



DEBATES

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HANSARD

3 April 2003

Thursday, 3 April 2003

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Thursday, 3 April 2003

The Assembly met at 10.30 am.

(Quorum formed.)

MR SPEAKER (Mr Berry) took the chair and asked members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

Petition

The following petition was lodged for presentation, by Ms Tucker, from 1,048 residents.

Block 12 section 2 Belconnen

To the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

The petition of certain members of the Australian Capital Territory draws to the attention of the Assembly the inappropriate development of Block 12 Section 2 Belconnen, at the intersection of Coulter Drive and Nettlefold Street, and the threat to its magnificent remnant Yellow Box / Red Gum woodland.

Your petitioners therefore request the Assembly to call on the ACT Government to withdraw the block from development and preserve the area as public open space.

The Clerk having announced that the terms of the petition would be recorded in Hansard and a copy referred to the appropriate minister, the petition was received.

Rates and Land Tax Amendment Bill 2003

Mr Quinlan, pursuant to notice, presented the bill and its explanatory statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MR QUINLAN (Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Business and Tourism and Minister for Sport, Racing and Gaming) (10.34): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Mr Speaker, the Rates and Land Tax Amendment Bill 2003 amends the Rates and Land Tax Act 1926 to provide the legislative mechanism required to implement a new rating system. This new system, designed to commence on 1 July this year, is a direct result of the government's election promise to make the Canberra rates system fairer for all long-term owners of residential and rural parcels of land.

Under the new rating system, long-term owners of residential and rural land will pay the previous year's rates, increased by the actual CPI. Long-term owners are defined as those who have owned the parcel of land for a period of at least 12 months as at 1 July each year.

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Mr Speaker, the new rating system will provide certainty to long-term owners, as they will be able to determine and budget for increases in their annual rates bill so long as they remain in their house. People will be able to determine what their annual rates bill will be by increasing their previous year's bill by the actual CPI. Their rates bills will not be impacted by movements in property values.

The impact of movements in the average unimproved value will effectively be deferred until the parcel of land is sold. Therefore, long-term owners will not see large increases in their rates as a result of large increases in values due to their suburbs becoming sought after, for example, for redevelopment potential.

New owners of residential and rural land will receive the benefit of the previous owners' rates for the balance of the year in which they purchase the parcel of land, after which time they will pay rates based on the existing formula, incorporating the prevailing unimproved value for that parcel of land. The new owners will become long-term owners after owning the parcel of land for more than 12 months as at 1 July each year.

The existing concessions and deferments that are available to owners of parcels of land will be maintained under the new rating system, thereby ensuring that no-one will be disadvantaged. Concessions for pensioners are portable and move with them from one parcel of land to another.

The method by which rates for commercial parcels of land is calculated will remain unchanged under the new rating system. That is, it will incorporate the latest unimproved valuation.

The new rating system, Mr Speaker, will commence on 1 July 2003, with new owners subject to the new calculation on 1 July 2004. For 2003-04, rates for all residential and rural parcels of land (including units) will be charged at the 2002-03 rates plus CPI. Hence, all owners on 1 July 2003 will be considered long-term owners for 2003-04.

There are provisions in this bill which will change the method of calculating rates on unit subdivisions. Currently, the ownership of units rests with a body corporate, and changes in individual ownership of units does not change liability of rates imposed on the body corporate.

Under the new system, a new unit will be treated in a similar manner to a new lease. This bill also includes provisions that make members of an owners corporation, rather than the owners corporation itself, liable for rates. This is necessary in order to distinguish between new owners and long-term owners.

Mr Speaker, as promised, the government has produced in the new rating system a fair rates system for residential owners of parcels of land in the ACT. I commend the Rates and Land Tax Amendment Bill 2003 to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Smyth**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Public Accounts—Standing Committee Reference

MR SMYTH (Leader of the Opposition) (10.38): I seek leave to move a motion concerning the Rates and Land Tax Amendment Bill 2003.

Leave granted.

MR SMYTH: I move:

That notwithstanding the provisions of standing order 174 –

- (a) the Rates and Land Tax Amendment Bill 2003 be referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts for report no later than 17 June 2003;
- (b) on the Committee presenting its report to the Assembly resumption of debate on the question “That this Bill be agreed to in principle” be set down as an order of the day for the next sitting.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Financial Management Amendment Bill 2003

Mr Quinlan, pursuant to notice, presented the bill and its explanatory statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MR QUINLAN (Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Business and Tourism and Minister for Sport, Racing and Gaming) (10.40): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

This bill provides for a number of minor amendments to the Financial Management Act 1996. Mr Speaker, the Financial Management Act 1996 is the cornerstone upon which effective financial management of the territory rests. For this reason, it is essential that the provisions of the act clearly and unambiguously convey financial requirements and obligations, and that the act impose obligations and requirements that result in effective and efficient financial management practices.

The first area that the bill addresses is the issue of amending budgets when there are changes to the structure and function of departments through amendment of the administrative arrangement orders during a financial year.

The Financial Management Act requires annual financial statements to be prepared in a form that facilitates comparison with budgets. Where major variations occur during a financial year due to changes in the administrative orders, it can be difficult to present financial statements that are comparable to the original budget presented in the budget papers.

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Financial statements need to present useful information to readers. This understanding would be assisted by enabling financial statements to present budget information relevant to a new department structure. However, at present the Financial Management Act 1996 has no mechanism to enable this amendment to a department's budget information to be included in financial statements.

Mr Speaker, this bill provides such a mechanism, while not overburdening the Treasurer—God bless him—with administrative paperwork. Further, this bill ensures there is accountability to members with the tabling of the amendments.

The second area this bill addresses is amendment of investment provisions. The Auditor-General has expressed concerns that the types of permissible investments for public moneys need to be clarified. This bill requires investments of public moneys to be for the purpose of increasing or protecting the financial wealth of the territory. This requirement is in addition to the current requirement that investments can only be in accordance with the investment list contained in section 38 (1) of the Financial Management Act and prescribed under the financial management guidelines.

Mr Speaker, the bill also allows for the ability to deduct outsourced investment management fees from interest received. This amendment removes any question regarding the validity of fund management arrangements currently in place. Further, to ensure the integrity and consistency of the Financial Management Act 1996, this government is applying these new investment provisions to territory authorities.

I trust that members will support the bill, which is aimed at clarifying provisions within the act and promoting efficient, effective financial management practices.

I commend this bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Smyth**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Government Procurement Amendment Bill 2003

Mr Quinlan, pursuant to notice, presented the bill and its explanatory statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MR QUINLAN (Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Business and Tourism and Minister for Sport, Racing and Gaming) (10.44): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Government Procurement Amendment Bill 2003 improves the legislative framework and addresses the concerns that have been raised on the operation of the Public Access to Government Contracts Act. This bill will promote transparency and accountability and make access to information easier for industry and the public. It will also streamline the legislation that currently relates specifically to government procurement activities.

The bill recognises that since the Government Contractual Interest (Debts) Act 1994 and the Public Access to Government Contracts Act 2000 were enacted the Assembly has passed the Government Procurement Act 2001. The proposal to incorporate these acts into a single piece of government procurement legislation will streamline processes by making it easier for suppliers to obtain information on government procurement policies, while giving the ACT Government Procurement Board responsibility for promoting the effective implementation and operation of all government procurement policies and related legislation.

The Government Procurement Amendment Bill incorporates the existing requirements of the Public Access to Government Contracts Act 2000 and addresses weaknesses identified previously by the Standing Committee on Finance and Administration and by the Auditor-General.

One of the main concerns with the Public Access to Government Contracts Act has been whether all confidentiality requirements being imposed on government agencies are being reported to the Auditor-General. The bill effectively addresses this concern by requiring that whenever a government contract contains confidential text a copy of the contract will be provided to the Auditor-General.

The bill will improve the current level of transparency and accountability by establishing a central register for government contracts valued at \$50,000 or more. This register will provide the public with a central access point to locate details of contract entered into by government agencies and will either make copies of the contracts available electronically or provide contact details of where a hardcopy may be obtained.

The bill addresses the issue that has been raised previously by the Auditor-General and more recently by Ms Dundas on the length of time the public text of contracts is to be available. The bill will require the text to be available for the life of the contract. This means that a contract that runs for a 10-year period will be accessible to the public for the full 10-year period.

Mr Speaker, this bill will strengthen agencies' accountability requirements and will continue to place the ACT at the leading edge both in Australia and internationally in providing transparency and accountability in government purchasing. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Smyth**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) Amendment Bill 2003

Mr Wood, pursuant to notice, presented the bill and its explanatory statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MR WOOD (Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, Minister for Urban Services, Minister for the Arts and Heritage and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (10.47): I move:

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That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) Amendment Bill 2003 provides the regulatory environment for public passenger hire car services in the ACT. The features of the bill are in accordance with the government's response to the Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission's review of the future direction of the taxi and hire car industry.

Although the hire car legislation is contained in the Road Transport (General) Act 1999, the Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) Act 2001 is the appropriate home for hire car legislation, and therefore the latter act is to be amended to include the new provisions. Together with the provisions for public passenger bus and taxi services already provided in the Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) Act 2001, the bill creates a streamlined yet comprehensive legislative framework for all public passenger services.

The bill will strengthen the public safety, service quality and consumer protection elements of hire car service provision. In response to the ICRC review, the government agreed to a number of policy changes in the regulation of taxi and hire car services.

The bill provides for regulation-making powers for the staged release of taxi and hire car perpetual licences by public auctions. The legislative provisions create a stable and controlled release based on a specified formula. The formula will ensure that additional licences are released in response to demand but at a rate that will not impact significantly on licence values in any year.

Provisions previously included in the Road Transport (General) Act 1999 and the Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) Act 2001 requiring the minister to determine the maximum numbers of taxi and hire car licences are to be removed.

The bill covers standard hire car services and restricted hire car services. Regulation-making powers provide for subcategories of restricted hire cars to include wedding and school formal services and tourist services. Restricted hire cars will no longer be able to undertake perpetual hire car work.

Small bus operators that were excluded from the definition of a bus under the Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) Act 2001 are now provided for under the restricted hire car services subcategory of tourist services. This bill will allow existing operators of boutique tours to continue to operate and others to enter this special market.

Regulatory problems experienced by the Road Transport Authority in effectively identifying and taking action against alleged and reported illegal operators will be addressed, as I indicated earlier, by providing for regulation-making powers for the definition of restricted hire car subcategories. This will create a clear separation between hire cars and restricted hire cars. The definition will ensure transparency of industry areas of operations and will greatly assist in alleviating the concerns of the industry about illegal operators.

The bill brings the ACT hire car legislation more into line with that for other public passenger services in the ACT and New South Wales and introduces an accreditation scheme for all hire car operators and restricted hire car operators. No operator can provide services without accreditation. To gain and keep accreditation, operators will be required to meet the agreed accreditation requirements.

Accredited operators may only use licensed hire cars and licensed restricted hire cars. Accreditation standards will ensure that the industry maintains high-quality services and safety standards. The introduction of accreditation is supported by the hire car industry. The legislation confirms operator responsibility and accountability for service standards. Operators are obliged to supervise and monitor drivers. New provisions outline the actions that may be taken in relation to an accredited operator or a licence holder should there be a breach of an accreditation or regulatory requirement.

The legislation provides for tests to be used in assessing accreditation applications. This will allow the Road Transport Authority to apply fit and proper tests to applicants for operator accreditation.

Under the provisions of the bill, it will be at the discretion of the Road Transport Authority to audit operators to determine compliance with the accreditation requirements and to maintain service quality and public safety.

Similar to the approach adopted in the Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) Act 2001, the bill provides that the powers, duties, conduct, training and attire of hire car drivers may be regulated. A modest fee regime will cover the cost of administration to establish and monitor the accreditation scheme. The fees will be reasonable.

The bill contains significant changes to the regulatory environment for hire car services and provides the framework for the provision of services that are responsive to community needs for safe, reliable and efficient public passenger hire car services.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate (on motion by **Mrs Dunne**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Tertiary Accreditation and Registration Bill 2003

Ms Gallagher, pursuant to notice, presented the bill and its explanatory statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MS GALLAGHER (Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, Minister for Women and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.55): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

This bill and the Vocational Education and Training Bill 2003 provide for revised and updated vocational education and training and higher education legislation. The bill will

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give effect to ministerial arrangements for national consistency in the regulation of vocational education and training and higher education.

All states and territories have worked together to establish a national training system that mutually recognises high-quality vocational training organisations and, more importantly, deregisters any poorly performing training organisation. Model clauses were collaboratively developed to bring legislation around the country into alignment. All other states and territories have agreed to implement the intent of the model clauses, which were the product of extensive national consultation.

I wrote to all members recently and included a copy of the model clauses and the Australian quality training framework standards for registered training organisations that underpin them. I also included the national protocols for higher education to highlight the extent of the national cooperation. The government's commitment to consultation has involved extensive participation in national forums about quality issues.

The ACT is the first jurisdiction to embed the model clauses in new legislation. This is a demonstration of our commitment to a high-quality vocational education and training system and sends a clear message of our support for the Australian quality training framework. Only the highest standards are appropriate for those delivering vocational training in the ACT.

The other important group covered by these bills is the non-university higher education sector. This is an area of increasing educational activity, one that was not adequately covered by the previous legislation. Again, there is a spirit of national cooperation, with nationally agreed protocols for the regulation of non-university providers of higher education. The national protocols for higher education are reflected in the Tertiary Accreditation and Registration Bill.

The ACT Accreditation and Registration Council will oversee both the vocational and higher education accreditation and registration. The council was established in 1995 under the ACT Vocational Education and Training Act 1995, and its functions have been expanded to reflect the changes in tertiary education and training since that time.

I will briefly outline the Tertiary Education and Registration Bill. The role and function of the Accreditation and Registration Council is a key feature of the legislation, together with the registration of vocational education and training providers and the accreditation of their courses. The bill provides for compliance audits of all registered training organisations and provides a process for them to gain national recognition once registered here in the ACT.

The bill also provides for the council to register non-university providers seeking to deliver higher education qualifications. Existing universities are covered by their own legislation and are excluded from the provisions of this bill.

For the first time the ACT will have more than administrative processes to cover the establishment and recognition of a university in the ACT. While we are not expecting a flood of applications, this section is needed to comply with the national protocols for higher education that I mentioned earlier. The bill covers an interstate university seeking

to set up in the ACT and a foreign university seeking to deliver university courses in the territory. We are now prepared with legislative cover for the process of recognising an applicant for university status in the ACT.

This is a long and detailed bill that reflects the spirit of national cooperation. I recognise the work of the Australian National Training Authority in leading the working groups that developed the model clauses that now form a central part of the VET provisions of this bill. I also recognise the Department of Education, Science and Training for its role in developing the national protocols for higher education. Most importantly, I recognise the work undertaken in all jurisdictions to support national consistency and improved quality assurance for education and training. I include my own department in this commendation.

I ask that members note that this bill moves the territory forward with an integrated approach to the registration of both vocational and non-university providers of education and training in the ACT.

Mr Speaker, I commend the bill to members for their consideration.

Debate (on motion by **Mrs Burke**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Vocational Education and Training Bill 2003

Ms Gallagher, pursuant to notice, presented the bill and its explanatory statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MS GALLAGHER (Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, Minister for Women and Minister for Industrial Relations) (11.00): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

This bill, together with the Tertiary Accreditation Registration Bill 2003, provides for revised and updated vocational education and training and higher education legislation. As previously mentioned, these bills will give effect to ministerial agreements for national consistency in the regulation of vocational education and training and higher education.

The Vocational Education and Training Bill 2003 replaces the 1995 legislation, which will be repealed, and reflects the removal of all accreditation and registration processes to the new Tertiary Accreditation and Registration Bill 2003. This bill contains model clauses which, as I mentioned earlier, were developed after extensive consultation and agreed to by all states and territories. The model clauses in this bill relate to contracts of training which cover the relationship between the employer and their apprentice or trainee. There is now a national training agreement that all employers and apprentices around Australia sign—a direct result of the work towards national consistency in vocational education and training.

It is also timely to refresh the old act so that it covers vocational training as it is now in 2003, not as it was in 1995. There is now flexibility to introduce training into new and

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emerging industries, whereas in the past contracts of training were confined to specific trades only.

I am especially pleased that a representative of indigenous interests has been added to the Vocational Education and Training Authority membership.

Mr Speaker, I commend this bill to members for their consideration.

Debate (on motion by **Mrs Burke**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Animal and Plant Diseases Amendment Bill 2003

Mr Stanhope, pursuant to notice, presented the bill and its explanatory statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MR STANHOPE (Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Community Affairs and Minister for the Environment) (11.03): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Mr Speaker, I bring to the Assembly today a bill to amend the Animal Diseases Act 1993 and the Plant Diseases Act 2002. These two acts set out the powers of the government to deal with the outbreak of animal and plant diseases. While their details differ, they have in common powers to declare quarantines within the territory and to impose restrictions on imports from other places in Australia should it become necessary to prevent the outbreak of disease or to control the spread of a disease.

The diseases in question include foot and mouth disease, which can have devastating economic and social consequences. It is important that the procedures and powers in the legislation are effective and appropriate to the task.

The main thrust of this bill is to address an issue with commencement of quarantine declarations (and other declarations that support them). This issue came to light during the national foot and mouth disease simulation run last year, called Operation Minotaur.

These acts provide that the quarantine declarations made by the minister are disallowable in this place. In the normal course of events, this will mean that there is at least 12 hours delay between a quarantine declaration being signed and its coming into effect, and more usually over 24 hours delay. With many diseases, such as foot and mouth disease and some viral plant diseases, every hour of delay means significantly greater risk of spread of the disease. It is therefore highly desirable to minimise the time between the recognition that a quarantine is required and when it comes into effect.

The proposal in the bill takes a leaf from the Emergency Management Act and the power to declare a state of emergency. When it is considered necessary to control a disease, a quarantine declaration can be made to commence immediately it is made. Notice of the declaration must then be broadcast on radio or television. As a matter of good administration, further steps would be taken to inform people most likely to be affected, such as the rural community and those who trade in affected goods.

Further amendments to the Plant Diseases Act in the bill deal with two further issues. The first relates to the power vested in the minister to give directions in relation to diseases or pests. The existing provision, section 13, gives power to order treatment or destruction of affected plants and other materials. It is being replaced with a much broader directions power modelled on that already in the Animal Diseases Act.

The most important feature is the power to restrict movement of goods, vehicles and people on and off an affected property. This can be used to control the spread of the disease or pest in between its detection and the making of a formal quarantine declaration. While this period may be only a matter of hours, in some circumstances it would be critical.

The results from Operation Minotaur have highlighted the problems that can arise from any delay in the quarantine declaration coming into effect. They pointed to the need for a broader directions power akin to that in the Animal Diseases Act.

The final matter dealt with by the bill is to make the offences in the Plant Diseases Act compliant with the Criminal Code. The code came into effect this year and will apply to the offences in the act. The bill makes it clear that a number of offences in the bill are strict liability offences. These are not lightly put forward. The reasons for making each of these offences strict liability is set out in the corresponding part of the explanatory statement.

Finally, the bill removes references to “reasonable excuse” in a number of the offences in the Plant Diseases Act. Part 2.3 of the Criminal Code 2002 provides for an extensive series of defences that will be available to defendants in prosecution under these offences, including mental impairment, intoxication, mistake of fact, intervening conduct or event, emergency and duress. These defences provide an adequate range of defences for the relevant offences, and there is no need to explicitly provide for reasonable excuse.

Mr Speaker, I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mrs Dunne**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee Membership

Motion (by **Mrs Dunne**) agreed to:

That Mrs Dunne be discharged from attending the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure on 6 May 2003 and Mr Stefaniak be appointed in her place.

Community Services and Social Equity—Standing Committee Report No 2—government response

Debate resumed from 21 November 2002, on motion by **Mr Wood**:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

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MR STEFANIAK (11.09): This matter has been hanging around for a while. I must admit I was a little bit concerned about the government response. Homelessness is a very serious issue. In the latest *Chronicle* we saw a very sad story about homelessness. Homelessness among men particularly is a distinct problem. The *Chronicle* referred to some figures that have been with us for almost 12 months. Up to 2,000 single men have been unable to find crisis accommodation. The St Vincent de Paul Society indicated to me and to the committee that they turn away up to six homeless men a night.

It is not common to see homeless men with children. Nevertheless, that is a very real problem. The committee looked at accommodation and the support services for homeless men and their children. The inquiry arose out of a motion I moved in December 2001 in relation to some problems with the contract that was awarded to group to run a shelter in Belconnen for a homeless men and children. That contract cut short the tenure of the group running the shelter at the time, Lone Fathers. There were a number of problems with the way the department looked at that service. There were significant concerns with the report by the so-called independent consultants. There were factual errors, from what I could gather, and there were some real concerns with the way the department accepted that report. There were all sorts of allegations of bias in the way the consultation was done. I thought that with the significant problems the minister should have put everything on hold and have the new minister investigate it. He did not—I think that is an absolute shame—and another group took over.

I said at the time that I was not going to bag the other group. They went in there with every good intention. They were the successful tenderers. Their philosophy was somewhat different from that of the previous runners of the service. The question here is the need and the government addressing the need.

We saw a clear need for not only one service on the north side but also a service on the south side. For months after that, as housing spokesman I kept getting figures from Barry Williams, the founder of the service for children and men in Australia. He was getting phone calls at all hours of the day and night about men with children in crisis. Quite clearly, there is still an unmet need. There is a real need for a similar service on the south side. I am disappointed that the committee report does not go far enough. I think it has a bit of window dressing. It could have made more useful recommendations to the government about this service.

When we think of homelessness, we think of homeless single men and we often think of women with children in crisis needing special accommodation. Compared with other places, Canberra is quite well served with accommodation for women with children. The crisis services do a very good job.

More and more we are seeing men with children being left out on the street. Under family law, once the mother always got custody of the child. I am advised that in about 40 per cent of cases now the father gets custody. That is just one of the changes in our society. Even though a lot of people might not think of men with children being out on the street, their need for crisis accommodation is real.

The service that Barry Williams set up was an Australian first. My colleague Mr Smyth, who replaced me as housing minister, provided the home, and my department set up the

service. It was a good service that looked after about 60 men and 100 children during its operation.

I went to the celebration of the first year's operation by the new service. I was very disappointed—indeed, quite angry and even disgusted—that Lone Fathers lost that service and that the government did not look at the matter properly. There would have been no problems with them doing that but they did not. Nevertheless, I was happy to see the new service operating well, providing a good service to its clients.

