



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL
TERRITORY**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

(Reference: [Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2019-2020 \(No 2\)](#))

Members:

**MRS V DUNNE (Chair)
MS T CHEYNE (Deputy Chair)
MS B CODY
MS N LAWDER**

TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

WEDNESDAY, 4 MARCH 2020

**Secretary to the committee:
Dr B Lloyd (Ph: 620 50137)**

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

ACT HEALTH	221
CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES	221
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE	168, 242
EDUCATION DIRECTORATE	152
ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE	191, 194
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Amended 20 May 2013

The committee met at 9.43 am.

BERRY, MS YVETTE, Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Women

MATTHEWS, MR DAVID, Acting Deputy Director-General, Education Directorate

DALY, MS LYNETTE, Chief Finance Officer, Strategic Finance and Procurement, Education Directorate

HAWKINS, MR ROSS, Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery, Education Directorate

THE CHAIR: Welcome to the third day of hearings of the inquiry by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts into Appropriation Bill 2019-2020 (No 2). Today we will hear from Ms Yvette Berry, Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, and her officers; Mr Shane Rattenbury, Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety, Minister for Corrections and Justice Health and Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability; and his officers; Mr Mick Gentleman, Minister for Planning and Land Management, Minister for the Environment and Heritage and Minister for Police and Emergency Services; and his officers; and Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith, Minister for Health, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and Minister for Children, Youth and Families, and her officers.

I ask witnesses, when they first speak, to indicate whether they have read and understood the privilege statement, which is on the table. Witnesses are encouraged, when they take a question on notice, to say the words, "I will take that question on notice," to make it clear that a question has been taken on notice.

I welcome Minister Berry to the table this morning. We will begin with the Education Directorate and then go on to family violence. Minister, on page 51 of the budget statements, there is continuing work towards safe, supportive and inclusive schools, which has an appropriation of \$1.1 million for the remainder of this financial year and \$5.6 million over the outyears, and some offset expenses. Could you elaborate on what the program is for, before we go on to what is going to be spent this year and what the offset expenses are?

Ms Berry: I will explain the offset first. The offset is the amount that was equivalent to 66 support assistants in schools. It is not 66 individuals; it is just that that is the amount it equals.

THE CHAIR: Could you elaborate, for the non-education people, on the 66 support assistants?

Ms Berry: It is about \$25,000 per school, if that makes more sense.

THE CHAIR: For what purpose?

Ms Berry: To provide extra support for teachers in the classroom.

THE CHAIR: How do schools use that money?

Ms Berry: The money is now being redirected towards some of the future of education strategy and speeding up the implementation of the positive behaviours for learning framework across our schools, so that we can make sure that every school is implementing that framework and embedding that culture change around violence, safety and risk in core relationships across all of our schools.

Last year we had 51 schools that had started or were in the middle of the positive behaviours for learning framework, and now there are 59 schools. We have 88 schools in the ACT that we want to make sure embed that framework. That is one of the things that that funding of about \$25,000 in each school is going towards—embedding that positive behaviour.

THE CHAIR: What was the \$25,000 approximately that has been redirected used for? Was that at the school's discretion?

Ms Berry: Yes, pretty much. I will ask Mr Matthews to provide a little bit more detail behind that.

Mr Matthews: I have read the privilege statement. This initiative that the minister is talking about is also linked to our enterprise agreement negotiations that occurred last year. The short way of providing the background, Mrs Dunne, is that, as a result of the EA negotiation, the government committed more than \$200 million of extra funding to a range of initiatives, including salary and other supports for teachers. There was a prior initiative that was funded in the 2017-18 budget called “more support for teachers”. That included components about reducing workload in schools as part of the EA outcome, which received a 98.7 per cent yes vote. There was a new process introduced about managing workload issues within schools. Therefore the funds that were previously allocated to that prior commitment in the previous EA were made available for future of education initiatives.

THE CHAIR: Could you, on notice, Mr Matthews, or minister, provide the committee with what was appropriated over what time for more support for teachers? I notice that the offsets decline in the outyears, so I would like to see what the trajectory was for that—if that is a substitute, one for the other, that would be helpful.

Mr Matthews: Mrs Dunne, I will take that on notice.

MS CHEYNE: At what level will the dedicated officer to collaborate with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner be?

Mr Hawkins: I have read and understood the privilege statement. It will be an SLC SOGC position, so it sits at a C level. We want a senior level officer that can engage with the AFP and with the eSafety Commissioner—someone who will be able to look more broadly at the materials that are available for our schools, and help to provide those to schools and to the community so that we are getting better information flowing through in terms of e-safety initiatives and e-safety approaches.

MS CHEYNE: Is it a SOGC officer to distribute information?

Mr Hawkins: No. The level of interface sits with the eSafety Commissioner because we want a senior level of engagement with them. We are able to help with the distribution and the writing, but we need to make sure we get the right formation of what effectively is advice out to our schools and our communities. That is what that person will be doing regarding the coordination of that activity in terms of it going out to schools.

MS CHEYNE: Where will they be located? Is this an office job, will they be out and about in schools or will they be within the school environment?

Mr Hawkins: No, they will be based in Hedley Beare, in my team. They will be working closely with schools. They will spend some time out in schools. We are interested to see what the application of e-safety will look like in the classroom. We will look for good examples of what our schools are doing and share some of that best practice. They will also be spending a significant amount of time engaging with other stakeholders.

Within the e-safety space, the AFP run the “think you know” program. The eSafety Commissioner has a range of different programs and initiatives and is always looking to update its advice and to pilot and trial new ways of working. We have been working very closely with them, and this officer will take the lead on those engagements.

MS CHEYNE: We get a lot of feedback that much of the bullying is online and not visible to adults, so I am just curious about how that will work.

Mr Hawkins: Agreed, and we are very conscious that that came through the inquiries and through the minister’s advisory committee last year. They both had recommendations around cyber safety. That is why we are keen to get this officer on the ground, working, connecting in, and providing as much information as possible. There is a very clear approach to e-safety around what we do in our schools and how we teach that, but we are also really keen to make sure that flows through to the community, and to parents, so that there is a level of consistency in approach between what takes place at school and what takes place at home: that parents are aware of what that can look like at home, and can have conversations with their children around some of those issues.

MS CHEYNE: Is the SOGC officer full time?

Mr Hawkins: Yes.

Ms Berry: It should be noted, too, that this is not the start of this work. The Education Directorate has a very good and productive relationship with the eSafety Commissioner and, when incidents occur, they work very closely on removing incidents from social media where it is possible, where it can be identified; on making sure that parents can attend training, either in person or through webinars, to understand the social media world and what is available for children, and the kinds of

things that children might be attracted to online; all the different social networking that can happen online, the positivity of some of that, but also the negative effects of some of that; and what parents can do to support their children in being good citizens online.

MS CHEYNE: Has this person already been employed?

Mr Hawkins: Yes. As the minister said, they sit within a broader team, so they work in this space already, but the new dedicated individual started with us a week or two ago. As the minister said, part of the challenge in this space is keeping up with what is taking place: what are the changes on platforms and apps, and what that looks like. We are really keen to get that information out to parents so that if they see this app appear on a phone or on their iPad, they know what it is. It is a two-way feed of information.

THE CHAIR: What sort of planning has gone into this initiative? You have said that you already have the principal staff member on board.

Mr Hawkins: Yes.

THE CHAIR: How long has this initiative been in the planning? It raises the question of why we are appropriating it now, in the supplementary appropriation, rather than having it appropriated at the beginning of this financial year or waiting three months and appropriating it in the next financial year. What was the development of this project?

Ms Berry: This was in the response to the advisory committee's recommendations to the government, to me. This was one of the recommendations that they made; this is in response to that.

THE CHAIR: Just for clarity, when did the planning start on this initiative?

Ms Berry: This work has already been happening, as I said in response to Ms Cheyne's inquiry, around making sure that parents are informed and engaged, and we have this really good relationship with the eSafety Commissioner. The employment and engagement of this individual to do even more detailed work within our school communities, to make sure that we understand the kinds of supports that our schools and our parents need, came out of one of the recommendations through the advisory committee. This is in response to that particular recommendation to engage this particular individual.

THE CHAIR: The question, and this is a question the committee has been exploring with most ministers, is about the Assembly being asked to appropriate money for something which, in the case of this initiative, has already commenced without appropriation.

Ms Berry: You might have misunderstood my explanation. The work around the eSafety Commissioner, support for parents and webinars, face-to-face information sessions and the ThinkUKnow programs that the police run throughout our schools has all been happening for a number of years.

THE CHAIR: What is the funding source for that?

Ms Berry: That is not a specific program; it is just funded to support our schools. That is part of the schools funding in the Education Directorate.

THE CHAIR: It is business as usual.

Ms Berry: Yes.

Mr Hawkins: Correct.

Ms Berry: This is in response to some recommendations that were made from the advisory committee into bullying and violence last year.

THE CHAIR: However, you are saying that the SOGC person to liaise is already recruited. How are you recruiting someone in a position where you do not have appropriation for the program?

Mr Hawkins: Mrs Dunne, this is a strengthening of what we already do, so I have resources available.

THE CHAIR: My point is that you are coming here and changing something from business as usual, just taking this money out of the allocation for education, to a specific program asking the Assembly to appropriate for a specific purpose. Part of that specific purpose is the employment of an officer whom you had already employed before you had appropriation. Is that the case?

Mr Matthews: Mrs Dunne, we can confirm the recruitment arrangements, but it is important to outline the time line.

THE CHAIR: Yes, it is very important.

Mr Matthews: The standing committee reported on 19 September 2019. There was a separate schools and education advisory committee report to the minister. Both of those reports, which involved both members of the Assembly and independent experts, recommended an uplift in existing activities in the area of violence and safety in schools, including online safety.

THE CHAIR: I am trying to pin it down. You are coming here with a new initiative. Parts of this initiative were previously funded out of business as usual.

Mr Matthews: Yes.

THE CHAIR: You are coming to this committee and to the Assembly asking for a specific appropriation. I do not have a problem with that. The problem is the time line, that you were recruiting people in anticipation of the appropriation. Is that the case?

MS CHEYNE: Given that the appropriation has not occurred because the Assembly has not passed it—and this has been a line of inquiry that the committee has asked for

the last three hearings—if you have been able to already hire somebody, what bucket of money did that come out of? Are you just moving things around accounting-wise?

Mr Hawkins: Absolutely right. I think the appropriation talks about this actually coming into place for 2021. In terms of initiative, we have managed to manage an offset within my internal resources to bring this person on to address an immediate area of need and then we address that immediate area of need, recognising that the appropriation here sits for 2021 onwards, and the access to the funding for—

THE CHAIR: It is \$1 million in the last three months of this financial year?

Mr Hawkins: The \$1.4 million includes five or six different line entries, which I am happy for us to go through. It is not just for one officer.

MS CHEYNE: That is what we need the breakdown of, I think.

Mr Hawkins: Yes, I am happy to do that.

MS CHEYNE: I think a bit of a source of difficulty for this committee over the last few days is that we can see these appropriations but they often have five or six things sitting underneath them. We do not know what they are and what the breakdown of that funding is. It is useful to know that the appropriation that we are talking about for this officer is from the middle of this year onwards, but they have already brought them on under a current bucket of money.

Mr Hawkins: Yes. Part of the reason for us to do that is that school years run counter to financial years. We wanted to get someone on board ready for this school year to provide those supports because we thought, coming out of what we heard last year, that this was an essential position, an essential activity we wanted to do. We brought them on, recognising that this sits from 2020-21 onwards and we can manage that as an offset internally within our current allocations.

Mr Matthews: Just to reiterate that point, there is an offset in this financial year as well.

MS CHEYNE: The thing is that all we have is what is on page 51 and we are not mind-readers of what—

Mr Matthews: I appreciate that. I am just responding to the issue about employing somebody ahead of an appropriate section.

MS CHEYNE: That is exactly what Mrs Dunne is asking.

THE CHAIR: Yes. The thing is that it is not about the merits of the program; it is whether you have the legal underpinning to employ this person if you do not have the appropriation. It may be different in this case because you are actually providing an offset. But I think the committee needs a better explanation of what agencies do.

Ms Berry: Perhaps I can try and help with how this might work. In the budget we would appropriate for the bigger budget items and go ahead and respond and get on

with the work of the Education Directorate. Sometimes things will happen and there will be recommendations that the directorate will need to respond to or things will arise and responding to that will put pressure on the appropriation that has already occurred in the budget.

Employing the person puts pressure on what is already there and then the appropriation is there to take the pressure off the workload that has occurred in response to things like our response to the advisory committee and the standing committee. That is how this works. We have responded within what we have, but it has put pressure on our existing budget in education. The appropriation is to fix that up so that it balances it out and takes the pressure away. Does that make sense?

THE CHAIR: Yes, it does make sense. But I think the committee needs more clarity about what is—

MS CHEYNE: If we could get a breakdown of that list of initiatives that are there, the money that is associated with them and when that money comes into play, that would be useful. I think, particularly because it is an ongoing position, it makes sense that the appropriation is not coming in until mid this year. But to give some certainty that this is an ongoing funded position, you needed to bring them on at the start of the school year; you had funding available to do that, but you would prefer to put that funding back into other things.

THE CHAIR: Ms Lawder or Ms Cody, do you have questions in relation to safe, supportive and inclusive schools?

MS CODY: On the safe, supportive and inclusive schools, what do the positive behaviours entail? What sorts of things are we looking at in that program?

Ms Berry: It is not a one-off program. It is a culture change framework that has a whole lot of initiatives as part of the program implementation, which is about embedding culture change within schools to make sure they understand the issues around safety and they maintain respectful relationships across the school and across a number of areas. It is a lot of identifying behaviour, rewarding positive behaviour, making sure that teachers understand how they can use examples that might happen in the playground to take into the classroom and say, “This situation happened. What would we do to make this situation better?” rather than it ending in a bad way where there might be violence or bullying. That is a broad picture. There is quite a lot of detail in it and it involves a lot of professional development amongst our school community as well to understand better how to maintain those respectful and safe school communities. Mr Hawkins, do you want to expand on that?

Mr Hawkins: Yes. It is a universal offering. This is something we want to put in place through all our schools. As I said, we are currently at 59. We have provided a timetable for what that would look like for the remainder of this year and next year. But it really is a journey that the school starts on. It is really a whole-of-school approach to behaviour.

It works through quite a clearly stepped process, but it will not go to the next level until 80 per cent of staff are on board in terms of what the values and behaviours look

like and what we expect. That is to ensure that our students get a consistent approach between going to Ms Cody's classroom and going to Ms Berry's classroom. They know what those expectations look like; they know what the behaviour looks like. We find that that works incredibly well.

The evidence that came through from the advisory committee last year was very clear: this is working well; you are in your third year of implementation; you need to deepen this and continue to the remainder of the schools.

What we are finding is that teachers that are trained in it and have been working in the process easily migrate into other schools as well. It is a consistency of program effectively across our system, rather than what you can see in some systems where it can be one type of program here and another type of program here and they are inconsistent. We want a standard level of what that would look like across our schools. But it does recognise that within each school and its community they can set their own level of values around what that looks like. They can look at mascots and how to best represent that for their students to understand that.

We have found it to be, as we have kind of gone through that process, a really great way of installing that base level of expectations of what good learning in schools looks like. That is not to say that issues do not arise from time to time, but it is a lot easier to deal with those issues when you have got that foundational layer in place.

MS CODY: Does that encompass—and this might be a question for a later part of this hearing—some of the work that will be developed through the family violence hub as well, to look at how respectful relationships make a difference in a broader sense?

Ms Berry: That is right. Violence in any way is unacceptable across our whole community. Within our schools the positive behaviours for learning framework is about what we can do within our schools around culture change and adopting really positive frameworks to make sure that our schools are safe and respectful places. It is about engaging with the whole school community. It is not just the teachers telling the students what to do. The students are all engaged in this whole journey and are often the ones that are leading the school community through different initiatives.

School communities will have different ideas about how they want to embed this framework and have really safe and respectful schools. It does take into account that understanding gender inequality, understanding domestic and family violence, is gendered and that understanding what we do as a school community to support educators, what we do to support our school communities, parents and families and carers as well as our students is about how we make our schools safe places.

Mr Hawkins: It can vary at different stages of schooling. The way that it can be configured within a primary school would look very different to what it would look like within a college setting. There is a scaling up of discussions there. When we talk about protective behaviours in the K-3 age group, what does that look like? Who can touch you? Who can be near you?

But that would change to what specifically consent would look like as conversations within our high school and college settings. Also what does respectful behaviour look

like when it comes to our LGBTIQ+ community and how do those better connections go within that college setting? That has worked really well.

Gungahlin College were one of the first to go through that, and we have seen some really great work come through there. The positive behaviours for learning can link to other things like their support of IDAHOBIT Day or Wear It Purple Day. There is a real kind of better connection across the school community.

Mr Matthews: Should I clarify what is taken on notice as part of that question? The committee were requesting a next level breakdown of the safe and supportive schools initiative and clarity around what is funded through the offsets in 2019-20.

THE CHAIR: Yes, please.

Mr Hawkins: I think probably it needs clarification. The safe and supportive schools initiative is specifically a program, but the words in here are “the safe, supportive and inclusive schools”. The program line is within the budget.

Mr Matthews: Yes, the budget, indeed.

THE CHAIR: What we want are the items which are in that item.

Mr Hawkins: The breakdown, absolutely; correct.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. If members are happy can we move onto the item on supporting parents and schools through new engagement grants.

Ms Berry: Yes.

THE CHAIR: There was a parent engagement officer funded in the last budget, as I understand it. Is that the story?

Ms Berry: That is correct, yes.

THE CHAIR: Is that part of this process?

Ms Berry: No. Well, yes, but different, because the grants are being provided to the P&Cs, and the engagement officer will be part of working through—

THE CHAIR: What does the parent engagement officer do?

Mr Hawkins: The parent engagement officer is currently employed within my team. They are reaching out and working with the P&C. They are working with specific schools, as well, around different engagement programs. I think it would be fair to say—

THE CHAIR: What do you mean by “engagement”?

Mr Hawkins: That is just where I was going to go.

THE CHAIR: Okay, good.

Mr Hawkins: That looks really different in different schools and different constructs and the way different P&Cs want to operate. In some of our schools it can be around operating out of school hours care clubs; sometimes it can look like operating canteens; sometimes it can be connecting into our reading programs in schools or school banking, where our P&Cs are heavily involved. So there are a range of different areas where different P&Cs can be involved at different times, and we provide the help and support around what that looks like and the creation of new programs when parent groups come up with ideas and suggestions of what that would look like in the school. Then there is the provision and helping the school with how we can set that up effectively.

THE CHAIR: And what are these grants for?

Ms Berry: They are for all of those things that Mr Hawkins has identified, where P&Cs might want to get some improvement around their governance.

THE CHAIR: So we have a parent engagement officer who gives P&Cs ideas and then there is a bucket of money that would help the P&Cs implement those ideas in their schools.

Ms Berry: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Shorthand.

Ms Berry: I guess, yes.

THE CHAIR: Okay.

Ms Berry: It might include all of the ideas that Mr Hawkins has raised, depending on how the P&Cs operate within their school communities and the needs within their school communities, but it can also include, importantly, how the P&C wants to engage with the parent and student communities, and what sorts of supports they might need through this grants program. The engagement officer would help them bring more parents into the P&C and build those really strong relationships with the teaching workforce and staff of the school as well.

You know, Mrs Dunne, that these days it gets incredibly challenging—more and more challenging—for P&Cs and other organisations to engage and get volunteers participating in the work of the P&C. So this is about what they could do to encourage more parents to be part of their school communities in an active way, looking at different things that parents might be able to contribute which might not mean just coming to meetings; it might be some other way that they can support their school.

THE CHAIR: Okay. I note that there is \$400,000 in this financial year. How are you going to get \$400,000 in grants out the door between April and the end of June?

Mr Hawkins: We are just finalising the process now to put to the minister in terms of the formation of that granting process. We have had conversations with the Council of

P&Cs around how we will manage this, and they will be working with us. We know that there is a desire within the P&Cs for these grants and what that could look like in terms of further strengthening their supports for schools. We are optimistic that in putting this together, and probably getting it out in the next two or three weeks, we can have this up and running by the end of March, but up and functioning by the end of the year.

THE CHAIR: You probably will not have it up and functioning before the end of March because it will not be appropriated.

Mr Hawkins: Because we have to do the planning based on the notion of the appropriation coming through, good planning would entail managing the planning, then, for the appropriation to connect.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Is there a ceiling on the grants? How many grants are there? What is the maximum amount of money et cetera?

Ms Berry: It would depend a bit on what the school P&Cs need and what the P&Cs see are the needs of their school communities. That is going to change across the 88 schools. There might be a school P&C in one of those 88 schools that says, “Actually, we do not need the grants at the moment because we are happily rolling along and everything is going fine.” But there might be other P&Cs that need multiple supports or have different programs that they want to access the grants for, so I do not think there is a set amount for—

THE CHAIR: There is not a set amount per school.

Mr Hawkins: No, no, it could really vary based on need. I am still, as I said, finalising the guidelines to put it up for the minister’s consideration, so that we are really clear on what the aim of the program is, what the criteria would look like, what the ability is for schools to apply and then, importantly, to make sure that we have clear assessment criteria that we can look at that through in order to provide those to the P&Cs.

MS CHEYNE: P&C is parents and citizens, right?

Mr Hawkins: Sorry, yes.

MS CHEYNE: No, I am just trying to make a point; I am not asking for you to please define it for me.

Mr Hawkins: That is okay. It is shorthand, really.

MS CHEYNE: I guess we have just been talking a lot about how to engage parents more and saying that it is very hard to find active volunteers because everyone is living a busy life.

Mr Hawkins: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: But even just in the language that you have been using and what is in

here, the focus appears to be on how to engage parents better. Yet, traditionally, P&Cs were not just about the parent community but perhaps other community groups or other citizens who like the school, formerly had kids there, or just live in the area and want to see it succeed.

Mr Hawkins: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: Yet when I have looked at some of the P&C associations around town, they seem to be largely made up of parents and have very few outreach opportunities to engage your average Joe Blow citizen who might care about the school community but not have any child there.

Mr Hawkins: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: Could these grants be trying to reach out to those groups of people as well, to try and bolster schools of interest around a school, or—

Mr Hawkins: Probably less so. I would say that there is a P&C function that they perform in terms of the parents of the students that are attending. But then there is the broader role of the school in terms of where it sits within the community. We have a high expectation of principals in our schools working closely with what is in their community. There are a range of events that schools will organise and connect with to ensure that that school sits well within its broader community base.

I have not heard about a primary alumni or anything like that, but there is a connection with people that have been to the school previously. You see a lot of these connections when you go to school fetes and market days. There is a great connection out there with local businesses, community members and other groups. So there is really a sense of that connection, and we look to and support our principals and executive staff in our schools to do that—to actively connect in order to see that school within its broader community base.

MS CHEYNE: I really do see that with the community groups and the businesses, but with the average everyday citizen who might be living around the area I see that less so and I see that outreach less so. I just wonder if there is a gap here that could be flexible.

Mr Hawkins: It is definitely something we can go away and look at and talk about with the Council of P&Cs.

MS CHEYNE: I am just saying that we have average people who live around the area who might have something to offer.

Mr Hawkins: Yes. We work very closely with the Council of P&Cs; that is the kind of uber point where it connects up. They are always coming to us with new ideas and formations as well. It is definitely something we could work through with them as to whether there could be a better connection through the P&Cs to connecting with community.

Ms Berry: There are a couple of other ways that ordinary citizens, or people who

have a passion for that particular school because of their previous relationship with it or just because it is in their community, can connect. One is through the school boards, of course.

Mr Hawkins: Yes.

Ms Berry: But also you will see other citizens—grandparents or friends of the school—volunteering in reading classes or signing up with the school and the ACT government to be learning support assistants. There are lots of ways for the community to be engaged. There are the Rotary clubs and the men’s sheds that will run all kinds of different programs to support a school that they might have adopted as their own friend. That is encouraged. The schools really do encourage other groups and people to be engaged in ways that meet the school community’s needs.

MS LAWDER: You had a parental engagement officer funded in the 2018-19 budget?

Mr Hawkins: That is correct.

MS LAWDER: They are already at work?

Mr Hawkins: Yes.

MS LAWDER: What kind of work are they doing at the moment?

Mr Hawkins: Probably along the lines of working with the Council of P&Cs, the local P&Cs, and schools—advice, support, information. We often find that P&Cs can vary and change as people come and go. Their levels of interest in what that looks like in the school can change. People come in with new enthusiasm and vigour to get involved. There is a level over us and the supports we provide back into schools and into the associations.

MS LAWDER: The grants were an election commitment; is that right? New engagement grants were fulfilling an election commitment? Why weren’t they in the budget?

Ms Berry: I think we were working through what the P&Cs would actually need.

MS LAWDER: What if there had not been an appropriation bill? What would you have done then?

Ms Berry: We would have worked out other ways to support P&Cs. We already support them through the parent engagement officer.

Mr Hawkins: We have a broad relationship with the P&C; the grants are the next frontier of that. We have listened to the community; we have listened to the P&C. This is now the stage they feel they are at and what they feel is needed. We have supported them; they have supported us.

MS LAWDER: How did they indicate to you that they wanted more support?

Mr Hawkins: We regularly meet with them and have conversations with them. We work with them on various projects. We sat down with a P&C yesterday, talking about school health notices. We regularly integrate their thinking and engagement into a range of different policy areas.

