able to cost it within their package but also partnerships with our NGOs who are interested in having some access to the scheme.

MR WALL: Thanks, chair.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: I might defer my question to you, chair.

THE CHAIR: Minister, the national disability strategy really outlines a 10-year national policy framework that is going to guide government policy. We are fully transitioning into the NDIS. How is the ACT government going to contribute to that strategy in the future, given that we are having this full transition happening?

Ms Burch: It is important to remember that whilst certainly the national disability insurance scheme is an important part of our world, our transition and our environment, we also have to keep an eye on the national disability strategy and that broader framework which underpins principles around access, employment and livability for people with a disability in the city where they live.

We have signed up to and will continue to work on the national disability strategy. The face of that—before I go to one of my colleagues here—has been *Future directions: towards challenge 2014*, which is coming to an end; it is the final year. We have already started the process of redefining our ACT national disability strategy beyond that. There was a task force attached to the NDIS. There was a disability advisory council. We have in many ways spilled and collapsed those two groups into one single entity that will provide strategic advice and guidance and expert advice to us as we develop this next framework for disability. One of my colleagues at the table will talk more on that.

Ms Starick: Thank you, minister. As the minister said, the NDIS will phase in 5,075 people. There are, from the information that we have, over 57,000 people in the ACT who identify as having a disability. The national disability strategy and our expression of that, which is *Future directions*, have been to create an inclusive community for all people with disabilities. An example of that, where we have worked with young people, is the everyone everyday program, which is a curriculum development program to ensure that teachers have the skills and the knowledge to work with their students and recognise that it is the responsibility of the whole community, not just people with disabilities, to recognise the abilities of everybody and to ensure that everybody can participate. That will continue. That is an example of where the ACT government has maintained its responsibilities and will continue its responsibilities.

I guess the aim of *Future directions* and the national disability strategy is that that responsibility is shared. So it is not just disability services that take on the actions under the national disability strategy; we will be continuing to work with justice, health, education and all mainstream services so that they meet their responsibilities and recognise their responsibilities to create a service that is inclusive of and responds to the needs of people with disabilities.

In the week of I-Day, we will be talking about some of the achievements and outcomes from the *Future directions* strategy, but that work will continue once we engage the community in the next round of planning, because, of course, *Future*

directions was not based on our vision for people with disabilities; it was done through a round of consultation with people with disabilities and what they wanted our community to look like and what they determined were the priorities.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MR WALL: May I have a supplementary?

THE CHAIR: Yes, of course.

MR WALL: You mentioned that the NDIS task force has been disbanded and amalgamated with—

Ms Burch: The expert reference group, sorry.

MR WALL: So the NDIS task force is still operational?

Ms Burch: Yes; sorry. See; you have to be careful with language, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: You do, minister. What is the current make-up of the task force, and are there still staff on secondment with the NDIA or are the co-location arrangements still in place?

Ms Sheehan: Thanks for that question. It is a multidisciplinary task force, so we have a combination of staff that are employed by the Community Services Directorate, such as Ms Starick and me, and we have some specialist people from Disability ACT. We have outposted officers, which we pay for, from Mental Health and ACT Health who are specialists on the home and community care program and the mental health programs. We fund a position in education; we fund a position in Therapy ACT; and so on. We have communication and engagement staff in the task force.

With a combination of staff who are outposted from other parts of government and staff who are employed in the task force themselves, we have about 10 staff at the moment. Throughout the transition, we are reviewing the skill set we need. In the lead-up to the start of the trial, we had to do the actuarial work and work out the interface. As the NDIA is up and running now, it is a different approach. It is all about whether the sector is ready, whether the workforce is ready, whether organisations are ready. Over time, the composition of the task force and the skills that you need will change.

MR WALL: I know that in the preliminary stages there were NDIA staff that were co-located—

Ms Sheehan: They were co-located.

MR WALL: That is no longer in place?