My one criticism would be that it is not a 24-hour-a-day service. People have difficulty accessing it after hours. It certainly has a different philosophy from that of the service run by the Lone Fathers. The former service was a 24-hour-a-day service. It had a live-in caretaker. That was a real plus. It was a different type of service to the current one. I think it would be very desirable in the current climate if we had two services, one on the south side, which because of the inequities of what happened to the Lone Fathers I would suggest they should run, and the one run—and it seems run well—by the current service in Belconnen. This would take up the unmet need. It would provide two different models. That would be useful for people accessing the service.

Because the report lacks specific recommendations on homeless men and children, I would urge the minister and the government to take action. Whilst it is good that service for men and children, the first of its type, continues, albeit in a slightly different form in the ACT, there is a real need for something similar on the south side. I would certainly commend that idea to the government. I still hear of men with children who for various reasons are unable to access the current service. There is a need for another service.

I have already paid tribute to Barry Williams for his vision in pressing the then government for a service. I was very proud to be able to offer the first service in Australia. I also pay tribute to Barry Williams for being named volunteer of the year for the work he has done for people who are disadvantaged. He has been tireless in his efforts on behalf of people such as lone fathers. He has assisted in the development of the law, especially family law. He brings enthusiasm and dedication to his efforts on behalf of his clients and his constituency. I congratulate him, as I hope the Assembly does, on winning this most prestigious award. He thoroughly deserves it. I know that he is going to keep up the good work he does on behalf of our community.

MR HARGREAVES (11.17): The committee was determined not to get into whether the contract was issued to Lone Fathers appropriately or not. That was the wish of the Assembly. It was made very clear. The committee deliberately stayed away from that issue. I was a bit saddened that it was raised again in the chamber, but I was pleased to see that the government's response also recognised the Assembly's wish.

When committees present reports and the government responds to them, it is important that we do something with the information. All too often we hear a lot of rhetoric in this place, and nothing much happens. The reports are left to collect dust. I sometimes wonder why that it is. One reason among a myriad of reasons could be that this is a house full of good intentions. Ministers are committed to change and committed to going forward. I know that our minister for housing is committed to equitable, affordable, appropriate housing for our various demographic groups. However, every now and again

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he runs foul of Treasury, and Treasury officials bind his hands, feet and eyes. I find that unfortunate. These people across the road counting their beans ought to open their hearts more, as well as their wallets.

Homeless men with their children are often the overlooked group among the homeless. When we talk about homeless people, we often think of dysfunctional families where one member has left. We often think of people sleeping rough. We often think of kids sleeping rough or sleeping on the floors of other people's homes. We forget that small number of men who, for one reason or another, have left the family home accompanied by children. We need to realise that they exist. They have a claim.

Mr Stefaniak indicated that we ought to look at a second refuge on the south side. I disagree that we need two models. I think we need one good model. But certainly we need another refuge on the south side of the lake because of the turn-away rate of the current service.

Our report talked about the needs of homeless men and accompanying children. The government has responded to that. Some people bring misfortune on themselves, and they have to take responsibility for their own actions. However, the kids have no say in the matter. They are victims. We have to do everything in our power to make sure that the actions of a couple of dysfunctional adults do not leave kids homeless on the streets.

The one thing that affected me deeply during this inquiry was the depth of despair homeless fathers felt over their impotence in providing secure accommodation for their kids. I welcome the government's response. I warmly welcome the minister's commitment to this issue. I ask members to open their hearts to these people.

MS TUCKER (11.21): We are way past the time when this matter was relevant. This matter came out of Mr Stefaniak's support for the group, Lone Fathers, that was running the service at the time. I was supportive of the government's handling of the matter. I understand that there is a good service running at present. However, I am not of the view that we are adequately accommodating the need for people in the community, men or women—in this instance we are talking about men and their children—who are seriously disadvantaged for various reasons.

Because I work quite closely with those supporting homeless people in Canberra, I would like to put on record a couple of issues for homeless people. Free food is an issue I have been working on for quite a number of years now. I am still concerned that government is reluctant to coordinate what is happening. I used to have this discussion with Mr Stefaniak and the previous Liberal government. I think the situation is the same now.

There seems to be a bit of a hands-off approach in providing basic necessities such as food for people who are homeless. In Canberra there is a tendency for governments to say that the charities deal with this and it is their responsibility. The charities do feed homeless people, to an extent. Government-funded agencies can also do it, and some of them assist. But I believe that government should coordinate and oversight what is going on.

Directions is not offering breakfast anymore. The Red Cross Roadhouse is not operating at the moment. I think Hare Krishna are filling the gap. We are lucky that they are. I do not know what is going to happen with the Red Cross. I had to advocate for a dishwasher at the Red Cross house. What was happening there was quite concerning. I asked Clubs ACT to assist. There were hygiene issues, as dishes were not being properly washed with very hot water.

A lot of homeless people in Canberra have been evicted from ACT Housing properties or from whatever housing of last resort they had or whatever institution they were in. This is something we need to be very clear on. We have had many discussions in this place about evicting people from government housing, which more and more is becoming housing of last resort, and about what it means for society as a whole if we put people on the street. What are the implications of that for the community, whether those evicted have children or they do not have children?

Because I work with those supporting homeless people, I am aware that many homeless people have a mental illness. There is almost an alternative society of people who have no connections with any services in Canberra. They have dropped out, because services have not been able to meet their needs. I am not suggesting that the needs are not complex or that delivering services to these people is not a serious, complex, challenging issue.

The fact that so many of these people have a mental illness is of huge concern to me. We have seen this right across Australia, particularly since institutionalisation became a factor. We have never had huge institutions in Canberra, but mentally ill people still end up being homeless. That is a tragedy and something we should be ashamed of. Various committees have recommended that we should have more mental health outreach workers and give more attention to how we can better support these people.

It is always an issue to get the federal government to take a more humanitarian approach in its budget decisions right across the board. I will support the government in all its attempts to persuade the federal funders to do a better job of SAAP funding and so on. Maybe the minister can enlighten me about exactly where we are up to with the strategy development he spoke of when he responded to this committee report. For example, there was to be a housing transition forum.

Mr Wood: I will give you an update.

MS TUCKER: Mr Wood will give us an update. I appreciate that.

MR WOOD (Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, Minister for Urban Services, Minister for the Arts and Heritage and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (11.28), in reply: This is a timely debate, given the front page of the *Chronicle* this week, as Mr Stefaniak mentioned. As we move into winter, we need to remember people such as Chris and others in our community, a community we think is pretty affluent, and examine our response to the situation.

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In the last few days I have received a report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare quoting census data. The last census showed that on census night in the ACT there were 1,198 people who were not in a home.

Mr Cornwell: How can you establish that if they were not in a home?

MR WOOD: That is the difficulty, isn't it? That is census information. Many of those people were in SAAP accommodation, in boarding house accommodation or with friends and relatives. That is the ABS data.

Bear in mind that homelessness means that you do not have your own home. In my job as housing minister, I often find that a woman leaves a domestic violence situation and with two or three kids, goes to her mother and says, "Mum, I need help," and she finishes up in Mum's two-bedroom unit. That is commonplace. A young homeless fellow may sleep on the floor of a mate's house and then go to another mate's house. That is homelessness. Someone may be sleeping in the car. I get stories of that often enough. That is homelessness. One bloke camped outside the front door here. That is homelessness. That person and the person in the *Chronicle* story, I am sure, would be accommodated if they applied to ACT Housing.

I would reckon that 99.9 per cent of homeless people do not want to be homeless. Mr Cornwell asked, "How do you count these people?" They can be hidden, and the figures might surprise us, but they are there. According to the needs analysis of homelessness in the ACT, as many as 5,350 people in the ACT may experience periods of homelessness each year. That would certainly be consistent with the ABS figures, which are for a period of a year.

Homelessness can mean sleeping rough—out in the open, under a bridge, on Mount Ainslie as some people do, out the front here or in a car. Homelessness can also mean sleeping on a friend's floor or being in those other circumstances I have mentioned. The needs analysis estimates the number of people sleeping rough each night in the ACT to be between 120 and 315. That is an alarming number. It is an estimate, because it is not easy to determine numbers accurately.

Our bean counters tell us it is important to quantify these important social issues. That is true, but in doing this we cannot forget each individual's experience. We must remember those such as Chris and others and ensure our services address their situations.

As I have reported previously to the Assembly, people who are homeless are among the most marginalised and disadvantaged in our community. We all have a responsibility to do as much as possible. In recent years, gaps in the provision of services have been identified in numerous reports, including the one we are debating now. While homeless fathers with accompanying children represent a small proportion of the homeless, their needs have certainly been highlighted through these reports.

What clearly emerged from these deliberations is the absolute requirement for a coordinated whole-of-government approach. In order to scope the extent of the problem and provide a basis for a long-term approach to the problem, the government

commissioned the Council of Social Service to undertake a needs analysis. I have mentioned some of that. That report was delivered to government in July last year.

In September we conducted a community consultation forum to test the veracity of the report's findings and identify priorities. The homelessness advisory group in the department has begun the task of developing a homelessness strategy. The strategy will allow us to build on the strong community and government partnerships that have been developed so far.

The simple provision of a roof over one's head is not a cure-all for homelessness. I think Mr Hargreaves mentioned that. The circumstances which lead to people becoming homeless are much more multifaceted than the loss of secure accommodation. Our response to this problem, therefore, must embrace, as well as address, the complexity of the issue.

Through the strategy, the ACT will have, for the first time, an integrated, planned response to homelessness. The strategy will ensure the effort to be put in over the next few years will have long-term sustainable community benefits.

In order to ensure we have a better understanding of the dynamics of the transition between supported accommodation and long-term sustainable housing options, later this year I will host a housing transition forum. The forum will bring together people and services from the supported accommodation and the long-term housing sectors to discuss how we build in better pathways between those sectors. The purpose will be to draw out the policy and program blockages in the current system and devise new ways to build the capacity of residents to sustain long-term housing. The forum will be based on the findings of the needs analysis, as well as the report of the affordable housing task force.

In this context, we will monitor the need for additional accommodation and support services for homeless men and their children, examine ways of providing more appropriately designed crisis accommodation facilities for homeless families, and continue to provide ongoing funding for intervention programs for boys to prevent the perpetuation of domestic violence.

It is clear that tackling the very complex issue of homelessness will require a determined effort. I am confident that through the enhanced partnership arrangements we will rise to the challenge.

Members will be aware that I recently announced the establishment of an emergency accommodation fund of up to \$60,000 per year, excluding rental bonds, to allow demand for emergency housing assistance to be met in a flexible needs-based manner. Anglicare manages this fund. A separate rental bonds program is being established to assist private tenants to access long-term housing.

The department has also developed a central referral and information service provided by Lifeline as the hub of an integrated system of accommodation systems. I think I have made the point here before that, instead of ringing around a large number of bodies, you can ring one number. The Canberra emergency accommodation fund will provide assistance in accessing emergency accommodation, which might mean entering motel

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accommodation, maintaining existing rental accommodation if possible, or entering into long-term rental accommodation where possible. The service will allow homeless fathers with children to call a single telephone number to receive information.

Construction of a night shelter at Ainslie Village is scheduled for completion this month. A tender process to determine service providers will be managed by the alcohol and other drugs unit in the Department of Health and Community Care and should be completed by the end of this month. The night shelter will provide 17-bed short-term (up to three nights) no-cost crisis accommodation to people who are homeless. That will be available to single people aged over 18 years. While not accommodating young people, this service exemplifies the government's commitment to a range of supports.

The government will continue work in this area. We acknowledge that there is much to be done. It must happen in a broader context of ensuring our response to homelessness in general is effective. It is not just a housing issue. Homelessness occurs in the context of a complex set of circumstances, including domestic violence, mental health issues, substance misuse, sexual abuse and problem gambling.

Homelessness affects men, women, children, and people from all cultural backgrounds. It disproportionately affects indigenous people. We must be aware of the particular circumstances of each group and ensure that our systems are responsive, logical and effective for the whole community. We base a lot on the homeless strategy, which is well into the process of being developed, and we look for a framework to deliver a coordinated response.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Discharge of order of the day

MRS DUNNE (11.39): I seek leave to move a motion to discharge order of the day No 2, Assembly business.

Leave granted.

MRS DUNNE: I move:

That order of the day No 2, Assembly business, relating to the Government response to the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment's report No 9 on the Planning and Land Bill and associated legislation, be discharged from the *Notice Paper*.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Suspension of standing and temporary orders—consideration of Assembly business

Motion (by **Mrs Dunne**) agreed to, with the concurrence of an absolute majority:

That so much of the standing and temporary orders be suspended as would prevent

notice No 1, Assembly Business, relating to the appointment of a Select Committee on Estimates 2003-2004 being called on forthwith.

Estimates 2003-2004—Select Committee Appointment

Motion (by **Mr Smyth**) agreed to:

That:

- (1) a Select Committee on Estimates 2003-2004 be appointed to examine the expenditure proposals contained in the Appropriation Bill 2003-2004 and any revenue estimates proposed by the Government in the 2003-2004 Budget;
- (2) the Committee be composed of:
 - (a) two Members to be nominated by the Government;
 - (b) two Members to be nominated by the Opposition; and
 - (c) one Member to be nominated by the Crossbenchto be notified in writing to the Speaker by 4.00 pm today;
- (3) the Committee report by 17 June 2003;
- (4) if the Assembly is not sitting when the Committee has completed its inquiry the Committee may send its report to the Speaker or, in the absence of the Speaker, to the Deputy Speaker who is authorised to give directions for its printing, publishing and circulation; and
- (5) the foregoing provisions of this resolution so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders.

Health and Community Care—Standing Committee (Fourth Assembly) Report No 11—government response

Debate resumed from 26 September 2002, on motion by **Mr Stanhope**:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

MR CORNWELL (11.41): I do not have very much to say. It took the government 12 months to reply to the recommendations of report No 11 about elder abuse in the ACT. The response came down in September 2002. The government has not yet, as far as I am aware, implemented the recommendations agreed to in the response brought down in September 2002. I have covered that matter by way of question No 497 on the Assembly notice paper. I look forward to the government's response.

MS DUNDAS (11.42): I will be brief. Elder abuse is an important issue in our community. I am glad that the Assembly investigated it and that we were able to get the new government of the Fifth Assembly to respond to the report of the Fourth Assembly into elder abuse.

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One of the main areas that the committee spoke of was problems around power of attorney. I do hope that the government will be moving, as they say that they are in their response, to look into power of attorney. It is an issue about which a number of people have approached my office with concerns and it was an issue that came up again in the Gallop inquiry.

I hope that the inquiry into complaints mechanisms in the ACT also will look at the way that different office holders in the ACT deal with power of attorney when it is presented to them. It is of concern that so many elder members of our community are having their rights abused by people that they once trusted enough to delegate power of attorney to them.

There are recommendations in the report relating to having a whole-of-government approach and the government did note that they are establishing frameworks to deal with these areas. How these frameworks are being implemented and are actually being taken up is a question that still remains unanswered. We are now almost halfway through the Stanhope government's term. I do recognise that there was a lot of work to be done when they took the reins of government, but a lot of this work is urgent and we are still waiting to see whether we are doing whatever it is that we need to do for our community.

The other recommendation that I would like to turn to is the one about the incidence of social isolation, which is of concern in parts of our community, not just those of older people in our community, but also single mothers, those with mental illness, those who are unfortunately living at the edges of our community. How to address the problem of social isolation and allow people to access support communities before they become crisis communities is something that we are still tackling.

With the Fifth Assembly calling on the government to respond to this report of the Fourth Assembly and the government again having before it a report that draws attention to the great social issues that are facing our community, I hope that we will have some action taken. The committees of this Assembly do a lot of work and put down a number of reports and it is always of concern if reports end up just sitting on a shelf. They are a great body of research that does call for action by government.

We are now at that time, as we await the budget, where we need to look at whether we are taking the steps that are needed to address social isolation, to assist people as they develop powers of attorney, and to look after the aged community in the ACT.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Planning and Environment—Standing Committee Report No 13

MRS DUNNE (11.46): I present the following report:

Planning and Environment—Standing Committee—Report No. 13—Draft variation No. 187 to the Territory Plan—Heritage Places Register—Red Hill Housing Precinct, dated 1 April 2003, together with a copy of the relevant extracts of the minutes of proceedings.

I seek leave to move a motion authorising the publication of the report.

Leave granted.

MRS DUNNE: I move:

That the report be authorised for publication.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

MRS DUNNE: I move:

That the report be noted.

On behalf of the members of the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment, I am pleased to table the report on variation to the Territory Plan No 187, concerning the Heritage Places Register and the Red Hill housing precinct.

Draft variation 187 followed a review by Planning and Land Management, PALM, during 2000 of the Territory Plan and is related to draft variation 114, concerning the Heritage Places Register and the Red Hill housing precinct, to provide for a development intensity of no more than one dwelling on any block in the Red Hill housing precinct. This review was undertaken as a result of a resolution of the Assembly of 28 June 2000, at the time draft variation 114 was being tabled. As you can see, Mr Speaker, draft variation 187 has a complicated provenance.

The review examined the new policy initiatives included in draft variation 114 and found that they may not be adequate to protect the intrinsic character of the precinct, which is related to the high ratio of landscape area to built form. It was considered that the existing 10-metre front setback requirement may allow development to substantially intrude on the streetscape, where existing setbacks are much greater, thereby detrimentally impacting on the overall landscape character of the area. To protect the existing landscape setting and ensure sufficient separation between buildings, minimum side and rear setbacks were also recommended. Draft variation 187 responds to the recommendations made in that review.

On 14 February 2001, the Legislative Assembly passed a further resolution in accordance with subsection 37(2) of the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991 recommending to the executive that the ACT Planning Authority be directed to implement policies which provide for a development intensity of not more than one dwelling on any block in the area known as the Red Hill housing precinct, as described in draft variation 114, relating to the Heritage Places Register and the Red Hill precinct.

As a consequence, draft variation 187 came into existence and was released for public comment by Planning and Land Management on 12 July 2001, with the closing date for comments being 27 August 2001. In the event, progress on draft variation 187 was slowed, due to the election in October 2001.

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My committee received the documentation after its having been referred by PALM to the ACT executive on 5 April 2002. The committee has recommended that this draft variation proceed in accordance with the new policies proposed to afford the Red Hill housing precinct a number of planning controls for the conservation of the heritage significance of the precinct. The precinct will be allowed a development intensity of not more than one dwelling per block, rear and side setbacks of five metres and a minimum setback of 10 metres for two-storey developments.

The conservation of the cultural and heritage values of Canberra depends, in part, on the effective conservation of this precinct. The committee is currently also considering draft variation 173, which caters for areas of Barton, Braddon, Forrest, Kingston/Griffith and Reid in the same respect. These suburbs remain culturally significant for the manner in which they demonstrate the garden suburb planning principles.

Their future planning is still in the hands of those who manage development application processes, however. The committee hopes that the ACT Heritage Council and PALM, together, will rigorously apply the development controls of draft variation 187 when approving proposed developments and that any approvals will be consistent with the specific requirements that are intended to conserve the heritage values of the place.

I commend the report to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Wood**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Health—Standing Committee

Printing, publishing and circulation of report

MS TUCKER (11.52): I seek leave to move a motion to enable the tabling of the report of the Standing Committee on Health on the health of school-age children in the ACT out of session.

Leave granted.

MS TUCKER: I move:

That, should the Standing Committee on Health complete its inquiry entitled *Looking at the Health of School-Age Children in the ACT* before 6 May 2003, the Committee may send its report to the Speaker or, in the absence of the Speaker, to the Deputy Speaker who is authorised to give directions for its printing, publishing and circulation.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Gaming Machine (Cap) Amendment Bill 2003

Debate resumed from 13 March 2003, on motion by **Mr Quinlan**:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Stefaniak**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Sitting suspended from 11.55 to 2.30 pm.

Ministerial arrangements

MR STANHOPE (Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Community Affairs and Minister for the Environment): I would indicate, for the information of members, that the Treasurer, Mr Quinlan, and the Minister for Health and Planning, Mr Corbell, are at ministerial council meetings today and, regrettably, are not available for question time. However, I am happy to take any questions members may wish to direct to their portfolios.

Questions without notice

Bushfires—Commonwealth assistance

MR CORNWELL: Mr Speaker, my question is to the Chief Minister, Mr Stanhope. Chief Minister, yesterday, in response to a question from me about a letter you were supposed to have sent to the Prime Minister, seeking assistance with bushfire recovery, you told the Assembly that yes, the letter had been sent. Inexplicably, as far as I am concerned—it is somewhat puzzling—you then refused to table the letter you said you had sent.

Neither the Prime Minister's office nor the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet had received this letter as at close of business yesterday. When did you sign this letter to the Prime Minister? When did you send it? I ask you again: will you table it, please, to prove that you have sent it?

MR STANHOPE: The answer I gave yesterday was, "Yes, I have sent it." It was sent from my desk. I will have to check exactly when that was. The letter has been signed and has left my desk. As far as I am concerned, that means it has been sent.

No, I will not table it, Mr Cornwell. This was a letter from me to the Prime Minister of Australia in relation to issues around potential financial assistance. It contains a number of issues, other than just issues around the promise made by the Prime Minister to consider further assistance to the ACT in light of the disaster which befell us. It sets out a number of areas in relation to which we believe further Commonwealth assistance would be warranted, and certainly would be well received. It indicates a number of areas where the ACT government believes that assistance would be best utilised and would best address issues which are of concern to us, as a result of the impact of the fires.

The letter sets out a number of issues. It goes into some other current issues of importance in relation to Commonwealth funding and financing of the ACT. These are not matters which I believe are appropriate to make available generally through the tabling of a document. It is personal correspondence from me to the Prime Minister. If, as you indicate, the Prime Minister has not yet received it, I think it is only appropriate that he at least be allowed to read it before it is made public in this place. I do not believe it is appropriate for communications between heads of government to be tabled before they are apparently received.

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Mr Smyth: When was it sent?

MR STANHOPE: The answer I gave yesterday, Mr Smyth, was truthful. The letter was signed and sent. I said I am more than happy to have a look at when that was.

MR CORNWELL: Mr Speaker, I ask a supplementary question. I can accept that other aspects were covered in the letter, but perhaps I can refresh your memory. I understand that the letter you said left your desk was dated 1 April, two days ago. Why did you take until 1 April to write this letter to the Prime Minister, which the chief executive of your department said on 26 February—which was part of my question yesterday—would be sent within the next week, that is, by 7 March 2003?

MR STANHOPE: Thank you, Mr Cornwell, for confirming that the letter was sent on 1 April, if indeed your information is correct. I must say I am bemused, Mr Cornwell. If neither the Prime Minister's Department nor the Prime Minister's office had any knowledge of the letter, how is it that you know it was dated 1 April? Did you mislead the Assembly, Mr Cornwell, in suggesting that neither the Prime Minister's Department nor the Prime Minister's office had received or had any knowledge of the letter?