MS LAWDER: But when was the new engagement grant raised with you?

Mr Hawkins: I would need to take it on notice to look at the conversations that we have had specifically around that. Our conversations tend to be more broadly around what we can do as the Education Directorate in supporting the P&C council and then, through them, supporting all of our P&Cs.

We engage with them on a range of issues, from policy formation to any specific issues they are hearing from parts of the community. We engaged with them very closely last year through the inquiries. There is some work that we have been doing with them around what we can further do to support the outcomes from the provisions around bullying and violence in schools. We work very closely with them on a number of those issues. They will come to us with what they think are good ideas. I would need to check when specific conversations on the grants would have happened, but this is part of a broader piece of work that we do routinely with the P&C.

THE CHAIR: This was an election commitment in 2016. We had an appropriation in June last year. These grants were not there. Suddenly there is a supplementary appropriation and we are looking at a grants program that was promised in 2016.

MS LAWDER: Yes, right at the last minute.

Ms Berry: For this term of government. Are you asking why it was not part of a budget appropriation and not part of this appropriation?

THE CHAIR: Why was it not part of a budget appropriation? Why was it not part of a budget appropriation in 2017 or 2018?

MS LAWDER: The point I am trying to get at is that you have known about this for some time, so why has it suddenly come up when a budget appropriation of this type is not common? We do not do this every year.

THE CHAIR: We do not have a supplementary appropriation every year.

MS LAWDER: If we had not had one, what would you have done?

Ms Berry: We already work closely with the P&Cs across a range of areas. Recently, over the last 12 months, because of bullying and violence issues being raised in our school communities, our P&Cs wanted to make sure that parents were supported around those concerns and that parents and communities could understand what is happening within schools, particularly the positive behaviours for learnings framework. There were a number of activities held in partnership with the P&C council and the Education Directorate to put on seminars across the city that parents

could come along to, to engage in that way. It was not done as a standalone thing; it was something that we would do generally with our P&Cs as issues arise.

With this grants program, as we have been talking with our P&C council, with the peak body, about what school P&Cs need and working through what that might look like, it has been decided that this is a good time to start those grants now that we understand the kinds of concerns that our P&Cs are identifying, which were not identified immediately but have come to the forefront, particularly around governance and making sure that they all have that right.

Because of the change in the membership of P&Cs and the different levels of experience and expertise, it is about making sure that people are prepared within our P&Cs so that they can be viable and sustainable and support our school communities effectively. Decisions around whether budget appropriation is made in the budget fully or whether it is appropriated at another time, like this, are decisions that governments make over the term. That is the decision that we made in respect of this appropriation.

THE CHAIR: If we have finished on the grants, we should go on to the capital expense.

MS CODY: Minister, I note that on page 52 there is expenditure out to 2022-23 for \$2.569 million. On page 73 there is some capital expenditure in the next financial year, 2020-21. Can you give me a breakdown of the difference between those two line items? I am referring to the budget review.

Mr Matthews: I will make a start on Molonglo more generally. The very quick history around this school is that, in the 2018 budget, the government appropriated money for a P-6 school, catering for 644 students, at Denman Prospect. When we went to the market for that school, being mindful of the growth in the Molonglo area, we also sought prices around what the 7-10 expansion would look like.

We were very happy, through that process, to get a very competitive set of bids which allowed us to use the original budget allocation to bring forward some additional works, like a full double gymnasium and some enhancements to the school administration area. We were also able to get a very attractive price to complete the year 7-10 schooling, which is what the budget appropriation provides for. As a result of the budget appropriation, we will be able to negotiate with the contractor on the delivery of the whole P-10 project as an integrated project, with the economies of scale that come from that and the attractive price that we receive through the procurement process, to be able to—

THE CHAIR: The \$23 million was the original envelope for the P-6 school?

Mr Matthews: No, \$47 million was the 2018 budget appropriation. The chief financial officer will correct me if I am wrong, but there was an original budget appropriation for the P-6 school at Denman Prospect, and that went to market. As part of going to market, we asked for a price for 7-10.

THE CHAIR: What is the \$23 million on page 79?

Mr Matthews: That is the 7-10 component.

THE CHAIR: What is the extra appropriation, the extra \$2.7 million, which is associated expenses? It is slightly different. I am sorry; it is \$2.569 million. Could somebody tell us what the \$2.569 million is for? It is expenses associated with capital infrastructure, but it is in the expenses rather than the capital infrastructure; so what is that?

Ms Daly: I have read the privilege statement and understand my responsibilities. In answer to your question, Mrs Dunne, it is the first-year effect of the operations of the actual school opening. It is the operation of the utilities, electricity and the staffing costs associated with the original opening of the school.

THE CHAIR: The school is scheduled to open in 2022-23?

Mr Matthews: 2023.

Ms Daly: That is a half-year.

THE CHAIR: 2023.

Mr Matthews: The school year, obviously, so that is—

Ms Daly: That is February 2023, so it has to be in the 2022-23 budget allocation.

Mr Matthews: There are, of course, some startup costs associated with setting up a school—the employment of a principal, administrative staff and so on.

THE CHAIR: They are essentially the first two quarters running costs of the school?

Ms Daly: Yes, they are. It is not the full staffing costs. Obviously, they will come on when we know what the enrolments are and we get the associated funding to staff according to the enrolments.

THE CHAIR: Could we get a breakdown of what the \$2.569 million is?

Ms Daly: I will take that on notice, yes.

THE CHAIR: I think that is all for education. Is there anything else that people wanted to cover in that area?

MS CHEYNE: No.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. We will hear next from the officials from CSD about domestic violence.

BERRY, MS YVETTE, Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Women

WOOD, MS JO, Acting Director-General, Community Services Directorate

THE CHAIR: We will go to strengthening support for young people and families affected by domestic and family violence, which sits in CSD. On page 49 of the budget review, it says that the ACT government is contributing \$191,000 to the commonwealth government's prevention campaigns. It says it is part of the ACT government's commitment to the fourth action plan of the national plan. But the prevention campaigns, I have been advised, actually appear in the second action plan.

I want to get some clarity, minister, about what exactly the \$191,000 is being used for. Is it a future prevention campaign in the ACT, is it part of the national campaign or is it paying for something else?

Ms Berry: Yes, it is two campaigns, and that is a very good question.

THE CHAIR: I always ask good questions; thank you, Minister Berry.

Ms Berry: I am sure. When it comes to the commonwealth government's ideas around how this can be spent, it is a good question.

THE CHAIR: I would like some clarity about the \$191,000. It is a one-off amount of money. It has an equal offset, so it is a net zero. What is it for? Is it for the fourth action plan of the national plan to reduce violence or is it part of the second action plan? Is it catch-up money? What is it for?

Ms Wood: The \$191,000 is part of the continuation of the campaigns that started under earlier action plans. With the "stop it at the start" campaign, it is for the next phase of that. It is also to develop a new campaign to reduce sexual violence. It is about a continuation of the existing effort.

THE CHAIR: Could we have a breakdown of what is a continuation and what is a new campaign?

Ms Wood: Yes, we could do that. The commonwealth is funding 50 per cent. We make a contribution based on our population share, and we can do a breakdown of, effectively, how much of ours goes to which campaign.

THE CHAIR: Great, thank you. That is on notice?

Ms Wood: Yes.

MS LAWDER: We have the removal of the safer families levy funding from five initiatives beginning in 2021. In the estimates we were told that the safer families levy funding provided for 2.5 FTE. How many FTE are in the restored funding in this appropriation?

Ms Wood: This is strengthening support for young people and families affected by domestic and family violence. Are you talking about the funding for Legal Aid, specifically?

THE CHAIR: No, there are two education expense items and there is Legal Aid as well.

Ms Wood: With the Legal Aid component, which was previously safer families funded, the funding in this initiative for Legal Aid continues funding for two lawyers and one paralegal position.

MS LAWDER: Is it 2.5 FTE, or three?

Ms Wood: I do not have the FTE figure, but we can take that on notice and check with JACS.

MS LAWDER: That would be great. There were another four initiatives that would lose their safer families levy funding at the end of this financial year. Will they be continued with the same staffing levels?

Ms Wood: In this initiative, that is in the midyear appropriation, there was the Legal Aid funding and funding for the court measure. That has continued the court funding at the same level of staffing. With the remaining measures, it is a matter for the responsible directorates and ministers. They have funding until the end of this financial year and they are considering how they manage those into the future.

THE CHAIR: With the Education Directorate expenses which are run over two years and are offset, what are they?

Ms Berry: This is a program similar to the health justice partnership, where we have a lawyer embedded within our health services to provide legal support to parents—mostly mums where it has been identified that when they are pregnant or when they are having a child is often when they are most susceptible to domestic violence. This is about embedding some legal supports within the health system to ensure that they can access that in a place where they feel safe.

THE CHAIR: It is an education initiative?

Ms Berry: Yes. That is the health justice—

THE CHAIR: This is similar to the health initiative?

Ms Berry: These are the same kind of supports, but we are embedding them within our schools to ensure that parents, families, carers and children can get that legal support within our schools in a safe place.

THE CHAIR: How do you do that effectively? We have two hospitals and 88 schools.

Ms Berry: Yes. The health justice partnership was a pilot program across three sites. That has been really successful in providing that legal support. This is a new pilot within our schools to see how we go and what kinds of supports need to be provided within our school communities. There will be a similar process. The legal officer will be able to attend schools or provide advice where it is required. That is what this funding goes to.

It is a pilot, so we will see how it goes and how it is going to work. We know that when people are in a crisis the best way for them to get support is from a trusted person, and to get that legal advice somewhere where they feel safe and where they can go which is part of their normal life, and where they will not put themselves at risk.

THE CHAIR: Will not draw attention to themselves.

Ms Berry: Yes.

THE CHAIR: How are you going to evaluate it?

Ms Wood: I might talk about how we have evaluated the health justice partnership. With the health justice partnership we had a six-month pilot, and that service has continued on the basis of the outcomes there. It was a review process. We had to establish some baselines to have something to measure against.

Critically, our baselines for the health justice partnership were about testing the awareness, understanding and confidence of health staff to have the conversation with clients. I refer to midwives in particular—their confidence in being able to identify domestic and family violence and their confidence to have the conversation. Part of that pilot was about reaching clients directly, but it was also about some capability building and building that understanding and awareness in the health staff.

We used surveys to establish a baseline so that we could then go back and measure against the same indicators at the end of the pilot. We also collected data on the number of clients serviced, both directly—in the health justice partnership, the midwife can walk the woman down the corridor to meet directly with the lawyer—and what we call secondary consultation, where the midwife, the social worker or the other person in that health setting seeks advice, effectively, to provide some better advice to their clients. We measure both those primary consultations and direct service delivery and those secondary consultations, as well as that capability building piece. We have had quite a good picture across all of those.

In the education setting, it is a pilot to test what is the best way to offer this service. There will be different channels of service and they will be able to measure the uptake for each of them.

THE CHAIR: If there are no further questions on the domestic violence initiatives, thank you very much, minister and Ms Wood. There was something that you took on notice.

Ms Wood: Yes, I took on notice the breakdown of the ACT contribution.

THE CHAIR: Yes. We will suspend for five minutes and come back with Minister Rattenbury.

Short suspension.

RATTENBURY, MR SHANE, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability,
Minister for Corrections and Justice Health, Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs
and Road Safety and Minister for Mental Health

GLENN, MR RICHARD, Director-General, Justice and Community Safety
Directorate

GREENLAND, MS KAREN, Executive Branch Manager, Legislation, Policy and
Programs, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

HOSKING, DR KIM, Executive Branch Manager, Legislation, Policy and Programs,
Justice and Community Safety Directorate

LUTZ, MS AMANDA, Manager, Restorative Justice Unit, Legislation, Policy and
Programs, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

THE CHAIR: I welcome Mr Shane Rattenbury and his officers. Minister, in relation to your role as the Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety, we are covering the charter of rights and additional support for victims of crime; improving access to restorative justice; improving our justice system; increasing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved with the justice system; investigating mobile device detection cameras in the ACT; and supporting young people through the Public Advocate and the office of children and young people.

Going to the charter of rights and additional support for victims of crime, this has been going on for quite some time; there has been mention of this over several budgets and several annual reports. What does “implement” mean? Does it mean finalise, put into action or what?

Mr Rattenbury: This has been developing over some time. There has been a very extensive process of consultation, both with the community and within government. This budget funding is actually about implementation. I anticipate putting the charter in place in the coming months. These resources are about having the staff in place to enable that. Funding in this budget initiative incorporates funding for staff in the Human Rights Commission, the Director of Public Prosecutions, courts, Corrective Services, ACT Policing and the directorate. This is actually putting in place the people who will deliver the outcomes or the services that are envisaged in the charter.

THE CHAIR: I am conscious of the time, but can you briefly say what those services are, or would it be better to say on notice what those services are and what money is associated with them?

Mr Rattenbury: I am happy to provide the breakdown on notice; that might be a better way to go about it. In the broad, this is about putting in place the sorts of measures that are coming through the charter. People want better information about where their case is up to, the timing of things and perhaps if a person is being released on parole. These are the sorts of matters. That has been the primary feedback in the consultation with the community about what victims are seeking. The capability that is being funded in government is to deliver those services. That is the broad answer; I will provide you with the breakdown on notice.

THE CHAIR: Okay.

MR HANSON: We were advised previously that this is going to be legislated in some form.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

MR HANSON: Is that still the intention?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, it is.

MR HANSON: What would be the time frame for that legislation?

Mr Rattenbury: Before the end of the term.

MR HANSON: If we have a victims charter of rights—and I would have thought that the legislation in a hierarchy sets the agenda—why are we appropriating money for staff prior to the Assembly actually seeing or agreeing to the legislation that informs and directs it?

Mr Rattenbury: These resources are about building capability in our agencies—which is, frankly, the right thing to do anyway—in terms of ensuring that victims are better supported. That is work we could probably do without the legislation, but the legislation will provide a sound legislative basis to ensure that these things happen, as opposed to trying to build a service model.

MR HANSON: I do not understand why we are saying that. This is about the victims charter of rights; we have not even seen the charter. You are allocating money towards a victims charter of rights that no MLA has seen. We have been talking about it for three or four years, but you are putting money into services without us actually getting to see what this charter of rights is. This seems to be a bit backwards.

THE CHAIR: It seems to be putting the cart before the horse.

MR HANSON: Why are we not seeing a draft, a template or something to inform us what this charter of rights is? What if that is not what we are all going to agree to? I am not disputing the need for additional services within the system, but you have been talking about a victims charter of rights for years; now you are putting money into it without us ever seeing a victims charter of rights.

Mr Rattenbury: I am sorry you feel that way about it, Mr Hanson, but the community have been very clear about what their needs are, and that is what we are funding.

MR HANSON: When are we actually going to see something? Before the end of the term?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, certainly in the next—

MR HANSON: You have been saying this for years.

Mr Rattenbury: It has taken some time. I think it has been right to do extensive

consultation on it, and we are very close to completing the project.

MR HANSON: If you are able to get money to hire staff, allocate resources and do all that body of work, it seems to me that you have a level of detail and understanding about exactly what this is.

Mr Rattenbury: Sure.

MR HANSON: I am not sure why you are then doing things within the directorates, hiring people, when we are not able to see the overarching document that is meant to inform the whole charter of rights. Why are we not seeing that? It is bizarre.

Mr Rattenbury: Does your question relate to a concern not about the allocation of resources but about the fact that the MLAs have not been briefed on the details?

MR HANSON: No. This all comes under a victims charter of rights, but we do not actually have a victims charter of rights. You are saying that this is only being appropriated to enable the victims charter of rights, which does not exist. It seems to me to be an odd way to do it. You have been saying that we are going to have this victims charter of rights. No-one has seen it, and no-one knows what it is, but you are putting money against it.

Mr Rattenbury: Plenty of people have seen it. There has been extensive consultation. You are not one of those people, evidently. If that is what you want to know, I am happy to arrange a briefing for you on the detail of the victims charter.

THE CHAIR: But I think Mr Hanson's point, Mr Rattenbury, is that the victims charter of rights is, by your own admission, a legislative instrument. The Assembly has not legislated in this space, but the Assembly is being asked to appropriate in this place—

Mr Rattenbury: Sure.

THE CHAIR: without the Assembly making a decision in relation to the victims charter of rights. It is not about who has seen the document; the Assembly has not seen the document.

Mr Rattenbury: I take that concern on board.

MR HANSON: Well, what are you going to do about it?

Mr Rattenbury: I am going to present the legislation to the Assembly shortly.

MR HANSON: All right.

Mr Rattenbury: We could be having the opposite conversation. I could be in this committee having passed the legislation and not put the resources in to implement it.

MS CHEYNE: Yes, and it is not funded.

MS CODY: Exactly.

Mr Rattenbury: And you would be grilling me over that.

MR HANSON: If you had actually passed the legislation before us in a timely fashion—

Mr Rattenbury: We are actually ahead of the curve, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: so that we could have done that several years ago, that would have been good, would it not? We could then make sure we are making important decisions.

MS CHEYNE: It sounds like things are working in lockstep.

THE CHAIR: I think the point has been made, Mr Hanson.

MS CODY: I have one supplementary.

THE CHAIR: You have a supplementary question on the charter of rights?

MS CODY: Yes. You mentioned consultation. Will the money that is appropriated here have an impact on further consultation or are your consultations wrapped up now and this is really about implementing?

Mr Rattenbury: This is really about a focus on implementation. We have a victims advisory board, which is an ongoing mechanism. That has driven a lot of this work and has probably been the group that is most involved in the consultation. I expect they will play a role, going forward, to oversee the implementation, but there is not another consultation phase, per se.

MS CODY: Okay, thanks.

THE CHAIR: What is the \$215,000, which you propose to get out the door in the last three months of this financial year, for?

Mr Glenn: Those measures are for 2019-20. There is \$200,000 for support for victims. That is going to programs managed by the Victims of Crime Commissioner. That will provide active—

THE CHAIR: What are those programs?

Mr Glenn: These are the support arrangements that the Victims of Crime Commissioner can provide to individual victims. Some of that goes to psychological support and other arrangements. That is actually an enhancement of services that are currently being delivered—some additional funding for that. The \$15,000—

MS CHEYNE: What do you mean by “enhancement”? Are victims not being supported enough at the moment? Do we need to put in more because more victims are relying on them or—

Mr Glenn: It is a demand-driven exercise. There are pressures on those programs because of the number of—

MS CHEYNE: Yes, okay.

MR HANSON: This is increased demand for existing services? What has this got to do with the victims charter of rights? This is increased demand for existing services.

MS CODY: I think Mr Glenn was still going.

Mr Glenn: Well, it is part of the continuous support to victims. So that is simply what that measure is for in 2019-20.

Mr Rattenbury: The money is in some ways unrelated to the victims charter, although that is where it is badged in the budget papers, but the Victims of Crime Commissioner has been doing a very good job of engaging the community, and under the new scheme that went through two years ago—you would remember, Mr Hanson—we have seen more people applying because they find the new system easier to deal with. It is an administrative model rather than a court-based model and the people have been more willing to come forward. So the Victims of Crime Commissioner has sought additional resources to deal with that increase in demand.

MR HANSON: That is good to know. You can see why I have been somewhat confused. Actually, it is augmenting existing services because of increased demand.

Mr Rattenbury: That part is, yes.

THE CHAIR: Is the \$215,000 this year augmentation for the Victims of Crime Commissioner?

Mr Glenn: The \$200,000 is augmentation for the Victims of Crime Commissioner, \$15,000 is for the development of some educational materials for the community and for justice agencies in relation to the victims charter.

MR HANSON: So only \$15,000 of that money is actually related to the charter and the rest of it is augmenting existing services because of increased demand?

Mr Rattenbury: In this financial year.

MS CODY: In this financial year.

THE CHAIR: In this financial year, okay. And in the outyears, what are the \$449,000, \$486,000 and \$495,000 for?

Mr Rattenbury: As I said earlier, I am happy to provide that on notice if you would prefer.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

Mr Rattenbury: But the short answer to your question is that that is all then directed

at agencies for implementation of the victims charter. I will provide you the breakdown of that on notice.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. Anything else on the victims charter? Great. Is the item on the family liaison officer for you, Mr Rattenbury?

Mr Rattenbury: No.

THE CHAIR: No, it is not. Sorry.

MS CODY: We spoke about that.

THE CHAIR: We will move on to improving access to restorative justice.

MS LAWDER: With respect to providing an additional full-time support convenor in the restorative justice unit, does it mean that there are not enough convenors to meet the demand at present?

Mr Rattenbury: We have seen an increase in demand. You may recall that we had entered phase 3 of restorative justice, which opens it up to victims of sexual assault and family violence. That has resulted in an increased number of referrals, which is positive, in the sense that the system is being used. But they are proving to be particularly complicated matters, so not only are there more matters but there are more complicated matters. The restorative justice unit have sought additional funding to ensure that we do not end up with a long waiting list in that unit.

MS LAWDER: With that additional complexity, have you found that this approach is still appropriate for family and sexual violence?

Mr Rattenbury: The feedback I get from the restorative justice unit is: for some matters. Obviously, in these matters, power imbalance is a particular issue in many of the cases. They have to work very carefully to assess the suitability of a matter for restorative justice. Some matters get referred but do not proceed to a conference stage because the assessment of the restorative justice unit is that it is not suitable for the victim or for the perpetrator.

MS LAWDER: At first glance the funding looks like a half-a-year position, perhaps. But you will only be able to recruit that person perhaps for three months, given—

Mr Glenn: We had that position filled using internal resources prior to the beginning of this year. That will simply balance that out. There is in fact a non-ongoing convenor currently engaged.

MS LAWDER: Was that a vacant position that you used?

Mr Glenn: It will now be able to be filled permanently.

THE CHAIR: Mr Glenn, did you say you have had a non-ongoing position and it is now going to be an ongoing position; did I mishear that?

Mr Glenn: Yes, that is correct.

THE CHAIR: You already have a convenor?

Mr Glenn: We have been able to provide an additional convenor to the restorative justice unit through internal allocations within the directorate. This measure will enable us to keep that position and fill it permanently.

THE CHAIR: You have touched on it a little bit, minister, but there is the question of the appropriateness of some of these references. What research is there that underpins and assists people to make that judgement? There are issues of power imbalance and people may not want to confront their assaulter again.

Ms Lutz: Mrs Dunne, would you mind repeating the question for me?

THE CHAIR: In the context of restorative justice and victims of sexual violence, there may be some people who do not want to do this, but presumably they self-select out. There are issues about whether, for the people who want to have that conferencing, it is appropriate and in their best interests. What sort of research and support is there in making those decisions?

Ms Lutz: As a voluntary program, absolutely, the first step is to be giving information about the process so that people know the potential benefits and potential risks. There are off-ramps throughout the process. If they have consented to explore restorative justice, they can step off down the track if they no longer feel it is of benefit. That can include informal and professional supporters to help assess their psychological wellbeing throughout the process, to assess their capacity.

We like to defer to victims of crime to have a say about what they want to get out of the process. That can be managed in ways that help prioritise the fulfilment of those needs. As an example of that, a victim of sexual assault may not need to have every detail of what happened expressed by the offender in that forum. The process can be modified in accordance with that.

THE CHAIR: There being no further questions about access to restorative justice, we will move on to improving our justice system. At page 59, minister, can you tell us what the money is for?

Mr Rattenbury: Regarding the Human Rights Act, Mrs Dunne, you will probably recall that there was a reform in the 2016 act. There was a legislative change in 2016 and it built in a requirement to review it three years after the implementation. This money is to get an external consultant to undertake the protection of rights services review and an external consultant to undertake the review of the victims of crime financial assistance scheme. There are two pieces of work there, and they are both statutorily required reviews.

THE CHAIR: Why is this not business as usual funding, out of the JACS budget?

Mr Rattenbury: Because it is to bring in external consultants so that there is an independence around the review process.

THE CHAIR: You cannot bring in consultants under the JACS budget?

Mr Rattenbury: There was not money available, no.

THE CHAIR: Who is the consultant?

Mr Glenn: That procurement is underway to select the individuals to do the work.

THE CHAIR: You have started the procurement?

Mr Glenn: Yes.

THE CHAIR: When did you start the procurement?

Mr Glenn: I would have to take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MR HANSON: When is that review due to be completed? This review was in the original bill, wasn't it?

Mr Glenn: I am sorry, Mr Hanson; I am struggling to remember the—

MR HANSON: You can take it on notice.

Mr Glenn: There is a time frame that is set out in the act. I think it is within 12 months after the commencement of the review.

MR HANSON: Okay. Given that this is a legislative instrument that was passed in the Assembly in 2016 that required that this review be completed by a designated date, why are we only now saying, "We need to get money to do this review"? Why wasn't this part of a budget process back in 2017, 2018 or 2019, if we knew that this was coming three years ago?

Mr Rattenbury: Because this is when the cabinet agreed to fund it.

MR HANSON: But the Assembly agreed to do this and mandated that this be done three years ago, or more. We knew that this was coming. It seems an odd way to do business that we wait until the last moment to say, "We've got no money. Quick; we'd better appropriate some money for this." The directorate knew years ago that this was a body of work that needed to be implemented. Why wasn't this in your forward planning and in the budget years ago?

Mr Rattenbury: The work is being done. You have your own commentary on that, so—

MR HANSON: I am asking a question. It is a pretty straightforward question.

Mr Rattenbury: The work is being done.