Ms Sheehan: They were co-located in the planning to open the doors, but now that the doors are open, it is a different group of people. Now that the doors are open at Nature Conservation House we have the actual NDIA assessors and the planners that

are there, and then the NDIA has some other offices at Northbourne Avenue. We are very excited about that co-location. It is quite interesting that if you go to the Northbourne office, you see fewer people than if you come to Belconnen: people are coming there for other reasons—perhaps to get lots of services that they need—and because the NDIA is there, they get a disability service as well.

MR WALL: Thanks.

THE CHAIR: Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: I have a question, and I hope you can answer it, which is a bit about the nuts and bolts of the NDIS. I think you mentioned that the majority of people indicated they would choose to self-manage.

Ms Burch: This is in relation to the ESOs.

MS LAWDER: Okay. For the NDIS itself, I wondered whether, if a person chose to self-manage and selected a provider who was not an approved NDIS provider, that provider could charge anything they wanted—or does it have to be as per the cap?

Ms Sheehan: They can charge whatever they want, but it will not change the dollar amount that the agency gives for the package, bearing in mind that it is an insurance model and the agency is working on the idea of almost a benchmark package or a demonstration package. And it will be for certain types of services that meet your plan needs. If you then decide to pay more for that service, it means that you will have less for other types of services.

MS LAWDER: So they could pay out of their pocket if they so choose?

Ms Sheehan: That is right. And that provider might not have to be registered with the National Disability Insurance Agency, but they do have to meet the legislative requirements in the ACT. That is very important for the committee to understand. Now that the legislation has been passed by the Assembly, in June, it requires providers to meet those national standards for disability, mental health or the home and community care program. That is being monitored by the human services registrar, and for each specialist area there is a panel that is advising the registrar on making sure that people are meeting the standards.

So you can self-manage, and you do not have to use a provider that is registered with the national agency, but that provider must meet the ACT legislative requirements for quality and safety.

Ms Burch: And because until now those safeguards had been held in contract arrangements under the NDIS, which means that those arrangements are not there, we considered it—certainly I considered it—very important to put those safeguards in and change the legislation. That has come into effect now. So there are very strong safeguards for clients regardless of what service they choose. Being a registered provider gives clients assurance that these services meet all of those safeguards and conditions. If they choose to go outside that, there is ultimately legislation there to protect them.

MS LAWDER: Continuing on in that kind of vein, can a provider charge a participant for a no-show for an appointment—do you know?

Ms Starick: Thank you for that question. That is something that providers have raised with the NDIA, and I understand they are considering that as an option for providers. But if a provider is registered, a condition of registering is that they sign up to the business rules, if you like, of the NDIA, which clearly outlines what they are able to charge and the conditions under which they register.

MS LAWDER: And that may apply even if the person self-manages and chooses a provider outside of the—

Ms Starick: No. If a person self-manages, they are not compelled to choose a registered provider. The provider that they choose then can operate their own charging and pricing arrangements.

MS LAWDER: So that will be in the detail of the agreement?

Ms Starick: Yes. The person would still need to purchase services that met the outcomes that are in their plan.

MS LAWDER: Thanks.

THE CHAIR: Mr Wall.

MR WALL: If I can just go to page 283 of volume 2, government contracts, I want to ask a few questions about a couple of contracts. At page 283, there is a KPMG select tender for the NDIS interrelated project. I was wondering what that piece of work was surrounding.

Ms Starick: That was the actuarial work that KPMG did to inform our phase-in options.

MR WALL: The other one was PwC, for delivery of a report on Therapy ACT.

Ms Evans: That is a piece of work that PricewaterhouseCoopers did for Therapy ACT to look at future state service delivery. Basically they just looked at what Therapy ACT were doing and what some possible future options might be for services.

Ms Sheehan: Mr Wall, if I could just speak about the select tender, it was a select tender because it was a piece of actuarial work. We went to the three big actuarial firms.