How is it, Mr Cornwell, that you have knowledge of my correspondence? How is it, Mr Cornwell, that you have a knowledge or understanding of the date of my letters to the Prime Minister that neither the Prime Minister's office nor the Prime Minister's Department have? Did you have that information, Mr Cornwell? How do you have that information? We know about the email scandal. We know that you read for six months Mr Wood's personal mail. Whose mail are you reading now, Mr Cornwell?

This really is intriguing. Mr Cornwell has advice that neither the Prime Minister's Department nor the Prime Minister's office has any knowledge of a letter from me, no knowledge of a letter from me, yet Mr Cornwell can now stand up and say the letter that neither the Prime Minister's office nor the Prime Minister's Department have any knowledge of was dated 1 April. What a major concern.

Mr Smyth: It is not what he said.

Mr Cornwell: You asked me—

MR SPEAKER: Order! As far as I can make out the only member who is not interjecting amongst the opposition is Mrs Burke. Would you like to have a go as well to make it a full hand? This is ridiculous.

Mrs Burke: Just answer the question.

Mr Pratt: Prevarication.

MR SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order, please.

MR STANHOPE: Mr Speaker, the answer that I gave to Mr Cornwell's question yesterday was that, yes, the letter has been sent. Mr Cornwell has now just confirmed

that to be the case. The other part of the answer I gave was that, no, I would not table it, and that remains my answer.

But I think, Mr Speaker, it will be interesting to have a look at the *Hansard* to see on what basis it was that Mr Cornwell could stand up in here and say that neither the Prime Minister's office nor the Prime Minister's Department has any knowledge of a letter which I sent, and yet he can stand up again a second later and give the date that the letter was dispatched. So either Mr Cornwell has misled the Assembly with his question or the Prime Minister's office or the Prime Minister's Department has lied to Mr Cornwell, or Mr Cornwell has been reading my mail.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Chief Minister, I would ask you to withdraw the imputation that Mr Cornwell has misled the Assembly.

MR STANHOPE: I will withdraw that, Mr Speaker. But this issue does bear some further investigation. Having regard to the knowledge that we have of the use which the previous Leader of the Opposition's office was put to in the reading of minister's mail, having regard to the reputation of the Liberal Party in relation to the reading of other people's mail, I think this is a matter of grave concern. We know their history, we know their complete disregard for the privacy of others, we know they go around reading other people's mail—we know they do that. Mr Cornwell has now given another very concerning example of their propensity, apparently, to do the same.

Mr Cornwell: Mr Speaker, I must ask that that be withdrawn.

MR SPEAKER: What was that?

Mr Cornwell: The propensity of me—

MR STANHOPE: There was a Privileges Committee inquiry into your propensity to read other people's mail, Mr Cornwell.

Mr Cornwell: I beg your pardon!

MR SPEAKER: What is your point?

Mr Cornwell: I asked that the inference that I am involved in reading other people's mail—a propensity—be withdrawn. By inference, the Chief Minister directed his last comment about an inquiry into the reading of other people's mail at me, and I ask that to be withdrawn, too.

MR SPEAKER: I think the points that were being made by the Chief Minister were generally—

Mr Smyth: No, it was aimed at Mr Cornwell.

Mr Cornwell: Withdraw.

MR SPEAKER: I think you had better withdraw.

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MR STANHOPE: On the point of order, Mr Speaker: let me say that the propensity that I referred to was a propensity of the Liberal Party's. We had a Privileges Committee inquiry into the Liberal Party's propensity to read other people's mail. We can invite Mr Wood to speak to the point of order on the reading of his mail that was undertaken by the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party has a propensity to read other people's mail. We had to have a Privileges Committee inquiry into that propensity, with very damning findings. We do regret at the time that no members of the Assembly had the courage or the integrity of Mr Cornwell's staff, now abandoned by the Liberal Party.

Mr Speaker, I do withdraw. I withdraw the suggestion that it was made of Mr Cornwell personally, but it certainly was made of the entire Liberal Party.

Griffin Centre

MR HARGREAVES: My question is to the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services. Community organisations make a vital contribution to the life of our community, and the provision of appropriate support for these organisations is an important role for government. One of the most important kinds of support government can give to community organisations is to ensure that they have access to suitable accommodation, and in Canberra the Griffin Centre has been the most important of such community facilities. Can the minister give the Assembly a progress report on the redevelopment of the Griffin Centre?

MR WOOD: I would like to carry on that debate about the reading of my mail, but I doubt that you will let me. So I will respond to Mr Hargreaves.

Mrs Cross: You can always seek leave, Bill!

MR WOOD: I might seek leave another day, Mrs Cross. Yes, Mr Hargreaves, we all share your views on the importance of the high quality community facilities that are in our community, and the new Griffin Centre is very much part of that. It is being provided as part of the Queensland Investment Corporation's redevelopment of section 84. Let me acknowledge that this arrangement was signed as part of the deed of agreement between QIC and the previous government—I do not know which minister had his signature on it—in December 2000.

The proposed new building design will be a substantial improvement on the existing facilities in terms of functionality, accessibility and building quality. It will have more useable meeting and community rooms, new, modern furniture and such facilities as provision for computer and video outlets. The building will also be provided with electronic security to offer a safe environment.

In response to community consultation, \$1.7 million extra was provided in the 2001-02 budget to provide additional space and fit-out. The total useable area within the building will increase by 20 per cent, from 3,105 square metres to 3,727 square metres. It will be a four-storey building instead of the current two storeys.

The real point of your question, Mr Hargreaves, is that the design and construction program has now been agreed. Design commenced in late January 2003, with completion

scheduled for October 2003. Construction is planned to commence in November of this year, with completion in January 2005.

MR HARGREAVES: I have a supplementary question. Minister, can you advise the Assembly whether there has been any community consultation regarding the proposed redevelopment of the Griffin Centre?

MR WOOD: There has been pointed comment within the community from time to time. But from start to finish, there has been close communication. There is no question about that. These processes have been run by departmental officers, QIC and community organisations. During 2000, meetings were conducted involving the public and tenants to determine the key uses of the new building. These comments were written up as a comprehensive, functional brief.

Community input was also sought during the Territory Plan variation process, and submissions were considered by the Standing Committee on Planning and the Environment. The variation successfully passed through the Assembly in September last year.

The government is committed to further consultation over the next 12 months, as the detailed design of the new building is being undertaken. So that process continues and will include presentations of the design to facilitate the consultation. It is proposed to be a broad consultation and to include current tenants of the centre, other community groups and representatives of potential users of the facility.

I have had direct advice from representatives of all three key players—the tenants of the Griffin Centre, departmental officers and QIC—that they are all satisfied with the excellent progress they are making on this task.

Treasurer's Advance

MR SMYTH: I hope the Chief Minister listens closely. Mr Cornwell obviously said “close of business yesterday”. You must have missed that. Chief Minister, in question time yesterday the Treasurer, in responding to a question relating to the use of the \$10 million from the Treasurer's Advance for fire safety matters, made the following statement:

Let me assure you that when we sit in cabinet we have the benefit of the advice of not only the Under Treasurer and officials that handle the budget but also agency heads. Sometimes their collective advice is good enough.

He then clarified that statement in response to the supplementary question by stating:

... I recall that the main advice came from the Under Treasurer at the time, Mr Ronaldson.

Chief Minister, in a letter to the chief executive of the Department of Urban Services of 4 June 2002, the then Under Treasurer, the same Mr Ronaldson, wrote of this matter:

Addressing these matters [the fire safety issues] should be a matter of priority for

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the existing Housing budget. The additional funding [the \$10 million from the Treasurer's Advance] is for social housing.

Chief Minister, there is a contradiction between these two statements. Which is the correct one?

MR STANHOPE: I do not object to your basic premise that there is a contradiction. Mr Quinlan, in referring to Mr Ronaldson, was referring to advice received by cabinet. I remember the conversation. Some time ago either you, Mr Smyth, or one of your colleagues asked me a question about my first knowledge or understanding. I did not remember the dates specifically. I said they were something I would have to look to. That remains the case.

Certainly, I remember such a discussion as that alluded to by Mr Quinlan yesterday. It was with Mr Ronaldson at a budget cabinet meeting. So the comment Mr Quinlan made yesterday is entirely consistent with my recollection of the fire hazard presented by the state of repair of significant public housing units in the ACT.

I am not quite sure what you regard as inconsistent in the letter you refer to. Certainly, there were conversations. I was first made aware of fire safety issues through that briefing from Mr Ronaldson and officials. But I would have to go through all my files and through cabinet files to determine whether or not there might have been an advice previous to that. Certainly, fire safety, the danger many of our tenants were in, and the duty of care first came gravely to my mind in the briefing Mr Quinlan alluded to yesterday.

MR SMYTH: I ask a supplementary question. Chief Minister, is it not a contradiction for the Treasurer to say that cabinet received advice from the Under Treasurer to spend the money on fire safety and for the Under Treasurer to write a letter saying, "You already have the money in your budget; do not spend it"?

MR STANHOPE: I am not aware of any contradiction. You may think there is some contradiction between the letter and oral briefings the budget cabinet received. I remember quite distinctly receiving with significant alarm the advice, backed by legal advice, that the ACT government was potentially in breach of its duty of care to its tenants as a result, essential, of a failure by the Liberal government to ensure that our public—

Mr Smyth: The legal advice does not say that. That is not true.

MR STANHOPE: I am not talking about the legal advice. But we know that after seven years of Liberal equivocation, sitting on hands, refusal to act and disregard for safety advice was provided to cabinet that we were faced with a potentially serious consequence of the fire preparedness of major public housing units. It is down to you. It is down to your disregard for public housing tenants. It is down to your disregard for the proper maintenance of major public housing units in Canberra. It is a matter of shame which the Liberal Party must bear.

Sentencing legislation

MR STEFANIAK: My question is to the Attorney-General. Attorney, according to page 7 of today's *Canberra Times* you said that Canberra was not the same as Sydney and, just because the New South Wales premier, Bob Carr, introduced legislation, did not mean that it should be the same here. Can you please explain why a person convicted of armed robbery in Sydney, Wollongong, Queanbeyan or Cooma should be treated differently from a person convicted of a similar or identical armed robbery in Canberra?

MR SPEAKER: Order! The question anticipates debate on legislation that you have before the chamber.

MR STEFANIAK: I would not think so.

MR SPEAKER: I think that it does.

Mr Stanhope: I take a point of order, Mr Speaker. It does. The comments I made today were made in the context of a bill introduced by Mr Stefaniak yesterday. How Mr Stefaniak can stand here today and ask a question on a comment I made about his bill and for it not to go to his legislation is beyond me. The question is directly related to legislation introduced yesterday and is out of order.

MR STEFANIAK: On the point of order: If Mr Stanhope were to read page 7, he would see that that comment was attributed to him. He went on to discuss a part of the bill. I am not asking about that.

MR SPEAKER: Resume your seat, Mr Stefaniak. I rule that the question is anticipating debate.

Severe acute respiratory syndrome

MRS CROSS: My question was to be to the Minister for Health but, in his absence, I assume that I can ask it of the Chief Minister. Minister, no doubt you are aware of the disturbing media reports concerning severe acute respiratory syndrome, also known as SARS, and its rapid spread through Asia. Have you had any contact with, or do you know whether your colleague Mr Corbell has had any contact with, the federal Health Minister? What, if any, contingency plans have been initiated to ensure that there is a coordinated Commonwealth and territory response to this frightening pandemic? In your answer, Chief Minister, could you please indicate whether you are aware of any SARS cases in Australia and whether you consider that the ACT is sufficiently equipped to deal with any cases that arise here?

MR STANHOPE: I do not have detailed information around the steps that Mr Corbell, as minister, may have taken personally. I do have Mr Corbell's question time brief and there is a suggested answer from which I am happy to provide information in answer to the question.

Following the World Health Organisation's global alert concerning an atypical pneumonia known as severe acute respiratory syndrome, ACT Health has intensified its existing communicable disease surveillance system with all ACT hospitals and general

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practitioners to ensure the early identification of any case of the disease in the ACT. Contingency plans are being refined to ensure that the ACT is able to respond appropriately should there be a confirmed case of SARS in the territory.

The case definition for the disease defines a suspected case as any person with a respiratory illness of unknown origin with onset since 1 February 2003 and the following criteria: a temperature above 38 degrees; a respiratory illness—a cough, shortness of breath, difficulty of breathing; and travel within 10 days of onset of symptoms to an area with documented or suspected communicable transmission of SARS. Cases have been reported in a number of countries in Asia, Europe and North America. The countries most affected are Hong Kong, Singapore, China and Vietnam.

The Commonwealth chief medical officer announced on 1 April that Australia had officially notified the World Health Organisation of its first suspected case of SARS. The suspect case had been under investigation for some time in New South Wales and, while the man had fully recovered, he fitted the WHO criteria for SARS and no other cause for his illness had been identified.

The media has also reported an ACT case. A 26-year-old female was admitted to the Canberra Hospital on 30 March with atypical pneumonia. The patient has been classified as a patient under investigation, rather than a suspect or probable case of SARS. Nevertheless, contact tracing is proceeding to alert people who have had close contact with this person to the need to be on the lookout for symptoms.

Australian health authorities have investigated more than 30 suspected cases of SARS over the past three weeks, but none of the people have met the WHO criteria for the SARS case, including people from the ACT, except the New South Wales man. ACT Health participates in daily conferences with the communicable diseases network in Australia and is closely following WHO updates on a daily or twice-daily basis.

That is all the information I have, Mrs Cross, but if there is further information that you would like or other members would like, I am more than happy to provide any detail wished.

MRS CROSS: I have a supplementary question, Mr Speaker. The Chief Minister may have to take it on notice because it was meant for Mr Corbell, but I will put it to him anyway. Chief Minister, are you able to indicate whether the ACT health department was represented at the recent communicable disease control conference held in Canberra? Are you aware whether Mr Corbell was briefed on the influenza planning that has been undertaken in New South Wales and whether, as that state's nearest neighbour, the ACT will have any coordinating efforts with New South Wales?

MR STANHOPE: I do not know the answer to those questions, Mrs Cross, but I am more than happy to get those details for you.

ACT Housing—eviction of tenant

MRS BURKE: My question is to the minister for housing, Mr Wood. Mr Wood is aware of this. I alerted him earlier to this matter. Minister, I was advised yesterday of a case in which a mother of two children, one a young teenager with a disability, will be evicted

from their public housing rental home in Holt tomorrow, Friday 4 April. Mr Wood, the tenant I am referring to has indicated that the government has shown little or no compassion towards her case to date. Why are this woman and her family being evicted, what, if any, assistance has been offered to her, and under what circumstances?

MR WOOD: Yes, Mrs Burke advised me of this, but it is also the case that, when there are evictions that are more than usually unfortunate, as this one is, I am always well informed by my department, and I keep in touch with these things, as I have on this matter. The procedures we put in place are simply the ones we inherited when we came to government. I think they are very extensive. We have no wish to evict anyone. We do not set out to do that and, indeed, we do everything we can to avoid evictions. We know how distressing it is for people in that circumstance. I can tell you—and I am sure some of your ex-ministers over there can tell you, too—it is very distressing to people in ACT Housing when this happens.

We all know the very great impacts on people in those circumstances. I am not happy about it. Mrs Burke quoted extensively yesterday. I was happy to hear her reading of Labor Party policy, which stressed the importance of a secure home as the basis for much of what we do. That is our view, and yet circumstances arise when evictions will occur.

It doesn't happen suddenly, and I think we all realise that. When I became minister, one of the very first things I did was to circulate to every member a very large sheet of the actions that are taken before someone actually gets down the crunch point of an eviction. When I was in opposition I often used to raise it with ministers, so when someone came to me I felt the need to keep everybody apprised of the arrangements. I have a summary of that here today, covering two pages. I will table that.

It is a long process. It starts early, because ACT Housing has learned that you do have to get in early. You do your very best not to let a debt accumulate, because it becomes increasingly difficult to pay. There is a very long process, during which there are many contacts, and people are invited to talk further with specialist housing managers so they can try to sort things out. We know that, for the greater part, when someone has a housing debt, they are probably associated with other debts as well, and that it is not just housing.

We know the danger of falling further into debt. However, we do work from the basis that, in the end, tenants have to commit to paying rent. Bear in mind that most rents are concessional rents, so we do not think that paying them it is too much to ask. If there are very special circumstances, we will do our best to accommodate. We will extend, we will allow people to pay a little bit back to try to recover their debt—a miniscule amount I might say.

Mrs Burke: This woman has offered to do that, I understand, Minister. How has it gone this far? This is a desperate situation.

MR WOOD: Yes, I know, okay.

Mrs Burke: I am glad you know. What are you going to do about it?

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MR WOOD: I do not want to be drawn into going into the details that I have about the measures in this case. I will tell you what the Residential Tenancy Tribunal said, because that is in a public document. This comes at the very end of it and, before I cite that, I will indicate that, at the end stage of this process, although ACT Housing has instigated it and worked it through, it becomes a legal matter. It is legal. It goes before the tribunal, which is a court.

The capacity for ACT Housing to manipulate the system at that stage is practically nil. In fact, when we've tried to do that on occasions that some other members know about, we have made the tribunal very unhappy. At the end stage, people should realise that it is a legal process that can be quite firm.

In this case, to answer your question, the residential tribunal determined that the tenant is not likely to pay her rent in arrears. All sorts of measures would have been offered. That is the sad circumstance. I wish it wouldn't happen on any occasion, whether it is to some single young bloke who might be able to wander around a bit, or whether it is to a person with a family. These tenancies—

Mrs Burke: Why was it allowed to get this far?

Mr Cornwell: How early is early intervention, Minister?

MR WOOD: The computer system recognises a tenant's rent account as falling into arrears when it is a figure of more than \$20, and this would go back to late last year, I believe. That is the timeframe.

Mrs Burke: So you let a debt roll on and on, to the point where a person is going to be kicked out of her home tomorrow?

MR WOOD: No, wait a minute. I know you care about it, Mrs Burke, and I understand where you come from. However, there are two sides in this, Mrs Burke. The process is put in place, it rolls on, and at many points in that process the opportunities are there for tenants to get their act together, to maybe get assistance from somewhere, to get advice and the best help that can be managed.

It is a long, indeed tortuous, process before that end result when the tribunal says, "That is it." I am absolutely confident, I know, that ACT Housing puts effort into trying to prevent these cases. The contacts are made at all times. I do not know what the circumstances are—well, I do know some of the circumstances in this case—but ACT Housing is out there proactively trying to prevent this.

Mr Cornwell: Are you going to table your document, Minister?

MR WOOD: Yes, by all means. Most members would have a more complicated one than this, but I will table *Debt recovery processes and legal action utilised by ACT Housing*.

MRS BURKE: I thank the minister for that and I will look forward to looking at the tabled document. I am concerned, however, and perhaps you could answer this question:

why did your office hang up on the carer when she called seeking assistance for the woman and her family?

MR WOOD: I would doubt that happened. My office takes many calls and they're always respectfully received. In opposition, I can recall standing up to commend the various departmental officers who worked in the then minister's offices. They have universally done a brilliant job. They are patient, they are long suffering and, I might say, on occasions they are firm.

Mrs Burke: They are, but she tried to ask for help.

MR WOOD: I will have some more conversation with you about this. I might give you a different side of the story, Mrs Burke.

Autism assessments

MS DUNDAS: Mr Speaker, my question is to the minister for disability services, Mr Wood. Minister, can you please tell the Assembly how many children are currently awaiting assessment by a psychologist from the Child Health and Development Services for suspected autism spectrum disorder?

MR WOOD: The number is significant. I do not know so much about the number, but I certainly know the months children have to wait. It is too long a period of time.

Mrs Dunne: What are you doing about it?

MR WOOD: We inherited that, but I do not usually want to get into that. You can make all sorts of inane comments, if you like—you are good at that. You just do that. I will respond to the question through the Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Members of the opposition will maintain order. Ms Dundas has asked a question and the minister is attempting to answer it.

MR WOOD: It is a long waiting list. I was checking those details only yesterday. It goes beyond a year, in certain circumstances. For younger children, where it is even more important to make an early diagnosis, the waiting time is shorter. We have employed additional counsellors and psychologists who can do that sort of work. So we have picked up on it, but there is still difficulty in engaging people. There is still a large number of prospectively autistic children coming through and, regrettably, it is a long list.

MS DUNDAS: Mr Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Minister, I take it that you have taken providing the number on the list as a question on notice.

MR WOOD: Yes.

MS DUNDAS: Considering you have said that there are people who have been on waiting lists for more than a year, are you looking at changing the processes, or implementing a process so that, when parents put their children on a list to be assessed, they will know how long they will have to wait before an assessment takes place?

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MR WOOD: Yes. I will see what I can respond to. In fact, when I turn to the brief here, I can tell you that there are over 95 clients on the list. I told you about the additional psychologist who has been recruited. Basically, I have said all the things in there. I will get back to you with some more details on that.

As to assurances, it is difficult. We want to get more psychologists. It is an area where, for some reason, we are getting larger numbers coming through with suggestions that they may suffer from autism than previously. It is a struggle to keep up with the assessments which might enable the treatment for which so many parents are desperate. In many circumstances, the assessments say that no, there is not an autism problem. However, in many circumstances, that problem is identified.

Education funding

MR PRATT: My question is to the minister for education. Minister, why did you say in debate yesterday that you could not spend the \$7.4 million slush fund, because “it is not in the budget this year”, when Mr Corbell has previously told the Assembly that “that money is in the budget so that we fulfil in full our election commitment” and we know that the money is there, because we put it there?

Why have you contradicted Mr Corbell? Is the money there, or has it been swallowed up by your government’s financial incompetence? Who has misled the Assembly—you or Mr Corbell?

MR SPEAKER: Order! You can withdraw that.

MR PRATT: Mr Speaker, I withdraw “misled”. Can I rephrase the question. Minister, who is providing incorrect information to the Assembly—you or Mr Corbell?

MR SPEAKER: I draw your attention to standing order 117 (e):

Questions shall not refer to:

- (i) debates that have taken place during that calendar year; or
- (ii) proceedings in committee not reported to the Assembly;

Accordingly, I rule the question out of order.

Needle distribution program

MS TUCKER: My question was meant for the Minister for Health, so Mr Stanhope will take it, as I understand it. It is in regard to the needle distribution program. Since surveillance programs were introduced some time ago, conspicuous drug use in Civic has diminished, and intravenous drug users have resorted to purchasing and using substances in other locations.