MR HANSON: The work is being done?

Mr Rattenbury: Correct.

MR HANSON: That is the answer to the question, is it?

Mr Rattenbury: The answer to the question is: the legislation requires it to be done and the work is being done.

THE CHAIR: Why are we appropriating for it, if the work is being done?

Mr Rattenbury: The appropriation enables the work to be done; that is perhaps grammatically more correct.

THE CHAIR: So the work is not being done?

Mr Rattenbury: The procurement is underway. The directorate is gearing up for the review process. The commission is gearing up for the review process. Everyone is preparing for it. This appropriation will enable the engagement of external consultants to ensure that there is a degree of independence about the review.

THE CHAIR: Are we shovelling \$270,000 out of the door in the last three months of the financial year or do you envisage progress payments? It says it will take 12 months to do this job.

Mr Glenn: Twelve months is the maximum period in which the report needs to be done. We will be dealing with the consultants to determine how the payment schedule might work and the scheduling of that time frame. We would seek to have it done as quickly as we could.

THE CHAIR: There is the potential that some of that would be rolled over into the next financial year?

Mr Glenn: I would hope not. I suppose we are not far enough into the exercise for me to be able to say that with certainty.

MR HANSON: You are appropriating this money; surely, you know when it is going to be expended. Is it this financial year or is it next financial year? When is it?

Mr Glenn: My expectation would be this financial year, but we have to get the consultants on board and we need to determine what the payment schedule for those individuals will be. I am not going to provide them with all of the money up-front.

MS LAWDER: With that \$270,000, are you expecting to pay them in advance to get it out the door this financial year?

Mr Glenn: No. I am expecting to determine what the payment schedule will be when we have the consultants arranged. That is a contractual negotiation we will have to undertake.

THE CHAIR: And that is what you expect the reviews will cost?

Mr Glenn: Yes, that is an estimate of the two reviews.

MR HANSON: On a bit of a broader question, do you have someone looking through other pieces of legislation that have passed in the last few years that require reviews, to make sure that the money is appropriated in a more timely fashion, perhaps? Are there other legislative instruments that have review clauses built in that are going to require consultants?

Mr Glenn: We certainly track requirements for statutory reviews. Some of those have particular time frames around them, some of them do not, depending on what the Assembly has decided. Some of those reviews can be done internally and we seek to do those where possible. Some can only really be done meaningfully by engaging an external party. We work through that and we engage with the budget process to be able to provide funding for those that are required.

THE CHAIR: Is it a JACS rule of thumb that if it is internally you fund it yourself, but if you are going out to a consultant you will get an appropriation? Is that always the case?

Mr Glenn: We would seek funding from government to be able to conduct the business that the directorate requires. I suppose I cannot go into any more detail about particular measures and particular requests of government for funding.

MR HANSON: Why was this not in last year's budget?

Mr Glenn: This is the point at which the government has decided to fund this measure.

MR HANSON: Was there a desire to get this in last year's budget or was it part of the budget process?

MS LAWDER: Was it knocked back?

Mr Glenn: I cannot discuss the budget process in that amount of detail.

THE CHAIR: Can we move to increasing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders involved in the justice system. There is \$1.3 million over three years to provide resources aimed at reducing the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members in the justice system. Is that investment in throughcare, or what is it?

Mr Rattenbury: No. This funding is for an on-country program. That is \$310,000. That will deliver a 10-week culturally relevant sentencing options program. It is available with both the Magistrates Court and the Galambany Court as an alternative to a custodial sentence for Aboriginal men. The primary objective is to reduce reoffending within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cohort by taking participants through healing journeys. That is the first bit of funding.

There is \$257,000 for yarning circles that will deliver a series of culturally informed, 26-week programs for men, women and youth. There is also an employment and business development initiative. That is \$640,000. That will deliver an individualised career and vocational development model, co-designed to be a target for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. There is also a little bit of money in there for project management.

THE CHAIR: That is essentially over two years. There is a little bit in this financial year. What is the \$74,000 in this financial year for?

Mr Rattenbury: I do not have that time breakdown to hand. I am happy to provide it to you on notice.

MR MILLIGAN: What sort of evaluation will you be undertaking for these three different initiatives to evaluate their success in reducing reoffending?

Mr Rattenbury: It is a really good question. I think the first measure of success is to make sure we actually co-design these programs with the service providers in the community and make sure that they are providing the right options; then having an evaluation to make sure they are working; and then, frankly, being comfortable that if it is not working in something, taking a different approach or adjusting it or whatever; and if it is working, to continue to fund it going forward. We have \$50,000 allocated as part of this money for the evaluation process.

MR MILLIGAN: Have you decided who will be doing that evaluation? Is that going to be done internally or externally?

Mr Glenn: That has not been decided as yet and obviously that evaluation process will be with some early design at the beginning of the exercise. Most of it is at the back end when there is data to look at.

THE CHAIR: How much early design has happened?

Mr Glenn: I think we have some internal thinking about the points which we would seek to have evaluated. But the actual evaluation exercise will be—

THE CHAIR: Actually my question was: how much of the design has there been in relation to these programs?

Mr Glenn: In the course of our thinking about the design of the programs we have thoughts about the data points that might need to be evaluated and the nature of the evaluation, but there is considerably more work to do on that as the programs roll out.

MR MILLIGAN: Have you ticked off on service providers that will be providing these programs and are Aboriginal community-controlled organisations providing these program services?

Mr Glenn: Dr Hosking is in a good position to answer that.

Dr Hosking: Going back to the initial question—

THE CHAIR: Sorry, Dr Hosking, the privilege statement.

Dr Hosking: I acknowledge the privilege statement. Apologies. Just going back to the earlier question about what the \$74,000 is for, these are new initiatives and we recognise that we have to co-design them with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. At this stage the \$74,000 this financial year is for 0.44 of an FTE, which will turn out to be two people. The program managers will get them in to help co-design what these will actually be.

THE CHAIR: Have we started the recruitment?

Dr Hosking: We have.

THE CHAIR: We have started the recruitment?

Dr Hosking: We have started the recruitment and we hope to get them in very soon.

THE CHAIR: What does “very soon” mean?

Dr Hosking: April.

MR MILLIGAN: Can we go to the question that I asked about community-controlled organisations. Who will be providing these programs and services in the three different initiatives that you have mentioned?

Dr Hosking: We will develop them first, obviously in a co-design way, and then we will go out to appropriate providers, but we have strong preferences for them to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations that deliver these programs.

MR MILLIGAN: Who are you co-designing this with?

Dr Hosking: We will work with the community generally, as we do for these programs and as we have for our justice reinvestment programs that are around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

MR MILLIGAN: How do you reach the community exactly, the Indigenous community?

Dr Hosking: We talk to existing providers. We talk to the elected body. We talk to caucus. We talk to end users even.

MR MILLIGAN: How long will this consultation go for before these initiatives actually get enacted?

Dr Hosking: We are hoping to enact them next financial year—and that is when we have money for the actual programs and providers, the next financial year. Basically, the rest of this financial year we are hoping to design and scope.

Mr Rattenbury: I am pleased with some of our recent funding issues where we have brought in new service providers. Yalari, for instance, won a recent funding round from the ACT government. I am pleased to see there are some new Aboriginal-led or controlled organisations that are starting to step into the space of receiving government grants. I think this is a very positive development.

MR MILLIGAN: Have you established what sorts of targets you want to reach in terms of reducing recidivism? Currently it sits at around 90 per cent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as far as I understand. Do you have a reduction target for that, and what is it? Even the report that UNSW conducted suggested that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders are twice as likely to reoffend. Have you established any targets and what have you based that on?

Mr Rattenbury: We have a target to reduce recidivism overall by 25 per cent by 2025 within our building communities, not prisons, program, which is very much about seeking to shift the emphasis of the justice system to the front end, where we seek to intervene with people before they end up in custody or after release from custody, to avoid them going back, rather than putting the money into the back end of the system.

There is a lot of emphasis in that space that recognises the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our justice system—programs such as Yarrabi Bamirr. They are the sorts of programs where you see a real emphasis in our funding in that space, in recognition of the over-representation.

THE CHAIR: Ms Cheyne is busting to ask a question about investigating mobile device detection.

MS CODY: We are not doing the item on introducing a parole time credit scheme?

Mr Rattenbury: We can talk about parole time.

THE CHAIR: That is under corrections. This is justice and then we will go onto corrections.

MS CODY: Okay, sorry.

MS CHEYNE: The \$365,000 seems like an awful amount of money, given that New South Wales is just doing it. Why do we need \$365,000 to investigate it and what is the urgency for this to have been included in a midyear appropriation?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, certainly. In terms of the work that needs to be done, we need to engage both legal staff in JACS and also at the Government Solicitor to undertake the policy analysis and legislative development, including privacy, impact assessment and procurement planning. That is the back-end work that needs to be done. In terms of the actual—

MS CHEYNE: Are they getting a pay rise to do it?

Mr Rattenbury: No.

MS CHEYNE: I am asking what the funding is for the investigation.

Mr Rattenbury: In what regard? That is what the roles are; that is the staff.

MS CODY: Would they not be doing it?

MS CHEYNE: Are these existing staff? Where is this money going—for investigation?

Mr Rattenbury: It is going on legal staff, Government Solicitor staff and staff in Access Canberra to put all the systems in place and to undertake the procurement. That is the short answer.

MS CHEYNE: So, we need new staff then?

Mr Rattenbury: We need additional staff to do it, yes.

MS CHEYNE: Why?

Mr Rattenbury: Because it is an additional piece of work that was not on the work program in the longer sense. But, given that New South Wales has now spent considerable effort to work it out, we think we can bring this in quite quickly by simply using the New South Wales model. We do not need to reinvent the technology. We think the work has been done.

We do have to make a legislative change to enable this to operate in the ACT and work through privacy issues and the like. I think the community in New South Wales has been very supportive of this technology. Recent government polls suggest about 80 per cent support, but there are questions around it. The device takes a photo of the cockpit of the vehicle, so there are issues around privacy and those matters that we need to work through.

MS CHEYNE: Is the urgency because New South Wales has forged ahead with it?

Mr Rattenbury: The urgency is that one of the increasing and significant road safety issues we have is driver distraction, particularly mobile phone use. I know ACT Policing are deeply frustrated by this. You may have seen the report just before Christmas of the undercover operation they did where they included booking some of the same people twice in two weeks. We clearly have a significant community issue and we are, I guess, being a little bit opportunistic about the fact that New South Wales have done a lot of work and we can potentially engage their provider to operate here in the ACT. We will of course need to go through a procurement process, but the work has now been done and we can bring this forward quite quickly.

MS CHEYNE: That is where it is just not marrying up for me. If the work has been done—if New South Wales has already done the bulk of the thinking and the bulk of the acquiring of the provider—and we are really just tacking onto that—

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: why is it so much money over such a long period of time?

Mr Rattenbury: Well, it is not over a long period of time; it is this financial year and next financial year. Publicly, I have indicated that we would anticipate having this in place by the first quarter of 2021. There will need to be legislative and regulatory change and that is where the work has to be done. So even though the technology has been developed by New South Wales, we still have to change our legislation and undertake a procurement process, and that is what the staff have been engaged to do.

MS CHEYNE: Have we already hired the staff to start work on this?

Mr Rattenbury: I am not sure.

MS CHEYNE: Are you able to provide a breakdown of this \$365,000?

Mr Rattenbury: I can, yes.

MS CHEYNE: Dr Hosking can help out.

Dr Hosking: We are recruiting at the moment and we have 0.5 of an FTE this financial year, so we are just looking at the ways we could break it down. There are a few chunks to this project. It is an FTE—it is basically a legal 1 in LPP—for 16 months, with 0.5 this financial year. The chunk includes, as the minister referred to, procurement, legislative amendments and privacy assessments. The ACT is unique—different from New South Wales in some ways. What works for them may not work here in terms of our infrastructure. There are a lot of issues to look at. So, as I said, we are recruiting, and we will look at how we chunk that and then how many people we bring on board for what length of time. We are just determining that at the moment.

MS CHEYNE: Is there someone already working on it?

Dr Hosking: It is being done within current resources at the moment, but we are bringing—

MS CHEYNE: Okay. That is not ideal and you would prefer to bring on—

Dr Hosking: Yes. Because it is a significant program of work.

MS CHEYNE: So it is detracting from other work?

Dr Hosking: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: Okay. On notice, if could we just get a breakdown of where that \$365,000 is going for all the different components that would be great.

Dr Hosking: Yes. Some of it is going to Access Canberra, because they will need to look at the operational issues as well.

MS CHEYNE: Sure.

Dr Hosking: And some is going to the Government Solicitor's Office, but we will provide a breakdown.

MS CHEYNE: Yes, perfect. Thank you.

MS LAWDER: So, each time there is new legislation—new work sent to the GSO, for example—you acquire new staff to work on that. Is that what you are saying?

Mr Rattenbury: Not necessarily.

Dr Hosking: Not really.

Mr Rattenbury: No. It is about work capacity. Because this is an additional project, we have sought additional resources to get it done in a relatively short time frame. It is a new piece of work. As I said, with New South Wales having worked out largely how to do this, we feel we can accelerate bringing it in in the ACT, which I think is important for addressing what is a significant road safety issue.

THE CHAIR: The last item for JACS, as opposed to corrections, is strengthening support for young people in families affected by domestic and family violence.

Mr Rattenbury: That is not within my portfolio, Mrs Dunne.

THE CHAIR: I am sorry; supporting young people through the public advocate and children and young people.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, that is one of ours.

THE CHAIR: In 2016 the Glanfield inquiry expressed concern that the office of the public advocate was under-resourced, and the commissioner herself has publicly expressed the same concerns. Will these additional officers fill the gap that has been recognised by the commissioner and by inquirer Glanfield?

Mr Rattenbury: As you can see from the budget papers, this funding is over four years. It is to provide two ASO6 positions to assist the office to meet its statutory obligations. That is the intent, and we believe that this will make a material difference to the office.

THE CHAIR: Will it mean that people in CYPS will engage with the commissioner and answer the commissioner's inquiries?

Mr Rattenbury: I would certainly expect so, yes.

THE CHAIR: You have had consultation with the commissioner and this is the right amount of staffing and at the right level?

Mr Rattenbury: We believe this will assist the commissioner in performing her role.

THE CHAIR: How many full-time staff were recommended in the Glanfield review?

Mr Rattenbury: I will have to take that on notice, Mrs Dunne. I cannot remember.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Has the public advocate at any time asked for more staff than this or at a different level?

Mr Rattenbury: I cannot recall.

THE CHAIR: Can you take that on notice as well?

Mr Rattenbury: I have quite a few conversations with the public advocate and I cannot recall.

THE CHAIR: Could you take that on notice as well? If the answer is, “No, I’m fine,” it would be useful.

Mr Rattenbury: Sure.

THE CHAIR: We will move on to corrections and justice health. Ms Cody, do you have questions on the parole time credit scheme?

MS CODY: Yes. In the descriptor it talks about reducing recidivism and reinforcing a rehabilitative approach to sentencing administration. Can you expand on exactly what you see this money doing?

Mr Rattenbury: Sure. There are two questions. There is the policy issue of why we brought in parole time credit. In the ACT, because we did not have this, if you got nine months of parole and you committed an offence at the eight-month mark, you had to go back into custody and serve the full nine months. Parole time credit seeks to give you credit for the eight months of good behaviour, if you want to put it like that, and you would only go back to jail and serve one month.

It is about creating recognition of when people do well. We certainly had strong anecdotal feedback that people were not seeking parole because they feared getting to the eight-month mark and having to come back and do another nine months. That is the reason we brought it in. It is our view that it is better for people to leave custody on parole because they then do so under supervision. We are able to work with them, assess how they are going and have some degree of ongoing supervision, which is better from both a rehabilitation point of view and a community safety point of view. That is the policy rationale.

In terms of where the money is going, predominantly the capital funding is to reprogram the courts’ calculating system—essentially, the back end. There is some complexity in making sure that you get people’s sentences exactly right, in counting the number of days. The capital funding is for IT work and the expense funding is for a senior officer grade C to support the Sentence Administration Board with the implementation of changes to the legislation, including governance policy issues and those sorts of matters.

MS CODY: Obviously, there will be a limit on who can access this particular scheme.

Mr Rattenbury: There are some constraints built into the legislation, yes. There are certain categories of offenders or types of offence that we put some limitations on.

MS CODY: Particularly with the two big numbers, for the end of this financial year and the next financial year—128 and 155—is that for the employment of a staff member?

Mr Glenn: Yes, that is correct. There is one staff member for the 2020 calendar year, so we have that half-split over the financial years.

THE CHAIR: It says this is an attempt to reduce recidivism. I understand the point that you have made, but I am trying to work out how it actually reduces recidivism.

Mr Rattenbury: The thinking in making that point is that, as I said, it is better to have people on parole and under supervision, where they can have a more structured and hopefully supported period through their parole, which leads to them being less involved in crime. That is the primary point.

THE CHAIR: Has there been any modelling as to how this particular initiative would reduce recidivism?

Mr Rattenbury: I will invite Ms Greenland to take that question.

Ms Greenland: I acknowledge the statement. There is work that has been done that shows that people who take up parole are less likely to reoffend than offenders released without any supervision. That research was undertaken by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. I do not have further detail on it; certainly, there is evidence to show that a supported release from custody provides a better outcome, effectively—

THE CHAIR: That bears out the point that the minister made.

Ms Greenland: which is the point the minister was making about assisting in reducing recidivism.

THE CHAIR: Could I note—because we are here, and it does not directly relate to the budget—that there has been quite swingeing criticism in the paper today from Winnunga about failure to implement review recommendations. How do you respond to that?

Mr Rattenbury: I do not share the analysis that Ms Tongs has made in the *Canberra Times*. There has been significant work done since the release of that report, both to address the specific recommendations in the report, as well as the second report that was the scheduled one, and then just other work that is going on. I can give you many examples of that work, but a sweeping statement that nothing has been done I do not think is a fair or accurate account of the efforts that have been put in by Corrective Services and me as the minister.

THE CHAIR: What do you think was the disconnect between your perception that

things are being done and Winnunga's perception, a fairly significant stakeholder in the corrections system, that nothing is being done?

Mr Rattenbury: I think the fair answer is that Ms Tongs is a strong advocate for her community and she is frustrated by the fact that there is a considerable ongoing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and she is right to be both angry and frustrated about that. It is not something we can fix overnight.

We have taken some bold initiatives. The fact that we are the first and only jurisdiction in Australia to bring an Aboriginal health service provider into our system is a significant achievement. It has taken considerable effort; it has been a partnership between Winnunga and the ACT government; and it has not been easy at times. It has required cultural change.

There have been misunderstandings, but we have done it and it is working. I think that is a testament to the initiatives we are prepared to take to make things different to how they have been. I note that the proposal to bring Winnunga into the jail was put forward in 2009 when the jail was first opened, and that option was not taken up at the time. But we have taken it up because we think it is the right thing to do and because we think it can make a concrete difference in both the quality of life of Aboriginal people in the corrections system and in their likelihood of coming back into the system.

THE CHAIR: Ms Tongs makes particular comments here, and one in particular is that there are a lot of initiatives in this budget in relation to sexual violence and the like but what we are actually seeing is—and her complaint is—that women inmates have to parade past male inmates, have to come in visual contact sometimes with their abusers, and these are continuing, ongoing problems. How are we addressing those?

Mr Rattenbury: That is a challenge in the ACT because we built a single jail for both men and women. When the women were in the previous women's accommodation area they also potentially came into contact with male detainees in moving to the health centre and various other parts of the jail because the health centre is right in the middle of the jail. This is an issue.

There are some particular issues with the current accommodation but we are taking a range of steps to improve that. I held a roundtable at the jail just before Christmas with a whole lot of stakeholders, specifically about women's issues, which I facilitated to ensure strong engagement with the sector.

We had a number of concrete recommendations made to us, including, for example, how staff should be trained in trauma-informed care. We have already implemented that and there is now a program underway for our senior staff in the first instance to get training in trauma-informed care so that we can actually imbed that into how we work in the jail, particularly for our female detainees, in recognition of that trauma.

Short suspension.

RATTENBURY, MR SHANE, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Corrections and Justice Health, Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety and Minister for Mental Health

RUTLEDGE, MR GEOFFREY, Deputy Director-General, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

McGLYNN, MR GENE, Executive Group Manager, Climate Change and Sustainability, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

THE CHAIR: We will now move to your role as the minister for climate change. I have not been paying enough attention to the timing; I do apologise to members. What is the role of the climate change community liaison officer and what is their remuneration?

Mr Rattenbury: I will answer the first half of the question; I will probably take the second one on notice.

Mr Rutledge: We can help.

Mr Rattenbury: Going to the purpose of the role, in seeking to attack all emissions reduction and respond to climate change in the ACT, we know that the community is really engaged by this. We know that there are lots of organisations that want to be involved and that people want to feel empowered to be part of the solution. We are also conscious that, as a community member or a small community group, it can sometimes be hard to know where to start. This role is almost a concierge role into government to assist organisations to get off the ground, to get projects going, and to have a clear point of liaison between the directorate and the government, particularly in the context where our next climate strategy recognises that the community needs to be involved in making a change. It is our endeavour to build that bridge. In terms of the remuneration—

Mr Rutledge: I acknowledge the privilege statement. Mrs Dunne, within that role there will be an additional person at the senior officer grade B level to lead; we have also reallocated a further three staff to work in the community leadership team. As the minister said, we constantly get approached by various members of the community—business community, stakeholders—wanting to know how to do more. We feel that helping them help themselves is what is required in that. We have tried a number of programs, and we have those programs in place, but this is to reflect the new actions in the new climate change strategy and lead the community along the transition to 2045.

THE CHAIR: Mr Rutledge, you said that there has been a reallocation of three staff.

Mr Rutledge: Correct.

THE CHAIR: So there will be three staff working to the SOGB.

Mr Rutledge: Correct.

THE CHAIR: Does anyone have questions on minimum energy performance

standards for rental properties?

MS LAWDER: I want to ask who you might have had consultation with in regard to this.

Mr Rutledge: We did a lot of consultation in the preparation of the climate change strategy, and there were thousands and thousands of representations from the community and many groups.

MS LAWDER: Perhaps I could be a little more specific. I asked who you might have consulted, not whether you did a lot. For example, were landlords or their representatives consulted?

Mr Rutledge: Specifically on energy efficiency, or on community leadership?

MS LAWDER: The performance standards for rental properties.

Mr Rutledge: It has been an ongoing commitment of this government for some time to bring that into place. Yes, there has been consultation about the policy. Now, through the implementation and the design of the standards, there will be a second set of consultation, with landlords, tenants and building technicians. We have been used to the current energy rating standards and disclosing voluntarily for some time. The current rating tool drives you to gas products, because, for most people in the electricity grid, gas is of lower carbon intensity than electricity. Now that we are 100 per cent renewable electricity, we need a different tool.

MS LAWDER: I am not taking any issue with that; I am asking about the consultation.

Mr Rutledge: Further consultation will occur.

MS LAWDER: How will you reach landlords?

Mr Rutledge: I will ask Mr McGlynn to add to this, because he has worked a bit more on the implementation of it, but first there are a number of technical working groups under the building ministers council and the Building Codes Board that look at this at a national level. They do a lot of consultation, particularly with industry. We are trying to augment that through this process. During that process, we will talk to local landlords and the local building industry. Mr McGlynn, do you have anything to add?

Mr McGlynn: I have read the privilege statement. In terms of the new mandatory energy requirements for renters, there are three things that are being consulted on. One is the legislative framework for that. We have been talking to some of our colleagues about the legislative approach that might be used to do that; that is well advanced. The second one is the analysis that will go into the regulatory impact statements. As the next stage of this—

MS LAWDER: Sorry, just in the interests of time, I am quite happy with all of that. I am specifically asking about the consultation.

THE CHAIR: Who did you consult with?

Mr McGlynn: We have talked with renters groups quite extensively. We have talked with technical analysts about some of the options that will be available to improve properties and what the costs and benefits of those might be. They have included representatives from the building industry and other interested stakeholders. A lot of that consultation has happened in the context of the energy efficiency improvement scheme upgrades, where one of the—

THE CHAIR: What about landlord groups?

Mr McGlynn: I do not think we have specifically talked to landlord groups at this stage, but certainly they have been invited to this.

THE CHAIR: I think that was Ms Lawder's question.

MS LAWDER: Yes.

Mr McGlynn: We will be doing that.

THE CHAIR: I am mindful of the time.

MS CHEYNE: On notice, could we get a breakdown of that 757,000 funding?

Mr McGlynn: Sure.

MS CHEYNE: What is it all going to?

Mr Rattenbury: We will take that on notice. Yes, that is fine.

THE CHAIR: I have some other questions which I can put on notice. Thank you, minister and officials.

Hearing suspended from 11.40 am to 1.02 pm.

GENTLEMAN, MR MICK, Minister for Advanced Technology and Space Industries, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services

BRADY, DR ERIN, Deputy Director-General, General Land Strategy and Environment, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

WALKER, MR IAN, Executive Group Manager Environment, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

FOLEY, MR JUSTIN, Executive Branch Manager, ACT Parks and Conservation Service, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

THE CHAIR: We will resume the third day of hearings on Appropriation Bill 2019-2020 (No 2). I welcome Mr Gentleman and his officers. Mr Gentleman, the committee has listed environment and heritage, extra rangers, improving water quality, protecting endangered species, and supporting volunteers; planning and land management and simplifying the Territory Plan; and then police and emergency services. Is everyone happy with that as an approach?