MR WALL: That side of it is not in question on that one. The other one was Quest Employment Solutions. There are two tenders there. One of them is for a panel of providers of relief disability support workers. They are providing temporary staff in cases of annual leave or sickness of ACT government employees?

Ms Starick: Yes. They are one of the agencies that we are in contract with that

provide some relief staffing, and cover as well, if we need to scale up support very quickly if an individual's needs change within the supported accommodation.

MR WALL: And the line number, which was for professional care and support—how does that differ from the above?

Mr Baumgart: That is a single client who has chosen to elect Quest as their service provider for an individual support package. It is the first foray for Quest, who primarily have been, for Disability ACT, a relief panel provider only—branching out into an in-home support option which Quest had previously provided. Other organisations had previously provided that support through Disability ACT contracts, but the individual approached us saying that they would like Quest. That is why in that case it is a single select; it was an approved individual support package and, like all other people who have individual support packages, they can choose the provider. So in that case that is how it was delivered.

MR WALL: In the instance of an individual under an ISP, when they make a choice as to whom they would like to provide the services, are the services then procured through government?

Mr Baumgart: At the moment that is the way it works, yes. For example, if there is one provider we currently fund, say, to the tune of \$1 million a year, and if someone who has an ISP of a small amount chooses that provider, it is just a very minor variation to that contract, so there are no procurement issues from a government procurement situation. In this case, in the case of Quest, given that one individual was choosing a different service, it was the first time and we actually had to go through a single-select arrangement.

MR WALL: Let me go to the Centre for Applied Behavioural Analysis. They are in there for two lines as well. The first line says “Complex Clinical Services for 10 individuals”. What kinds of services are they providing? Are you able to elaborate on those?

Ms Starick: Yes. They are essentially working with our supported accommodation teams to create specialised support for people with extraordinarily high and complex needs.

Mr Baumgart: I was just going to say that the organisation name is the Centre for Applied Behavioural Analysis, but applied behaviour analysis is a method of support, obviously. That is their trading name, but it is a clinical psychologist developing behavioural support plans for individuals in our service. They are working with young people outside of Disability ACT as well, and we continue to work with them on that. There are some where they are working within a broader contract, and then there have been a small number of individual one-off cases where they have provided people for a short-term arrangement. That is why that contracting is the way it appears again.

MR WALL: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Are we all done?

MS LAWDER: I will ask—I have not found it yet, but I am sure it is in here somewhere—

THE CHAIR: Maybe you would like to put it on notice.

MS LAWDER: On page 19—

Ms Burch: Volume 1?

MS LAWDER: Yes. I referred to this earlier. It mentions a sector development grant to 20 organisations of \$20,000 and 18 organisations of \$50,000. Are the organisations listed in volume 2 somewhere?

Ms Burch: If they are not listed, I did offer to provide that to the committee, so we will. It is certainly in the public domain.

MS LAWDER: I have had a quick look, but I cannot find it.

Ms Howson: It is not in the annual report, Ms Lawder.

Ms Burch: We can provide it, though.

MS LAWDER: Thank you.

MR WALL: Just while we are on that one, is there any further funding available for sector development grants?

Ms Burch: There is a second tranche of around \$6 million—is that right?

Ms Howson: Yes, that is right.

MR WALL: That was a combined 12½, was it, over the transition?

Ms Howson: That is correct.

Ms Burch: Yes. As Ms Sheehan spoke about before, we will start to get the learnings back from that first round of grants and finetune and apply some more targeted response.

THE CHAIR: We will adjourn there. I remind members that the committee has resolved that supplementary questions are to be lodged with the committee office within four business days of receipt of the proof transcript of this hearing. The committee asks that ministers respond within 10 working days of the receipt of those supplementary questions. Answers to questions taken on notice today are to be provided five business days after this hearing, with day one being the first business day after the question was taken.

The committee adjourned at 5.17 pm.