Can you advise the Assembly if there has been any reduction in clean needle use associated with these developments, if the distribution of needles across Canberra has

changed in order to accommodate any changed patterns of use and if you aware of whether users are again resorting to sharing and reusing needles?

MR STANHOPE: I fear, Ms Tucker, that I do not have up-to-date information on needle availability or needle distribution specifically. I think it would be best if I took the question on notice. I regret that.

I am aware of concern within the sector at the continuing increase in the rate of hepatitis C infection in the ACT, particularly in some parts of the community. After the last discussion I had with representatives of Winnunga Nimmityjah, I believe there is a real concern within the indigenous community at the level of hepatitis C infection and the fact that it is continuing to trend up. But I regret that I am not up to date with the distribution of needles around Canberra, and it would be best if I received a detailed brief for you on those issues.

I know from recent discussions with the AIDS Action Council that there are continuing concerns about the availability of insurance. I am pleased that the department of health was able to assist the AIDS Action Council in overcoming that, although the premium has increased significantly. There was a grave fear some weeks ago about the capacity of the AIDS Action Council to continue with its distribution. That follows on from the inability of a previous provider to gain insurance.

So, I am aware of some pressures, but I do not have up-to-date information. I will obtain it for you.

MS TUCKER: Thank you. Could you also take on notice, since you cannot answer it right now, whether there has there been any tightening up of the availability of needles through community providers—I am also interested to know if the reason for that is insurance related—and whether there has there been a growing emphasis on cost recovery in supplying needles through pharmacies?

MR STANHOPE: Yes, I will take that on notice, Ms Tucker. I am sorry about that. As I say, I am aware, through discussions with Daniel Coase, about the issues the AIDS Action Council faced. They were certainly insurance based. The department of health managed to negotiate its way through that, but at some cost.

I am not aware, generally, of the tightening up, and I am not aware of increased cost recovery. I am a little bit out of the loop, but I will get the information.

Horse Park Drive

MRS DUNNE: My question is to the Minister for Urban Services, Mr Wood. Minister, in a press release issued on 31 May 2003 you stated:

It is planned that Horse Park Drive will eventually be a major dual carriageway road in Gungahlin.

Can you please explain what timeframe you envisage when you state that this road will eventually be a major dual carriageway, and can you confirm whether the \$10.4 million allocated to the project will initially make the road two lanes or one lane each way?

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MR WOOD: I do not think you have any credibility when it comes to timeframes.

Mrs Dunne: That is a reflection upon me. I have done nothing in this place not to meet timeframes. Mr Speaker, that is entirely out of order.

MR WOOD: I apologise profusely and go on.

Mrs Dunne: Withdraw.

MR WOOD: And I withdraw unequivocally. I was being a bit facetious. You began your question by referring to a media statement on 31 May 2003. I am having a bit of a joke.

Mrs Dunne: I am sorry. I missed the joke. Joyce was asleep.

MR WOOD: It is not 31 May yet. It would have been 31 March. That work is getting under way. It will be a two-lane road. I think the media statement indicated that it would be substantially completed by the end of this year.

Mrs Dunne: When will it eventually become a major road?

MR WOOD: I do not have that information immediately available. I will get back to you on that as we program that work into the future.

Mr Cornwell: Dual or single?

MR WOOD: Single.

MRS DUNNE: Mr Speaker, I ask a supplementary question. Given the uncertainty and delays around the construction of Gungahlin Drive, can the Minister assure the residents and business owners of Gungahlin that the completion of construction of the current phase will be in November of this year? When will Horse Park Drive eventually become a major road was my question.

Mr Stanhope: If you stop interfering, yes; if you stop deliberately delaying it.

MR SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Smyth: How have we delayed it?

MR SPEAKER: Mrs Dunne—

Ms Gallagher: Are you going to take this one to the NCA?

Mr Stanhope: She knows that, with her mates up on the hill. Deliberately delayed it.

Mr Smyth: How? You have made the statement. How have we delayed it? Are we talking about Horse Park Drive?

MR SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr Smyth: Wrong road.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Smyth, Order! Mrs Dunne.

MRS DUNNE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will ask again: given the uncertainty and delays surrounding the construction of Gungahlin Drive, can the Minister assure the residents and business owners of Gungahlin that the completion of the first stage of construction of Horse Park Drive will in fact happen in November of this year and that it will be sufficient to alleviate the extreme peak hour congestion not only around the Gungahlin town centre but on heavily used Flemington Road?

MR WOOD: What Mr Stanhope and I were saying is that if you keep your hands off it and do not interfere it might be done on time.

Mr Hargreaves: What is Wilson Tuckey going to say about it?

Mr Stanhope: Have you approached Wilson yet?

Mrs Dunne: You haven't done anything about the road. You are just blaming Wilson Tuckey because you have nobody else to blame. Your own incompetence.

MR SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr Cornwell: The only road you have got is the yellow brick road.

MR WOOD: I should stir things more often, Mr Speaker; I do not do so too often. I expect it to be completed. That is the plan and I would aim to see that happen. I am not going to go out there myself with a pick and shovel and see what I can do to help. That is the idea. The expectation is that it will considerably ease the traffic around the town centre.

Royal Commission into the Building and Construction Industry

MS MacDONALD: My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Minister, you and members will be aware that the Cole Royal Commission into the Building and Construction Industry recently handed down its 22-volume report. Can the minister say how the industry in the ACT fared in this report?

MS GALLAGHER: There is no doubt that the findings of the Cole Royal Commission into the Building and Construction Industry have been eagerly anticipated by many—not the least those on the opposite side of the chamber.

It is to be welcomed in this territory that the report delivered our construction industry a clean bill of health and recognised that there is no illegal conduct in the ACT industry. This is good news. However, we have to ask some questions about the report and how it relates to the ACT.

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The federal government called the Cole royal commission six months before a federal election. It devoted \$60 million to its execution and devised a very limited scope for its hearings and findings. I think people can legitimately question federal government's intent, from many stakeholder and community viewpoints.

Some of the most disappointing aspects of the report for the ACT industry are those issues which the commission did not address—important issues like workplace safety, unpaid entitlements and the use of illegal labour. These issues received scant attention generally in the report. But they will not be ignored by the ACT government.

The ACT construction industry has one of the lowest rates of industrial action anywhere in Australia. No illegal activity was found by the commissioner in the ACT. The commissioner did, however, find that the industry is a robust industry. I do not think that is news to anyone here. The construction industry generates \$486 million in economic activity in an environment of industrial harmony that is generated by stakeholders who have pride in their work and value cooperation.

I am pleased to hear that the ACT did well in this report. It says something about the cooperative spirit of industrial relations that this government has fostered since being elected. Employers and unions both know that this is a fair, open and engaging administration on industrial relations.

We will await Mr Abbott's response to the broader issues in the report and respond to them appropriately. As is expected of the government, we will act to ensure that our cooperative approach to industrial relations is maintained and that unwarranted federal intervention is avoided.

The ACT government will, of course, act on any violation of the law. The ACT government will continue to monitor those areas which were outside the commission's brief and act where appropriate to ensure that OH&S, illegal operations and unpaid entitlements are addressed.

MR STANHOPE: I ask that all further questions be placed on notice.

Theft—role of illicit drug taking

MR WOOD: Yesterday, Mrs Cross asked me a question about research into the relationship between illicit drug taking and crime. I have a fairly detailed response, which I will table. I present the following paper:

Role of illicit drug taking—Answer to question without notice asked of Mr Wood (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) by Mrs Cross and taken on notice on 2 April 2003.

Severe acute respiratory syndrome

MR STANHOPE: Mr Speaker, I took on notice a supplementary question from Mrs Cross. I now have the answer, which I am happy to provide. Mrs Cross asked whether the Canberra hospitals have contingency plans in place to deal with a case of

SARS should it occur. I am advised that the Canberra hospitals have the capacity to isolate a total of 12 patients in negative pressure rooms which provide isolation from airconditioning systems. In addition, Calvary Hospital has a negative pressure room in the A and E department.

All patients presenting to hospital are asked about overseas travel and isolated if SARS is a possibility. Patients under investigation are barrier nursed, with goggles, gloves, gowns and masks being worn by all staff and visitors who have contact with them. All precautions remain in place until the possibility of a SARS diagnosis is excluded.

Mrs Cross also asked whether ACT representatives attended the communicable diseases conference in Canberra this week. The answer is that Charles Guest, the deputy chief health officer, attended, as did Rona Hiam, the ACT public health registrar, and a number of staff from the communicable disease control unit in health protection services.

She also asked whether the ACT is to be involved in the New South Wales influenza plan. The answer, I am advised, is that the ACT is working closely with New South Wales on influenza planning. In particular, representatives from ACT Health have been involved in the national influenza pandemic planning committee developing a plan to deal with any influenza pandemic should it occur.

Answers to questions on notice

Question No 402

MR CORNWELL: Under standing order 118A, I ask for a response from the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services to question No 402 minister, seeking information on child deaths reported to Family Services and other matters relating to that. The 30 days are up and the question has not been answered.

MR WOOD: You won't get an answer from me, either, but I go on to say that you will get one from the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services.

Mr Cornwell: It was addressed to you, Minister.

MR WOOD: It would have been passed on in a routine way.

Question No 379

MRS BURKE: Under standing order 118A, I point out that I have not received an answer to question No 379, directed to the minister for health. Perhaps somebody could alert him to that; it was due by 21 March.

MR STANHOPE I will draw that to the minister's attention, Mr Speaker.

Question No 395

MR SMYTH: Mr Speaker, also under standing order 118A: on Tuesday I asked Mr Stanhope whether an answer was forthcoming to question No 395 and he said that apparently it had been signed off. I am still to receive that answer.

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MR STANHOPE: I will pursue that, Mr Speaker. I am afraid I have not been advised about that. I will pursue it with gusto and I regret the delay.

Bushfires

MR SMYTH: Also under standing order 118A: on Tuesday I asked the Chief Minister whether an answer was forthcoming to a question he had taken on notice in, I believe, February as to a chronology of events on the bushfires. He said that he would get back to us. Again, I am yet to receive the answer to that.

MR STANHOPE Mr Speaker, at the time I said that I would arrange for my office to view the *Hansard* to see whether I had taken those questions on notice. We have not yet done that, but we will.

Bushfires

MR SMYTH: Mr Speaker, under standing order 118A: perhaps the Chief Minister will look at the question regarding the time at which the AFP requested the Emergency Services Bureau to put in place a declaration of emergency, because I am yet to receive an answer on that as well.

MR STANHOPE: Yes, I also undertook to search *Hansard* to see if I did take that question on notice. We will do that in due course.

Standing order 117—ruling by Speaker

MR SMYTH (Leader of the Opposition): Mr Speaker, I have a question to you on a ruling you gave during question time. You ruled Mr Pratt's question out of order, citing standing order 117 (e) (i), which says that questions shall not refer to debates that have taken place during that calendar year.

Mr Speaker, I refer you to page 528 of *House of Representatives Practice*. Under the heading "References to debates and committee proceedings", it says:

References in questions to debates in the current session, concluded or adjourned, are out of order.

I think we would all agree with that. *House of Representatives Practice* goes on to say:

The rule does not preclude questions on the subject matter of such debates, which may be so broad as to cover, for example, the country's whole foreign policy ...

Mr Speaker, I have checked the nature of Mr Pratt's motion of Wednesday and the motion was basically in four areas in that it talks about the value of an inquiry, the cost of an inquiry, whether the inquiry had worked out what the government would do with a certain amount of money, and whether the inquiry has exacerbated concerns.

Mr Pratt, in his question today, actually asked whether that money is still in the budget, which is an entirely different subject. I would therefore contend, Mr Speaker, that the

ruling you made was incorrect and was so broad that in the context of time it will rule out 95 per cent of the discussion in this place. I would ask you to reconsider your judgment and allow Mr Pratt to ask his question now because clearly, under *House of Representatives Practice*, Mr Pratt's question was within the bounds of the rules of question time. It was not a reflection on debate held in the previous year and it was about a subject that was not garnered or covered in the debate yesterday. I seek your ruling, sir.

MR SPEAKER: I have already ruled on the matter, Mr Smyth, but let me go to some of the issues. I wish you had referred to the words that Mr Pratt actually used. In fact, he referred to the debate yesterday. That was what alerted me to the issue of compliance with the standing orders. I do not have a lot of room to move in most of these standing orders, except by reference to precedents in other places. The reference you gave me was to page 528. I will read a relevant sentence or two. It states:

The rule does not preclude questions on the subject matter—

I understand that the subject matter of the debate yesterday was the inquiry into education—

of such debates, which may be so broad as to cover, for example, the country's whole foreign policy—

referring, of course, to the federal parliament—

but rather precludes reference to the debate itself and to specific statements made in it.

I took it that Mr Pratt had made specific reference to a statement about amounts of money mentioned in the course of the debate. On the basis of standing order 117 (e) (i), I do not think that I had much room to move.

MR SMYTH: Mr Speaker, I would contend that that is an inappropriate understanding of standing order 117 (e) (i), simply because it says that you shall not refer to the debate. The debate yesterday was about a motion that actually referred to the Connors inquiry. The substance of yesterday's debate was, in fact, what we, as taxpayers in the ACT, got out of the government's expenditure of \$250,000 on the Connors inquiry. That was the substance of that debate.

For the sake of accuracy in asking a question, Mr Pratt has simply said, "Yesterday, you said X, Y and Z in debate. Previously in debates, Mr Corbell has said A, B and C. Which one is correct?" I think it is fairly reasonable in this place to at least reference where you are drawing sources from. I do not believe Mr Pratt was imputing inference or reflecting on the vote of yesterday's debate in any way, shape or form. Indeed, the substance of his question and the matter to the heart of which he was going was an inconsistency that we perceived in a point taken by the government.

In seeking to ascertain whether the government was right, whether the government was absolutely wrong, or whether one of the ministers was right or wrong, you actually have to give the ministers the understanding of where it has been said, what has been said and the context in which it has been said. If that is denied to us as members and if for the rest of this calendar year I cannot refer to something that has happened in the previous year,

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I cannot do my job. I would contend, and I would hope you will see my point, that what Mr Pratt was doing—and I am happy to read Mr Pratt’s question—when he said, “Why did you say in yesterday’s debate” was actually lifting from the debate a reference that was very broad about education; he was not actually referring to yesterday’s debate.

MR SPEAKER: I heard him refer to yesterday’s debate; it was pretty plain to me. We have had this trouble before with questions which have been ruled out of order. If there is any doubt, you or those who draft these questions can easily take it up with the Clerk beforehand. I think you need to be particularly careful about the way you draft questions in the context of some of them. Mr Smyth, I am hearing what you say Mr Pratt said and what you say was intended by the question. I am going to stick with my ruling at this point. I am happy to review the *Hansard* on the issue and examine the matter more, but I am not prepared to change my ruling at this point.

MR SMYTH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. If you are willing to look at it and review it, you will save me the trouble of moving dissent from your decision, which I would prefer not to do.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Smyth, I am in the hands of the Assembly at any rate and it is open to the Assembly at any time to interpret the standing orders however it wishes, because they are, after all, the standing orders of the Assembly, not of mine. That is the way I have ruled at this point. I will review the ruling, but I offer you no guarantees. I would not want to dissuade you from moving a dissent motion if that was your wish.

MR SMYTH: Mr Speaker, I will have no hesitation in moving a dissent motion if, when you come back with your ruling, you stand by what you say.

MR SPEAKER: You should not threaten the Chair, Mr Smyth.

MR SMYTH: I am certainly not threatening the Chair, Mr Speaker. I am telling you a statement of fact. I think what you have done is set a precedent that, as a parliament, we would find very difficult to live with, as would other parliaments, simply because we would not be able to debate anything that was said in the first part of a calendar year.

Mr Stanhope: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: I understand. I think the matter is finished with for today.

Mr Stanhope: I just wanted to make the point that either Mr Smyth move dissent or we move on.

Questions without notice

ACT Housing—eviction of tenant

MR WOOD: Mr Speaker, I seek your guidance. I want to raise a matter that came up in question time in the question asked by Mrs Burke. Do I have your indulgence, sir?

MR SPEAKER: I assume that you want to raise a point of order.

MR WOOD: No.

MR SPEAKER: Do you want to add to an answer?

MR WOOD: No, I seek leave to make a further response to a question in question time when a staff member of mine was unjustly maligned. I am sure the Assembly would like me to correct that.

Leave granted.

MR WOOD: The Disability, Housing and Community Services DLO in my office whom Mrs Burke claimed hung up on—

Mrs Burke: I never said that, Minister.

MR WOOD: I'm afraid you did.

Mrs Burke: I take a point of order, Mr Speaker, I did not say that.

Members interjecting—

MR SPEAKER: Order! Mr Wood has the floor.

MR WOOD: I will carry on with my statement, Mr Speaker

Mrs Burke: I did not say anybody specifically.

MR WOOD: Not anybody specifically, but someone.

Mr Smyth: She said, "Why did your office hang up?" She didn't even mention a staff member. If you want to identify somebody, go for your life, but she did not.

MR WOOD: Thank you. Let me go on with this, then. My DLO in Housing is well known and much respected.

Mrs Burke: Mr Speaker, this is not what I said.

MR SPEAKER: Mrs Burke, let me explain the process here.

Mrs Burke: But he's mentioning the DLO.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Wood, sit down for a moment.

Mrs Burke: I did not mention the DLO.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Mrs Burke, if you are upset or you feel that you have been misrepresented by Mr Wood, you have available to you the same options as anybody else in this Assembly. You can seek leave from me to make a statement in relation to the matter pursuant to standing order 46. I can only deal with one person at a time here, but the Assembly has given leave to Mr Wood to make a statement and I think we should just let it happen.

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MR WOOD: I will make this statement, Mr Speaker: my DLO in Housing, as all former DLOs, is much respected. This officer had a long and amicable conversation with the tenant in question earlier this week, in which valuable information and advice were given. The officer asked the tenant to ring back if she was unable to access the support service that we believed she needed.

To the best of my knowledge, no-one in my office has spoken to a carer, any carer. My office's only knowledge of a carer is in the information Mrs Burke passed on to my office today. No-one in my office has hung up on anyone associated with the case. In fact, the officer concerned has been trying to contact the tenant in order to ensure that she had access to the appropriate legal support services.

Mrs Burke can attack me, but I do not think that it is appropriate—I am sure all members will concur—or acceptable to attack a public servant, particularly a public servant who does such a wonderful job.

MRS BURKE: Under standing order 46, I seek leave to make a statement on a point of clarification.

Leave granted.

MRS BURKE: I actually did say, for the information of the Chief Minister, who seems to be well up on it, "Why did your office hang up?"

Mr Stanhope: Just apologise.

MRS BURKE: This is none of your business; it is the minister's. We will talk, not you.

Paper

Mr Stanhope presented the following paper:

People, Place, Prosperity: a policy for sustainability in the ACT.

Report of the review of Public Sector Management Act 1994 Paper and statement by minister

MR STANHOPE (Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Community Affairs and Minister for the Environment): Mr Speaker, for the information of members, I present the following paper:

Public Sector Management Act—Report of the review of the Public Sector Management Act 1994, dated February 2003—Prepared by the Commissioner for Public Administration.

I ask for leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

MR STANHOPE: Mr Speaker, the report I have tabled, prepared by the Commissioner for Public Administration, Mr Richard Moss, finalises the commissioner's review of the Public Sector Management Act 1994. The report was presented to me by the commissioner following the preparation of a series of discussion papers released from December 2001. I tabled these papers in the Assembly in April 2002.

The report sets out 31 recommendations for changes to the act, reflecting the core themes identified by the commissioner. The government will now consider the contents of the report and develop a position on the recommendations made by the commissioner.

Endorsement of Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Amendment Regulations 2003

Paper and statement by minister

MR STANHOPE (Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Community Affairs and Minister for the Environment): Mr Speaker, for the information of members, I present the following paper:

Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act, pursuant to section 6A—Endorsement of Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Amendment Regulations 2003.

I ask for leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

MR STANHOPE: Mr Speaker, as the designated person under section 6 (a) of the ACT's Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997, I have endorsed the proposed regulations of the Commonwealth regarding the special exemptions that apply to the Commonwealth's Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement 1997.

The Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement is an arrangement between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments of Australia and the government of New Zealand. The agreement allows goods to be traded freely and enhances the freedom of individuals to work in both countries by addressing regulatory impediments to trade, such as different standards for goods and duplicative testing, certification or qualification requirements.

When the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement was signed in 1997, there were six industry areas where further examination of both Australian and New Zealand regulatory requirements was necessary to determine whether mutual recognition was appropriate. As a result, special exemption status was given to the following sectors: automotive; consumer product; electromagnetic compatibility and radio communications; gas; hazardous substances; and therapeutic goods.

During the special exemption period, the relevant regulatory bodies in Australia and New Zealand have embarked on a cooperation program in each of these sectors. The reports produced of each cooperation program seek to introduce mutual recognition, harmonise the regulations of Australia and New Zealand, permanently exempt the regulations or roll over the special exemption status.

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The 2002 cooperation reports for automotive, gas appliances, hazardous and therapeutic goods, and radio communications have recommended that special exemption status for these sectors be rolled over for another 12 months. All cooperation reports recommend a rollover of their special exemption status, except for the consumer products cooperation report.

Two consumer products have been harmonised within the last year, leaving only one remaining to be rolled over for a further 12 months. As a result, the consumer report recommends a 12-month extension of the special exemption for the regulation of child restraints for motor vehicles to allow for further consideration and formulation of recommendations. A final recommendation should be formulated by the relevant authorities within the next two years. The Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement Amendment Regulations 2003 reflect this change. The relevant ministerial councils have agreed to the recommendations of the cooperation reports and the Prime Minister has supported their decision.

The Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement and the Australian Mutual Recognition Agreement are being jointly reviewed in 2003. As the first phase of the review, the Productivity Commission has been asked to undertake a commissioned research study and is expected to report to COAG and New Zealand in early October 2003. To ensure the integrity of this phase of the review and of consideration of the Productivity Commission's report to COAG and New Zealand, the Prime Minister has supported the rollover of the current special exemptions until April 2004.

States and territories endorse the changes to the Trans-Tasman agreement special exemptions by gazetting the regulations in the respective gazettes or, in the ACT, by notifying the instrument on the ACT legislation register. On behalf of the ACT, I endorsed the notifiable instrument on 25 March 2003.

Paper

Ms Gallagher presented the following paper:

Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act, pursuant to section 8 (5) (a)—
Canberra Institute of Technology Annual Report 2002, dated 11 March 2003.