MS CODY: Yes.

THE CHAIR: I would like to begin with extra rangers to support urban wildlife. How many of these rangers are currently employed in this financial year, and how many new ones will we get and will they be on board in this financial year?

Mr Walker: I have read the privilege statement. I will pass that question to Justin Foley, the head of the parks service.

Mr Foley: I have read the privilege statement. In terms of the urban wildlife program, it is an ongoing program. The program is targeted at addressing injured and dead wildlife, predominantly on our urban roads. It is a significant challenge for the agency. We have had years where we have had up to 4,000 call-outs for the park service staff in a single year. Each day we are running shifts where we have staff doing wildlife on an “as the calls come in” basis. Effectively, we have staff on each shift allocated to the urban wildlife program. It is a service we deliver as it is at the moment. There is a significant trend of the call-outs increasing, which has seen us seek extra funding for the wildlife program. What we will be doing as a result of this funding is putting additional wildlife rangers in place so that we are able to service the number of calls that are being made, for our staff to deal with that injured wildlife.

THE CHAIR: This funding is roughly \$300,000 over a full financial year. What is that for? It is two officers. At what level?

Mr Foley: We are aiming for ranger 1 level. We are looking to employ rangers to come into that program.

MS CHEYNE: Two rangers at ranger 1 level?

Mr Foley: Two rangers, yes.

THE CHAIR: What are the on-costs apart from super and stuff like that? Presumably

a truck each?

Mr Foley: They will be working off the fleet, but there will undoubtedly be additional pressure on the fleet. There are all the on-costs, as you have discussed, associated with that. And there is training and keeping people updated in terms of their training. There are all the costs associated with running the urban wildlife program and keeping those staff equipped to do the job.

THE CHAIR: Could you, perhaps on notice, give the committee a rundown on what the staff cost is: the salary cost, the on-costs and the other running costs?

Mr Foley: Yes.

THE CHAIR: There are very different running costs in having somebody behind a desk and somebody out in the field with a vehicle.

Mr Foley: Yes.

Mr Walker: Although the costs are reflective of rangers in the field anyway. Our rangers are equipped with the fleet, the uniform and all those sorts of things.

THE CHAIR: The committee just wants to know what those costs are. The \$98,000 in this financial year is for what?

Mr Foley: The costs associated with putting the rangers on this financial year.

THE CHAIR: So you are going to have a quarter of two FTE, essentially, half an FTE, for the remainder of the year?

Mr Foley: And the costs of putting them in place.

THE CHAIR: Have you recruited, or are you recruiting?

Mr Foley: Recruiting is underway.

THE CHAIR: When did recruiting start?

Mr Foley: The recruitment approval process is underway, and we are looking to advertise shortly.

THE CHAIR: If there is no appropriation, what happens to that recruitment?

Mr Foley: It will not go ahead, effectively.

THE CHAIR: Minister, this is a question that the committee has asked of almost everybody. How is it that you have started the process in anticipation of appropriation?

Mr Gentleman: We started the process because of the need, and we are moving the appropriation bill to appropriate the money to support that.

THE CHAIR: And if for some reason there is no appropriation?

Mr Gentleman: As you have heard from staff, we will not be able to proceed.

THE CHAIR: I would like to know when the recruitment process started.

Mr Gentleman: There are also our internal cash management operations within EPSDD, particularly parks and conservation, that allow us to start that work.

MS CHEYNE: Thank you. How much have call-outs increased year on year? I know we have discussed this in annual report hearings as well, but refresh my memory.

Mr Foley: I will dive into my memory. We have gone, in the last few years, from having around 2,500 calls to around 4,500 calls in 2018. We have also seen some changes in the patterns of call-outs. The seasonal conditions drive the call-outs. We have had three dry years. This year we have seen an extremely high call-out rate over the summer months as kangaroos in particular move off reserves to seek feed in the urban areas. We have seen a significant jump in numbers, and we have seen a shift in the pattern of when these calls are coming in as a result of the extended drought.

MS CHEYNE: That shift was starting to happen in 2018, noticeably. Is there a reason that we are only recruiting these two extra rangers now, when we had a reasonable idea about the weather patterns and that this dry spell was going to continue?

Mr Foley: It was really a matter of us undertaking a review of the wildlife program and understanding whether we had capacity internally to manage the increase in numbers. That was really the focus. It is important to note that we deliver the wildlife program along with a number of other programs. We really needed to understand whether, if the numbers increased, we had the capacity to absorb that without impacting the others.

MS CHEYNE: So you genuinely looked internally first to see if you could absorb the increase in the call-out demand and, after tracking and looking into that, decided no. But the need is there right now to do that recruitment, not in the next budget cycle?

Mr Foley: Correct. Yes.

Mr Walker: We also looked at other strategies around not just employing more staff but seeing whether there were other ways that we could actually minimise the impact on the community and, obviously, wildlife. That was part of an ongoing review process that we continue to deliver each year to assess how effective we are or whether there are changes required. We look at whether we can improve the safety and the wellbeing of our staff through these processes as well. It is very much about a continual review process.

THE CHAIR: Just briefly, what does a ranger do in the urban wildlife program—in 25 words or less?

Mr Foley: In 25 words or less, we manage the impacts of injured and dead wildlife in

Canberra's suburbs.

THE CHAIR: So it is really injured and dead wildlife. It is not wildlife straying into places where they are going to cause trouble or—

Mr Foley: No, it is responding to calls.

THE CHAIR: What about snakes and stuff like that? Who does that?

Mr Foley: We tend not to deal with snakes. We direct people to private service holders.

THE CHAIR: You do not pick up snakes?

Mr Foley: I do not pick up snakes and I do not recommend anyone does.

THE CHAIR: No, no! Sorry, your people do not pick up snakes.

Mr Foley: No, that is right.

MS CHEYNE: I think by the time people call for a snake it is usually gone.

Mr Foley: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Yes, sometimes.

Mr Foley: We predominantly deal with issues on urban roads and in the urban space where we have seen wildlife injured. And we have a triage system, effectively. We work with ACT Wildlife to make sure that where animals are injured and can be helped, we work in partnership to enable that to happen. We are also dealing with the unpleasant outcome of cars and kangaroos meeting in our urban areas. So it is not the broader wildlife management program; it is a very specific program designed to manage those issues.

MS CHEYNE: So, when we are referring to call-outs, they are call-outs because there is an injured or dead animal?

Mr Foley: That is right. We get a call through Access Canberra.

THE CHAIR: Moving on to improving water quality in Lake Tuggeranong.

Mr Gentleman: Yes, a very important topic.

THE CHAIR: What does this project do? Sorry, where do I find it in the budget review? I can only find it in the supplementary budget papers, in a list of initiatives.

Mr Gentleman: Okay, we will chase that location down for you. There are two main aspect of this for Lake Tuggeranong. The first is a larger, new gross pollutant trap on the northern end of Lake Tuggeranong, where we have not had a reasonable way of dealing with pollutant coming in.

THE CHAIR: What do you describe as the northern end—Greenway?

MS LAWDER: From Wanniasa or Kambah?

Mr Gentleman: From the Wanniasa-Kambah area.

THE CHAIR: Is that north?

Mr Gentleman: Well, it is for the lake.

THE CHAIR: Okay. It is for the lake.

Mr Gentleman: Yes, indeed. At that northern end, the GPT.

THE CHAIR: It is just the deep south to me.

Mr Gentleman: We are doing extra work with the University of Canberra in identifying how nutrient flows are coming into the lake, with the opportunity to do some in-water management with them, as well.

THE CHAIR: Is that all money to be spent in this financial year?

Mr Walker: We have the money spent over this financial year and also part of next financial year in terms of capital expenditure.

MS CODY: It is on page 74.

THE CHAIR: Page 74. Great, thank you. It is in capital; that is why I could not find it. Sorry. On page 74 you have \$100,000. That is associated expenses. And then there is \$750,000 in capital expenditure this year. What is the capital expenditure?

Mr Walker: The capital expenditure, as the minister explained, is for a gross pollutant trap to stop the large pollutants going into that.

THE CHAIR: Are you going to go out to tender and contract, and build a gross pollutant trap for \$750,000 in the last three months of this year?

Mr Walker: Because we have been delivering the healthy waterways project over the last number of years, we actually have people who are working in the healthy waterways space, so we have been able to look at opportunities to extend those existing arrangements to deliver this work.

THE CHAIR: This is new work?

Mr Walker: It is work that has been identified previously as one of the key things to help improve the water quality of Lake Tuggeranong and therefore it gives us the ability to tap into that work.

THE CHAIR: Has there been a previous budget bid for this work?

Mr Walker: No, it has not been in previous budget bids. When we did the initial healthy waterways project we identified a large number of projects and we went out to the community through the various processes of government and narrowed that list. This project was on that list as well. So it is part, I guess, of an ongoing list of works that government can implement over time.

THE CHAIR: Are you going to spend \$750,000 in the last three months of this financial year?

Mr Walker: That is what we have put forward, and we will look to see how we progress that in the course of the remaining period of time.

THE CHAIR: What has to be done to spend and get this money out?

Mr Walker: I mentioned the establishment of the gross pollutant trap and the refurbishment of that.

THE CHAIR: I know you are doing that. What do you need to do to start the building and make progress payments, even if you do not complete, to the tune of \$750,000 between April, when this bill is likely to pass, and the end of the financial year?

Mr Walker: We will ensure that we have contractors appropriately engaged to deliver that work, and, as we have said—

THE CHAIR: Have you got contractors in discussion?

Mr Walker: We have contractors who have been involved in the healthy waterways projects through the last number of years. We have identified whether they have the suitability and the skills to do that work going forward.

THE CHAIR: You would be going out to a single select tender for this project?

Mr Walker: No, it would potentially be a variation to the existing contract.

MS LAWDER: Is the swale that is included in this up at that end as well?

Mr Walker: The swale is to intersect water coming up—

MS LAWDER: I know what a swale is.

THE CHAIR: Where is it?

MS LAWDER: I am asking where it is.

Mr Walker: Off the adjacent playing fields, which I understand are on the northern edge as well. It is to intersect the run-off from those playing fields.

MS LAWDER: In Wanniasa?

Mr Walker: I will take that on notice and confirm the exact location for you. I will provide that to you.

MS LAWDER: With the water quality work by UC, they were there last year, with those squares in the lake.

MS CODY: They are actually still there.

MS LAWDER: With the rain gardens and wetlands et cetera, what improvement in water quality have we seen for the H2OK healthy waterways work?

Mr Gentleman: We have seen a diversion of 547 tonnes of nutrient into the waterways, which is an incredible achievement over this short period, considering that these healthy waterways projects are still growing. I have been down to visit them quite regularly. They are still in their growth spurt, if you like, but that is quite a significant move of nutrient out of the waterway project.

MS LAWDER: Yes, but in terms of the water quality in Lake Tuggeranong, we still have blue-green algae, for example. Have you been doing monitoring? Have we seen an improvement in the water quality in the lake?

Mr Walker: Water quality in the lake continues to improve. This is a long-term process that we are trying to recover from. The lakes were designed to trap nutrients and sediments. That is why we get the algal blooms. This is going to take a long-term focus and activities to do that. That is why we have invested in those key projects.

We are continuing to identify particular source points of nutrients coming into the lakes. For example, that is why we are putting the swales in place, to help reduce those. But it will take time because those nutrients have built up over time, so it will take time to remove those nutrients before they enter the lake as well as what is already in the lake.

MR COE: Minister, you mentioned the quantity that has been diverted. What is that, relative to what is still going down? Can you put it in some context? It does not really mean much, in isolation.

Mr Gentleman: I will ask our experts to try and give you that information.

Mr Walker: Can we take that on notice and come back to you with a bit of quantification around the context for that?

MR COE: Sure. And how do you know that that amount has been diverted?

Mr Gentleman: That is the report from UC.

MR COE: How do they know?

Mr Gentleman: They have done the testing.

MR COE: How do they know? What do they do? How do they actually—

Mr Gentleman: They test the water. I cannot remember the figure, but it was something like 600 tests every two minutes in the apparatus that they have set up at the University of Canberra. They go down to the lake, take water from the lake, test it back at UC and get the results.

THE CHAIR: We will move on to protecting endangered species.

MS LAWDER: Enhancing the resilience of the grassland earless dragon: tell me more about that.

Mr Gentleman: It is an important step forward to ensure that we can protect this species into the future. It is an endangered species. The work that we are doing ensures that we can keep the environment in place for that species to keep growing. I will pass over to the directorate to give you more detail.

Mr Walker: As the minister has highlighted, it is an endangered species nationally. It inhabits grassland areas. Grassland is required to be, for this particular species, at a particular height of grass. Its management regime requires us to effectively keep grass, or grass clumps, at a particular height to enable the species to survive.

MS LAWDER: So it is about managing the habitat rather than the resilience of the dragons themselves?

Mr Walker: Both of those things are intimately linked. Managing the grassland habitat will provide resilience to the species. We need to make sure that we are reducing things like weeds and also managing, as I said, the grass level. That is a particularly—

THE CHAIR: Does that mean physically cutting it?

Mr Walker: It does mean physically cutting it, physically grazing it, removing it in some way or using fire in some way. There are different techniques, depending on the history of the grassland, that you would continue to apply. If the grassland has been grazed in the past, you would continue to graze it, because that is the regime that has been adopted there. If it had been burnt or slashed, you would continue to do those things—trying to create what is referred to as a mosaic landscape for these species to move through.

That work is what is being delivered here and continues to be delivered, as well as continuing to search for these animals. They are cryptic in nature and difficult to find. Therefore it requires continual monitoring. We have a monitoring program set up to look for dragons. That includes placing roof tiles on the ground; they tend to hide underneath them and bask under those areas.

THE CHAIR: What did they do before roof tiles back in the day? Where is this work going to be carried out?

Mr Walker: In the grasslands in and around south of the airport; that is where the

grasslands are that we are particularly focused on in this case.

MS LAWDER: You mentioned the grasslands. Is it particular types of grass that they live in? Are they impacted, for example, by the spread of African lovegrass?

Mr Walker: The answer to that is that grassland communities are impacted by African lovegrass and other weeds. Part of this work is about weed removal and weed management. Grasslands are typically inundated by a number of weeds like African lovegrass. That is a common approach to managing.

They are not native grasslands. Native grassland communities across Australia are highly degraded and the fact is that there is only one per cent of native grasslands conserved across the country—in fact, less than that—and that makes them particularly significant and all the more reason for the ACT to be focused on them. We have got some of the best grasslands in the country and some of the locations where dragons occur relate to those grasslands.

THE CHAIR: What is the \$540,000-plus each year in the outyears for?

Mr Walker: That work will be for the delivery of programs like managing weeds.

THE CHAIR: Is it staff or is it—

Mr Walker: It is for the infrastructure. That is one way to say that in the context of capital but—

THE CHAIR: Kit?

Mr Walker: It is for kit; it is for chemicals; it is for those sorts of things that are required to do the work.

THE CHAIR: Are there staff associated with that?

Mr Walker: There are staff associated with that, yes.

THE CHAIR: How many staff?

Mr Walker: In the outyears, three, and then a couple of variations over time in that space.

THE CHAIR: They are just dedicated to that particular area?

Mr Walker: Like all staff in our organisation, their focus will be on this area but they will also do other tasks and other activities where that is required.

THE CHAIR: What is the \$20,000 in this financial year for?

Mr Walker: The \$20,000 is to make a start on those new and emerging weeds that are currently popping up as a result of the weather that we have got now, but also starting to move on the fire or other grazing requirements.

MR COE: I have a related question with regard to the brumbies in Namadgi. What is the current thinking on the management plan and what is required in light of the recent events?

MS CODY: I am not sure that they are a protected species. I am not sure that they would come under this particular budget item.

MR COE: That is why I said “related”.

MS CODY: We are talking about the supp appropriation bill. We are not talking about the brumbies. We have got a very limited time with Mr Gentleman here and I have got questions for policing and for planning. I really do not think that we should be wasting time on questions that are not related to the supp appropriation.

THE CHAIR: It may be that Mr Gentleman has a quick answer, which may have been covered in that time.

Mr Gentleman: A quick answer might help. We have a feral horse management plan for Namadgi National Park. It is implemented. There are no horses there at the moment.

MR COE: Has it changed following the fires?

MS CODY: I think that was a quick answer.

MR COE: It was a quick answer but—

MS CODY: I have many questions.

THE CHAIR: Ms Cody, I am chairing this meeting.

MR COE: It was with regard to the fires.

MS CODY: Mrs Dunne, maybe you should do a better job at it.

MR COE: Following the fires, how has that management plan changed in the stage of its implementation?

Mr Gentleman: It stays in place, as it was before, that we will manage any feral animals—feral horses in particular—coming into the park in the way that we have managed them before. There are no horses there now.

THE CHAIR: There are no horses in the park at the moment?

Mr Gentleman: No.

MR COE: They are not a threat to endangered species at the moment?

Mr Gentleman: Not from feral horse inclusion. But we are keeping an eye on it.

There have been signs of feral horses coming to the park but they are not there just at the moment.

THE CHAIR: Just very quickly, do people have questions on supporting volunteers to undertake environmental conservation?

MS CHEYNE: I appreciate that the nature-based volunteering initiative is the rangers program and Waterwatch. We have got a huge number of citizen scientists in the ACT. Is this helping them as well? I see that this is about creating a new position to support ranger assist. What is the breakdown of this funding? It is significant.

Mr Walker: The proposition here is really to deliver our Waterwatch program. Our Waterwatch program is fundamentally citizen science. A proportion of this funding is to provide that work in addition to the ParkCare assist ranger. That role is to coordinate volunteers to support the delivery of programs in our parks and conservation areas.

MS CHEYNE: Is that like when we do kangaroo monitoring and things like that?

Mr Walker: That might be a scenario where that ranger assist program would come in. Volunteers register through our ParkCare hub. They can choose their particular areas of interest, whether that be wildlife or assisting rangers. They are then effectively partnered with the teams and the rangers, the teams on the ground doing the work. That is the ParkCare assist model.

The Waterwatch model is for Waterwatch coordinators who coordinate activity with a host of volunteers and we use that to inform our catchment health indicator program. That program provides advice to us to answer questions around water quality across the ACT. It is produced annually and gives a snapshot of the water quality across all the catchments, the tributaries across the ACT.

THE CHAIR: What is this expense for, exactly?

Mr Walker: This expense is for volunteer coordination and employing Waterwatch coordinators and the ranger assist coordinator.

MS CHEYNE: Basically, you have got a whole lot of volunteers that just need to be assigned and best used for their skill set?

Mr Walker: Managed and supported, yes.

MS CHEYNE: Are you missing that position at the moment?

Mr Walker: Correct.

MS CHEYNE: Rangers themselves are having to work it out, whereas a coordination role would help funnel people through?

Mr Walker: Correct. It is about managing volunteers safely and efficiently to deliver a range of opportunities that the parks and conservation service provide.

THE CHAIR: Is there kit associated with this? That is a lot of staff money.

Mr Walker: In terms of supporting volunteers, we make sure that our volunteers do have appropriate things around health and safety. There are things like fluoro vests and appropriate gloves; those sorts of material costs would be part of the program that we deliver. Waterwatch is the same. We do require tubes to collect the water and nets to collect samples. Those sorts of things and those ongoing programs continue to consume costs.

THE CHAIR: What is the \$171,000 this year for?

Mr Walker: That is to continue implementing those programs.

THE CHAIR: Have you run out of money in the program? Why are we appropriating money to continue to implement an ongoing program?

Mr Walker: The recognition that volunteers are a significant contribution to help us deliver—

THE CHAIR: But we already have those programs. We already have Waterwatch and ranger assist. What is this \$171,000 in this financial year for?

Mr Walker: It is recognition that we have more and more people wanting to be involved and that there is a growing demand for engagement.

THE CHAIR: What are we going to use the \$171,000 this year for?

Mr Walker: The \$171,000 is for the employment opportunities and the volunteer coordination associated with these programs.

THE CHAIR: You are going to employ extra people in this financial year?

Mr Walker: That is the intention, yes.

THE CHAIR: How many FTE is this program—the \$2.3 million?

Mr Walker: Let me clarify that. It is 0.4 this financial year, so half an FTE, and 1½ FTEs going forward.

MS LAWDER: You will provide a breakdown?

MS CHEYNE: Yes; I am not sure where all of this money is going.

MS LAWDER: 0.4 should not cover \$171,000.

THE CHAIR: Yes. What is the extra money? A breakdown—

Mr Walker: Yes, we can provide that.

MS CHEYNE: Are there opportunities, with the recovery of Namadgi, for citizen scientists to get engaged and involved with that?

Mr Walker: Yes. Part of the process of recovery will see many volunteers wanting to participate in that. As I have already mentioned, the ParkCare hub provides a portal for people to volunteer to. We have set that up with the recovery space. If people want to specifically volunteer associated with the bushfire recovery, they can go to that space and register.

They go through all of the same processes in terms of health and safety and risk management that the rest of our ParkCare communities go through. There is a good pathway for that. That is part of the process whereby we run around supporting volunteers in the conservation arena.

MS CHEYNE: I suspect you expect that there would be quite a bump, in terms of people wanting to help—speaking again to the importance of this role?

Mr Walker: We are seeing dramatic increases in the number of people putting up their hands to volunteer, from people with very high level skills coming out of various universities to mums and dads and kids really wanting to help. There are a whole range of different environmental opportunities and we are looking to try and support the community and tap into that—look after not only the park but also the rest of the ACT.

MS LAWDER: Are you providing any funding to Landcare?

Mr Walker: Landcare ACT is a body that sits above all of those groups. It is a coordinating body, so we are not providing direct funding to Landcare ACT. The three catchment groups sit under Landcare. Landcare is an overarching body to which we are not providing money directly, but we are supporting the groups underneath it—the constituents.

THE CHAIR: Could we move on to simplifying the Territory Plan? This is dealt with on page 55. There is half a million dollars in this financial year and another \$700,000 over two of the outyears. What work has already been undertaken in relation to the review of the Territory Plan?

Mr Gentleman: Quite a bit of work has already been undertaken. This extra funding is to assist the directorate in moving forward on reviewing the Territory Plan. As you know, it is quite a wieldy document.

THE CHAIR: I think the word is “unwieldy”.

Mr Gentleman: The chief planner has said that he wants to reduce it to a more simplified document that allows all Canberrans to understand how the Territory Plan operates. In regard to the funding, most of it will be for consultants to assist our staff with the renewal of the Territory Plan. I will pass over to the deputy director-general to give more detail.

Dr Brady: I acknowledge the privilege statement. As the minister said, the chief

planner advised that a review of the Territory Plan was warranted. In doing that, we have been doing internal work within the teams over the last year. We have a Territory Plan team, a strategic planning team that does a lot of policy work, so we have been doing some internal review. Through that work we have been able to focus on what it is that we need to do around not just the Territory Plan but the whole planning system. There have been policy changes with the planning strategy, the housing strategy and the climate change strategy. We need the planning system to take account of that and to accommodate growth better.

Specifically, the Territory Plan, as the minister said, is a pretty chunky document. It is not easy for people to understand how to use it. What we have found on the ground and from a lot of community consultation over a range of Territory Plan variations, DAs and things over the last couple of years is that, with the way that the Territory Plan works, it does not necessarily make it clear for people: "This is what our intention is; this is what we want things to look like." It is quite rules focused, but it does not necessarily allow for innovation.

They are some of the things that we have been doing. I will not keep going in case there are other questions. We have been doing an internal review of what we need to focus on, not just in the Territory Plan but perhaps a bit more broadly, in terms of how people interact with it, and how it fits within the broader policy system that affects planning as well.

THE CHAIR: Was there money for this in the principal 2019-20 budget or has it so far been treated as business as usual?

Dr Brady: So far, business as usual. There is some work that we think needs some specific input that we could benefit from, from consultants, and that is why we requested some funding.

THE CHAIR: How is it suddenly not business as usual?

Dr Brady: Once we had done the review, we had more of an idea that it is more of a system-wide thing that we need to look at. In terms of the teams continuing with their business as usual, there is work that we need to do that is in addition to that. That is why we sought the funding. Some of the funding is to help us with engagement, to understand how we can better connect with the community as we do the work. Some of it is related to that. Some of it is related to having consultants focus on specific parts of the Territory Plan to help us while we continue with other work we have around Territory Plan variations, while we are doing this work.

MS LAWDER: This work has been underway already for some time?

Dr Brady: For about a year we have been doing a review of the Territory Plan in the system.

MS LAWDER: Why is it that you suddenly needed more money? I can see that you did some stakeholder workshops back in May last year.

Mr Gentleman: That is correct, and there was a survey.

MS LAWDER: That would have been planned for before then. Why wasn't it in the budget? Why is it in this appropriation bill? Why didn't you plan better for it?

Dr Brady: As I said, with some of the review work, it is as a result of the review work that we found that it is not just the Territory Plan that we need to focus on; it is more broadly. To do it within the time frame that had been suggested that we would do it, within the next couple of years, we will need some input from consultants to focus on some specific elements.

MS LAWDER: Have you changed the scope for the terms of reference?

Dr Brady: In some respects the scope is a bit bigger, which sometimes happens as you do a review. You find out that there are more things that could benefit from being looked at and it might be better to look at them now more holistically than breaking it—

MS LAWDER: Can you give me an example or two?