Justice, options and prevention—working to make the lives of ACT women safe Paper and statement by minister

MS GALLAGHER (Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, Minister for Women and Minister for Industrial Relations): Mr Speaker, for the information of members I present the following paper:

Justice, options and prevention—working to make the lives of ACT women safe,
dated March 2003.

I ask for leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

MS GALLAGHER: I am pleased to table today a document entitled *Justice, options and prevention—working to make the lives of ACT women safe*. The ACT government recognises the right of every individual to participate and contribute in all aspects of life in the ACT. Violence and community safety can affect the accessibility of, and the extent of participation in, all aspects of society.

Violence in the community refers to a broad range of behaviours in which an individual or group uses power to oppress others in some way. This can include physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse and economic abuse. Violence occurs in people's homes and in public places.

Evidence provided to the Select Committee on the Status of Women in the ACT from the Australian Federal Police noted that in 2001 in the ACT women and girls accounted for 43 per cent of the victims of assault and 86 per cent of the victims of sexual assault.

In 63 per cent of the 109 sexual assaults against women in the ACT in 2001 the victim knew the offender and in 21.8 per cent of these reported cases the offender was a member of the family. Approximately 42 per cent of those reported rapes were perpetrated on girls under the age of 14.

The ABS conducted a national women's safety survey in 1996. The result showed many women in the ACT to be uneasy about harassment and safety in various situations, particularly after dark using public transport, walking in their local neighbourhoods and in their own homes. These concerns for their safety were higher than the national average of women in Australia. Recent consultations during the development of this framework confirmed this as still being a current issue for ACT women.

Mr Speaker, the ACT government and community agencies have developed a range of strategies and programs designed to address the issues of violence and safety in the community. These include: a discussion paper, *Facing up to racism*, which will lead to a strategy to address issues of racism and unfair discrimination; the establishment of an information and referral service and an emergency accommodation fund, in partnership with Lifeline and Anglicare, to assist people in need of emergency housing to access available services; and new education programs that aim to help all family members after violence has been perpetrated. This policy framework will form the basis of a more collaborative, coordinated and holistic approach to addressing violence and safety issues for women in our community.

The reduction and prevention of violence towards women require a united government and community action. That is why the government consulted extensively with stakeholders from government and non-government agencies, as well as members of the community.

To ensure that the ACT is a community where women of all ages feel safe and valued, issues of violence and safety have to be addressed. This framework recognises that. The document encompasses not only a statement of the government's commitment to addressing issues of violence and safety for women, but also includes a series of specific

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actions that have been undertaken by ACT government agencies. The framework outlines our vision for every woman in the ACT to be free from violence and free from the fear of violence.

There are three core outcome areas on which the framework focuses. Firstly, protection and justice: women have a right to access a justice system that provides protection, support and advocacy. Secondly, options for women: recognising that assistance provided to women needs to be appropriate, accessible and responsive. Thirdly, prevention of violence: understanding, acceptance and acknowledgment of the right of all women to live their lives free from violence.

Mr Speaker, the government is committed to implementing the framework and maintaining dialogue with the community. This will be achieved through the ongoing monitoring and assessment of the success of the framework. I am committed to raising the status of women in the ACT and achieving our vision of every woman in the ACT being free from violence and the fear of violence. For this to occur successfully requires the involvement of the whole community.

As I said earlier, Mr Speaker, I believe that we are off to a good start with this framework. As the United Nations recently identified:

... the world is achieving greater awareness and understanding of gender-based violence and more effective measures are being developed to confront it, but much more remains to be done to create and sustain an environment where women can go about their lives free from this scourge.

Mr Speaker, I commend the document to the Assembly.

Estimates 2003-2004—Select Committee Membership

MR SPEAKER: I have been notified in writing of the nomination of Mrs Cross, Mr Hargreaves, Ms MacDonald, Mr Smyth and Mrs Dunne to be members of the Select Committee on Estimates 2003-2004.

Motion (by **Mr Wood**) agreed to:

That the members so nominated be appointed as members of the Select Committee on Estimates 2003-2004.

Leave of absence

Motion (by **Mr Wood**) agreed to:

That leave of absence be granted for today, 3 April 2003, be given to Mr Corbell (Minister for Health and Minister for Planning).

Legislation (Statutory Interpretation) Amendment Bill 2003

Debate resumed from 13 March 2003, on motion by **Mr Stanhope**:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

MR STEFANIAK (3.51): Mr Speaker, one of the problems with any legislation to do with a number of acts is that there is usually something in it that is a bit problematic. The genesis of this bill was a piece of legislation about 12 months ago with which there were some problems, particularly in relation to statutory interpretation. A part of the previous legislation certainly concerned me. I was pleased to see that it concerned the scrutiny of bills committee and the Bar Association as well.

As a result, the government, to its credit, did not proceed at that time and withdrew the offending provisions, indicating that it would have ongoing discussions with the relevant agencies to come up with something which was considerably better. The government has, in fact, done so. I am pleased to see from the latest scrutiny report that the scrutiny of bills committee does not have any problems now with this piece of legislation as the issues it raised some 12 months ago have been taken into account. I take the attorney's advice that the Bar Association is quite satisfied. It has not contacted me, but we did have contact on several occasions last time. That would appear to me to be logical. I thank Mr Gosling and the other officers for their briefing on this matter.

Luckily, the legislation that passes through a parliament is not all that difficult to understand in many instances, but we do need to be careful to ensure that we pass legislation that gives any sections and subsections within an act a normal meaning for the words in English so that anyone can understand them. There have been some reasonable advances in the way explanatory memoranda, which are an essential tool in terms of statutory interpretation, are being prepared to assist further.

I must say as a former lawyer—I suppose I am still a lawyer—that I do like the giving of examples in various acts, which assists as well. Generally, we do not have too much trouble with interpreting statutes. From my experience in the courts, there were not all that many occasions when there were detailed arguments as to exactly what an act meant.

That means that generally drafters are getting it right and legislatures are getting it right, but sometimes things can go wrong. Sometimes statutes are a little bit difficult to understand. Indeed, sometimes they result in court action themselves. Some statutes are more complicated than others. The taxation act is an horrendous example. I am aware of a number of other acts on which people argue as to exactly what something means. So it is important to ensure that what a court can actually look at is set out.

What is set out in this new bill before the Assembly is described effectively on pages 6, 7 and 8 of the explanatory statement in terms of the types of things that courts can look at. They are the types of things courts have been looking at for 20 or 30 years, and in many instances look at further. It is a bit of a shame, as I have said, if a court gets to the stage where it has to look behind a statute just to see what on earth the words mean. They should be basic. That applies not only to statutes, but also to statutory instruments, which are an important advance. It is equally important to interpret those if there is any problem there.

Sections of the previous act which have been with us for about 20 years have been replicated, including things such as relevant reports of law reform commissions,

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committees of inquiry or similar bodies that were presented to the Assembly before the act was passed—in other words, the types of reports which actually led to a statute being created—and the traditional explanatory statement, which used to be called an explanatory memorandum, for the bill or any other document that was presented to the Assembly before the act was passed. Another traditional means is the presentation speech itself made to the Legislative Assembly before the passage of the bill that became the act. Again, if there is any confusion in the act or the explanatory statement, you can go to the speech and there may be something there to assist as well.

Also included are official reports of proceedings in the Assembly in relation to the bill that became the act. The actual debate itself can elicit exactly what is meant. I can think of some fairly complex debates we have had on pieces of legislation which would not be covered by the act itself or the explanatory memorandum because amendments were made from the floor. I can remember one specific example which may have led to confusion but has not to date, to my knowledge, that is, some amendments we made to, I think, the Crimes Act. The Clerk is grimacing at this one. There was a lengthy debate. We were amending 11 or 12 different sections and we were doing so late at night—in fact, in the early hours of the morning.

Mrs Dunne: It sounds like the land act.

MR STEFANIAK: Yes. We had a few moments as well with the retail tenancy legislation. At about 2.15 am we had a swag of amendments and counteramendments. We adjourned for about 10 minutes and sorted it all out. I might have come up with a formula. Anyway, it was all sorted out and went into the legislation. We were a little bit worried, but it was okay.

Reference to the debate there would have been of some assistance if there were problems. It is not the ideal way of doing things, but reference to the debate could assist there. I do not quite know whether reference to the debate would have assisted with regard to the act governing PALM which we debated in, I think, 1991 as there were some 50 different amendments and counteramendments moved from the floor. That probably has been rectified by the passage of time.

Mrs Dunne: No, it has just got worse.

MR STEFANIAK: It has just got worse, according to Mrs Dunne. That was not an ideal situation and I do not recall there being a particularly helpful debate on that occasion, either. That is an example of how reference to the debate might be rather useless, but where reference to the debate is useful it can be of assistance.

I turn to something which has been done at common law and which I must admit has concerned me and members of my party at times in relation to various jurisdictions, that is, the treaties and international agreements to which Australia is a party. When you look at certain UN charters and consider the nature of some of the regimes that signed them, you can have a problem initially. I have found, however, that when you look at the sections actually being dealt with you will find statements which most people in Australia would have little problem agreeing with. Australia being a signatory to them is something courts have come to consider a lot over the last 20 years.

It is also something that the Commonwealth government has come to consider. States have some input now in terms of treaties that the Commonwealth signs. They are consulted, at least, in relation to certain things. That is a form of interpretation to be used on occasions by our courts and it has happened over a 20-year period. It is certainly something that the High Court does indeed do to assist in interpretation, where necessary. Whilst I have not been terribly happy with some of those things, they have been part of our common law for 20 years or so. I have been advised that this provision simply replicates what is in the common law at present, and it would seem to do so.

I think the concerns have been taken on board in terms of having just too many types of things that a court can look at. That would have been the situation before this bill came in. There was a plethora of other instruments and documents which a court could have regard to and which I do not think would have been at all suitable or necessarily helpful. It would have bogged down litigation and it would have bogged down the operations of the court in certain cases. It would have made it difficult for the profession to advise clients if there was a little bit of doubt as to exactly what something meant and it would have blown out expenses in a number of cases.

That has been clearly recognised. Indeed, there is some reference to that in the documentation. For example, subsection 144 (2), which deals with deciding whether material not forming part of an act should be considered in working out the meaning of the act and the weight to be given to the material, provides that the matters which must be taken into account are, firstly, the desirability of being able to rely on the ordinary meaning of the act, having regard to the purpose of the act and the provisions of the act or even the context of the act as a whole; secondly, the undesirability of prolonging proceedings without compensating advantage; and, thirdly, the accessibility of the material to the public. I think that subsection is very sensible in recognising some of the inherent desirabilities of statutory interpretation and the undesirability of prolonging proceedings without any compensating advantage and the expense to which that takes ordinary people.

The Opposition is happy to support this bill. It does pick up the problems which were raised by those various bodies some 12 months ago. On that basis, we support it.

MS TUCKER (4.02): The aim of this bill is to complete the process of updating and clarifying provisions brought over to the Legislation Act from the old Interpretation Act. It will restate the provisions dealing with statutory interpretation to make the law in this area clearer and more coherent and to take account of developments in the common law.

The new provisions are restated in a simplified, updated and, where appropriate, enhanced form. According to the government, they do not reflect a dramatic change in the rules of statutory interpretation, but reflect significant common law developments in the area in recent years.

In May 2002, the minister presented to the Assembly a bill which included reform along similar lines to the law of statutory interpretation, the Legislation Amendment Bill 2002. The Standing Committee on Legal Affairs indicated some concerns with the reform of the law of statutory interpretation represented by that bill. The ACT Bar Association also

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circulated a submission indicating its concurrence with the views of the standing committee and raising some additional concerns of its own.

The government agreed that the reform should be deferred and undertook to pursue this reform in consultation with the ACT Bar Association with a view to revising chapter 14 along lines similar to those originally proposed, but addressing the concerns raised by the scrutiny of bills committee and the Bar Association in relation to the previously proposed chapter 14. The current bill is the product of the consultation process. The minister has stated that the Bar Association has confirmed that it is satisfied with the modified proposals. We have had confirmation of that as well.

The main concerns expressed by the scrutiny committee and the Bar Association in relation to chapter 14 of the 2002 bill can be summarised as follows. Firstly, access to law: would the revised non-legislative material provisions tend to make the law less accessible and more costly? This concern is addressed by the preservation and reinforcement of existing safeguards against inappropriate regard being had to non-legislative material in interpreting legislation. A court will need to consider the ordinary meaning of a statutory provision in its legislative context and the cost of prolonging proceedings unnecessarily.

Secondly, the separation of powers: would the mandate given by the revised provision to consult a wide range of non-legislative material give the courts too much leeway to mould the law in a way that trespasses on the doctrine of separation of powers? This concern is addressed by the retention and reinforcement of the principles mentioned that safeguard against inappropriate use of non-legislative material.

Thirdly, presumptions of common law: would the best purpose rule, as drafted in the proposed section 139, extinguish common law presumptions regarding the interpretation of legislation? An example would be the presumption against interference with the liberty of the citizen. It was never intended to extinguish the operation of the common law in this sense. To ensure that there is no suggestion that this will be a consequence of the reforms, previously proposed provisions for the Legislation Act principles to have effect despite any rule or presumption of common law to the contrary have been dropped from the bill. The result will be to enable common law rules and presumptions to continue to operate in conjunction with the principles stated in the Legislation Act.

The scrutiny of bills committee, in its report No 30, stated:

The Committee makes no comment warranting consideration of any clause of the Bill. It acknowledges that its comments on an earlier version of this Bill, made in Scrutiny Reports No 4 (5 March) and No 9 (7 May) of 2002 have been taken into account in the drafting of this bill.

Based on the report from the scrutiny of bills committee and the comments from the bar and law societies, it appears that the concerns expressed in the 2002 debate have been addressed. I understand that Mr Stefaniak has made clear that he is now happy as well.

MR STANHOPE (Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Community Affairs and Minister for the Environment) (4.06), in reply: Mr Speaker, as members have indicated, this bill will bring an important stage in the government's public access to law

project to completion. Last year the Interpretation Act 1967 was repealed, following the incorporation of all its remaining provisions into the Legislation Act. The bill now before the Assembly will complete the updating of the provisions of the old Interpretation Act.

As I stated in my presentation speech, the bill amends the Legislation Act to restate the provisions dealing with statutory interpretation. The objectives of the restatement are to make the law clearer and more coherent and to take account of developments in the common law.

In summary, proposed new chapter 14 of the Legislation Act will state three key principles of statutory interpretation. First, that the interpretation of a provision of an act or statutory rule that best gives effect to the purpose of the act or instrument is to be preferred to any other interpretation. Secondly, that the provisions of an act or statutory instrument are to be interpreted in the context of the act or instrument as a whole. Thirdly, that non-legislative material may be considered in working out the meaning of an act or statutory instrument.

This principle is stated to be subject to three safeguards in that the court or tribunal considering the question of interpretation must take into account the desirability of being able to rely on the ordinary meaning of the act in the light of its purpose and legislative context, the undesirability of prolonging court or tribunal proceedings without compensating advantage and public accessibility to the non-legislative material.

Finally, the government wishes to record its particular appreciation for the valuable and constructive contribution made by the ACT Bar Association to the development of these reforms in consultation with parliamentary counsel. As always, I thank the Parliamentary Counsel's Office for the sterling work that it continues to do in our legislation drafting and program. I commend the bill.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill agreed to in principle.

Leave granted to dispense with the detail stage.

Bill agreed to.

Affordable housing task force Papers and statement by minister

Debate resumed from 12 December 2002, on motion by **Mr Wood**.

MRS BURKE (4.09): Mr Speaker, in December 2002 the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services tabled the report from the Ministerial Task Force on Affordable Housing entitled *Affordable Housing in the Australian Capital Territory: Strategies for Action*. In his tabling statement, the minister said that he had much pleasure in tabling the report from the ministerial task force. I would have to concur with that. This is an incredibly in-depth and well put together and collated report—a fine report, indeed.

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There is a shadow over this, however, in that I am of the understanding that the government are possibly saying they will not be formally responding. I think there may have been some moves today to address that and I certainly hope that there will be a change of heart after this debate. I would find it both arrogant and amazing if the government were to take this line, given that the minister, to use his own words, was “highly impressed with the level of effort, detail and independent research that the task force has provided as part of this report to inform both the Assembly and the broader community”.

The minister also said that he acknowledged “the substantial efforts of the consultants and organisations that contributed to the task force’s deliberations” and “they worked exceptionally long hours to address the fundamental issue”. So I trust that the Minister will be paying people the courtesy of responding in an as timely as possible manner to all their hard work and effort, and advising this Assembly of the government’s position in relation to the 45 recommendations in the report.

According to a statement made in the ACT Shelter submission to the task force, ABS statistics in the late 1990s showed that mean weekly housing costs in the ACT were 23.7 per cent higher than in other capital cities but, because of Canberra’s higher than average mean incomes, affordability was no worse than in other cities. However, since that time —since 1998, for example—median private rental for three-bedroom houses has risen by 26 per cent, whilst median family incomes have risen only by 8.8 per cent, indicating that housing affordability is worsening in the ACT.

In fact, the minister has acknowledged that “a number of issues become immediately apparent”. I would obviously like to know, and I will be pleased to hear, the government’s response and actions that will flow out of these “immediately apparent” issues that have come to light through this good report.

The report was forwarded by Christine Purdon, the chair of the ACT Affordable Housing Task Force. She opens the report by saying:

Shelter is a basic human right and housing is central to all our lives.

She goes on to say:

The task force has found that the problem of housing stress will not be solved in the short term. A long term commitment is required. Leadership and a sustained effort by Government, together with involvement by the private and community sectors and support from the wider community are essential. Within Government, involvement by ACT Housing and the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services is crucial, but other agencies need to be actively involved in addressing housing unaffordability.

I think we are all aware that it will take a long-term commitment and that the problem will not be resolved overnight.

It is worthy of mention that, as I have already said, there are 46 recommendations covering a whole spectrum of areas, including:

- increase be based on demand;
- a diverse range of housing be offered;
- a review of existing eligibility criteria for social housing;
- greater flexibility in the construction of new stock—for example, project homes. I do not know why we have not looked at this matter sooner. There are some really good examples of project homes that would probably help to alleviate this issue;
- expansion of the community housing sector;
- that the annual land release program should identify sites for allocation to affordable housing providers;
- government provision of interest-free finance for non-government affordable housing providers for construction of affordable housing;
- adjustment of current property thresholds for stamp duty concessions for home buyers;
- raising public awareness—and this is probably one of the very key areas, and indeed the report says it is of critical importance—of the housing system and affordable housing within the overall economic, social and environmental outcomes for the community; and
- the release of a government housing statement each year in conjunction with the release of the annual report—and that makes sense to me.

The report is very supportive of a “whole of community approach”, which really is the only way forward. I am very supportive of this approach and I hope that the government will take on board that we can all be involved. There is no quick fix to this ever increasing and perplexing issue. However, we can make progress if we are united in our approach.

As I said, I look forward to the government accepting a whole of government, whole of community, approach to reach some long lasting and sustainable solutions. I further look forward to the government showing some long overdue leadership and making some hard decisions in order to begin to alleviate the situation of those adversely affected by housing affordability.

MS TUCKER (4.15): I move the following amendment that has been circulated in my name:

After “That this Assembly takes note of the papers”, insert “and calls on the government to

- (1) prepare a comprehensive response to the task force report,
- (2) and table that response in the next sitting period”.

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I will speak to both my amendment and the general motion. I am aware that the task force was formed in February 2002 and that it handed down its report last December. In other words, many of the more difficult and significant issues were parked in the affordable housing task force basket. In fact, we were raising these issues quite a long time before that and it was a great relief to me when the current government decided to say that they would take proactive action by establishing this task force. I was very pleased to see that happen because I think this area has been left neglected for far too long.

However, I have some concerns about the current process. It has taken very long for this task force even to report. Here we are in April of 2003 and in the meantime a number of fairly large-scale developments and territory variations have proceeded, and even been called in, without the benefit of an affordable housing strategy to guide them.

Kingston Foreshore, the Metropolitan, the Hungarian-Australian Club, as far as I am aware even the Griffin Centre, and many more developments, including detached housing in Gungahlin, Belconnen and Tuggeranong, are all proceeding or have proceeded apace.

This minister's task force has made comprehensive recommendations covering a wide range of strategies designed to deliver affordable public, community and private housing in a number of configuration. I do not accept all the recommendations of the task force, nor do I believe it has covered all the issues.

There is a real shortage of crisis accommodation for young people, for men and for women with mental health and substance abuse problems, for people on the margins of our society, which impact on the housing situation more broadly, but these issues are not addressed in the report. Nor were the benefits of a mix of tenants in public housing factored into tenancy management discussion under "developing social housing", and it seems to me that there is considerable further work to be done there.

Furthermore, while there is some discussion of reconfiguring public housing stock in the interests of so-called "better utilisation", there is no discussion of expanding that stock. Indeed, the reverse is the case. The Greens and many other community organisations have already questioned the benefits of handing over public housing stock to community housing organisations, as has happened in the past and is further recommended in this report.

I notice that the bibliography of the report did not include the select committee report on the role of public housing, of which I was chair and Mr Wood was a member, nor the report of the Youth Housing Task Force.

We are concerned also about the promotion of Community Housing Canberra Ltd as such a key organisation for the development of affordable housing in the ACT and we are uncomfortable with what appears to be a fairly quiet reorganisation of its governance arrangements in order to facilitate that progression. And that is as good a place as any to point out the abrogation of responsibility that is going on.

Some of the recommendations of this report are quietly being adopted; others, perhaps more profound, will not even be addressed. For example, it appears Community Housing Canberra may be given the power to buy and sell public assets in order to become an affordable housing developer/landlord across Canberra. But what is the government's response, say, to recommendation 18 to "explore construction, sale and leaseback options to contribute to affordable housing outcomes, accompanied by planning and other concessions recommended in this report" or recommendation 29 "that all legislation relating to land and planning be amended to include references to support increased provision of affordable housing"?

Furthermore, key overall recommendations that an affordable housing statement should be released with every budget and that affordable housing providers should be established in order to retain the community benefits of affordable housing are fundamental to this task force report. Yet we have no idea whether the government will pursue this strategy.

On Tuesday I asked Mr Corbell a question about affordable housing in the Metropolitan development across the road from the Lakeside. While asserting that Mr Wood has carriage of the recommendations and implementations of the Affordable Housing Task Force—and, after all, it was a ministerial task force set up by Mr Wood—Mr Corbell conceded that "there is a clear synergy between housing policy and planning policy, when it comes to addressing issues of affordability". He then went on to advise us that "the government is considering a range of recommendations from the Affordable Housing Task Force". He said that it is "not going to seek to do things in a piecemeal or ad hoc manner. The government is developing a holistic approach to addressing the issue of affordability".

Yesterday, when the issue came up again, Minister Wood argued that he had never proposed to come back with a consolidated government response. The reason, it seems, is that "there were lots of controversial issues in that" and "not everything" that was in the report "was absolutely agreed"—by the government, perhaps, or by members of the task force".

Given that, according to Mr Corbell and Mr Wood, government is not going to address things in a piecemeal way, then the fact that a ministerial task force comes forward with some controversial recommendations surely does not mean government should not respond. Rather, I would have thought the reverse would be the case.

The housing minister has set up a task force consisting of key industry, government and community sector representatives to investigate the provision of affordable housing. Perhaps this is one of the biggest issues facing the cities of Australia; it is a question which is fundamental to the goals of equity and opportunity.

Now that the task force has reported, this government's approach is to pick over the report and select a few recommendations that can be negotiated through cabinet without ever being up-front about how and why it is making those decisions. I think this shows a very cavalier response to the work of everyone who contributed to the task force—people whose time is extremely valuable—as well as the task force itself, and it offers no

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assurance to the people of Canberra for whom housing affordability is a key issue. I think there is a fundamental accountability question here.

More importantly perhaps is the fact that such an approach—avoiding arguably the hard or contentious debates—will not serve those people most desperately in need. If there are hard and contentious issues on which the government cannot agree then I think it is fair enough to state that at this time. Unless our societies develop a far-reaching and profound approach to housing which is adequate and affordable—this is unarguably a government responsibility and is central to the mitigation of poverty for people on low incomes or people who are socially marginalised—then too many people will still find themselves in housing stress.

We need to know that government proposes to address issues of affordable housing in its planning and development legislation and practice. We need to know what it will and what it will not do and why. We need to be able to have a full debate in the Assembly about these issues, once we are informed by government of their understanding of the necessities and their policy response. We need to know what action government is prepared to take to encourage the supply of affordable private rental accommodation. We need to know how the private purchase of affordable housing can be supported by the territory and what impact such strategies would have on land release programs and government revenue. We need to hear the government's response to the proposed annual adjustment of stamp duty thresholds as they apply to home buyers. We want to see evidence of housing affordability being factored into the social accounting of a sustainable territory.

My amendment calls on the government to provide a full response to this report in the interest of leading our community towards a more concerted and comprehensive commitment to affordable housing for all.

MS DUNDAS (4.23): Mr Speaker, I will be speaking to both the substantive motion and the amendment. The Affordable Housing Task Force report has provided us with some very useful information on the incidence and severity of housing stress in our community. This report complements the recent work that has already been done on homelessness.

The report informed us that housing stress was growing in the ACT. Though most people experiencing housing stress are private renters, there is also a substantial number of home owners and home purchasers who are struggling to pay for their housing.

The task force report has told us that the stock of private rental accommodation had fallen in the last five years and that the percentage of rental homes that were affordable for people in the 20-40 per cent income quintile has dropped from 57 per cent in 1998 to only 19 per cent in 2002.

The report came up with some interesting recommendations, such as that affordable housing providers should be exempted from land tax, payroll tax, change of use charges and stamp duty. The task force also proposed that the planning process be streamlined to help promote affordable housing.

The task force proposed the widening of stamp duty concessions and the scaling of property value thresholds according to the number of bedrooms in each dwelling. It suggested that income thresholds for concessions be calculated with reference to the income required to purchase median-priced properties. It proposed that a rental guarantee scheme be introduced to help low and middle income earners who experience discrimination or other problems in the private rental market.

These are all incredibly interesting ideas and I would hate to see them drop out of sight after all the work the task force did to come up with them. It is important that we are having a debate about what to do with the recommendations of the task force. We cannot just let this be another report that sits on the shelf.

Members of the community worked hard on this report. People from a whole range of non-government organisations took time out from work they were doing in an already stressed environment to contribute to the Affordable Housing Task Force in the hope that there would be some real changes and some real ways of addressing the problems that our community is facing.

I particularly would like to see the government propose some solutions to the majority of people in housing stress who are in the private rental market. The task force did suggest some tax and rate concessions for landlords who provide affordable housing. These measures may well make investment for rental more attractive, to the point that the supply of dwellings increases. But it may also be necessary to revisit the land tax system that currently targets private landlords and makes it less attractive to invest in rental properties, particularly if capital gains taper off, as predicted by many property market analysts.

I note that the government sees the capping of rates increases as an appropriate measure. Perhaps we should also be thinking about capping rent rises, if this can be done without detrimentally affecting the overall supply of rental dwellings. We also need to look at the way that rental properties are maintained. We have a lot of schemes in the ACT, such as the solar hot water rebate, that are designed to help make our houses more environmentally friendly. But these cannot be taken up by private renters because they cannot afford to improve a house that they may not be living in in the next three months.

Unless we can provide some incentives to landlords to make their houses warmer and safer, so that people who rent are not paying extraordinary electricity bills and living in houses where they cannot get insurance, then we are not addressing the affordable housing issue. Affordable housing is not just about rent. It is about all the other expenses that go with living in a house—expenses such as electricity, rates, water bills and security bills. This all needs to be looked at. We also need some information from the government about the direction they are going to take to help address these issues.

Hence, I strongly support Ms Tucker's amendment, which calls on the government to prepare a response to the Affordable Housing Task Force papers. I am quite concerned that the government is not planning to prepare a response. Without a formal response, housing advocates and the broader community will have no guidance on which recommendations the government supports and, therefore, no idea what to expect from the government in the way of action to alleviate our housing crisis.

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I hope that the amendment and the amended motion are supported by the whole Assembly, and that we will soon see how serious the government is about implementing its election platform to increase the supply of affordable housing in the ACT. We will then have some idea of what steps we need to be taking to make affordable housing in the ACT a reality.

MRS DUNNE (4.28): I rise to speak to the motion and to indicate the opposition's support of Ms Tucker's amendment. The poverty task force established during the term of the Carnell government was of the view that one of the keys to alleviating poverty was the provision of secure housing. Over the years we have seen an increase in the incidence of housing stress and a decrease in housing affordability. The government, to its credit, set up a task force, with wide representation across government, commercial and community sectors, to look at this very vital issue.

This is one of those sorts of things that affect the entire community. We are not just talking about people in need of government support, because when you do not have affordable housing across the spectrum it means that more and more people fall through the gaps and need to be picked up in the safety net of government housing. If we can provide affordable housing in the private rental market, in the private purchasing market, there will be less stress on the government housing market and, therefore, more resources will be available to address people who are really in need.

Both ACT Housing and Community Housing do very important work in addressing the needs of people in the material sense by providing shelter and especially, in the case of Community Housing, in addressing concomitant needs. We should be doing as much as possible to ensure that as few people as possible need to rely on government housing; that they can find their own way and be self-reliant. But there is increasing evidence that people in the ACT are less self-reliant in respect of housing. The increasing demands that ACT Housing is experiencing and the number of times that shelters offering support services have to turn people away show that there is an increasing amount of housing stress. But it is not just housing stress at that end of the market—it is all the way through. Unless you are extremely affluent, most people in this town find it difficult to meet their housing needs.

We have to look at taking a holistic approach. As Ms Dundas has said, we have to look at not just the entry costs—the cost of purchasing a house or the cost of renting—but the whole of life costs of housing. We have to look at not just what you pay out every fortnight, whether it be in rent or mortgage, but also whether your house is energy efficient. We have to look at how far you have to travel by car or other forms of transport, and whether you have access to efficient and affordable transport. The issue of rates is important as well. Whether you are a home owner, a home purchaser or renter, rates affect you. There is a possibility that the differential rates system proposal that is now before us could have an even bigger impact on housing affordability.

Many other aspects of government policy militate against affordable housing. At the moment, the Planning and Environment Committee, of which I am the chairman, is looking at draft variation 200, which is working through the process of limiting in many places the possibilities for densification and urban consolidation. This would mean that

there will be fewer places to build houses. There would be a situation of the supply of houses going down and the demand for houses rising.

As the minister said in this place yesterday, there is a general demand for 2,300 new dwellings a year. If that demand keeps rising and the supply of blocks on which we can build dwellings does not rise at the same rate, there will be pressure on the cost of housing. Those pressures will apply no matter whether the housing is at the middle level, the first home buyer's level, or the community housing level; they will apply to private rental and government rental. Draft variation 200 is one of the things that has the potential to militate against affordable housing.

The opposition supports Ms Tucker's amendment. I do not think, in the six years or so that I have worked in and around this place, that I have ever come across a government report where the government has declined to come up with a government response. We have a four-volume report that goes to all sorts of aspects of issues that relate to housing affordability. There are 46 recommendations in the report and this government does not propose to respond to them.

What message does that send to the community? First of all, it says to all the members of the task force who are listed in the front of the report, "Why did you bother?" Also, it sends a message to people involved in the community who will be asked to sit on boards and committees, and make recommendations to this government. They will ask themselves, "Why on earth would I bother in the future? Why would I bother?" The message that ACT Labor is sending to this community is that this is window dressing. It is a matter of "Gee, we've done something about housing affordability. We've produced a four-volume report." A four-volume report is not enough.

We now have to have action. We have to have a government which is prepared to come in here and say whether or not they agree or disagree with some of these recommendations. Some of these recommendations are pretty challenging, but they have to be addressed.

In respect of housing affordability, what are the barriers to first home buyers being more self-sufficient and getting out of the rental market and into the private ownership market? At the moment, the barriers are the fact that it will cost them, at the very least, \$110,000 to buy a block of land. You then have the cost of putting a house on top of it, and you are looking at \$200,000 bare minimum for a shoebox.

Mr Wood: Good luck if you get one for \$200,000.

MRS DUNNE: The very bare minimum. Mr Wood is the minister responsible for housing. As his colleague, Mr Corbell, was very quick to say, "I'm not responsible for housing affordability. Mr Wood is." All Mr Wood can say is good luck to them. That is not good enough. We have to find strategies that help people who can afford to enter the private housing market. This will relieve the stress on the government rental market, so that people in need will have access to reasonable housing.

As Ms Dundas says, we need to address a whole lot of things that have come out of this report. This government has sent a message that "We don't care what is in this. We are not going to respond. We are not even going to do the people who gave up time and

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effort to be on this task force the courtesy of telling them if we agree with their recommendations; and if not, why not.”

This is not the way an open an accountable government operates; this is no way to progress and come to some solutions about affordable housing. The report says we will not do this overnight, that this will take a long time. But if this government is not even prepared to say whether or not they agree with the recommendations of their own task force, we will make no progress at all. Unless this government comes clean and says what it is prepared to do, the best thing we can do for housing in the ACT is pulp all the copies of the four-volume report and turn them into insulation for houses.

MR WOOD (Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, Minister for Urban Services, Minister for the Arts and Heritage and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (4.37): Mrs Dunne can get very indignant. I will take indignation from Ms Tucker and Ms Dundas—I do not think I got it—because I know they are genuinely interested in housing. I won’t take indignation from the Liberals, who did their best over a number of years to cut down the number of public houses in this place.

Get out of the mould! Mrs Dunne said we get reports in here and we always respond to Assembly committees—we need to, we have to, we want to. I am not sure that absolutely every report that comes into this place does get a response. But get out of the mould! There will be responses and I will accept the amendment, but bear in mind the nature of this report. I do not want to come back and say agreed/disagreed on all these issues. I will come back and say what progress we are making on them. I will report progress. I accept the amendment. But this is a report that has been considered in great depth.

The people in the task force were from different agencies within government: Housing, Treasury, Planning—even Attorney-Generals might have had some input. It contained people from the community sector, and it contained people from the private sector. So there are many different opinions. It became apparent during it that, if I wanted a report that they all signed off on, I would not get a very large report because there were disputed areas.

So I asked them to give me a report with all the ideas and the concepts they could come up with, saying we would take them on and see how we could work through them. That is what I want to do. I want to work through them as best I can and get as much of them agreed as possible. If you asked me my opinion of the report, I would say I agreed with everything. I want to have a look at them all.

Mrs Burke: Well, say so then.

MR WOOD: That is my opinion. I have just told you. There you are, I have responded. I think everything in this report is terrific, and what I will do is see how much of it I can get up. I think there are some great ideas in it. But for heaven’s sake, Mrs Dunne, don’t say to me that I am sending out a message of “why bother?” I instituted this in part because the previous government did not bother, did not care—the words you used. I am actually quite passionate about these things—as I know other members are and as I know Mrs Burke is—and it is my intention to work through as much as I can.

Mrs Dunne said it would be a long, hard job. It is not something you do overnight. There is a lot of work to be done on this, and we are working on it already. I will certainly come back and report, but I will be reporting progress. I may do it more than once, and I will certainly do it in the next session. But it is a process that requires a long period of time, so I am a bit offended by Ms Tucker saying “cavalier”, “picking over”, “avoiding”. No, I am determined to see that we get—

Mrs Burke: Let us know how you feel about this, Minister. It’s simple. In writing.

MR SPEAKER: Order!

MR WOOD: You don’t listen very much to what is said. That’s your problem.

MR SPEAKER: Order, members!

MR WOOD: Ms Dundas also said that this will sit on a shelf. It won’t. It is being worked on right now. It is difficult because there are so many issues, among which many are agreed and have to be organised and managed as best they can be through the system. That is what we will do. I am accepting the amendment. Criticise my reporting when it comes down, if you will. We will be working through—to say it for the umpteenth time—as many of these issues as we can accommodate.

The issue goes beyond the scope of this government. It is the responsibility of the private sector as well and, indeed, the community sector very much wants to get involved. It would be great if we could get some help from the federal government. Mr Howard made a statement some time ago. I think he was going to set up a task force or have a conference or something.

But I go to meetings where his housing minister is and, gee, you don’t get an ounce of sympathy out of there. She is flat out even staying for an hour of the meetings. There is a meeting coming up in Brisbane soon, and I understand she is going to put in only a brief appearance. I wish we had more interest and maybe a bit of financial support from federal government. Indeed, they have taken \$6 million from the budget.

When Mr Howard introduced the GST, it had a very severe impact on every sector. The impact on ACT Housing was something over \$7 million. We were getting something like \$5.9 million in compensation. Now that has gone. There is no sympathy from that level; I wish there were. I will be back up in Brisbane at the end of next week for the next ministers’ meeting on housing, and I am not confident it will go better than other ministers’ meetings as we work towards the next Commonwealth/state and territory housing agreement.

Public housing is an essential component of any system, and we are trying to find more money for it. The government got criticised because it found some money when it absolutely needed to for fire safety last year. But we will pursue and spend every cent we can.

The task force report provides some arguments, based in many cases on precedent in other jurisdictions, for how a variety of fiscal measures can be utilised by the

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government to provide more favourable circumstances in which providers can operate. As Mr Corbell said, the land and planning system can be used, especially in Canberra, as an instrument for both improving affordability and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

The business sector is a component for ACT Housing. Even today I have been working through the words we put into the tender documents when we auctioned off land on the site of the former Burnie Court. We are looking at those issues, and it is not always easy to come up with the systems that will deliver what you want.

Housing is very much an issue in the community these days. Some years ago it did not seem to rate very highly, but now I understand it is very much an issue. I think it was Mrs Dunne who commented on the stress that people find themselves under in meeting their housing costs, and the report also makes some comment. I despair when the papers comment every second week, “Good news! Your housing value’s gone up.” I see that as bad news because it becomes harder for people to find a house. It is okay if you own a house—or more than one house—but trying to get into the market is becoming difficult.

The government will shortly—later this month, I think—be releasing a community housing framework that will provide strategic directions for the consolidation and the expansion of that sector. I know there are some reservations in the community about that sector at the moment, but it does have advantages. It has a bit more flexibility than the public housing sector. If we can find some flexibility and other means of doing things, that suits me fine.

I will also be releasing \$3 million to the community housing sector for a number of innovative projects, which will have some impact on that sector. That will be announced very shortly. We continue to address homelessness, and Aboriginal housing funding will be released shortly—another project that will be good. We will be moving to establish a transitional indigenous accommodation service for young male teenagers.

The work of ACT Housing in providing services goes on, and a great deal of work is progressing for tenants who need rehousing as a result of the bushfire. The capital works program continues, with substantial refurbishment of a number of big flat complexes either recently completed or under way.

Finally, the government responded to the issue of land supply and its role in determining housing affordability. (*Extension of time granted.*) Indeed, earlier this week Mr Corbell spoke about the initiatives that his department has embarked upon to ease pressure on land supply. Land is expensive at the moment, but if we remove developers’ profits and use those within the ACT for the community, it will be an enormous bonus for us all.

I am confident that the revised version of the draft Territory Plan 200 will be of help. I think that is still being worked through, Mrs Dunne. I will be reporting back to you some time in May in the terms of the amendment.

MS TUCKER (4.48): I seek leave to speak again.

Leave granted.

MS TUCKER: Thank you. I just want to respond to Mr Wood, and I repeat what Mr Corbell said—that the government will not seek to do things in a piecemeal or ad hoc manner, and the government is developing a holistic approach to addressing the issue of affordability.

What my motion says is “prepare a comprehensive response to the task force report”. I am concerned that Mr Wood has said he will produce a “progress report”. Of course, it is up to Mr Wood, but my amendment says, “prepare a comprehensive response to the task force report”. Also, in light of Mr Corbell saying that it is the responsibility of the government, it is more than just a progress report. A comprehensive response to the task force report could include progress in terms of what the government has done. But what we are all looking for in this place is a holistic approach to addressing issues of affordability, which is what Mr Corbell said you would produce. It is for that reason that this is so important.

As I said before, I understand what Mr Wood is saying about the report’s recommendations being far-stretching and that some of them are contentious, and so on. The government is not required to say that they do or do not agree to every recommendation; what we want is an overall response to this fairly substantial body of work and an overall response that is actually a strategy—how this government will deal with affordability in housing.

A progress report on a few little things that have happened so far is not a comprehensive response; it is avoiding producing an overall long-term response and plan for how to deal with this. I know it is a hard task; it is one that governments are struggling with all over Australia. But that does not mean that the government should not try to do it. It probably won’t be perfect—and I am sure it won’t be perfect—but it has got to be something.

I felt really disappointed, when I got the affordable housing task force report, that it was not itself producing a strategy or more specific initiatives. I was quite disappointed with a number of aspects of the report, I have to say. It did not produce a strategy. I would be concerned if now, again, we just got a few initiatives that the government report said it was undertaking. I repeat that this motion is asking for a “comprehensive response to this substantive piece of work”. That is what the Assembly is expecting.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

Leave of absence

MRS DUNNE (4.52): I seek leave to move a motion concerning leave of absence for myself.

Leave granted.

I move:

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That leave of absence for 6, 7 and 8 May 2003 be given to Mrs Dunne to attend, in her capacity as Shadow Minister for Transport, the 55th World Congress of the International Union of Public Transport.

Motion agreed to.

Legislation—discriminatory references

MR WOOD (Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, Minister for Urban Services, Minister for the Arts and Heritage and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (4.52): On behalf of Mr Stanhope, I move:

That the resolution of the Assembly of 28 August 2002 concerning the compilation of a report into discriminatory references in ACT legislation be amended by omitting “by 1 May 2003” and substituting “by 8 May 2003”.

This is a simple matter. The motion seeks to put back by one week the date for the government to respond to an Assembly resolution calling for a report on issues around gay, lesbian, transgender and intersex persons. That resolution calls for a report to be lodged on or before 1 May 2003. That date was an arbitrary one, selected before the sitting pattern for this year was set.

My motion calls for the date to be set back one week to Thursday, 8 May, a sitting day. The ACT community sent in over 300 submissions in response to the issues paper Mr Stanhope released in December last year. The Department of Justice and Community Safety has collated and examined many of the submissions and has commenced work on the report for the Assembly. With some difficulty and at a cost, the original date could be met, but it would be preferable for the date to be set back by just one week.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Adjournment

Motion (by **Mr Wood**) agreed to:

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

The Assembly adjourned at 4.55 pm until Tuesday, 6 May 2003, at 10.30 am.

Answers to questions

Respite care—funding (Question No 379)

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

In relation to carer's funding:

- (1) How much money has been allocated specifically to carers in the 2002-2003 Budget;
- (2) Is there a detailed list of the allocation of funding to carers in the current budget, if so, could it be included in the response to this question;
- (3) Is there any annual grant or have any funds been allocated to the ACT Carers Association;
- (4) If so, how much is this annual grant, or how much has been allocated to the ACT Carers Association this financial year;
- (5) Does the department have a figure of how many carers there are in the ACT, if so could a figure be provided in this response;
- (6) Is there a breakdown of the type of people these carers assist ie; how many have mental health disorders, physical disability, cancer etc, if so could that breakdown be included in the response to this question.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is:

- (1) A new initiative with funding of \$1 million has been allocated to ACT Health for Respite Care in the 2002-2003 Budget. This initiative provides for more respite care for clients, families and carers covering the aged care, disability and mental health sectors. In addition to this initiative, there are other programs and services funded by ACT Health that provide respite care and assistance to carers. Other ACT Departments, including the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, and the Department of Education, Youth and Family Services fund respite care programs. This response refers only to ACT Health funded programs and services.
- (2) A description of projects funded from the 2002-2003 Respite Care budget initiative is at Attachment A. The majority of these projects are one off with recurrent funding to be allocated following the final report on the empirical study into respite care in the ACT. The amount of funding provided for other ACT Health respite programs is at Attachment B. Attachments A and B refer only to ACT Health funded programs.
- (3) The Home and Community Care (HACC) Program, managed through ACT Health, funds the ACT Carers Association (ACT Carers) annually for an Information and Counseling Service, a Multicultural Isolated Carers Project, and a Carers Workshop. Mental Health funds ACT Carers annually for the provision of a full-time Care

Liaison Worker, a part-time Peer Support Project Officer, and the training and establishment of two peer information and referral Carers.

- (4) The amount of funding provided to ACT Carers by the HACC Program for 2002-2003 totals \$225,248, and by Mental Health \$50,000. In addition to this, as shown in Attachment A, ACT Carers have received an additional \$100,000 from the 2002-2003 Budget Initiative. ACT Carers also receive funding from other ACT and Commonwealth agencies. Information on other sources of funding for ACT Carers is not included in this response.
- (5) In Canberra in 1998, there were 43,100 people in the ACT who were fulfilling the role of a carer. Of these carers, 53% were females. These figures are from a paper produced in 1999 by the Epidemiology Unit, Population Health, which provides a summary of findings for the ACT from the National Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 1998.
- (6) A full breakdown of the type of people carers assist in the ACT has not been undertaken. ACT Carers compile data on issues seen by their counsellors. During the months of April 2002 to February 2003 inclusive, the main caring areas were:

- Disability 25%
- Dementia 23%
- Mental illness 21%
- Frail aged 14%
- Dual diagnosis 13%
- Chronic illness 3%
- Acquired brain injury 1%

Other issues were addressed by ACT Carers' counsellors, however the above were the main areas. Additionally, there would be people not captured in these figures as all carers would not access services through ACT Carers.