Dr Brady: Initially, for example, when we started looking at the Territory Plan, we were probably looking more at whether the DA process was part of the issue. Is zoning part of the issue? Is the way that it controls an issue?

What we have found through some of the consultation with people is that we do not necessarily give as much indication of what it is that we want areas to look like at a scale between the city and a site. That is one of the areas where we have realised we need to do a bit more spatial planning, on top of what we thought we would need to do. To keep things moving, it would be of benefit to get some consultants to help us with that piece of work.

Generally, when we have spoken to the community, we have heard from them that they feel that, for their districts or areas, we are not necessarily preserving the character of them and that we do not articulate that as clearly as we could. That is an area where we realised, "Okay, we need to focus on that, and probably sooner rather than later."

MS CODY: Does this involve consultation or is this mainly just the development of things that you have already heard from the public?

Mr Gentleman: It does involve consultation as well. As you heard earlier from Ms Lawder, there were a number of workshops held last year. Prior to that there were session meetings with community councils. Then there was a survey that went out through the your say community panel in October last year; we had 950 responses to that. We will continue to do that work with the community as this work goes through.

MS CODY: So this is part of that planning refresh stuff that the government was doing last year?

Mr Gentleman: Yes.

Dr Brady: We used some of that. That was for the planning strategy, but we absorbed some of the work last year as part of business as usual, trying to help us with the review. With the funding for the consultation, as we continue the work we will get to a point where, for example, if we are making changes to the Territory Plan or the Planning and Development Act, we will need to do consultation. We have heard from people that they feel that when we are consulting on some of the planning matters, either it is too technical or it is not easy to grapple with and they do not know how to interact with it. That is why we thought it would be good to get some expertise from communications and engagement people to assist us with that. That is what some of the funding will go toward.

MR COE: What is the product, the output, that you are seeking to produce, either along the way as an interim measure or as the final output, as a result of this project?

Dr Brady: I cannot pre-empt fully what the output will be, because we have still got work to do and there will be consultation to happen. The intention is that we end up with a Territory Plan that is easier for people to read.

THE CHAIR: Fewer pages?

Dr Brady: The chief planner would like to get it on a page; I think that might be a really big page and lots of pictures.

Mr Gentleman: He did not say how big the page was.

Dr Brady: I know his intention is that it is simplified. People have quoted that it is over 2,000 pages or something now. To be honest, if someone wanted to find out what they could do on a piece of land, they would have to go through quite a lot to find that out. That is not uncommon in planning systems: people incrementally make changes and then you get to a point—in lots of jurisdictions in Australia and other places—where you think that there have been so many changes you need to look at it. We are in that position.

Hopefully, we would end up with a Territory Plan that is clearer for people to read in terms of thinking, “Okay; for this piece of land, this is what is intended. For this piece of land sitting in a neighbourhood, this is how it relates to this neighbourhood in terms of the overall city.” Hopefully, there will be better connection that way.

MR COE: I understand that that is the objective, but as a result of this appropriation, are you going to have a scripted, drafted Territory Plan, or is this just overarching?

Mr Gentleman: It is a three-stage-process. We are in stage 2 at the moment. The end result will be when stage 3 is completed. It will give us direction-setting identification and a clear scope for change as the Territory Plan is changing.

THE CHAIR: When is stage 3?

Mr Gentleman: We are in stage 2.

THE CHAIR: When is stage 3?

Dr Brady: Likely into next year.

THE CHAIR: Are the expenses in this supplementary appropriation for stage 2?

Dr Brady: They will assist with stages 2 and 3 really. Mr Coe, to go back to your question, I would like to think that in a couple of years time, whether it is drafting instructions or whatever, we would at least have some idea of what we might need to change in the act and some idea of what the new Territory Plan might look like.

MR COE: In terms of stage 1 and stage 2, are the objectives that are currently in each zone and subzone not actually what you are striving to do? Isn't it the technical stuff you have to change rather than the objectives?

Dr Brady: Yes. That is the complexity of it. We cannot just change one part. There might be some things in the Territory Plan you could change, but there are some things that might be really important for us to deal with and we cannot unless we change the act.

MR COE: I agree, but if you already have all the zone objectives in the current Territory Plan, and they are actually the objectives that you want, why aren't you just straight into stage 3, into how you actually simplify it?

Dr Brady: Because it is not just about the zones. That is one quite significant development control measure—

THE CHAIR: I think that is what Mr Coe said some time ago.

Dr Brady: There is a lot more in development controls than zoning. It is about design guidance as well. There is a lot more than the zones. The zones have an unusual role, in some respects, in the ACT planning system, compared with others. We have been looking at other systems to work out whether the zones stay the way they are, whether they are the right way the way they are. That is part of the thinking that we are going through.

MS CHEYNE: It seems as though we have a Territory Plan variation every few weeks out for consultation. How will that work with what you are trying to do here? At the end of it, it is going to be seven years in the making. I have just been looking up when Mr Ponton first said he wanted to get it on a page, and it was some years ago. How are we going to be able to do this while we have Territory Plan variations that are live and are important for the development of this city? Are we going to just put a moratorium on everything at some point and say, "Hold on; we are just going to stop while we fix the Territory Plan." How is that going to work?

Dr Brady: At the moment, the intention is that we continue with the Territory Plan variations. There may well be a point, when we are getting closer to changes, when we will have to consider what is the appropriate thing to do at that point. But for the moment the intention is to continue. This is quite a lengthy process. As I think you were suggesting, it is a pretty big thing. If we put Territory Plan variations on hold now, that would just cause us all a bit of problem, I think. We know that we need to

do more work before we even get to a position to consider what we need to do about it.

THE CHAIR: Before we move on, can I quickly ask this. There has been half a million dollars expense in this financial year. What are you proposing to do in the last three months of this financial year to spend half a million dollars?

Dr Brady: It is partly for consultants. Some of it we have cash-managed in the hope and anticipation that the appropriation will be approved to assist us with some consultation that we have done recently with some focus groups. Some of it is for consultants to do some more detailed work that we have started to look at. Some of that will be around setting up a more detailed program of how we delve into the work now. They are just some of the—

THE CHAIR: This is a three, four, five or possibly seven-year program so far, with at least another two years if you go by the money. How was this managed previously? My first question was about whether there had been an appropriation for this project before. The answer was no. How has it been managed up until now, and why do we suddenly need appropriation for this?

Dr Brady: As I mentioned before, we did the initial part of the review internally. As a result of that, and starting to be able to scope the project, we have been able to more clearly say, “This will require some funding to assist in being able to do that.” At this point, we realised that we needed someone to help us with overall program management.

THE CHAIR: At which point did you decide this?

Dr Brady: Probably late last year when we were getting to a point in our internal review process where we needed to put forward a suggestion for funding.

THE CHAIR: So this was the first time there was a budget bid for this project?

Dr Brady: We asked for money in the midyear budget review, once we got to the end of that internal review.

THE CHAIR: That was the first time you had asked for money?

Dr Brady: It was the first time we had asked for this money.

MR COE: Are you planning on rolling over any of these funds into the next financial year?

Dr Brady: I would hope that we can spend the money. Certainly, on the program we are working, I would hope we can spend the money.

MS LAWDER: When was the closing date for you to get your bids in for this appropriation?

Dr Brady: I might need to ask our finance person. Off the top of my head, I cannot remember that.

THE CHAIR: We can take that on notice.

Dr Brady: Yes.

THE CHAIR: We will move to Justice and Community Services.

GENTLEMAN, MR MICK, Minister for Advanced Technology and Space Industries, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services

GLENN, MR RICHARD, Director-General, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

WHELAN, MS GEORGEINA, Commissioner, ACT Emergency Services Agency, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

MURPHY, MR JOE, Chief Officer Rural Fire Service, ACT Emergency Services Agency, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

CHEW, COMMANDER MICHAEL, Acting Chief Police Officer, ACT Policing, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

THE CHAIR: We will move to police and emergency services. For strengthening bushfire preparedness, there is \$396,000 in expenses this financial year and 750 over the outyears. What is that actually for in terms of police and emergency services?

Mr Gentleman: There is some work to support the ACT Rural Fire Service, particularly our emergency alert system and the electronic fire danger rating signs, and to upgrade the removal of the manual signs that are in place at the moment. Then there is the six-month trial for the fire-detecting cameras in towers around the ACT. When I say that—

THE CHAIR: The fire-spotting towers?

Mr Gentleman: Yes, with infrared cameras. We will not be replacing the staff who staff those towers, by the way; this is extra support for our bushfire Rural Fire Service.

THE CHAIR: What is the \$396,000 and associated capital in this financial year for exactly?

Mr Glenn: I acknowledge the privilege statement again. Just to break down some of those numbers, with the capital of \$226,000 in 2019-20, there is \$126,000 for the seven electronic fire danger signs and their installation, and \$100,000 for the fire detection cameras installation and associated ICT mechanisms for that.

THE CHAIR: That is a trial. How long is the trial for?

Mr Glenn: Six months.

THE CHAIR: We are putting them in for six months. We are putting them in in this financial year. We are putting them in in April through to June. When does the six-month trial run?

Ms Whelan: I acknowledge the privilege statement. The next three months will be finalising the negotiation and the fees for the trial. Then we would be looking to trialling in the next bushfire season.

THE CHAIR: Mr Glenn, you just said that there is \$100,000 capital for this in this financial year.

Ms Whelan: Yes.

THE CHAIR: We are not going to spend it if you are saying that we are negotiating it and there is a six-month trial. It is actually going to be spent in the next financial year.

Ms Whelan: No.

MS CHEYNE: Aren't we trying to acquire it now and then trial it?

Ms Whelan: Acquire it now, in this financial year, to trial it from July onwards.

THE CHAIR: For a six-month trial, so we would be halfway—

MS CODY: For the bushfire season.

Ms Whelan: The bushfire season.

THE CHAIR: How are we acquiring it? Is it a lease or are we buying the kit? What happens at the end if we do not want to do it?

Mr Murphy: I acknowledge the privilege statement. We are in negotiations with an international company right now. They provided us with a very good option for the way in which they will provide a significant amount of the hardware. The idea would be to trial it, with no guarantees of purchase at the end. It is simply us providing the locations, the tower infrastructure, the network construction and the power. They are committed to providing the rest, to try and make a sale to us. It is very much a trial at this stage.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. So this \$100,000 is our infrastructure? There was already power to these?

Mr Murphy: There is; there is certainly power up. But we are looking at putting them on what we call territory radio network sites, because they have power and they have the network backbone that we require to manage the amount of data that we will transfer through. Also, we have quite a significant radio infrastructure network around the ACT for that reason, so we will leverage off that. It is about us providing that network infrastructure and putting it in place, and making sure that there is sufficient power in place. There will be fitting required for PCs and any other associated infrastructure that would be required to make the system work.

THE CHAIR: I am a little confused that we are running this trial through the bushfire season, September to March in the next financial year. I am a little unsure why we are appropriating capital money in this financial year.

Mr Murphy: There will have to be a lead-up. There will be an amount of money required to get the sites prepared and ready. We will have to take project managers up there; that is, our project managers as well as their project managers. There may need to be some fit-out within the huts that currently exist at the tower end sites to locate

this equipment in. We have a body of work to do to get this underway.

MS CHEYNE: If we started this in August, after the budget appropriation, it would be too late?

Mr Murphy: Yes.

Ms Whelan: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: What is the urgency with regard to updating the remaining fire danger rating signs from manual to electronic?

Mr Murphy: We have six manual signs currently outstanding within the ACT. They used to be updated on a daily basis by the parks and conservation rangers who make their way about the place. We have been advised that, through work changes just through time, while those signs are not visited on a daily basis and certainly not an early morning basis, those signs have been updated. Our being able to do it electronically means every sign gets changed at exactly the same time, showing exactly the same message to the community. The seventh sign we will be planning to put on the southern border of the ACT on the Boboyan Road down there. Right now we do not have a sign down there at all. People entering the ACT will know what our current fire danger rating is.

MS CHEYNE: In theory, fire danger ratings could change during a day, is that right?

Mr Murphy: In theory, they can.

MS CHEYNE: It would allow you to be more agile?

Mr Murphy: Yes. It is not so much that the rating does not change—it does change and it can change—but, more importantly, we have a variable message board at the bottom as well which we can change. We used those very successfully this season and last season—a total fire ban. Today shows “low-moderate”. During the off season we put fire messages on them. “Don’t stop looking while you’re cooking,” things like that. We actually used the signs year round, despite the fact they are really designed for the bushfire period. They are used year round for community messaging and the like as well.

MRS JONES: Were the better masks for the RFS a part of the strengthening bushfire preparedness, and was there any consideration of better rollover protection or falling tree protection for the RFS vehicles as a result of this additional funding.?

Mr Murphy: I will talk about the mask trial first. The mask trial will be completed at the end of this bushfire season, which will be the end of March, noting that we have got a significant rain event currently. That has been communicated to all brigade members who have been taking part in it.

In terms of the rollover or the falling objects safety systems, at this stage all our vehicles meet NCAP ratings, with the highest NCAP ratings we can meet. Mechanical safety systems are a last resort on vehicles. We put a risk management approach into

all firefighting activities, which is to put firefighters in the safest position that we can all the time. We use mechanical safety as a last option.

MRS JONES: What was the NCAP rating on the truck that rolled over and people died this season in New South Wales?

Mr Murphy: I do not know.

MRS JONES: You do not know what is used in New South Wales?

Mr Murphy: No. You would have to check with New South Wales.

THE CHAIR: Could we take that on notice?

Mr Murphy: Yes, I will take that on notice.

MRS JONES: The question is in relation to the truck that rolled over and somebody died in New South Wales. I believe it was earlier in the fire season this year. Was that at the same NCAP rating as our vehicles? Back on the masks, what is the trial exactly? Is it 10 people trialling an additional new mask or is it 50 or what?

Mr Murphy: It is not so much about people. I do not know the number, I am sorry. We have a series of different types of masks with different types of filters which have been shared amongst a number of brigade members. They have been brought back in, cleaned, then reissued so that we actually get a good scattering of reports back in. Each person who wears a mask reports back with a feedback session on paper as well about what they got out of the mask and how they felt it went. All that is being collated by the ops team within Rural Fire Service.

MRS JONES: Could you take on notice how many masks, what types of masks and how many different usages you are trying to get out of each one, for example?

Mr Murphy: Sure. We will add that in our final report once we get to the end of the bushfire season.

MRS JONES: You do not know yet how many masks you have got out in the field?

Mr Murphy: Sure I do, but I would really like to save that. You have asked for some details about how they are being used as well and the like. That will come out in the final report.

MRS JONES: That will be July or something?

THE CHAIR: Mrs Jones has asked on notice. Could you provide Mrs Jones with as much information as you can on notice?

Mr Murphy: Yes.

MRS JONES: I just want to ask the date when that trial on the masks first started.

Mr Murphy: I will have to take it on notice. It was prior to the bushfire season.

THE CHAIR: Anything else for the RFS before we move to the police? No. Enhanced forensic medical services.

Mr Gentleman: Whilst we are just changing staff, can I congratulate Joe Murphy on 33 years of service to the ACT.

MRS JONES: Hear, hear!

THE CHAIR: Hear, hear!

MS CHEYNE: Is that your last hearing with us ever?

MRS JONES: We will see.

THE CHAIR: We will see. Yes. So in relation to this, minister, there is \$715,000 expense in this year. What is that for? And seeing as it is a one off expense, how do you propose to get it out the door? You might think that there is a pattern in this questioning. There is.

Cmdr Chew: I acknowledge the privilege statement. This is a contractual arrangement in relation to our forensic medical contract. Essentially, what this is based on is an increased demand for the service. These are the health practitioners that come out to take evidentiary samples, statements from our victims of crime, our assault victims. They also attend all the deaths to pronounce life extinct. The contract is with ACT Health as the sole provider within ACT, and it is based on increased demand for that service.

THE CHAIR: So why is it a one-off expenditure, then?

Cmdr Chew: Because it has been—

THE CHAIR: If there is an increased demand, it would be an ongoing arrangement.

Cmdr Chew: Yes. It has been a constant cost pressure for our supplier appropriation for a number of years and we have been managing it within the appropriation or the base appropriation. Because of the increased demand it is putting more pressure on our base appropriation, which is why we sought—

THE CHAIR: So what is happening in the outyears?

Cmdr Chew: At this stage, we are still negotiating with the government and ACT Health around the provision of that service. The contract runs out—

THE CHAIR: The contract runs out?

Cmdr Chew: In April 2020. This year.

THE CHAIR: So there might be another budget bid in the next budget cycle.

Cmdr Chew: There might be, depending on how—

THE CHAIR: Depending on the contractor. Okay.

Cmdr Chew: The contractual discussions with Health and working with the government on ensuring that this service continues.

THE CHAIR: Sorry, has there been an increase in call-out or is the increase in unit cost?

Cmdr Chew: It is an increase in call-out and an increase in unit cost as well.

THE CHAIR: Could you give the committee a breakdown on both the call-out and the unit cost? I am just mindful of the time. Perhaps we can do that on notice.

Cmdr Chew: Yes. I would have to take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: Great. Okay.

MS CODY: I do indeed. So this is only for the medical side of things? It is only for the contract that you have with ACT Health to provide that service that you have just mentioned? It has nothing to do with other forensic services that are offered out at AFP Majura?

Cmdr Chew: That is correct, yes.

MS CODY: Yes.

THE CHAIR: So this is solely the Health contract?

Cmdr Chew: It is solely the Health contract and the medical practitioner support for crime investigation in the ACT.

THE CHAIR: Okay.

MS CODY: Excellent. I just note that ACT Policing has another very small line item under the charter of rights and additional support for victims of crime. I was just wondering if you can expand on that one for me, please.

THE CHAIR: Sorry, where? Give me a page reference, please.

MS CODY: Page 58.

Mr Gentleman: Yes. That is to provide funding to implement the charter of rights for the victims of crime, the charter, to give victims rights and assist victims to access their rights as well. It provides the victims with information and opportunities to be heard and access to complaints pathways where their rights were not upheld, for example. Government will also continue to support victims of family violence and other violent crimes to access therapeutic support aimed at minimising that traumatic

experience as well.

MS CODY: And the ACT Policing component of that is so that your officers, when they are called out to a situation, are armed with that sort of information?

Cmdr Chew: Yes, it is. It is one FTE for ACT Policing to be that sort of coordination point, to put all that together as our officers respond to those types of incidents.

MS LAWDER: Do you not already help victims access their rights?

Cmdr Chew: There are a variety of ways that we do that. Because the charter is coming in, and it comes in August this year—

MS CODY: There could be some changes to how things are done.

Cmdr Chew: As we progress through the transition to our new services model, there could be changes in this particular role and as we step more into a community focused place with our service delivery, we will progress through that. We will undertake training and capacity work in partnership with the Human Rights Commission and JACS and the other government departments as the charter comes through.

MS CODY: Okay.

Mr Glenn: Ms Cody, elsewhere in that measure are positions for other parts of the justice systems. This is only for ACT Policing. It all fits together, yes.

MS CODY: Correct, yes. I just wanted to know the ACT Policing side of things while we have them here. It was a good opportunity to find out exactly what their contribution to this is, because it is important.

THE CHAIR: Yes. I am just mindful of the time. Have you got any more questions for Mr Gentleman and his officials?

MS CODY: Well, I did have, but—

MRS JONES: Only very briefly on whether any of this funding is associated with or whether we are seeing a conclusion to the preparing us for the future program. How are we tracking on that? Is there a due date?

Cmdr Chew: For the police services model? That is a transition program over the next four years of the budget. This funding is separate to the police services model.

MRS JONES: Yes, and how are we tracking with that work? That four years of work?

MS CODY: It is not really related to this budget measure, though, and we are over time by 10 minutes.

THE CHAIR: Sorry, we are over time so perhaps Cmdr Chew can take that on notice.

MRS JONES: Take it on notice.

Cmdr Chew: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MRS JONES: That would be great. Thank you so much.

THE CHAIR: Wonderful. Thank you very much, Mr Gentleman and officials. We will suspend so that we can have a changeover of minister and the cast of thousands that sound like they are outside.

Short suspension.

STEPHEN-SMITH, MS RACHEL, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Children, Youth and Families, Minister for Health and Minister for Urban Renewal

DE'ATH, MR MICHAEL, Director-General, ACT Health Directorate

CHAMBERS, MS KATE, Chief Finance Officer, Strategic Finance, Corporate and Governance, ACT Health Directorate

McDONALD, MS BERNADETTE, Chief Executive Officer, Canberra Health Services

GAY, MR ANDREW, Chief Financial Officer, Canberra Health Services

THE CHAIR: We will recommence and welcome to the table Ms Stephen-Smith, firstly in her capacity as Minister for Health. We will begin with supporting growing demand for health services. There are also issues in the budget which relate to SPIRE, so there may be some questions in relation to SPIRE. Some of it may have already been covered. Minister, there is \$59,696,000, which basically is, in a rough rule of thumb, three-quarters of the appropriation this year, in this supplementary appropriation, for Health. What new services will this be providing?

Ms Stephen-Smith: As I said a number of times when we announced the funding, Mrs Dunne—and I acknowledge the privilege statement—it is really about acknowledging the demand on the services that we are already seeing for this year and ensuring that we can continue to meet things like our elective surgery targets. Last year we delivered 14,000 elective surgeries. We are on track this year to deliver a record 14,250 elective surgeries across the territory-wide system. It is so that we can continue to meet our targets in relation to that while managing the increased demand that we are seeing on the system from things like increased complexity in emergency department presentations and increased demand for emergency surgeries.

There is no pinpoint where we can say, “The \$60 million is for an additional X, Y and Z, on top of meeting the demand for our public hospital services.” It is about recognising the significant increase in demand for our public hospital services, the complexity of that demand and ensuring that we can continue to meet our targets in elective surgery while also addressing that demand.

THE CHAIR: Is that business as usual?

Ms Stephen-Smith: I will hand over to Ms McDonald to talk about some of the increased pressure that we have been experiencing.

THE CHAIR: I asked a question, minister. Is what you have described business as usual?

Ms Stephen-Smith: It is continuing to provide the services that Canberra Hospital provides to the community in an environment of increased demand. It is recognising the demand that we are experiencing and our commitment to not pull back on other elements in order to meet that demand.

THE CHAIR: I would like to pursue this without going to Ms McDonald, if I could. What was the appropriation in the 2019-20 budget for Canberra Health Services?

I would also like to know how much of that is ACT funded and how much of that comes from grants from the commonwealth.

Ms Stephen-Smith: The total expense in the 2019-20 budget—and it is on page 33 of the supplementary statements, if this is what you are asking about—that was budgeted was \$1.224 billion for Canberra Health Services in terms of their operating statement and the expected total expenses in 2019-20. Is that the question that you are asking? Then you are looking at how much of that—

THE CHAIR: How much of that is commonwealth grants?

Ms Stephen-Smith: That is an interesting question, because the commonwealth funding flows across the local hospital network, so it is not only for Canberra Health Services. It flows through—

THE CHAIR: I am actually asking how much of the commonwealth grants go to Canberra Health Services.

Ms Stephen-Smith: We might ask Kate Chambers—

THE CHAIR: Where is the \$1.224 billion on page—

Ms Stephen-Smith: On page 33, under total expenses, in the left-hand column, 2019-20 budget. In the supplementary budget paper it is on page 33, in the very left-hand column; there are the 2019-20 budget numbers.

THE CHAIR: I cannot—

Ms Stephen-Smith: On the very left-hand side of the page, Mrs Dunne, before you get to the descriptions.

THE CHAIR: Yes.

Ms Stephen-Smith: There is \$1.224 billion.

THE CHAIR: I had my hand over the left-hand column. Thank you.

Ms Stephen-Smith: I will hand over to Ms Chambers to talk about how that works.

Ms Chambers: I acknowledge the privilege statement. May I ask what page you are referring to?

Ms Stephen-Smith: The question we have for you here is the breakdown of commonwealth and own-source revenue funding for Canberra Health Services and the LHN.

Ms Chambers: On page 24—I hope you are on the same page; I missed all of that conversation as I was coming up—on the supplementary appropriation we have the movement from the 2019-20 budget to the second appropriation into 2019-20. In that breakdown of revenue we have that \$833 million, which is appropriation from the

ACT government; \$110 million is from cross-border, and grants that we have listed there are from the commonwealth, \$423 million. Of that split we then directly exhaust the LHN and pay that out to our service providers, so that goes out to CHS and Calvary.

Of those splits, in the 2019-20 year, based on the original budget, of that money, including cross-border, we commission services to CHS. I have a figure in front of me of \$1.1 billion, but I will check that, because there are other contributions that go out to Calvary. We have QEII in that figure and cross-border revenue, which is also split between the two hospitals, and the additional appropriation of \$59 million is directly to CHS.

THE CHAIR: In that case, perhaps we could have that breakdown on notice.

Ms Chambers: We can take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: It is interesting; I would not expect the commonwealth grants to change over the period from the budget to the revised budget, but I am surprised about the user charges. The user charges are the interstate reconciliations?

Ms Chambers: That is correct.

THE CHAIR: I am surprised to see that that has not moved.

Ms Chambers: That is not in my area of expertise. However, those estimates are still going through with the commonwealth. I believe their submission is due at the end of March for their commonwealth activity for 2019-20. We do not have any new adjustments to be made from first approp to second approp at this time in this budget.

THE CHAIR: That is the accounting treatment, but if, as the minister is saying, we are seeing increased acuity and complexity, you would expect to see some change in the user charges over the period, from what is budgeted to what has actually happened, if we are appropriating extra money for increased acuity and the like. Would we expect to see a shift up in the user charges?

Ms Stephen-Smith: That is a good question, Mrs Dunne, and we will not necessarily—

THE CHAIR: I always ask good questions, minister.

Ms Stephen-Smith: We do that reconciliation at the end of the year. What we saw last year was more commonwealth funding coming into the system than had been originally budgeted for. That was shown in the budget papers for the full budget last year. That is a process that happens every year.

THE CHAIR: I have a technical, nerdy question: how does the commonwealth money come in? Does it come in monthly, quarterly, whatever, and where does it land?

Ms Chambers: That is a very technical question. The LHN receives all that money

through state pool accounts with the RBA. That is under the national health reform agreement and that all sits in funding pools. We do drawdowns into those state pool accounts by the Health Directorate on a fortnightly or monthly basis and we draw down those and distribute them.

THE CHAIR: The LHN holds that money?

Ms Chambers: Correct.

THE CHAIR: That is paid on a rolling basis, one presumes?

Ms Chambers: That is right.

THE CHAIR: Not one big chunk at the beginning of the financial year?

Ms Chambers: No, unfortunately we cannot draw it down all at once. We pro-rata just to ensure—

THE CHAIR: Then you are drawing it down out of the LHN into the bits where it goes to?

Ms Chambers: And then we distribute the payments to CHS and to Calvary.

THE CHAIR: Ms Chambers, you are in Health, not CHS?

Ms Chambers: The ACT Health Directorate.

THE CHAIR: Are there any questions in relation to supporting growing demand for health services?

MS CHEYNE: You mentioned that growing demand, minister. Obviously a good portion of patients are from New South Wales. Is the demand from New South Wales patients growing at the same level as demand from ACT patients? And is New South Wales coming to the table accordingly?

Ms Stephen-Smith: We have an ongoing conversation with New South Wales and we are actually at the moment in a discussion with them about the new cross-border agreement from 1 July. This year we are hoping to get a new cross-border agreement. We have not had one for a number of years. But we have got an agreement with them to reconcile for all the years until now, on the basis of the most recent agreement that we did have.

Our conversation with them is really about quality of care close to home for patients across southern New South Wales and the ACT. It is actually taking a really deep-dive look at what we do, what the New South Wales Southern Local Health Network does, what our Canberrans have to go to Sydney for—for example, for specialist services—and really working through how we make sure we are delivering the best outcomes for the patients across our communities.

Some of that is actually about: what can people now be treated for in the Southern

Local Health Network that they have historically come to the ACT for? As they have boosted capacity across some of the hospitals in southern or some of the health centres in southern, can people actually be treated closer to home? I might throw to Michael to talk about—

MS CHEYNE: But what you are saying is that it is not as simple as demand is increasing; it is the type of demand and the pressure on our services?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes. Maybe Bernadette first for the demand issue or someone—

Ms McDonald: I acknowledge the privilege statement. We work closely with the Southern Local Health Network in New South Wales in finding the most appropriate place for people to receive their care. We spend quite a bit of time on that. We have a working group with them that meets on a regular basis to look at pathways, referral pathways, for treatment for specialist care.

One of the key aims is to keep people as close to home as possible and treatment as close to home as possible. For example, our dialysis service is a network dialysis service across the ACT as well as the southern parts of New South Wales. It is a beautiful model in terms of people receiving dialysis close to home. Specialists go to southern to treat people and see people from a specialist perspective, from a renal physician perspective. We maintain those services really well. A great example was that during the bushfires they could not receive dialysis close to home, in the dialysis centre, so they all came to us and we facilitated their dialysis and places for those patients to stay in the ACT.

Those sorts of networks continue to increase. That care that we are providing for people in that collaborative approach continues to improve. We are using our renal network as a model for other types of chronic disease management, those sorts of things, so that people do not always have to travel to us, to our outpatients, to receive specialist care.

MS CHEYNE: But generally people are coming to the ACT from New South Wales because what they require is more complex than what can be—

Ms McDonald: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: If it is more complex, does that mean it is also more costly?

Ms McDonald: Definitely, yes. The more complex the care is, often the longer they stay, the more comorbidities or other illnesses they might have at the same time. It is often more complex. Canberra Health Services in particular, who receive a lot of those patients, is a tertiary centre. We are a regional trauma centre. We have the complex facilities and the complex capability for that sort of complex care. Where possible we try to get people back to their local health service for rehabilitation or recovery so that we minimise the time that they are with us. They are closer to home as much as possible.

Mr De'Ath: I am happy to talk about the process we are following. I acknowledge the privilege statement. This cross-border relationship with southern New South Wales is

quite a complex space in its funding arrangements and the service arrangements, and what the dynamic is. While it is a little hard to specifically answer your question, there is probably a bit more light that I can throw on what we are doing here.

Upon Ms Stephen-Smith taking up the portfolio, it was clearly a priority for her that we make further progress on this. I undertook at that point to engage directly with the secretary of health in New South Wales, which was extremely productive in terms of our discussions. We then had an officials meeting where I took some of my officials to Sydney to meet with the secretary and her senior officials to talk about how we could make better progress in this space.

One of the things we were trying to do at that point was shift the conversation to be about what is the best for citizens of southern New South Wales and the ACT, as opposed to the battle over the dollars, which had not been particularly productive. Hence, we had not been able to reach agreement through the regular processes. That completely changed the dynamic of the conversation.

Minister Stephen-Smith had a meeting with Brad Hazzard, the Minister for Health in New South Wales. That was a very positive meeting. I was in attendance at that, as were other New South Wales health officials. We undertook there to undertake a process of regular fortnightly meetings, which are chaired by my deputy, Kylie Jonasson, and her counterpart in the New South Wales Department of Health. Those meetings have been progressing and we expect to be bringing forward to ministers around midyear where those meetings have got to in terms of what could happen there. It is complex. While we get a considerable level of demand from southern New South Wales, we actually require some of that demand to sustain our specialties. It is not a one-way street.

MS CHEYNE: If we did not have the population using the specialties, the specialists would not be here; they would go?

Mr De'Ath: Correct.

Ms McDonald: Yes.

Mr De'Ath: It is quite complex. It is not simply just about saying how much somebody paid to use ACT hospital services. The other side of it is that we are frequently sending people to New South Wales for treatments as well, and they are at the higher acuity, high cost end as well. It is a complex situation and we are trying to better understand it. We will talk about what the dollars look like and what might be required.

We have a brilliant commitment from the New South Wales health minister, and of course our own minister—probably the perfect recipe at the moment between officials, between ministers, to make some progress in this space. We are not able to inform at this stage exactly what that will look like.

MS LAWDER: On page 57 it talks about growth in emergency department presentations and emergency surgeries. Minister, in your answer to Mrs Dunne's first question, you talked about the increasing complexity of ED presentations. Is that

different from or in addition to what is here in the appropriation?

Ms Stephen-Smith: As I have said in responses to questions in question time, there are two elements to this. From everything I have heard, when we look at the numbers of presentations, we are seeing the number of category 1 and category 2 patients increasing quite dramatically in some cases. Categories 4 and 5 are going down. So we might see the same number of presentations at ED but more of them are at the category 1, 2 and 3 end.

But when I talk to the people at EDs, whether it is Calvary or Canberra Hospital, what I am also hearing from the people who run the emergency departments, or run the hospitals, is that more patients are coming in with comorbidity and there are more frail older patients with other health conditions. It takes longer to treat them and to understand the underlying issues that they are presenting with. Or they might be presenting with one issue but there are underlying issues that complicate that treatment. Is that a fair summary?

MS LAWDER: Hasn't that always been the case?

Ms Stephen-Smith: There is an ageing population and a growing older population cohort. People are living longer, and while they are living longer and healthier, they are also getting more medical intervention to stay alive. People are then presenting with more comorbidities. They are continuing to live with those chronic illnesses, but we are seeing more of them presenting.

MS LAWDER: Have you, or the management of the hospital, issued any instructions about discouraging staff from placing orders, freezing recruitment or reducing shifts? How are you managing this?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Ms McDonald can talk about some of the work that is underway on efficiency and some of the myths around that.

Ms McDonald: We have been working with staff across the organisation, with the goal of providing high quality, safe care and maximising the capacity we have across the organisation and the use of all our resources. We have been working with all our staff and our managers, executives and senior management team in looking at ways to maximise the efficiency of our services and maximise the use of those resources. We have asked all areas to look at ways to do that.

I can say that there is no recruitment freeze. We have improved our approval processes for recruitment so that we are sure that the recruitment is happening in the right place and we are prioritising the right recruitment. We are not not recruiting into positions; we just have put in a different approval process. We are tightening up from that perspective.

Our priority is to provide clinical care. We are not asking anybody to impact on the clinical care they are providing. We are just looking at ways that we can maximise revenue coming into the organisation as well as the efficiency of the resources that we are using.

THE CHAIR: It has been put to me that there have been people on short-term contracts who have been told that their contracts will not be renewed this financial year. Is that the case?

Ms McDonald: Not that I am aware of, unless that was planned—that the short-term contract was going to end—and people were aware of that. We have not specifically found contracts and said, “Let’s not renew those contracts.” We assess all contracts. If they are short term, when were they supposed to finish? Whether or not they get renewed is based on the clinical need and the need of the resources for the organisation.

THE CHAIR: So you can say that no staff member who has a short-term contract, who is needed, has been let go?

Ms McDonald: Not that I am aware of. I would have to go and check. I have 7,500 staff across the organisation; I am not personally aware of every short-term contract that we have and the decisions around that. I have a senior management team. I have managers across the organisation who are working on the services that they provide and making those decisions as appropriate.

MS CODY: Ms McDonald, the money that is appropriated here—let’s round it up to \$60 million for the sake of today’s discussion—is not necessarily going towards those things, though, is it? It is going towards the operations of the hospital. You had a pretty big flu season last year, from what Minister Stephen-Smith has said in the past.

Ms McDonald: Yes.

MS CODY: We also had the smoke impact in Canberra. That was something that was probably not foreseen; is that correct?

Ms McDonald: Yes, sure.

MS CODY: Or am I putting words in your mouth?

Ms McDonald: No, you are correct. As the minister has said, we have had an increase in demand. And we did have a very big flu season, just as the rest of Australia did. There was high demand, with lots of people presenting to ED and increased admissions because of that. And we did have the unforeseen impact of smoke and bushfire, having the capacity and staff ready for that. They have all impacted. But it is mainly about the increasing demand that we are seeing year on year for our services. It is about supporting those services and making sure people get access to those services.

MS CODY: What are some of the other approaches that have been implemented to manage the impact and the growing demand on Canberra Health Services?

Ms McDonald: We have a number of strategies across the organisation. One of the key things about increasing demand is looking at how patients flow through the organisation, and making sure people get the right care in the right place at the right time and that that is connected across the organisation. We have had a number of

strategies that we have been trialling and putting in place over the last 12 months—our timely care strategies—to really try and improve that flow.

I have to admit that we feel as though we are playing catch-up, because the demand keeps increasing. We have to get better and better and more efficient at managing capacity across the organisation. We put in strategies through winter to increase our bed capacity so that people can transition through the emergency department as quickly as possible while still getting the right care in the right place. We have a number of different strategies. We are looking at long-stay patients, patients who are waiting for residential care or waiting for the next level of care somewhere else—how we are managing those patients, what decisions are being made and how we are assessing them quickly: using care pathways in the community options that we have but also working with residential care to move patients into what is a home, out of what is a hospital environment.

There are a number of strategies that we continually look at across the organisation and trial and implement. We have just started a new process in the emergency department, with our most senior emergency physicians taking what we call a coordinator role in the emergency department and on triage, to try and move through and triage more quickly and get treatment times started more quickly. There are a plethora of strategies that we are trying to implement.

We look at length of stay all the time. We set performance targets for our senior management team in terms of what are the key priorities. Every division in the organisation has performance. We hold them to performance on contributing to the four-hour performance in ED. It is a whole-of-hospital approach; it is not just an emergency department approach. There are lists of strategies that we use to try to manage the demand, the increasing demand, and maximise our capacity. We try not to reduce bed stock or do any of those things for cost pressures; we try and maximise the use of the resources we have.

MS LAWDER: Ms McDonald, when were you first asked about preparing an additional appropriation bid?

Ms McDonald: Since I have come on board, we have done really detailed analysis of our financial position. As you would understand, when it was ACT Health all in one, you had the directorate as well as the health service put in together, in terms of financial performance and accounting. As that separated out, and as we got our finance team, and I got my CFO on board, we started pulling out and understanding what our cost drivers were across the organisation, where we were not working as efficiently as we possibly could be, what were our true cost drivers and what was happening across the organisation.

As you would understand, Canberra Health Services has 7½ thousand staff. We provide the most complex services. It is a very complex organisation to understand what is happening and pull that apart. We have spent quite some time pulling that apart. We started conversations with the minister as soon as we started to understand what our financial position was and what the pressures were with the increasing demand across the organisation.

THE CHAIR: What was the financial position of CHS at the end of December?

Ms McDonald: I will get my CFO to talk about that.

Mr Gay: I acknowledge the privilege statement. As at December, year to date, reflecting the additional activity we had and including the \$59.7 million, we have—

THE CHAIR: Sorry, not including the \$59.7 million.

MS LAWDER: Because you do not have that.

THE CHAIR: Because you do not have that. What was your financial position at the end of the calendar year?

Mr Gay: We were running at a deficit of \$35 million, which is \$5 million worse than our six-month budget.

THE CHAIR: So you were already deficit budgeting?

Mr Gay: Yes.

THE CHAIR: You were deficit budgeting?

Mr Gay: Yes.

THE CHAIR: With the \$30 million deficit that you anticipated, where were you going to get the money for that?

Mr Gay: As Ms McDonald said, we have been going through this process of understanding the additional funding requirements of the organisation, and we were having discussions into late last year. We were looking at different efficiency measures. The criticality of it would have been in the latter half of the year, Q4 for us, in terms of the pace that we are running at.

THE CHAIR: Yes; you would have run out of money—

Mr Gay: Yes.

THE CHAIR: in Q4 if this was not here?

Mr Gay: Correct.

MS LAWDER: When were you approached about putting in a bid for an appropriation, or was it the other way around? Once you had gone through this work, did you go to the minister and say—

Ms McDonald: Yes.

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes.

MS LAWDER: we need more money? So it went that way?

Ms McDonald: We have ongoing discussions about the whole performance of the organisation.

MS LAWDER: When was that? I asked when you were first approached. The other side of it is: when did you say you needed more money?

Ms McDonald: I started discussions with the previous minister briefly about our financial position and made her aware that we were doing that work to unpack that. When the new minister came on board we continued those discussions. Basically, together we went down the track, probably last year, of starting to think about what our performance would be and what our forecast performance would be. As you would understand, we need to see what our performance is to actually then do the forecast. So last year, probably—

MS LAWDER: So at the budget time—

Ms Stephen-Smith: These sorts of discussions started really in earnest in probably October. That would be my recollection from last year. But then there is a whole process of working not just with the Health Directorate, which manages the local hospital network, but also with treasury officials to unpack all of that. Ultimately, when you are going through a budget process, whether it is a full budget or a budget review, treasury is a key part of that process in terms of making recommendations to cabinet about whether or not to support a business case. Getting them to fully understand what is underneath those numbers is a critical part of that process.

THE CHAIR: Mr Gay, I want to make sure that I did not misunderstand you. When did you know that you would have a \$30 million deficit in the first half?

Mr Gay: We do our results on a monthly basis, so in Q3 we start forecasting forward to the end of the year, 30 June. We have a good handle on how our activity is going. We understand from the clinical perspective about what we can and cannot do to manage that activity. October was when we started to look at, with the funding that we had at that moment through the existing appropriation, how long that would last us if activity continued to go at the pace it was going at. That has continued for the last three months into December. Early indicators are that it is continuing now.

THE CHAIR: In quarter 1 were you starting to anticipate a deficit?

Mr Gay: In quarter 1 we were still focused on understanding some of the operating drivers and what was happening within—

THE CHAIR: But when you put the figures together, was there a deficit?

Mr Gay: Quarter 2 was when we understood that we would be running at a deficit over and above our current appropriation and the focus was on how long we could work with that before we needed a top-up of funding.

THE CHAIR: Quarter 2 finishes in December, but you were starting this process in

early October.

Ms Stephen-Smith: The beginning of quarter 2.

Mr Gay: Yes.

THE CHAIR: That is the beginning of quarter 2. At the end of quarter 1, did you know that you were facing a \$60 million deficit?

Mr Gay: No, not to that extent.

MS LAWDER: When did it happen?

THE CHAIR: What is the extent of what you thought it was then?

Mr Gay: Probably \$30 million to \$40 million.

MS LAWDER: When did you realise? If it was not at the end of quarter 1 and you said in October it became apparent, on what date was it?

Mr Gay: With our reporting process, we start the forecasting process in quarter 2. Our reporting process is that we try and close off our accounts and our reporting process within 10 working days. So 13 or 14 October would be when we would have had a clear picture in terms of a forecast.

MS LAWDER: Pretty much on the basis of quarter 1. Just to clarify, if you were aware of this in early October, in effect, the smoke had no impact, except perhaps to make it worse. We spoke earlier about the health impacts of smoke, but from what you are saying it would appear that you were already in this position irrespective of the smoke.

Mr Gay: Yes. The majority of the funding—99 per cent of the funding—is based on activity demand flowing through the organisation. Bushfires and smoke started to occur—unfortunately, I was not here—over December. Most of our planning was before then. I suppose from a health service response, and trying to get things done, the impacts were in the low million dollars in terms of smoke. That is about the air purification type exercises that we have had to do within CHS.

THE CHAIR: In relation to that, the budget bid was pretty much locked away by the end of November, early December, because this committee was notified midway through December—on about 13 December; do not hold me to the date—about the appropriation. There was a ballpark figure there, which is pretty much what has turned up in the appropriation. None of the things that happened over Christmas and the summer holiday period were factored into the appropriation; is that correct?

Mr Gay: With our infrastructure area, in terms of the allocation of the funds, the infrastructure team got an additional amount of money to help maintain the assets. That was based on the repairs, medical gases and security costs. In terms of managing within the constraints that we have, the infrastructure team would have taken a component of that and said, “We didn’t expect this smoke issue to occur. That

becomes a key priority for us, so we're going to focus on getting that right and we will recover that by being efficient in other areas or being economic in other areas in the coming months to 30 June."

THE CHAIR: My question is: did anything change in the appropriation after, say, this committee was advised that there would be a supplementary appropriation and asked whether we could have these hearings today, which was, to my recollection, 13 December? Did anything change between then and when the appropriation bill was presented to change the projected appropriation for health which we are now discussing, which is slightly south of \$60 million?

Mr Gay: No.

Ms Stephen-Smith: Did anything extra—

THE CHAIR: Did the number change?

Ms Stephen-Smith: I would say that probably the number was refined. I cannot remember when exactly cabinet considered this particular business case, but that number would have changed slightly as a result of those conversations with treasury and the backwards and forwards.

THE CHAIR: Up or down?

Ms Stephen-Smith: To be frank, I cannot remember whether it was up or down.

THE CHAIR: Can you take that on notice, please?

Ms Stephen-Smith: It would have probably changed up and down over the period. I do not know that there is an up or a down. It would have gone up and down through that process.

THE CHAIR: This committee was advised of a broad number.

Ms Stephen-Smith: A ballpark.

THE CHAIR: Did that number change? Did it increase or decrease?

Ms Stephen-Smith: This is my inexperience, I guess, in the Assembly processes. I am not sure what advice the committee would have received in terms of specific—

THE CHAIR: We received a spreadsheet from the Chief Minister's office saying, "These are the areas that are covered, and these are the numbers."

Ms Stephen-Smith: We will check against that spreadsheet. I was not aware of that process.

MS LAWDER: Mr Gay has said that, no, the number did not change. You are saying that it might have gone up and/or down. Which is it?

Ms Stephen-Smith: I do not think he did say that the number did not change. I would have to go back to *Hansard*.

THE CHAIR: Can you take on notice whether there was a change in the number?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes, we will take that on notice. Sorry, I was not aware of that spreadsheet process.

MS LAWDER: I asked whether there had been instructions about purchasing things, shift changes et cetera, and you talked about providing the best clinical care. Have there been any written or oral instructions to staff about cutting down on their use of stationery or any of that kind of thing?

Ms McDonald: We have asked staff to come in on budget wherever possible, to have a look at ways, in those areas that are over budget, that they can find efficiencies. There were no specific instructions to staff to say how to do that. Some of our staff have said, "We could cut down on the use of post-it notes or stationery," but there is no specific instruction to do that. What we have tried to do is talk to our staff about ways that they can come up with to just maintain efficiency and come in on budget wherever possible.

So there have been some discussions around. I know that some managers have taken it quite literally and said, "No, we are going to stop doing this or stop doing that," but from our perspective we have said, "Just use common sense. Think about it." We do not want to impact on patient care, we do not want to make it extremely hard for people to do their job and we do not want things that feel ridiculous and will not make a big difference.

We have just gone back to reiterate. As you would understand, when you ask people to start to look at the budget and come in on budget, people come up with all sorts of ideas. There have been lots of ideas tossed around and discussed, but no specific instructions from us on how to do that.

THE CHAIR: With the two or three areas that have told me that they have specifically been told not to use post-it notes or not to order post-it notes, that would be a management decision in those areas?

Ms McDonald: There might have been managers that have had discussions, and some staff might have said, "Why don't we stop using post-it notes?" We do not have a blanket rule about that.

THE CHAIR: It is a management decision for a particular area?

Ms McDonald: It may have come from the staff and the manager may have said, "Yes, I am supportive of that." Or it may have been from a manager who said, "I think this is one way that we could save some money." I do not have specific details on the strategies that every person has discussed.

THE CHAIR: I would have thought that even Health would not have had an enormous post-it note budget.

Ms Stephen-Smith: Mrs Dunne, just anecdotally, from my previous experience as a public servant, when people are told to find efficiencies, one of the very first things people talk about is buying cheaper post-it notes—not not buying post-it notes but buying the yellow ones, not the coloured ones. Those are the kinds of conversations that public service units have all the time when we are talking about finding efficiencies.

THE CHAIR: I have been missing that in the past 25 years. There was a discussion recently about changes to the on-call arrangements. Is that part of this efficiency?

Ms McDonald: It is not directly part of the efficiency. I have a relatively new—she has been there about seven months—executive director of nursing and midwifery. The benefit of bringing her in has been to have a look at all our practices, rostering practices in particular, across the organisation. One of the things she has highlighted to me and to the ANMF is the use of what is called an emergency recall, part of the EBA, where some staff were waiting for rosters to be posted with gaps in the roster, and waiting and waiting and waiting and refusing a shift. They would get off a shift, refusing a shift until close to that shift having to be filled, and then claiming the emergency recall. That is not the appropriate use of that emergency recall, so we have been working very collaboratively with the ANMF to change that practice.

We are more than happy, if somebody is doing overtime, to pay overtime. We are more than happy to pay everything that is in the agreement in the appropriate way. But we are looking at that. We have not implemented any change at this point in time; we are doing consultation with staff about the impact of that. But it is, as everyone agrees, not the appropriate use of that emergency recall.

THE CHAIR: What is the appropriate use of the emergency recall?

Ms McDonald: If I need to call staff back in for coronavirus, I need to open a ward and I give them less than 24 hours, or just 24 hours notice, that is a great example of an emergency recall. If I have to call staff in with 24 hours notice max—that is what that is for. It is for those true emergency situations.

THE CHAIR: What you have described is perhaps gaming the roster.

McDonald: I would hesitate to call it gaming. I would say that people have probably been using it in a way they thought was okay.

THE CHAIR: Strategically holding off?

Ms McDonald: I would probably put it like that, yes.

MS LAWDER: I guess you are well over budget, as you identified in the second quarter. What proportion of that overspend is Canberra Hospital versus Calvary Hospital versus some other part? Can you give us a breakdown, or are you only talking about the Canberra Hospital?

Ms McDonald: We can only talk about CHS.

THE CHAIR: There is no other appropriation for health in the supplementary appropriation. QEII is fine; Calvary is running within its budget. Calvary is not being impacted by more acuity, more complexity in accident and emergency?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Part of the way that the territory-wide system operates is that Calvary operates within its budget and it does what it is free to do under its agreement, and where there is extra pressure that does tend to be absorbed by Canberra Health Services. I think the agreement we have with Calvary is, “This is your budget that we are going to pay you for the year,” and they manage within that.

THE CHAIR: You have not had any conversation with Calvary about whether or not they are managing within their budget? Are you having a conversation about the extent, if any, to which they are offloading to CHS because of their budget?

Ms Stephen-Smith: I would not describe it as offloading. I do not think that is an accurate description. They do the things that we have agreed with them that they will do within their budget. I certainly have had conversations with Calvary, as I mentioned, around the impact that they are feeling of this increased acuity of emergency presentation. But we have also funded Calvary to expand their emergency department, a bigger emergency department, more staff, in part to respond to some of those pressures.

We have those discussions with Calvary year on year in the budget process to look at the pressures that they have been feeling over the last year, what we need to do about that in the budget going forward. That is how we manage the pressures that Calvary is feeling. It is a different process, I guess, with Canberra Health Services and what used to be the whole ACT Health Directorate, in that we make the agreement with Calvary, “This is what we have agreed you will do for the year.” That is what they agree to do; that is what they do. Whether it was a single directorate or whether it is Canberra Health Services, the rest of the public system absorbs, to the best that it can, those other things.