Attachment A

Respite Care Funding – 2002-2003 Budget Initiative

Project description	Cost
Innovative respite care pilots – ACT Health will work with the Departments of Disability, Housing and Community Services, and Education, Youth and Family Services and respite service providers to pilot innovative models of respite care including emergency respite and respite care for carers of people with challenging behaviours using brokerage models across the areas of mental health, aged care, younger children with high medical needs, and disability. The pilot will run over 12 months and a brokerage model will be developed with agencies such as Carers ACT, Community Options and Community Connections and include other respite service providers. The pilot will be monitored to identify usage by clients and areas of need for respite care.	\$450,000
Additional family support respite care packages – Existing respite care programs for families at risk and kinship carers at Marymead and Barnardos will be supplemented.	\$100,000

Innovative Dementia Respite Service – ACT Health will work with the Commonwealth and Alzheimer’s Association to develop a pilot of innovative respite care for people with dementia, including younger people.	\$20,000
Reduction of fragmentation of respite care service provision – ACT Health will coordinate a project to reduce fragmentation of respite care service provision by working with the Departments of Disability, Housing and Community Services, and Education, Youth and Family Services and other service providers. This project will include exploration of referral and service gateways. The project will also monitor innovative respite pilots to measure service needs to guide ongoing resource allocation. The project will include development and provision of information to carers and providers.	\$150,000
Carers of People with a Mental Illness – Funding over a 12 month period to enhance the community sector’s capacity to promote and support the role of carers of people with mental illness through an existing contract with Carers ACT. The project will provide a rigorous program of education and training to Mental Health ACT clinical staff including induction and orientation processes and ongoing staff development concerning the role of carers. Representation of carer needs, issues and expertise will be made to Government and services concerning policy and program development including respite care. Assistance will be provided to staff at the Psychiatric Services Unit to develop information for carers and consumers. Referrals will be made to services including respite care and Mental Health Carers Network.	\$100,000
This package includes funding already provided for the:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance the provision of 4450 hours individual respite care support and services to people with mental illness and carers of people with a mental illness. This program focuses on providing respite care where the principal carer is a young person; and 	\$105,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empirical Respite Needs Study – Funding for the study into met and unmet respite needs in the ACT. 	\$75,000
Total	\$1,000,000

Attachment B

Respite Care Services funded by ACT Health

Service	Funding	Total
Mental Health Respite <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respite Care ACT Barnados 	\$159,360 \$79,897	\$239,257
HACC (a) Centre Based Day Care (b)	\$654,549	\$654,549
HACC Respite Services (c)	\$2,138,231	\$2,138,231

ACT Community Care Aged Day Care (d)	\$593,900	\$593,900
Burrangiri Respite Centre	\$978,845	\$978,845
Total 2002/2003		\$4,604,782

- (a) HAAC is the Home and Community Care Program.
 - (b) includes regional community services, ACT Community Care, Mirinjani, and North Belconnen Day Centre.
 - (c) includes ACT red Cross, Communities @ Work, FaBRIC, Kincare, Marymead, and Respite Care ACT.
 - (d) includes programs not classified as Respite Care.
-

Children—deaths (Question No 402)

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice, on 4 March 2003:

In relation to child deaths and mandatory reporting:

1. In (a) 2001 – 2002 and (b) 2002 – 2003 to December 2002, how many children known to Family Services have died in the ACT by misadventure, ie accidental drowning, possible abuse, neglect etc:
2. How many of the above at (1) came to the professional attention of Family Services prior to their death and what action was taken by Family Services to address their individual problems;
3. How many at (1) and (2) came to the attention of people required by law under the provision of the Children and Young People Act 1999 (as amended) to so report and were not reported;
4. What action is being taken against those who failed to fulfil their legal obligations under mandatory reporting;
5. What steps are being taken to compel people required under mandatory reporting to do so;
6. If no action is being taken, what is the purpose of the legal requirement for mandatory reporting and why should it not be repealed.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Cornwell's question is:

1. There are two children, both previously known to Family Services, who have died in this period.

2. There are 2 children in this category.

As these children are identifiable, there are confidentiality issues which restrict these matters from being discussed in any public forum and consequently details can not be made available to the Assembly.

In matters related to the care and protection of children and young people, the department:

- assesses all reports using an evidence based Risk Assessment Framework which has recently been reviewed
- determines interventions based on this framework and professional judgement
- is required to work within the General Principles of the *Children and Young People Act 1999*. The Act includes the following requirements:
 - that the primary responsibility for providing care and protection for the child should lie with parents and other family members [section 12(1)(b)]
 - that high priority is given to supporting family members to caring for a child [section 12(1)(b)] and
 - that interventions are the least intrusive consistent with the best interests of the child [section 12(1)(e)].

Matters which require external enquiry and assessment to ascertain the safety of a child/young person move to the appraisal stage of intervention.

When the Risk Assessment Framework indicates that risk has been reduced to an acceptable level Family Services may remain involved on a voluntary basis or review the matter and withdraw.

In matters where there is insufficient evidence to suggest harm/likely harm to a child, or existing services are addressing the issues satisfactorily, the department may take no further action.

3. Division 2 – Abuse and neglect of the Children and Young People Act 1999, outlines the provisions for mandatory reporting . A mandated person has to reasonably suspect that a child or young person is suffering sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury.

Both children concerned came to the attention of mandated professionals at some stage prior to their deaths. In some instances, the children were not reported to Family Services by mandated reporters, as the reporters did not form a reasonable suspicion that abuse had occurred.

4. To take action in relation to any person believed not to have fulfilled their legal obligations requires a finding that they had formed a reasonable suspicion and had then not acted on this suspicion.

It is a police function to undertake any prosecution of a person who under the Children and Young People Act 1999, failed to report abuse to the Chief Executive. It would need to be proven that the mandated person had formed a reasonable suspicion that abuse had occurred and did not fulfil their legal obligations to report

their concerns to the Chief Executive. In the ACT, no mandated person has been prosecuted so far relating to their failure to report abuse or neglect.

Mandated persons who fail to report abuse and/or neglect concerns may also be subject to internal disciplinary action within their own places of employment. Family Services does not have information relating to the children in question regarding this matter.

Further, in the event of a child death, it is the Coroner who makes findings in relation to causes of death and any associated negligence. In the case of the children subject to this question, the coroner's reports have not been released yet. Therefore, statements regarding negligence against any mandated person cannot be made until the coroner has made his/her findings and released their report.

5. The Coroner's report from the recent inquest will identify any systems issues that require attention in regards to compelling mandatory reporting.

Prior to the implementation of mandatory reporting the department provided extensive training for mandated professionals. Training on mandatory and voluntary reporting continues to be provided on a regular basis. Community education regarding child protection is a key component in the development of partnerships with the professional community. Such partnerships are the most effective way to help ensure the care and protection needs of children and young people are met.

Currently an education program is being undertaken, with a letter being sent to 15,000 mandated reporters to remind them all of their responsibilities under the Act. Regular training sessions are run by the Child Abuse Prevention and Education Unit in Family Services for community organisations.

No legal action has been taken against mandated persons in the ACT so far. This is consistent with other States who have mandatory reporting provisions. It should also be noted that responsibility to prosecute persons under the mandatory reporting requirement belongs to the police. This would be an option in cases of extreme negligence. A punitive approach to mandated reporters is inconsistent with the development of partnerships with the professional community.

6. Mandatory reporting has been introduced in all states in Australia with the exception of Western Australia who are currently reviewing this. It is important to note that mandatory reporting is aimed at bringing hidden abuse to light and is one method in a broader range of strategies to help ensure children and young people are protected. As such, mandatory reporting is not an end in itself and does not in itself protect children. The crucial factor is what actions are taken to protect children.

Although mandatory reporting did not result in a significant increase in reports to Family Services (as it had in some other jurisdictions), largely due to the training which occurred prior to its introduction, it has resulted in more timely interventions in a number of matters.

Mandatory reporting has also provided a basis for:

- the inclusion of reporting obligations in protocols between Family Services and other agencies, and
- reporting provisions in other agencies' policies.

Any consideration given to repealing mandatory reporting needs to include debate and enquiry into:

- the desired outcomes of mandatory reporting
 - how these outcomes are best achieved
 - how mandatory reporting assists these outcomes
 - what other mechanisms assist these outcomes, and
 - what the overall benefits of mandatory reporting are.
-

Bushfires—mental health effects (Question No 411)

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

In relation to the effects of the bushfire disaster on mental health:

- (1) Have any new cases of mental health conditions been reported to the Health Department following the Canberra bushfires;
- (2) Have any cases of a mental health condition been reported to the Department of Health and Community Care where the apparent cause of the condition is related to the Canberra bushfires;
- (3) Will the Government ask for regular updates from the Centre for Mental Health Research on the study it has begun on the effects of the bushfires on mental health;
- (4) Is there any ability to share or use interim information from this study to assist those who have formed a mental health condition following the Canberra bushfires.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is:

- (1) Since the bushfires, Mental Health ACT has had eighteen (18) new contacts with the word "bushfires" mentioned in the clinical notes. Only two (2) existing clients had disaster recovery forms filled out at the evacuation centres, the existing clients tended to directly access clinical services where needed. An additional 111 existing clients also had the word "bushfire" mentioned in their clinical notes. In these cases the Bushfires have directly caused or been a contributing factor to their presenting mental health states that have caused them to seek help. This data is from the Mental Health ACT MHAGIC database.

There has one presentation through the Calvary Emergency Department to the Calvary Psychiatry Unit 2N but the client was not admitted. This information does

not include data from the psychiatrists in the private sector, as Mental Health does not have access to this information.

- (2) Of the new contacts for Mental Health Services following the Bushfires, four (4) clients continue to have ongoing clinical management. The biggest workload for mental health services had been from the existing client group and the heightened demand triggered by the bushfires.
- (3) The Government will seek updates from the Centre for Mental Health Research on the Path through Life Project (an ongoing examination of changes in mental health across the life span). The Centre for Mental Health Research has added questions to their Project to assess the possible impact of fires. They have previous measures on this cohort so will be able to look at changes linked to the fire impacts. The cohort for this year is 24-28 years old age grouping.
- (4) The Centre for Mental Health provides feedback via their website and newsletters to participants. The results will assist in policy direction and possible public health interventions. The Chief Psychiatrist keeps a watching brief, subject of course to privacy and health records requirements, on the Project for implications for mental health services in the ACT

**Consultants—use
(Question No 415)**

Mr Smyth asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 3 March 2003:

In relation to consultants used to date this financial year:

- (1) What was the (a) name of the consultant; (b) address of the consultant; (c) cost of the consultancy and (d) service provided by the consultants.
- (2) Was a report prepared by the consultants and, if so, where may copies be obtained.

Mr Stanhope: There were three consultants engaged for the Community Affairs portfolio. Their details and the response for the projects are outlined bellow:

**Question (1) Project One:
Work Experience and Support Program**

- (a) Name of the consultant:
Capital Careers Pty Ltd
- (b) Address of the consultant:
Level 3, Belconnen Churches Centre
Benjamin Way
BELCONNEN ACT 2617
- (c) Cost of the consultancy:
\$25,900

- (d) Service provided by the consultants:
To provide office skills training and employment support to two groups of 15 participants in the ACT Work Experience and Support Program

Question (1) Project Two:

Concession Review

- (a) Name of the Consultant:
Econtech Pty Ltd
- (b) Address of the consultant:
PO Box 4129
KINGSTON ACT 2604
- (c) Cost of the consultancy:
\$32,637
- (d) Service provided by the consultants:
Analysis of options generated from stakeholder and agency consultations.

Question (1) Project Three:

Cultural Centre

- (a) Name of the consultant:
Greenleigh Consulting Services
Contact: Brian Kimmings
- (b) Address of the consultant:
2 Barnett Close
QUEANBEYAN – NSW 2620
- (c) Cost of the consultancy:
\$45,000
- (d) Service provided by the consultants:
To provide business plan of the Cultural Centre.

Question (2) Project One:

Work Experience and Support Program

Yes, a report was prepared and copies may be obtained from the Director, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Canberra Nara Centre, 1 Constitution Avenue, Canberra City.

Question (2) Project Two:

Concession Review

The Government has yet to consider the Econtech work, but following its considerations, the consultants' report will be made public.

**Question (2) Project Three:
Cultural Centre**

The consultant is required to finalise a Business Plan for the Cultural Centre. The Plan has been progressed but will not be finalised until after the management organisations for the Centre has been put in place. This is expected to occur in the near future.

**Consultants—use
(Question No 423)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

In relation to consultants used to date this financial year:

- (1) What was the (a) name of the consultant; (b) address of the consultant (c) cost of the consultancy and (d) service provided by the consultants.
- (2) Was a report prepared by the consultants and, if so, where may copies be obtained.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is:

Please see the attached table.

Name of consultant	Address of consultant	Cost of the consultancy	Service provided by consultant	Was a report prepared, if so where is it available?
A S Consultancy (Alex Silber)	4/25 Holloway Street, Ormond VIC 3204	\$21,995.00	Communications Review	Yes. Support Services, The Canberra Hospital.
ACT Council Of Social Service (ACTCOSS)	PO Box 195, Civic Square ACT 2608	\$18,000.00	A consultative study to determine the feasibility of establishing mental health Peak Body in the ACT	Yes. Preliminary Report available from Mental Health ACT, ACT Health.
ACT Procurement Solutions	P O Box 818, Dickson ACT 2602	\$10,000.00 (approx)	3 tenders (covering Medical Footwear, P&O Materials & Rehab Equipment)	No.

Alan Bansemer	PO Box 23, Serpentine WA 6125	\$27,272.73	Review of Call Centres	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Alchemy Management Solutions	167 Castleton Crescent, Gowrie ACT 2904	\$6,200.00	Consultancy on reviewing administrative staff positions in Mental Health ACT	Yes. Mental Health ACT, ACT Health.
Anna Lennon	PO Box 645, Civic Square ACT 2608	\$9,600.00	Health Restructure	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Anthony Cooper	22 Thesiger Crescent, Deakin ACT 2600	\$7,146.00	Hennessy House	No.
Anthony Cooper & Associates	PO Box 268, Deakin West ACT 2600	\$7,140.00	Consulting at BHRC for works on Staff Station	No.
Bill Stone & Associates	PO Box 3063, Belconnen Business Centre Belconnen ACT	\$7,800.00	Accommodation Review	Yes. Business & Infrastructure, The Canberra Hospital.
Bob Scott Consultancy Services	10 Kananga Drive, Thirroul NSW 2515	\$21,320.00	Review of Base Funding Issues, Canberra Hospital	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Brian Driver	16 Suttor Place, Baulkham Hills NSW 2153	\$6,035.00	Cleaning Review	Yes. Support Services, The Canberra Hospital.
Cogent (Paul Dyer)	PO Box 171, Dickson ACT 2602	\$14,524.15	Surgical Planning Day	No.
Colleen Wilson Health	PO Box 134, Willoughby NSW 2068	\$31,000.00	Medical School Environmental Scan	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Colleen Wilson Health	PO Box 134, Willoughby NSW 2068	\$19,850.00	Sub & Non Acute Environmental Scan	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Corpsec Group	85-91 O'Riordan Street, Alexandria NSW 2015	\$7,000.00	AHMAC Working Group	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.

Corpsec Pty Ltd	30 Tewksbury Cct Theodore 2905	\$7,000	Inspect and swap scientific equipment for contamination due to the fires of Jan 18.	Yes, Facility Services and capital Works Level 2, North Building
Dr Peter Wurth	Suite 9/16-18 Malvern Avenue, Chatswood NSW 2607	\$13,020.78	Consulting at Dual Disability Program	No.
Dr Richard Ashby	9 Meteor Street, Coorparoo QLD 4151	\$5,000.00 (not paid yet)	Review of Emergency Department Operations prior to finalising redevelopment plans	Report in progress.
Dr William F Glaser	Suite 204 "Stanhill", 34 Queens Road, Melbourne VIC 3004	\$6,000.00	Consulting at Dual Disability Program	No.
Enduring Solutions	11 Masters Place, Kambah ACT 2902	\$21,000.00 (YTD 75k in total)	On signing of contract for Respite Care – Unmet Needs in the ACT.	Not yet finalised.
Enduring Solutions	11 Masters Place, Kambah ACT 2902	\$36,807.25	National Medical Indemnity	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Geoff Sims	12 Mainoru Place, Hawker ACT 2614	\$15,890.47	Investigation of care type changing in ACT public hospitals and other selected states with final report to be provided.	Yes. ACT Health.
Immaculate Software Pty Ltd	7 Leal Pl Palmerston 2913	\$8,425	Provisions of upgrading of software database packages	Not required
Information Management and Clinical Coding PTY LTD	Po Box 6063, Baulkham Hills Business Centre NSW 2153	\$20,668.30	Clinical coding of QEII medical records, 2000-01 & 2001-02 and a sample audit on coded records.	Yes. ACT Health.

Information Management Solutions Pty Ltd	Bradfield St Downer ACT	\$11,280	Review of Health Protection Services' File Management System	Yes, Health Protection Services
Insight Business Solutions (Don McFeat)	73 Doyle Terrace, Chapman ACT 2611	\$16,000.00	Security Review	Yes. Support Services, The Canberra Hospital.
Kerry Hudson & Associates Pty Ltd	PO Box 1120, Golden Grove Village SA 5125	\$30,113.60	Asset Review Stage 2	Yes. Business & Infrastructure, The Canberra Hospital.
NSW Cancer Council	PO Box 572 Kings Cross NSW 1340	\$22,556	Cancer registry database	Yes, Population Health Research Centre
M A International	PO Box 2158, Royal Melbourne Post Office, VIC 3050	\$28,000.00	Alternative Models VMO Contracts	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
May and Russell	PO Box 268, Deakin West ACT	\$14,405.00	Ronald McDonald House/Paediatrics	No.
May Russell Architects	PO Box 268, Deakin West ACT 2600	\$6,780.00	Karralika Redevelopment Design Options	Yes. Capital Planning, ACT Health.
Mercer Human Resources	PO Box 10244, Brisbane QLD 4000	\$15,677.00	Value Profiling	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Morgan Disney and Associates	PO Box 3068, Manuka ACT 2603	Progress Payment of \$7,000.00 \$8,035 last financial year and \$5,000.00 outstanding (total \$20,035.00)	Evaluation of Effective Weed Control and CADAS	Not yet completed.
Open Office Pty Ltd	U 14/ 653 Mountain Hwy Bayswater 3153	\$51,610	Installation of new software database	No
Opticon Australia Pty Ltd	Level1/28 Ainslie Avenue, Canberra ACT 2601	\$184,673.37	Development of Electronic Client Information System	Yes. Capital Planning, ACT Health.

Palm Management	GPO Box 2913, Canberra ACT 2601	\$14,300.00	Facilitation of Business Planning workshops	Yes. Director, Alcohol and Drug Program, Community Care, ACT Health.
PALM Management Consultants	GPO Box 2913, Canberra ACT 2601	\$14,350.00	Health Portfolio Restructure	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Pasco Hall & Associates	PO Box 4615, Sydney NSW 2001	\$9,860.00	Review of organisational governance procedures and compliancy to the National Standards for Mental Health Services of the following non-government organisations: 1) Post & Antenatal Depression Support & Information (PANDSI); 2) ACT Mental Health Consumer Network (ACTMHCN)	Yes. Mental Health ACT, ACT Health.
Price Waterhouse	GPO Box 2650, Sydney NSW	\$27,000.00	1. Tax consulting service in relation to TCH Rights of Private Practice Arrangements 2. Prepare and lodge submission to the ATO seeking confirmation of Scheme A (Rights of Private Practice) arrangements 3. Advice regarding super guarantee obligations re above	Yes. Financial Management, The Canberra Hospital.

Price Waterhouse Coopers	L4/64 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra ACT 2601	\$20,000.00	Budget Cost Estimates	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Professor P Gatenby	46 Appel Crescent, Fadden ACT 2904	\$11,250.00	Advice to Draft Health Policies	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Sandi Plummer	PO Box 26, Gundaroo NSW 2620	Total cost \$14,500.00 Balance paid \$2,500.00 (2002/03)	Communications Workshop	No.
Smartcontracting (Errol Kurger)	PO Box 111, Hawker ACT 2615	\$6,644.00	Review of Nursing Uniform Contract	Yes. Senior Nursing Advisor, The Canberra Hospital.
Stygron Systems Pty Ltd	PO Box 97, Hall ACT	\$5,040.00	Computer programming on Cervical Screening database	No.
Tania Parkes Consultancy	51 Denny Street, Latham ACT 2615	\$5,310.00 YTD work completed & paid for this financial year. Expected total is \$8,640.00	ACT Night Shelter Project facilitation and management	Not yet finalised.
Towbridge Deloitte	L2/60 Marcus Clarks Street, Canberra ACT 2601	\$14,716.20	Medical Indemnity for the AHMAC Working Group	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Turallo Consulting	GPO Box 2785, Canberra City ACT	\$35,836.00	Industrial relations advice and assistance	No.
VHIA	23-27 Wellington Street, St Kilda VIC 3182	\$90,868.16	Project 2000+	Yes. Business & Infrastructure, The Canberra Hospital.
Web Risk Management	PO Box 12, Para Hills SA 5096	\$6,674.01	Visiting Medical Offices project (VMO)	Yes. Executive Coordination, ACT Health.
Wildpeak Pty Ltd	PO Box 111, Belconnen ACT	\$10,520.00	Computer programming on Cervical Screening database	No.