MS CODY: Minister, you keep referring to comorbidity being an added complexity in caring for Canberrans. Will this money that has been appropriated go towards helping to plan for COVID-19 or coronavirus, as it is also referred to, or is it mainly just to satisfy current situations?

Ms Stephen-Smith: It is really about meeting that demand pressure that Mr Gay talked about in relation to what the projections have been. Obviously when we were projecting in October we were not predicting the arrival of the novel coronavirus. All state and territory health ministers at COAG health council last week were having the conversation with the commonwealth about the potential additional financial impact of COVID-19 across our health systems. That will really depend on how it plays out.

But in the same way as Mr Gay and Ms McDonald have talked about some of the preparations that went into bushfire and smoke, even if we did not have a significant clinical impact from those it costs you money to prepare. It is costing us money to prepare. Time is being spent doing that. Capability is being identified to respond to that. There will be some impact and we, as yet, cannot quantify what that looks like.

All states and territories have been very clear with the commonwealth that that will need to be taken into account in our ongoing conversations about the national health reform agreement—whether there are additional payments, how we cost-share for those additional impacts from this unforeseen event.

THE CHAIR: While we are on the subject of COVID-19 or coronavirus—what are we calling it?

Ms Stephen-Smith: COVID-19.

THE CHAIR: COVID-19 is the official name, is it? In that space Dr Murphy told the Senate this morning that we are a well-prepared health system but even the best prepared systems can face challenges. What are the challenges that we are planning for? You said, minister, that we are identifying contingencies. If we had an outbreak, we have only got a limited number of negative pressure rooms and we can double-bunk people in those. Eventually we are going to reach capacity in isolation wards. Where do we go from there, what is our thinking and how far has our thinking evolved?

Ms Stephen-Smith: It is a range of things. It is about hospital capacity, which Ms McDonald is very well placed to talk about, and we have been talking to the media about that this morning as well. But it is also what we can do to take the pressure off the emergency department and off the hospital, setting up respiratory assessment clinics so that people are not just going to the ED to get assessed if they have symptoms. That might be a respiratory assessment clinic at the hospital near the ED but not at the ED so that people get diverted to that. But it might also be something in the community for people who are not as unwell, the walking well, but who need to get assessed.

There is really a shift in terms of the way that we support people currently because we are in containment mode. Everyone who essentially is diagnosed with COVID-19 is being isolated in hospital and a lot of other people are doing home isolation who have not yet got symptoms or been diagnosed as having the novel coronavirus. But if it became widespread in the community, people with only mild and moderate symptoms are not going to be isolated in hospital; they are going to be self-isolating at home and it is only those who are really quite unwell who will end up in hospital. But that still could be an impact. Bernadette can talk about what we are doing in relation to ICU, negative pressure rooms et cetera.

THE CHAIR: As part of that, I suppose, in epidemiological terms, what proportion of people get really sick? What proportion of people are we planning for that would possibly end up in hospital? Most of us will probably ride this out at home.

Ms Stephen-Smith: What we are seeing at the moment globally—and we have got to take into account it may not play out the same in Australia—is around 80 per cent have mild symptoms, 15 per cent moderate, and five per cent quite severe. Obviously we are seeing a fatality rate of between two and three per cent and that actual number changes daily.

THE CHAIR: It does seem to change all the time.

Ms Stephen-Smith: One of the things that Dr Coleman made the point about this morning is that while we can learn lessons from how it is playing out in other countries, because it is largely playing out at the moment in countries like China, South Korea, and Iran—South Korea is a bit of a special case in terms of the population it played out in—they do not have the same kinds of health systems. People may have presented later. They may have missed quite a number of people who were not particularly unwell. If we get people earlier, they may not get as sick. That is a rough guide to what we are seeing at the moment. That may not be exactly the way it plays out in Australia.

Mr De'Ath: If I may, if you look at the pandemic modelling and you look at the graphing of that then, generally, probably what you are seeing in some of the first-presenter countries is the spike throughout the country. All the work that has been done in Australia has been excellent. That is a fantastic network of chief health officers with Brendan Murphy and so on; it is very, very impressive. What the containment strategies have really been doing is seeking to flatten that spike out so that it will probably run for a bit longer but the system can cope better with it. All indications at the moment are that that will be our experience. No-one really knows, but that is actually—

THE CHAIR: Flag a longer tail, yes.

Mr De'Ath: Yes, that is right. The minister is quite right about what we are seeing in terms of what the effect is like. We are learning more about it. It is not really presenting in the same way in young children, which is a great thing. Then you have got that top end of people who are already unwell.

There are a whole range of things being prepared in terms of informing people about the general flu vaccine. They are unrelated, but if you are well because you have had the flu vaccine then you are less likely to be impacted over here by COVID-19. Everybody, get your flu injections. We are trying to get that going earlier right across the country.

There is a level of sophisticated planning that is going on at the moment. That is one message I get across. We do have time to plan here and we have been planning along the lines of the things that the minister has just mentioned. The chief health officer's role is right across the health network of the territory and into southern New South Wales about what that capacity looks like—private, public, other health services and so on, to see how we will manage through that. That is the sort of planning that is well underway. I know Ms McDonald has set up her own taskforce in preparation within the massive provider that is Canberra Health Services. There is a fairly sophisticated array of measures being put in place at the moment.

THE CHAIR: As of today, where is the hospital running in terms of capacity?

Ms McDonald: We are full but we do not have every bed open right at this point in time. We have flex capacity, which we have at any point in time. We have a number of beds across the organisation that we flex up and down, depending on demand. Right at this point in time today—somebody can actually have a look at it for me—we

have some capacity.

What all the planning on coronavirus is telling us is that it will be a slow rise in demand. I think the impact will be far more on the emergency department and any of our respiratory clinics and walk-in centres. We are setting the walk-in centres up to be able to do testing so that people can go there, get their test, go home and self-isolate until results come through.

Whatever we are doing at the moment is, as the minister said, trying to contain it in the community. We will then start to see, we think—and we know from H1N1 a number of years ago—that then you start to see presentations increase to emergency departments. We start to see sicker people as well and then we start to admit more.

We have processes in place and plans in place. We have got a number of negative pressure rooms. We try to isolate in there first. If we get too many for that then we start to cohort in a ward. Then we may need another ward. And then we may need to look at what we have got in our planning: if we needed to create a whole other intensive care unit, where would that be, what would that look like, do we have enough ventilators, do we have enough staff—all those sorts of things.

We are doing extremely detailed planning based on the foundation of our normal infectious diseases planning that we already have in place. And we are not just doing it in Canberra Health Services; we are doing it with National Capital, we are doing it with every other hospital, private or public, and Calvary in particular, and we are also having conversations with the Southern Local Health Network about their capacity. The detailed planning will give us a spreadsheet of what the capacity is.

I think what people have to understand is that not everybody who gets sick will require hospitalisation. We just need to manage from that. And then we need to prioritise. At the moment what we are doing is maintaining our normal business for as long as possible and we will continue to do that. At some point—and I do not know when that is or what that looks like—we will have to say, “Now we cannot maintain normal business. We need to make some changes.” But that would be very carefully planned and managed because we will have that sort of slower increase.

THE CHAIR: Can I ask for a bit of clarity? We have not had a diagnosis in the ACT. If someone is diagnosed, they would only go to hospital if they developed serious symptoms. Is that the general predisposition?

Ms McDonald: At this point in time, and working with the chief health officer, my understanding is—and I am not the chief health officer—if we got a positive diagnosis then we would admit them and put them in a negative pressure room at this stage, to really isolate and prevent that sort of contamination. But once we get a number in the community where we are getting positive diagnoses, people are unwell and it is already in the community, it is unlikely that we would admit every positive diagnosis unless they were unwell. But because it is not widespread in the community at this point, we would admit and isolate as much as possible to prevent that contamination.

Ms Stephen-Smith: That is about containment rather than treatment.

THE CHAIR: Are you seeing an uptick of people presenting at primary health care, maybe anecdotally, and saying, “I’ve got flu-like symptoms”? Once upon a time, you would have taken an aspirin and had a good lie-down. Are you seeing people saying, “This could be this, so I will go and present to a primary healthcare service”?

Ms McDonald: My understanding is—again we would have to check with the chief health officer in terms of this—that GPs are saying, yes, they are seeing more people coming. It is very clear for GPs, walk-in centres and any primary care. You ask the question: do you fit the criteria? Have you been overseas to these countries? Have you travelled recently? Have you been in contact with somebody who is a confirmed case? If people are answering no to those questions, it is pretty easy for primary care to say, “You don’t need to be tested.” They are doing that assessment. We are certainly hearing from GPs who are getting increased activity from that. But that has been happening for a little while now.

Ms Stephen-Smith: Obviously, we have been testing people where they do meet those criteria. I think the last figure I saw, earlier today, was that about 145 or 146 people had been tested, which obviously had all come back negative. There are people meeting that criteria to be tested.

MS LAWDER: Is that what they are talking about federally regarding surge capacity?

Ms McDonald: Yes.

MS LAWDER: Do you have any projections? Is our surge capacity going to be sufficient to meet the demands of what you think may happen?

Ms McDonald: According to the chief health officer, it is very hard to predict that, and I would agree with that. We do not know. We do not know what is going to happen in our community. As the minister has said, and as the chief health officer was talking about today and has been for some time, we do not know what this is going to look like in our community in Australia, or in the ACT in particular. Scenario modelling has been done. It is very hard to pin it down into a number as to what that surge capacity looks like. We also do not know how many people who do get a positive diagnosis will become really unwell and require hospitalisation. At this point I would not like to hazard a guess at what those numbers might be.

Mr De’Ath: I would agree with Ms McDonald’s comments. It is very difficult, and until you get to a point in the country where you have human to human transmission and, from there, the contact tracing becomes too difficult to keep contract tracing, it is quite difficult to model that. But the modellers will be continuing to watch this and model it as things change. That will give us better information, and still in a reasonably timely way, to help us to adjust what we are doing. It is a big task for Ms McDonald in the hospital and across the services, and generally across the territory. That is what the chief health officer will continue to look at across the system as things develop.

One of the significant pieces of work for us at the moment, and something that is challenging every jurisdiction, is communications. We continue to work solidly on

that, on the best way to communicate with people and the best way to frame the messages. We get the opportunity here to sit and talk in great detail today, but most people out there in the public do not get that opportunity to have a conversation about this in great detail. How do you hit the mark with messaging that is meaningful to people but not alarmist? Some of what we have described today is not alarmist, and there is a need for composure and measured responses.

MS LAWDER: Can I put in a plug at this point, if you are making announcements, to ensure you have an Auslan interpreter available. That would be great.

Ms Stephen-Smith: That is a very good point, Ms Lawder. I will take that on board.

MS CHEYNE: And captions.

THE CHAIR: Can we try and impress on the public that stockpiling toilet paper is not going to stop you getting—

Ms Stephen-Smith: Dr Coleman certainly gave that message in our Facebook live interview today.

MS LAWDER: How many people are expecting diarrhoea with it or something?

Ms Stephen-Smith: That was an unnecessary response to this.

THE CHAIR: It is a respiratory disease.

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes, and for those of us who need to buy toilet paper because it is that time of the shopping cycle, please leave some.

THE CHAIR: There being no further questions for Health, I suggest that we have a break and come back with CSD.

Short suspension.

STEPHEN-SMITH, MS RACHEL, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Children, Youth and Families, Minister for Health and Minister for Urban Renewal

SABELLICO, MS ANNE-MAREE, Deputy Director-General, Community Services Directorate

PAPPAS, MS HELEN, Executive Group Manager, Children, Youth and Families, Community Services Directorate

CHARLES, MS LISA, Executive Branch Manager, Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Community Services Directorate, Community Services Directorate

ROBINSON, MS JODIE, Executive Senior Branch Manager, Practice and Performance, Children, Youth and Families, Community Services Directorate

THE CHAIR: We will recommence with the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and the cultural tourism hub at Yarramundi Cultural Centre. Minister, would you like to outline the purpose of this expenditure?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes, I would love to. Thank you, Mrs Dunne.

THE CHAIR: Excellent.

Ms Stephen-Smith: There are essentially two elements to this proposal, which is why it has expenses for both the Community Services Directorate and the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate. One part of it, which CSD is responsible for, is, as it says in the last sentence, developing the vision “to establish community control and management for Yarramundi cultural centre”. Some members might be aware that in the 2000s it was sort of third-party managed by an Aboriginal organisation. Then management came back in with government. It currently sits with the property group, but there has been strong advocacy from the community to put the cultural centre into community control. This piece of work is looking at how we do that.

The other piece of work is looking at how we can use the cultural centre—which is currently underutilised to some degree, I think we would all agree—as part of a tourism hub. We know we have some really fantastic Ngunnawal and other Aboriginal tourism operators and cultural services organisations who are looking for bases to operate their tours out of and to showcase their culture. That is a piece of work around what role the Yarramundi cultural centre can play as part of that tourism strategy. I will hand over to Ms Charles to talk about the further work in relation to this.

Ms Charles: I acknowledge the privilege statement. This is a priority for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. It is outlined in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agreement and it is an action under the economic participation priority action plan to work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait community to foster and promote cultural tourism and training opportunities.

Going to the work that we are doing at the moment, we have done all the pre-work in bringing on board the resources to lead the working partnership with the elected body,

to work with the community, to look at a codesign process, and to set out the strategy, vision and objectives of the Yarramundi cultural centre.

THE CHAIR: There is \$273,000 in this financial year, some from CSD and some from CMTEDD. Ms Charles, are you in CMTEDD or CSD?

Ms Charles: I am the executive branch manager of the office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs under CSD.

THE CHAIR: This is joint money, but you have the lead on this, minister. Is that correct?

Ms Stephen-Smith: It is initially two pieces of work. The office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs is coordinating these pieces of work or making sure that they are coordinated.

Ms Charles: Yes.

THE CHAIR: What are you going to do with the \$100,000 in the three months that are left in this financial year?

Ms Charles: The \$100,000 is the funding to CMTEDD to undertake the feasibility study to build new facilities and infrastructure at the Yarramundi cultural centre. We will be working closely with CMTEDD on the whole project. Essentially the funding that we get in terms of having the dedicated resources to work with the community will feed into that feasibility study and the broader cultural tourism strategy.

THE CHAIR: What is the physical status of the building? Is it at the end of its useful life? Is it fine and just needs a lick of paint? How does it stand?

Ms Charles: I think that is a question for the property group; they are currently managing Yarramundi cultural centre.

THE CHAIR: When we were asking about this on Friday last week—it seems like a lifetime ago—they said we should ask you.

Ms Stephen-Smith: It is probably fair to say that there is some work that could be done on the building, and that is probably part of the work that CMTEDD is doing, but it will depend on what, then, its use is going to be. There are a couple of buildings out there. There is the community meeting room, the theatre and the offices that are currently used by the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre, and there is the gallery that is currently run by Burrunjju Art Gallery. There is that building that is currently the art gallery. It will really be the question of what we want to use these buildings for into the future that will inform any capital investment that may need to be made into that.

THE CHAIR: So it is not \$100,000 for a building assessment; it is something more than that?

Ms Stephen-Smith: No, that is really to work with the community and to develop the

plan around it being a cultural tourism hub.

THE CHAIR: What is the 173 for, then?

Ms Stephen-Smith: That is for staffing and for engagement and the cost of engaging with the community in relation to the piece of work that CSD is undertaking. And in terms of the next question—

THE CHAIR: I am sorry, but it is not clear to me how these two buckets of money fit together. If they do not fit together, could somebody tell me?

Ms Stephen-Smith: They fit together in the sense that both pieces of work are around the Yarramundi cultural centre. Ms Charles just said that the piece of work that CSD is doing in terms of talking to the community and co-design about how the centre will be managed in future needs to sit alongside the piece of work that CMTEDD is doing and being really integrated with that about what the commercial—for want of a better word—opportunity for the cultural centre is in supporting the growing Indigenous tourism businesses in the ACT.

MS LAWDER: This money will be spent on resources within those two directorates, for an FTE? Is that what we are saying? By the end of that, there will be no tangible benefit delivered for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? It is all feasibility studies? There is no direct tangible benefit built, offered or leased to the community? Is that what we are saying?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes. Ms Sabellico can respond.

Ms Sabellico: There are a number of factors in the projects. One aspect is looking at doing some co-design work with the community to develop the options for community management of Yarramundi as we go forward and what is cultural tourism in and around that site. It might mean that it is more than just the site of the Yarramundi centre. We do need to consult with the community, the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, the elected body and the rest of the community around looking at what that means for the community.

Then it is about what sits at Yarramundi Reach itself. That is where the CMTEDD component comes in, in terms of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and other enterprises to determine what would be appropriate on site, what would be appropriate off site and how they all link together. At the end of it, we would have the plan for development of the arrangements around cultural tourism as well as community management in the longer term.

MS LAWDER: How would that be funded on an ongoing basis? Do you expect a budget bid with the next budget? Are you going to spend a quarter of a million dollars but have nothing ongoing to implement?

Ms Stephen-Smith: That will depend on what the outcome of this process is. It is not reasonable to say that there is no tangible benefit to the community if what comes out of this is a decision that is co-designed with the community about what the future of Yarramundi cultural centre looks like. There is currently a lot of uncertainty in the

community and there is a lot of feedback that we need to have that conversation. We need to come to a decision about what the future of the cultural centre looks like.

Any budget bid that might arise out of that or any process for handing control or transitioning control to the Aboriginal community may not have a cost associated with it, because currently the property group pays to manage the property. It may be that we go to tender and do some kind of culturally appropriate process to determine that a third party is going to manage that building but some of that funding is transferred. Until we have done the work, we do not know what the outcome will be in terms of whether we need to put in a budget bid or whether we manage that within existing resources or what that looks like.

MS LAWDER: What was the urgency? It was not in last year's budget. What was the urgency to do it in the last three months of this year, as opposed to waiting for the next budget?

Ms Stephen-Smith: It is not being done in the last three months of the year. This is something that has been cash-managed by both the office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs and, I understand, the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate. As Ms Charles said, it is reflected in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agreement. It was a decision that was taken too late to be included in the last budget process, but early in this financial year there was a very clear reflection from the Chief Minister and me that this was a piece of work that was important, that people should endeavour to cash-manage that work but that if it looked as though it was not going to be successful in terms of other pressures on the budget, it could be managed through the budget review process.

THE CHAIR: When did you start this project?

Ms Stephen-Smith: I think the project started early in the financial year, but I could not say.

Ms Sabellico: Earlier in the year, in terms of being able to work with the elected body and having discussions with the Ngunawal Elders Council about the approach to be taken and doing the pre-planning work in order to know how much of the funding would sit within government or sit within a non-government organisation in order to be able to progress the work. It is absolutely essential that this is done jointly and not just run by government.

THE CHAIR: Could you, on notice, indicate to the committee when the work began and how much staff and other resources have been allocated it. The minister has said that this has been cash-managed. What do you plan to do with this \$273,000 across the two agencies?

MS LAWDER: And how much has been spent so far if you have been cash-managing? How much has been spent on this project?

THE CHAIR: What I am getting at is this: is this to recoup a hole in the budget in the agency somewhere or is this new, ongoing spending?

Ms Sabellico: What has been happening through the office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs is that we reprioritised some work in order to do some of this pre-work in the pre-planning and back-ended some of the work to later this year. We looked at the work program for the full 12 months and what we needed to do to spread some of this work out to get it done and ready for if we were to then get the appropriation. That is how we have done that, but we can certainly provide you with some more detail about how we went about that.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MS CODY: I want to double-check something that was said earlier that I am not sure if I understood correctly. This project is to look at how you will develop that area along with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community?

Ms Sabellico: Yes.

MS CODY: And the plan is that they are fully involved in the development?

Ms Sabellico: It is essential, yes.

MR MILLIGAN: There is \$100,000 towards the feasibility study; is that right? And there is 173 for engaging with the community; is that right? How are you engaging with the community? Who is in the community that you are engaging with? And who specifically will be involved in the co-design?

Ms Charles: We have been working with the elected body on an approach to community engagement around the co-design process. The co-design process would work with all of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community who have an interest or view around what should be developed at Yarramundi Reach. We would look at trying to do that community engagement and co-design as broadly as possible across the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

MR MILLIGAN: The elected body will reach out to different Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and the wider public itself?

Ms Charles: We are finalising that approach with the elected body at the moment. It would include different aspects of the community, which would include the community-controlled organisations.

MR MILLIGAN: You mentioned the possibility of this being handed over to community control, whatever it might be, into the future. Is that potentially 100 per cent community control handed across?

Ms Stephen-Smith: That is probably my in-principle preference, but it will depend on what the outcome is from the community consultation. The community might say to us, "We do not have an organisation that is in a position to do that at this point. Give us another couple of years. We will establish an advisory board to work with government while you continue to manage." I am not saying that is what the outcome would be, but in hypotheticals, if that was the outcome from the community, we would not insist on saying, "No, we are going to do a tender and we want someone to

step up and take it as community control.” It will really depend. Our in-principle position is that it is an important cultural asset and it should be in community control.

MR MILLIGAN: I got really excited when I saw “business hub” mentioned. I thought you may potentially have taken a page out of the Canberra Liberals’ policy announcement on this about our own hub investment approach.

Ms Stephen-Smith: It would be slightly more convenient for business than the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm.

MR MILLIGAN: I thought it was good to see that you might be thinking along the same lines we are. Can you explain what you mean by business hub? What specifically does that mean?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Sorry, Mr Milligan. This is not a reflection, but I cannot remember if you were in the room when we started talking about it. It is really about recognising cultural tourism businesses. We know that there are a number of particularly Ngunnawal, but also other Aboriginal, cultural tourism businesses that have sprung up in the ACT over the last few years and are becoming more and more successful. They are looking for a base to conduct their activities from, a place where people can go and participate in activities that might be around bush foods or understanding artefacts. There have been conversations with the community about keeping places for artefacts and that kind of thing. We know the federal government is also doing something in relation to that at national level.

It is places to have those conversations and also places to meet, a meeting and greeting point to go out on country, further out into Namadgi or whatever it might be. Those are the kinds of activities. We have also had conversations with the National Capital Authority about their plans for Yarramundi Reach. They are thinking about how we acknowledge the cultural significance of that space. I do not know if Lisa wants to add something.

Ms Charles: That is correct.

MR MILLIGAN: Is it potentially open for businesses other than cultural or tourism businesses? Is there a possibility that other Indigenous businesses might be able to call that home for themselves there? Are you picking that particular type of niche business?

Ms Stephen-Smith: It is not a very large building space. If you are looking at things like co-working spaces, making spaces or that kind of thing for other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, or office space, there is not really the space to do that out there without a significant capital investment.

The Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre is currently based out there. They have their offices out there. There is not a lot of other office space that we would be able to look at adapting to make it a business hub in that sense. Realistically, for the kinds of businesses that are engaged with day-to-day business activities, whether it is in managing various rentals—I am sure you know the business I am talking about.

MR MILLIGAN: Yes.

Ms Stephen-Smith: Whether it is about that, or about making things or providing consultancy services, it is probably not the most convenient location for a co-working space or a shared office space for that kind of activity, I would suggest. I do not know if the community has come back with anything different in relation to business.

Ms Charles: No; that would be part of the conversations that we would have with community about the types of businesses, and also taking into consideration the structure itself.

MS CODY: Is there a chance for those in the community who have not been involved, who have not had a chance to get involved, to still be involved? And how would they do that?

Ms Charles: Again, it is finalising the approach with the elected body. Part of that would be that we would reach out in terms of our communications to make sure that the engagements were happening and the co-design process was happening. We would make sure, through our communications, that we are reaching a majority of the community who may be interested.

MS CODY: Would you be using any of the current grants systems for those sorts of things?

Ms Charles: Sorry?

MS CODY: Things like your scholarship grant programs.

Ms Stephen-Smith: For the engagement element?

MS CODY: Yes.

Ms Stephen-Smith: That is really what this funding is for: to work with the elected body to facilitate that engagement.

THE CHAIR: The next item on the agenda is building capacity in the child and youth protection service, page 47 of the budget review. Minister, it says:

The Government will strengthen the oversight and delivery of services to vulnerable and at-risk children, young people and their families ...

Can you elaborate on how this is different from business as usual? You are proposing to spend \$800,000 per year, roughly, in the outyears, and close to \$400,000 in the last three months of this year. What are you proposing to do? What is different and what is new in this initiative?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Part of this is around providing training and capacity, but a large proportion is really the continuation of the case analysis function that was introduced in response to the Glanfield review and was previously funded from the family safety levy money. That was implementation to see how case analysis was going to work

and fit in to improve practice and understanding of practice in CYPS and, particularly in the context of the Glanfield response, understanding the impact of cumulative harm and being better at identifying the risk of cumulative harm for young people who have come into contact with the child protection system. That case analysis team has proved to be very valuable and was something that we wanted to see embedded in the CYPS in an ongoing way.

THE CHAIR: So a Glanfield recommendation about family safety money is now going to become part of business as usual?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Essentially. I am not sure if there is an additional training element to it. Ms Pappas might want to expand on that.

THE CHAIR: My other observation is that in this financial year there is essentially what looks like half a year's amount of money but you have only got three months to spend it in. I would like to drill down into that a little as well.

Ms Pappas: A component of it is the case analysis team. As described by the minister, there is some additional FTE for training to continue the work to mature and improve the training response to our workforce and beyond and, also some investment, some operational policy development to respond to—

THE CHAIR: If there is more than one element, could the committee have on notice a breakdown of what those different elements are and how much is allocated to those different elements across this year and the outyears, please?

Ms Pappas: Jodie might want to correct me about this. We have a SOGB position for training and development, the manager of the training and development unit; SOGC policy positions, two; and an HP3 or CYPP3, which is the case analysis team. It is equivalent to about five FTE across each of those areas. I am not sure if I have got that right. But that is the breakdown.

THE CHAIR: If we could have a breakdown with the dollars, that would be handy.

Ms Stephen-Smith: I think the other point to make about this is that the family safety levy funding for the case analysis team element of it did not cease at the end of the last financial year. That has continued through the year. This is essentially an ongoing activity that was partially funded this year from family safety, partly funded from this initiative.

THE CHAIR: I had not realised until Ms Pappas started to speak that there is more than one element to it, apart from the case analysis. There are other elements as well. Are any of those elements essentially business as usual or is it all new in some way?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Case analysis is embedding the case—

THE CHAIR: Yes, I understand that.

Ms Stephen-Smith: The other elements, you mean?

THE CHAIR: But the other elements, the training and the—

Ms Pappas: They are operation policy and quality assurance functions.

THE CHAIR: Is that, in any sense, business as usual or are we ramping them up? Why are we appropriating this money for these things? Quality assurance seems like something that you should be doing all the time. Do you need more quality assurance, do you need more training or are we addressing a shortfall in training and quality assurance?

Ms Pappas: As you will be aware, the child protection and youth justice systems have had increasing scrutiny—I guess that is the word—and reviews and inquiries over the years. This is really about trying to ramp up efforts and to mature our existing business as usual responses. When we are talking about training responses, this is not about people sitting in a room just listening to information. What we are trying to build through this is a skills development program. When we are talking about family violence or responding to domestic violence, people know the strategies and the skills and can build through the training response, not just understand what it is. That is the maturity of the system that we are trying to achieve.

THE CHAIR: I note the point that the minister made about the domestic violence fund money going through. Is this in any way new work that is not currently being done by CYPS?

Ms Pappas: The effort is ramping up through this initiative so that we are able to increase the output in terms of policy development and training response.

THE CHAIR: It is still business as usual?

Ms Pappas: Yes.

THE CHAIR: But it is more business as usual?

Ms Pappas: That is right.

THE CHAIR: What sort of staff are you looking at employing as SOGB, SOGC professional officers? What sorts of qualifications will they need? Professional officers presumably have to have specific qualifications. But the SOGBs and SOGCs, what will they be? What will their background be? What are you looking for?

Ms Pappas: For training, adult education qualifications, social work, people who understand the complexity of human services and how you work with adults to teach them new things, I guess, in that space. We are looking for people who have got some experience in social work, psychology, adult education—across all those positions really.

MS LAWDER: Just to make this clear in my own mind, one of you—sorry, I do not recall who it was—talked about it being one of the recommendations in the Glanfield inquiry. Who was that?

Ms Stephen-Smith: That was me.

MS LAWDER: This additional training is part of a response to the Glanfield inquiry, is that what you are saying?

Ms Stephen-Smith: No, what I was saying was that the case analysis team was set up in response to the Glanfield inquiry, alongside what was previously called the CYPQAI and is now called the strengthening practice committee. It was part of that strengthening oversight and practice improvement in CYPS, specifically to look at and manage that issue of cumulative harm that came to the fore in that matter. And then the training is really about ongoing practice improvement, quality improvement and support for staff.

THE CHAIR: Increased support for Bimberi Youth Justice Centre seems to be the next one on the list, at page 48 of the budget papers.

MS CHEYNE: Are the infrastructure upgrades part of this?

Ms Pappas: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: Without revealing detail, are you able to say what sort of infrastructure is necessary and what is the urgency?

Ms Pappas: I am going to throw to Jodie Robinson.

Ms Stephen-Smith: Just to pre-empt a potential question from Mrs Dunne, the reason this is sort of urgent in the budget review process is that it is partially in response to the major incident that occurred at Bimberi last year—obviously, that was post the budget—and the independent review that we had conducted of that incident by Peter Muir and some of the recommendations that he made. This measure is in response to that.

Ms Robinson: I acknowledge the privilege statement. The initiative provides for some funding in relation to infrastructure improvements. They directly flow from the Peter Muir independent review into the major incident but also from some engagement we have been having with WorkSafe ACT, who have also been undertaking an investigation arising from the incident. Peter Muir's report went into some detail on some of the critical areas that we should examine. Some of that involves, and I am speaking in very broad terms so as to not undermine the safety and security of the operations at Bimberi—

MS CHEYNE: Sure.

THE CHAIR: We understand that.

Ms Robinson: It involves some upgrades and a review of the access control system that exists throughout the centre, making decisions based on the infrastructure upgrades necessary to respond to that, and also some upgrades to duty points within units more broadly.

MS CHEYNE: What is a duty point?

Ms Robinson: With the general structure within Bimberi, there are four units. Within each unit there is a duty point, which is the central control area within each unit where staff undertake a lot of their operations within the centre.

THE CHAIR: Mr Muir wrote that there is insufficient therapeutic capability in Bimberi to support the management of a highly complex group of young people. Minister, it is reported to me and colleagues by parents of young detainees that those detainees often spend large amounts of time in their cabins. Is this therapeutic best practice?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Every six months I table the headline indicators report in relation to Bimberi. Over time, you will have seen that the number of lockdowns has gone up and down. There has certainly been an increase in the need for lockdowns over the last six months, which is very unfortunate. That is not ideal in terms of the way that we want to support young people in Bimberi. We have been working very hard in relation to the recruitment of staff to address some of those issues, but our overriding priority is to keep young people and staff in the centre safe and be able to manage the centre safely.

In relation to therapeutic practice, CYPS and Bimberi had already put on a part-time principal practitioner in Bimberi. This measure funds a full-time principal practitioner. I will ask Ms Robinson to talk about some of the therapeutic supports that are already available and how this will strengthen them.

Ms Robinson: There are a range of therapeutic supports within Bimberi. This committee will be aware that I have spoken previously about the single case management model that was implemented in child and youth protection services back in 2014 or 2015, which provides continuity of case management and therapeutic supports for young people both whilst they are in the community and if they happen to have a period of time in detention at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre. We have an integrated child protection and youth justice system that is cognisant of all of the trauma history that young people may have experienced, if in fact they have had a child protection history as well. There are a range of external services that provide supports into Bimberi, including a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services.

The minister has indicated that those lockdowns are unfortunate. One of the ways we try to minimise impact is to prioritise visits, visits with family and friends but with those therapeutic support services. We also have ACT Health providing both health and forensic mental health services and supports into the centre and continuing to provide advice to centre management about how to best respond to young people's needs.

This position provides additional capability into the system to respond to young people's trauma history that has led to their offending behaviour that is quite unique or separate from a specific mental health diagnosis. This position is about looking at all of the information that we have in relation to a young person, engaging with their family, developing that therapeutic plan, and taking that therapeutic information that

we already have and translating it into a way that makes sense to youth worker staff within the centre in supporting young people on a day-to-day basis. The position is also working really closely with the Education Directorate through the Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre, into the school, again to look at how we best support young people to participate to their greatest capacity in education whilst they are at Bimberi.

THE CHAIR: What are the qualifications of the principal practitioner?

Ms Robinson: Social work or psychology. As the minister said, we had already put in place a part-time person. That person was a psychologist.

THE CHAIR: Are you going to increase that person's hours?

Ms Robinson: Increase it to a full-time capacity.

MS LAWDER: Can you give us some warm, fuzzy feeling that this principal practitioner and the infrastructure or associated capital is going to reduce the amount of time that kids spend locked in their cabins? Is this going to help?

Ms Robinson: One of the recommendations from Peter Muir's review is that we look at developing a long-term recruitment and retention capability within Bimberi. That is a recommendation that we are also progressing work on. We have been doing rolling recruitment and we have been using an external company, HorizonOne, to assist us in that. We have been doing back-to-back recruitment processes and also undertaking the induction for staff.

Longer term we are looking at exploring some other options which provide us with additional casual capability. One of the challenges that we have at Bimberi is retaining the necessary casual pool to be able to respond to staff planned and unplanned leave. There are some other options that we are exploring beyond what we have traditionally done, which was just to try and maintain a casual pool specifically for Bimberi.

THE CHAIR: What are the qualifications of people in the youth worker section of the workforce at Bimberi?

Ms Robinson: There are no set qualifications. We look really at their experience. The recruitment process involves psychometric testing, an interview process and a health screening process to determine the best fit for youth workers in the centre. They then do a very comprehensive full-time induction program of six weeks, followed by buddy shifts on the floor. Their appointment to positions permanently is dependent on successful completion of that.

We then support staff to undertake and complete their cert IV in youth work and obviously we support individual staff members to undertake further training and study. We have a number of staff that are doing various qualifications, including social work or community work or welfare-related work as well.

THE CHAIR: But there is no baseline qualification?

Ms Robinson: The baseline is the induction program and then maintaining skills through refreshers on an annual or biannual basis in that training.

MS LAWDER: Is that going to reduce the amount of time the kids spend locked in their rooms?

Ms Robinson: Yes, over time. There are always challenges in identifying suitable people to undertake youth work at Bimberi Youth Detention Centre. We look at supporting them and retaining them in those roles.

MS LAWDER: But is it a matter of more staff or the right, qualified staff?

Ms Robinson: It is both. We could potentially get more staff but we do not want to reduce the standards that we set for the youth workers that are undertaking that very critical role.

MS LAWDER: When you say it will over time, what does that mean—six months, a year?

Ms Robinson: I think we are in a particular period at the moment where we are responding to the critical incident that happened last year, in August. Because of that recruitment process and induction process I just described, you can appreciate that it takes time to get staff into those positions. It is resolving. It is not static either. It is slowly resolving and I expect it will continue to resolve over the remainder of this financial year.

Ms Stephen-Smith: And it is also influenced by the number of the young people in the centre and the complexity of managing those young people and their own associations inside and outside the youth justice centre. In the same way as AMC has those complexities, Bimberi does too, with a much smaller cohort.

When I table the next headline indicators report, the one that covers the last few months, it will show that there has been an increase in the average number of young people who are in Bimberi as well. That is something that obviously Bimberi and CSD cannot control. We have again seen that fluctuate over time, which has an impact on staff and has an impact on that casual pool.

MS LAWDER: In Peter Muir's recommendations he talked about the need for the centre to operate at its correct staffing levels. How many more staff do you need to recruit to reach the correct staffing levels?

Ms Robinson: I will come back with the actual figure on recruitment. We do, as part of our strategy, have an over-recruitment strategy as well. We have an FTE, not counting the positions that are in this business case, of 71 at Bimberi. I will provide some information on notice.

MS LAWDER: How many vacant positions are there?

Ms Robinson: I will come back to the committee and provide that information.

MS LAWDER: Is that 71 bodies or 71 FTE?

Ms Robinson: FTE.

Ms Stephen-Smith: FTE.

THE CHAIR: What is this \$555,000 in the remaining quarter of this financial year for?

Ms Robinson: It was to fund a number of positions identified through Peter Muir's review. It is a direct response to recommendations. Specifically they are the principal practitioner role, which I have just described, the intelligence—

THE CHAIR: And the minister said somewhere that there were going to be three additional full-time staff.

Ms Robinson: That is right, three FTE, four positions.

THE CHAIR: If we have got \$555,000 for four positions for a quarter and then we have got \$525,000 for next financial year, why is there a big drop-off?

Ms Stephen-Smith: The first year of funding includes the engagement of a consultant to undertake a review and update of emergency operating procedures, review the access control system, provide specialist negotiation training for Bimberi staff in relation to—

THE CHAIR: But I thought the access control review was part of the capital money?

Ms Stephen-Smith: There is also a review of the access control system that is expensed. The physical spending is capital. There is also a part that is expensed that is in relation to reviewing that.

THE CHAIR: For this project, could we have a breakdown of what is in each year?

Ms Robinson: Yes.

THE CHAIR: In the outyears, the \$525,000 et cetera, is that all staff or are there other elements to that as well?

Ms Robinson: That is staff for the outyears.

Ms Pappas: Ms Robinson could actually go through the additional positions just to give you an understanding of—

THE CHAIR: I think we have been through that. This year there is staffing and other things. In the outyears are there other things as well as staff?

Ms Robinson: In the outyears?

THE CHAIR: Yes.

Ms Robinson: It is staff.

Ms Pappas: Staff.

THE CHAIR: Just staff?

Ms Robinson: Staff—that is right, and in the 2020-21 year you can see the capital work.

THE CHAIR: But I am just looking at—

Ms Robinson: In terms of expenses.

THE CHAIR: The expenses page is just staff?

Ms Robinson: That is right.

THE CHAIR: So really we are looking for a breakdown of the \$555,000 in this year.

Ms Robinson: I can tell you what they are now.

THE CHAIR: Okay.

Ms Robinson: It is the CYPP5 principal practitioner that I have described; a SOGC intelligence officer; a point four SOGC work health and safety adviser; and a point six SOGC training officer. They are the positions.

If I go to the consultancies that we are engaging in part of this financial year, it is looking at the access control system that we have just described; it is looking at engaging a consultant to develop specialist negotiation skills for our staff, to put that into the induction training program; and it is a comprehensive review of the work health and safety systems that exist at Bimberi, looking at the existing materials and systems and identifying areas for improvement there.

THE CHAIR: Can we have a dollar figure against those? If you need to do that on notice, I am happy with that.

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes.

Ms Robinson: I can, but I should note that we have not procured each of those yet.

THE CHAIR: If you provide that, can you highlight that for the committee so that we will not necessarily publish that.

Ms Robinson: We can.

Ms Stephen-Smith: The fourth consultancy, which I think Ms Robinson skipped over, is the review of the emergency operating procedures and development of an

agreement with ACT Policing and our emergency services.

THE CHAIR: Ms Robinson, you referred to a principal practitioner, CYPP5. We already have half a CYPP5. Is that an extra one or is it moving from point five to one?

Ms Robinson: We had reprioritised the half a position from our existing principal practitioner structure within CYPP to reach into Bimberi Youth Justice Centre. This is new funding to allow the establishment of that in and of its own right.

THE CHAIR: So you were borrowing somebody hitherto.

MS CODY: I want to go to the work health and safety side of things. This money is for a work health and safety officer?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes.

Ms Robinson: Yes, that is right.

MS CODY: What sort of training will they undertake? A refresh of all work health and safety?

Ms Robinson: There are two components that go to work health and safety. Number one is the consultancy, to do a comprehensive review of the entirety of the systems in place in relation to work health and safety in the centre. The centre is unique because it has work health and safety obligations in relation to the physical infrastructure of the system at Bimberi and it also has work health and safety obligations in relation to the operations of the centre. The consultancy will do that. The specific health and safety adviser, in terms of the position that has been identified, will continue to maintain those systems within Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.

MS CODY: They will all form part of your induction processes as well?

Ms Robinson: Yes, that is right.

THE CHAIR: We will move to more support for the out of home care system. This is to enhance support for vulnerable children and young people in the out of home care system. It is \$1.7 million in expenses for CSD in this financial year. What is that for, minister?

Ms Stephen-Smith: That is for a couple of things. One of those things is a particular therapeutic response that is described. This is the primary investment. Of the \$4.4, \$3.189 million until June 2022 is an investment in a specialist therapeutic response called the sanctuary model, which Ms Pappas or Ms Robinson can talk more about. That is really about creating a safe, non-violent environment for a young person, essentially a 24 hours a day, seven days a week service for very complex young people who require that really individualised intensive service response in residential care.

THE CHAIR: Is this a pilot?

Ms Stephen-Smith: No; it is a response to the particular needs of a young person.

THE CHAIR: It is just that the money runs out.

Ms Stephen-Smith: I might hand over to Ms Pappas or Ms Robinson.

Ms Sabellico: I am happy to take that. Mrs Dunne, you are alluding to the fact that the money is only for a set period of time. When we look at putting in place some really robust therapeutic care models like the sanctuary model, the intent is that young people need that for a period of time, but not on an ongoing basis, because the model itself should support to decrease and then sustain them in options other than that really highly intensive service.

THE CHAIR: Did I just pick up—and correct me if I am wrong—that this is actually aimed at a particular client?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes.

THE CHAIR: You said, minister, there are a number of things. Again, it might be useful for the committee to have a breakdown of what those initiatives are, dollar by dollar for those items, because this is not very informative.

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes.

THE CHAIR: And it has been a pretty standard request across the board to get a breakdown.

Ms Stephen-Smith: We can provide some of that information now. Of all this funding, \$688,000 is for two staff until June 2021 in the children, youth and families division to support the update of the A step up for our kids strategy, which obviously comes to an end at the end of this year. But work is really ramping up on what the next stage of step up looks like. That will obviously involve engagement with children, young people, carers and families, birth families as well.

THE CHAIR: Sorry, did you say six—

Ms Stephen-Smith: \$668,000 for two staff in CYF and a further \$228,000 for a staff member in the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate to support that work as well. That is really recognising that our investment in child protection is a significant investment and we need to engage with treasury and work with treasury in a collaborative way to support the financial assessment and the modelling of that. It also includes a payment of \$87,000 to Barnardos for some unforeseen costs arising from the transition of residential care services. As you will be aware, Premier Youthworks withdrew from the ACT Together consortium last year.

THE CHAIR: Seeing that you have raised it, Premier Youthworks was operating 20-odd residential care homes. How many are currently operating?

Ms Stephen-Smith: I do not have those numbers in front of me today.

THE CHAIR: I think it was 24. Could we take that on notice, please?

Ms Pappas: How many residential homes there are operating?

THE CHAIR: Yes and, when Premier Youthworks were here, how many clients they had and how many clients are still there, not as of today but as of a reasonable reporting time since then.

Ms Pappas: This is a population that fluctuates up and down, obviously. Premier Youthworks would sit somewhere between 35 and 40 young people at any one time. Barnardos have taken that on. The last time I saw the figure this week, we were at 46. But they are kids in the system who are at different points. Not all of them are in a continuum of residential care. There are some kids—I think about 12 of them—who are in step-down, moving into semi-independent living or doing some skill development with two or three other young people in a shared environment. There are variations, depending on individual needs of those young people. The most recent figure was 46 across that continuum of residential care. But it is, as I said, a population that fluctuates.

THE CHAIR: That was \$88,000, a one-off to Barnardos?

Ms Stephen-Smith: \$87,000.

THE CHAIR: Anything else?

Ms Stephen-Smith: No, I think that is—

THE CHAIR: There is \$1.77 million expenditure in this financial year. What is the \$1.77 million, apart from about \$140,000 for staff and \$88,000 for Barnardos?

Ms Stephen-Smith: The majority of that would be for the implementation of the sanctuary model.

Ms Pappas: There is the sanctuary model and then—

THE CHAIR: And the rest of it is sanctuary?

Ms Pappas: And then there is also some money for some consultation—\$370,000 for research and engagement with community in relation to the A step up for our kids strategy.

THE CHAIR: That is in addition to the staff money?

Ms Pappas: That is right.

THE CHAIR: The remainder would be the sanctuary model?

Ms Pappas: It is the sanctuary model.

THE CHAIR: Am I to interpret that that is for this financial year and the next

financial year?

Ms Pappas: Yes.

MS LAWDER: With Barnardos taking over what Premier Youthworks did, when does that contract end, and will you be going out to tender again?

Ms Stephen-Smith: The current contract ends in February 2021 and we are currently working through what the arrangements post February 2021 will look like.

THE CHAIR: That is the bulk of the money for the step up staff and the \$370,000 for consultation?

MS LAWDER: And procurement?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Sorry, I thought you were talking about the ACT Together contract overall.

MS LAWDER: I was.

Ms Stephen-Smith: The whole contract with ACT Together currently finishes in February 2021.

THE CHAIR: We will move to supporting the reportable conduct scheme, page 49.

MS CODY: What about strengthening services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children?

Ms Stephen-Smith: We do not mind which order you do it in.

THE CHAIR: This is functional therapy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. What is the money for? It runs out after 2021-22. Is it a trial? Is it a pilot? How is it working?

Ms Stephen-Smith: We have already had a pilot or a trial of that program delivered by OzChild and, importantly, Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation, in partnership. I think you were here at the annual report hearings, Mrs Dunne, when we were talking about the ongoing funding for this program. This is delivering the ongoing funding. In the way that the budget tends to work, obviously this program will be evaluated in the trial phase but it will also be evaluated after a period of time. The funding has been provisioned in that final year, pending the outcome of the evaluation. We are extremely confident that if the program continues to operate in the way that it has, it will deliver absolutely outstanding outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in our community.

THE CHAIR: So this is actually picking up the program and appropriating money for the continuation of the program?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Yes.

THE CHAIR: And the next evaluation point is in 2021-22?

Ms Stephen-Smith: That is my understanding.

MS CODY: Is any of this funding going towards any of the recommendations out of Our Booris, Our Way?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Anyone?

Ms Pappas: The Our Booris, Our Way review talked generally about family centred decision-making, and functional family therapy put the family at the centre of work with family to understand the issues for them and how they are going to resolve those issues without intervention of government.

MS CODY: This will be addressing some of those recommendations coming out of that report?

Ms Pappas: Absolutely. It is a community-controlled organisation in Gugan Gulwan. There is the expertise of OzChild. That partnership is working beautifully. Families are at the centre and are able to self-determine, basically, their own response to their own family issues through that program. So, absolutely.

Ms Stephen-Smith: There are some other elements of this in relation to establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designated senior practitioner that will support culturally appropriate and responsive practices with frontline child, youth and protection service case managers—really, a port of call for frontline case managers to support their culturally appropriate practice but also to help manage highly complex cases to prevent those children and young people coming into care. Through that practice leadership and mentoring, there will be staff coaching for new staff about how best to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

There is some additional support for the CYPS cultural services team as well included in this measure. I think both those definitely speak to the recommendations of Our Booris around strengthening practice within CYPS when it comes to responding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

THE CHAIR: There is more than the functional family therapy. Could we have a breakdown of how much is functional family therapy, how much is the senior practitioner and how much is other implementation of Our Booris, Our Way?

Ms Pappas: I can respond to that, if you like. There is \$520,000 in 2019-20 for functional family therapy and \$150,000 for the 2 FTEs—cultural services and a senior practitioner.

THE CHAIR: That is this financial year?

Ms Pappas: That is right.

THE CHAIR: And next financial year?

Ms Pappas: I guess next—

THE CHAIR: We are not going to get rid of the senior practitioner at the end of this financial year?

Ms Pappas: No. We are invested, absolutely, in both those roles. We will look internally, in terms of reprioritising some effort in some other areas, to continue to focus on our response to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

Ms Stephen-Smith: And obviously this will be considered in terms of the broader response. When we were putting this together, we did not have the final report of Our Booris, Our Way. We will obviously be making further responses to the Our Booris, Our Way final report.

THE CHAIR: We would expect to see budget bids to address Our Booris, Our Way?

Ms Stephen-Smith: I think that is a fair assumption, yes.

THE CHAIR: Additional resources, the CYPS to undertake reportable conduct investigations—can somebody elaborate on that?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Anne-Maree, we nominate you.

Ms Sabellico: The staffing here is to actually support the increased level of work that the reportable conduct scheme has attributed to the resources and the workload of the child, youth and family area. There is a significant expectation around the provision of information as well as the investigations that are undertaken around reportable conduct. Again, CSD has reprioritised some other work in order to be able to fund this whilst waiting for the outcome.

THE CHAIR: For the \$215,000 this year and the \$600,000 next year et cetera, what are we getting?

Ms Pappas: For this year, \$215,000, we will get a SOGC and a 0.5 of an ASO6 funded. Then that ramps up in the outyears and we will have a team of five FTE over three years to continue that work.

THE CHAIR: But you are already doing this work. What size is the team that is already doing this work or are they coming from all over the place?

Ms Pappas: Do we have three or four?

Ms Robinson: Three.

Ms Pappas: Three FTE doing the work at the moment.

THE CHAIR: You have got three FTE, you are adding another 1½ FTE?

Ms Pappas: Over the three years it will be equivalent to five FTE.

THE CHAIR: You are taking the three that you have got, adding another 1½ and then ramping it up to five altogether so that the people who are currently in CYPS and doing this work will be specifically funded to do that work?

Ms Robinson: That is right. What we found was that since the introduction of the scheme in 2017 the demand had really increased, particularly demand related to information requests from other designated entities who are fulfilling their obligations of undertaking reportable conduct investigations in relation to their employees.

THE CHAIR: Has there been a surge in reportable conduct?

Ms Robinson: I would not say there has been a surge. The scheme was introduced in 2017 and as people have begun to implement that within their organisations and understand the full operation of the scheme, including the capacity to request information from CYPS that is relevant to their reportable conduct investigation, they have been making use of those provisions that exist within the legislation. There has been an increase in demand, yes.

THE CHAIR: I thank the minister and her officials. There is a lot of stuff that has been taken on notice. The usual rule of thumb: answers to questions on notice, five days beginning the day after the appearance of the proof *Hansard*; questions on notice, three days from the proof *Hansard* and five days to answer. Thank you very much, officials and minister, for your attendance here this afternoon. This concludes the hearings of the public accounts committee into this supplementary appropriation.

The committee adjourned at 4.23 pm.