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NB: Consultancy by Healthcare Management Advisors for the Mental Health ACT Strategy and Action Plan is being funded out of National Mental Health Strategy funds (\$130,000)

**Water efficient shower heads
(Question No 429)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Environment, upon notice:

In relation to rebates for water efficient shower heads:

- (1) How many Canberrans have taken up the Government's offer of buying water efficient shower heads and receiving the \$30 Government rebate;
- (2) How much has this scheme cost the Government in total, that is in rebates, advertising of the scheme and any other associated costs;
- (3) Is there a budget for this program and if so, has it been exceeded, or not;
- (4) How many extra employees, if any, were needed in the Department of Urban Services to process rebates;
- (5) Is this offer still open to Canberra residents, if so, how much longer is the offer open for, if not, when did the offer close.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the Member's questions are as follows:

- (1) Approximately 2,700 applications were processed for rebates on an estimated 4,000 showerheads (applicants could apply for up to 2 showerheads with a rebate of up to \$30 rebate on each.).
 - (2) The total cost is estimated at \$136,000, comprising \$111,000 in rebates and \$25,000 in administrative, advertising and evaluation costs.
 - (3) The original budget for the program was \$113,000. ACTEW Corporation has agreed to meet the costs that exceed this budget allocation.
 - (4) No extra employees were needed within the Department. The rebates were processed by the Home Energy Advice Team (HEAT), the contracted provider of the Government's energy advisory service.
 - (5) The offer closed on 12 January 2003.
-

**Government—staff interviews
(Question No 431)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 5 March 2003

In September 2002 there is travel recorded for a passenger to attend an interview for the position of Chief of Staff to the Chief Minister:

- (1) From where did the applicant fly;
- (2) How long did the interview take;
- (3) Did the passenger conduct any other business on behalf of the ACT during this trip;
- (4) Why was it necessary to pay for 2.5 days travel allowance in order to attend an interview;
- (5) Was the option of a telephone interview considered;
- (6) Why was the interview not conducted by telephone.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. Perth
2. Approximately 2 hours
3. No
4. Due to family commitments the person could not get an earlier flight out of Perth, and therefore had to overnight in Melbourne.
5. Yes
6. The preference was to meet the applicant in person and conduct a person to person interview.

**Tobacco—prosecutions
(Question No 438)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

In relation to the sale of tobacco in the Territory:

- (1) Were there any prosecutions against ACT tobacco retailers for the sale of cigarettes to minors in (a) 2001 or (b) 2002;
- (2) If so, (a) were they successful and (b) what were the dates of prosecution;

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- (3) Are regular checks undertaken to ensure that retailers are abiding by amendments made to the *Tobacco Act* in 1999 (enforced in 2000) regarding issues like no point-of-sale tobacco advertising;
- (4) Have any businesses been warned or fined for point-of-sale advertising or other infringements since the changes to the Act, if so, can any details about those warnings or fines be provided.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is:

With regard to the first and second questions, the answer is: no, there have been no prosecutions during 2001 or 2002. There have also been no administrative sanctions imposed against licensees for breaches of the Act.

The *Tobacco Act 1927* provides for the imposition of administrative sanctions, as well as for prosecutions, for offences against the Act. In practice, administrative sanctions would be the normal course of actions for a first offence by a licensee, with the option of prosecution still available for offences by non-licensees and where appropriate.

With regard to the third question, public health officers undertake routine compliance checks of tobacco outlets in relation to point-of-sale advertising and promotion requirements, including product displays and the display of required health warning notices. Officers also respond to complaints about particular premises. During 2001-2002, public health officers conducted 283 inspections of tobacco outlets; 386 inspections were conducted during the first half of 2002-2003, representing about 75 percent of all licensed outlets. During 2001-2002, 88 percent of premises complied with the legislative requirements.

With regard to the fourth question, a number of businesses received warnings over the periods 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. Translation of hardcopy records to the Health Protection Service's new computer database was to occur in 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. However, all hard-copy files were destroyed in the HPS Holder fire on 18 January 2003 prior to migration of these records to the new database. As a result, information about the number and nature of warnings issued to businesses is not available.

Seniors—residential care places (Question No 441)

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

In relation to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare release of 26 February 2003 on the Executive Summary of the Need for and Provision of Human Resources in the ACT, where under the category Aged Care it is reported that there are fewer aged residential places in Canberra than other capital cities and 15 percent of residents who do occupy ACT places are from outside the ACT:

- (1) How many extra residential care places should the ACT have if we currently have 80

per 1000 people compared with 86 per 1000 elsewhere if we had an 86 per 1000 entitlement;

- (2) How many residential care places does the ACT have under the 80 per 1000 ratio;
- (3) Why is there this discrepancy;
- (4) If 15 percent of ACT aged care residents are from outside the ACT, how many places does this translate to under (a) the 80 places per 1000 and (b) the 86 places per 1000;
- (5) What consideration is given for this use by interstate residents of ACT places by the State or Territory from where they came;
- (6) What is the Government doing to address the (a) discrepancy in actual places and (b) to seek some sort of consideration for the use of scarce ACT residential care places by interstate residents.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is:

- (1) The AIHW report presents a picture of service delivery in aged care as at June 2001. The Aged Care Chapter within the 2003 Report on Government Services (RoGS) reports service delivery as at June 2002 . It is important to note that there are discrepancies between data reported by the AIHW and the RoGS for the 2001 financial year, and there is later data available from the Commonwealth on the most recent allocations.

In response to the questions raised above, answers will refer to the AIHW report unless otherwise stated.

Aged Care ratios are calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{ratio} = \text{number of places} / \left(\frac{\text{population} \geq 70 \text{ years}}{1000} \right)$$

The AIHW report indicates that population estimates are based on data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics as at June 2000. Based on the above formula it is presumed that the AIHW has used a population of 18,500 people aged 70 and over for the ACT.

If the ACT's ratios were to increase to 86 per 1000 the ACT would require an additional 111 places. Overall, according to the Commonwealth benchmark, the ACT is entitled to 90 residential places per 1000. The data presented in the report by the AIHW indicates that both nationally and within the ACT, the benchmarks are not being met. If the ACT were to increase to 90 places per 1000, the number of places would need to increase by 185 places. The AIHW report does not clearly specify whether the figures refer to operational places or total allocations. In reference to similar figures in the RoGS it is assumed that the report is referring to operational places.

- (2) According to the report, there are 1,480 places in the ACT, equating to a ratio of 80 places per 1000 aged 70 and over (Table 2.4).

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- (3) Discrepancies between ACT performance, national performance and the Commonwealth benchmarks may be due to either the number of allocations being provided by the Commonwealth, or the time taken to operationalise provisional allocations made by the Commonwealth.
- (4) It has not been possible to source within the AIHW report the information that indicates that 15 percent of aged care residents are from interstate. However, using this figure, this translates to the following places under (a) 80 places per 1000 and (b) 86 places per 1000:
 - (a) 222 places
 - (b) 239 places

These calculations are based on the number of places allocated to the ACT (1480 places), and not on the number of residents occupying the places. Note that page 13 of the AIHW report indicates that there were 1,434 people in residential care in the ACT on 30 June 2001, indicating that there was a 97% occupancy rate.

- (5) Cross border usage of ACT resources is monitored by the Government across a number of service delivery areas. With regards to residential aged care facilities, neither the ACT Government nor the Commonwealth are able to influence which residents are accepted by aged care facilities within the ACT. Consideration of cross border usage can be undertaken through the Aged Care Planning Advisory Committee who advise the Commonwealth on aged care allocations. As part of this process the Committee will be considering the adequacy of the Commonwealth benchmarks in meeting demand for aged care services in the ACT.
- (6) (a) The ACT Government is actively working to increase the number of operational places in the ACT that have been allocated by the Commonwealth Government. Applications for land releases are considered in the wider context of the community including consideration of public interest and the classification of areas as urban open space. The Government is looking at ways to make this process quicker. Current applications being considered include land around Lake Ginninderra and near Calvary Hospital.
 - (b) As indicated in response number (5) decisions to accept clients to residential aged care are made at the discretion of aged care facilities. The recourse available for the Government to address resource availability in the ACT is through the Aged Care Planning Advisory Committee, and other formal groups such as the Aged Care Officials Group, Australian Health Ministers' Conference, and Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council. Ensuring that there are enough places to meet demand in the ACT is a high priority for the ACT Government and other jurisdictions.

**Economic White Paper
(Question No 448)**

Mr Smyth asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 11 March 2003:

- (1) How much of the \$250,000 allocated for the Economic White Paper has been expended to date;
- (2) How much has it cost to prepare the Economic Discussion Paper;
- (3) Are there any estimates of the cost of on completion of the Economic White Paper;
- (4) When was the decision taken to release an Economic Discussion Paper before the actual Economic White Paper;
- (5) Why has there been a delay in releasing the Economic White Paper;
- (6) What do you hope to achieve through the Economic Discussion Paper.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) All of it.
- (2) The cost of "Building Canberra's Economy: A Discussion Paper for the Economic White Paper" cannot be separated from the cost of developing the Economic White Paper. The cost of developing the Economic White Paper to date is \$467,000, of which \$250,000 was allocated in 2001-02 and \$250,000 in 2002-03.
- (3) The total cost for the Economic White Paper is estimated at \$600,000.
- (4) The decision to release a Discussion Paper before the Economic White Paper was taken in December 2002.
- (5) The release of the Economic White Paper has been delayed to allow time for public comment on the Discussion Paper.
- (6) Release of the Discussion Paper will raise awareness of the current features of the economy of the ACT and possible policy options for its future development. The paper seeks community and industry comment and feedback as part of the development of the Economic White Paper for the ACT.

**Capital works
(Question No 457)**

Mr Smyth asked the Treasurer, upon notice:

In relation to the Capital Works Budget:

- (1) How much of the 2002-03 Capital Works Budget has been expended to date;
- (2) What projects in the Capital Works Budget have been completed, what was the total cost and was this cost under, over or on budget;

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- (3) Can the Minister provide a list of projects and how much has been expended to date, if the projects are running to budget and to time schedule and if not running to budget or schedule, why not;
- (4) Can the minister provide a list of any projects that have not been started to date and explain why they have not been started;
- (5) Is there estimated to be an over spend, under spend or accurate expenditure (as listed in the Budget Papers) of the entire Capital Works Budget by the end of this financial year.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Total expenditure for the first half of the 2002-03 financial year was \$35.702m. This represents 24.2% of the total funds available for expenditure of \$147.237m (including budget deferrals, prior year unspent funds and variations to date).
- (2) A list of the projects that were completed by 31 December 2002 is at Attachment 1. Of these projects, there is a collective underspend of \$0.152m.
- (3) Attachment 2 provides a list, as at December 2002, of expenditure to date of all Capital works projects.

A list of projects that will be delayed this financial year is at Attachment 4.

In many cases the reason of delay is due to the need for complex and prudent planning and design processes to be completed.

- (4) The list of projects that had not incurred any expenditure is at Attachment 3. At this stage, most of these projects are expected to achieve their budgeted expenditure by the end of the financial year. The exceptions to these are at Attachment 4.

In many cases, there has been planning and tendering activity incurred on these projects that has not, as yet, translated into financial activity.

In other cases, there have been delays in design and tender processes that have pushed expenditure into the second half of the financial year.

Many of these projects were also not programmed for financial commencement until the second half of the financial year.

- (5) The estimated 2002-03 capital works underspend is approximately \$32m. This is detailed at Attachment 4.

[Attachments 1 to 4 are lodged with the Chamber Support Office]

**Burnout activity—police monitoring
(Question No 468)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 12 March 2003:

- (1) Are there any additional costs to the policing budget in monitoring burnout activity in Braddon on Friday and Saturday nights or does it take place as part of general duties;
- (2) Have any arrests occurred to date this financial year associated with burnout activity in (a) Braddon (b) elsewhere in Canberra (please list suburb and site if possible);
- (3) Braddon used to be the hot spot for burnouts are there any other areas that are being used frequently for burnout activity;
- (4) Have any warnings been issued to date this financial year associated with burnout activity in (a) Braddon (b) elsewhere in Canberra (please list suburb and site if possible);
- (5) How many call outs have police attended due to burnout activity (a) to date this financial year and (b) in 2001-02;
- (6) What percentage of policing time would be dedicated to attendance or calls in relation to burnouts taking place.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) There are no additional costs to the policing budget in monitoring burnout activity in Braddon on Friday and Saturday nights. It takes place as part of general duties.
- (2) No arrests have occurred to date this financial year associated with burnout activity in Braddon, however there has been 1 caution and 59 summonses issued. For elsewhere in Canberra there has been 1 arrest in Gordon and 62 other charges within the ACT Region.
- (3) Police statistics do not indicate other hotspots for burnout activity.
- (4) Yes, cautions have been issued for burnouts. A search of the police data base reveals the following information, this financial year to date (listed by suburb):

Suburb	Number of burnouts
Braddon	1
Calwell	1
Kaleen	1
City	1
Fyshwick	1
Palmerston	1

Braddon	1
Wanniassa	2
Chisholm	2
Phillip	1 Aggravated

(5) The information cannot be provided by the Computer Aided Dispatch System.

(6) The information cannot be provided by the Computer Aided Dispatch System.

**Oncology patients
(Question No 474)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

In relation to oncology patients going interstate for treatment:

- (1) How many ACT patients have been forced to travel interstate for cancer treatment (a) in the last 4 months (could you provide monthly figures), (b) to date this financial year, (c) in 2001-02 and (d) in 2000-01;
- (2) To what hospitals were these patients above sent to;
- (3) What was the cost to the ACT through the Interstate Patient Travel Assistance Scheme (IPTAS) (a) in the last 4 months (could you provide monthly figures), (b) to date this financial year, (c) in 2001-02 and (d) in 2000 -01;
- (4) Are there any other costs outside of IPTAS in sending ACT patients interstate for treatment, if so, what are they and can figures be provided for (a) the last 4 months (could you provide monthly figures), (b) the current date this financial year, (c) 2001-02 and (d) 2000-01.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is:

ACT patients are not forced to travel interstate for treatment but can be referred by the treating specialist following an assessment of their clinical urgency or the ability to access their care in the most appropriate time frame. This referral is made in consultation with the patient. Paediatric patients are included in this interstate referral category as they are routinely transferred to the established, specialist paediatric services for management.

The following information has been drawn from the records of IPTAS usage and may not reflect the total incidence of those traveling interstate for treatment. No other source of information is available.

- (1) The following numbers of ACT patients have traveled interstate in order to receive cancer treatment:

- (a) in the last four months – **18** December 2002 (8), January 2003 (6), February 2003 (1) and March 2003 (3);
 - (b) to date this financial year – **28**
 - (c) in 2001-02 – **66**
 - (d) in 2000-01 - **63**
- (2) The following hospitals have been utilized for the delivery of treatment during 2002-03:
- (a) Illawarra Cancer Care Centre, Wollongong
 - (b) Nepean Hospital, Penrith
 - (c) Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney
 - (d) Riverina Cancer Care Centre, Wagga
 - (e) Royal Adelaide Hospital
 - (f) Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney
 - (g) Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney
 - (h) Royal Womens Hospital, Sydney
 - (i) Seventh Day Adventist Hospital, Sydney
 - (j) St George Cancer Centre, Sydney
 - (k) St Vincents Hospital, Sydney
 - (l) Sydney Childrens Hospital, Sydney
 - (m) Wesley Clinic, Brisbane
- (3) The cost to the ACT of the Interstate Patient Travel Assistance Scheme (IPTAS) has been as follows:
- (a) in the last four months - **\$17,152.94** (December 2002 - \$5,968.46, January 2003 - \$4,826.00, February 2003 - \$1,850.48 and March 2003 - \$4,508.00)
 - (b) to date this financial year - **\$23,086.38**
 - (c) in 2001-02 – **\$48,855.74**
 - (d) in 2000-01 – **\$36,206.73**
- (4) There are no other costs to the ACT incurred in sending patients interstate for treatment.

**Hospitals—interstate patients
(Question No 475)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Health:

In relation to the cost of interstate patients:

- (1) Can the Minister provide a detailed list of the cost (a) to date this financial year and (b) in 2001-02 of interstate patients on the ACT Health system;
- (2) Did the cross border funds allocated to the ACT from NSW cover the cost of interstate patients in 2001-02;

- (3) Are cross border funds provided to the ACT from NSW on par with expenditure on interstate patients to date, if not, what is the additional burden on the ACT Health budget.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is:

- (1) It is not possible to provide a detailed list of the cost (a) to date this financial year and (b) in 2001-02 of interstate patients on the ACT Health System, because financial data and costs have not yet been agreed with other States and Territories. Cross border payments are finalized based on full year data for each financial year. Data for the 2001-02 financial year have been provided and received from other States and Territories and the ACT is working with them to validate the data and agree costs. Data for the 2002-03 financial year will not be available until after July 2003 and information about the costs associated with interstate patients will not be available until all the data have been agreed with all States and Territories. This process as been followed since the cross border procedures were introduced in 1998-99.
- (2) The funds received from NSW for cross border patients are based on the methodology agreed by an independent arbiter in April 2000. At that time, the ACT believed that the funding provided by the independent arbiter was insufficient, but was required to accept the arbiter's decision in accordance with the Australian Health Care Agreements. The ACT government is still of the view that funds received from NSW under the arbiter's agreement are less than the cost of providing care to those patients.
- (3) Assuming that question 3 refers to the current financial year, the ACT government is not in a position to determine the additional burden caused by interstate patients because the data is not available.

**Mirrabei-Gundaroo drives intersection
(Question No 479)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to work on the corner of Mirrabei Drive and Gundaroo Drive Gungahlin.

- 1) Can the Minister explain what works are taking place on the roundabout on the corner of Mirrabei Drive and Gundaroo Drive in Gungahlin;
- 2) When will the works be completed;
- 3) Will a new light be erected on the roundabout, if not, why not;
- 4) If a new light is to be erected will the government consider installing mobile telephone facilities to the light, if not, why not;
- 5) There also appears to be works on the land diagonal in the direction of the Lake and skate park, can the Minister explain what works are taking place there.

Mr Corbell: The answers to the member's questions are as follows:

- 1) Optus is installing mobile phone infrastructure above the existing light pole in the center of the roundabout. The facility will be similar in design to the existing Optus lightpole facility at the roundabout on William Slim and Owen Dixon Drives (McKellar).
- 2) The work on the light pole has finished. The antennas are up and the man proof fence around the light pole has been removed. There is still some work to be done on the service hut. The facility will be "switched on" the week ending 11 April 2003.
- 3) The existing lightpole at the center of the roundabout will be extended in height to accommodate the mobile phone antennas. The antennas are to be placed above the existing lights on the pole.
- 4) The existing light pole is being extended to accommodate the antennas.
- 5) The area in question, northwest of the roundabout towards Yerrabi District Park is to house the equipment hut associated with the antennas on the lightpole. The hut is located in Urban Open Space and will be screened from the road with new landscaping.

**ACTION—natural gas powered buses
(Question No 480)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning:

In relation to Request for Tender No. T02358 concerning the supply and delivery of compressed natural gas powered buses:

- (1) Why was the assessment of bus bodies in the context of this request for tender considered outside the formal tender process;
- (2) Why was a particular company specified in Request for Tender No. T02358 as the supplier of bodies for the buses being sought in this request for tender;
- (3) What process was undertaken to evaluate the capabilities of the company specified in clause 4.4.2 (c) of the request for tender;
- (4) What other manufacturers of bus bodies were identified during the assessment process;
- (5) Was any advice sought from relevant industry associations or similar organisations to assist in identifying companies that could be considered to supply bus bodies. If so, which of these organisations provided advice;
- (6) Were all these companies contacted as part of the assessment process. If not, why not;

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- (7) What contact was made with each company that was considered to have the capability to supply bodies for the buses being sought in this request for tender;
- (8) If any companies were not contacted, were they or any bus bodies they had made subject to assessment to establish their capability to supply bus bodies;
- (9) Why were all these other companies determined as being unable to be considered to supply bus bodies as part of this request for tender;
- (10) On what basis did ACT Procurement Solution and the ACT Procurement Board accept that Clause 8(c) of the Government Procurement (Principle) Guidelines 2002 (No.2) should not apply to the supply of bodies being sought by Request for Tender No. T02358;
- (11) What process was undertaken to determine whether a particular material was more suitable than other materials for the bus bodies;
- (12) If a particular material has been preferred, on what basis was this decision reached and why were other materials not preferred;
- (13) What existing Government contracts, if any, were identified as being relevant to this request for tender;
- (14) Has it been possible to utilise any of these contracts in seeking the supply of the buses specified in this request for tender;
- (15) Have there been any other tenders for the supply of buses to ACTION that have specified a particular company to be the supplier of any components of the buses;
- (16) If so, which companies have been specified and why were these particular companies so specified;
- (17) What action will be taken to ensure that the price at which bus bodies are supplied, following the finalisation of Request for Tender No. T02358, will be competitive.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The market research conducted as a preliminary process to the Request for Tender extended over two years, and was supplemented by the operational evaluation of two buses currently supplied under two contracts to other governments in Australia.

In the course of its assessment, ACTION obtained a demonstration vehicle from each of Brisbane City Council (BCC) and Transport South Australia (TSA). Both vehicles were subjected to a rigorous evaluation with regard to both operational and maintenance aspects.

ACTION sought advice from all coach suppliers, known to have the capacity to meet ACTION's requirements, regarding their ability to supply their standard body type within the timeframe for ACTION's bus acquisition program. All suppliers except

Custom Coaches advised that they were unable to meet that timeframe. This advice was reconfirmed by all suppliers in November 2002, and supported by research conducted by an independent consultant specialising in the bus industry.

- (2) During ACTION's market research and operational evaluation the ACTION Bus Committee evaluated both the Custom Coaches CB60 and a Volgren body. This committee comprised management representatives, drivers and maintenance staff. The bodies are distinctively different in terms of both construction material and construction method.

ACTION selected the CB60 body on the basis of its preference for its welded steel frame construction and for its design attributes. The CB60 body proved to have significant advantages over that supplied by Volgren, including:

- better access to the chassis and mechanical components for maintenance purposes;
- easier repair after an accident; and
- better handling and fuel economy due to the lighter weight of the steel body.

ACTION determined that, of the types of bus bodies available under existing Government contracts, the steel CB60 body was the only body type that would adequately meet the Territory's requirements. The Volgren body is manufactured from bolted aluminium a method with which also has experience, enabling effective user comparisons.

- (3) The ACTION bus committee conducted site inspections of both the Custom Coaches assembly plant in Adelaide and BCC's Volgren assembly plant in Brisbane to evaluate the different bodies. The company specified had undergone significant tender evaluation by Transport SA as part of the MAN/Custom Coaches Contract management. Custom Coaches is the largest manufacturer of bus bodies in Australia and has extensive contracts with both government and non-government bus operators Australia wide.
- (4) The Volgren body was also considered during the assessment process as the only other option available under the existing government contracts. The ACTION bus committee visited the Brisbane City Council Volgren assembly plant and a sample Volgren bus was also evaluated by ACTION in Canberra.
- (5) All existing government contracts were considered. Only Custom Coaches and Volgren bodies were available under the two government contracts assessed to meet ACTION's requirements.

(6) N/A

(7) N/A

(8) N/A

(9) N/A

(10) ACT Procurement Solutions and the ACT Government Procurement Board considered the procurement process proposed by ACTION complied with Section 8 (1)(c) of the Government Procurement (Principles) Guideline 2002 (No 2). In reaching this decision ACT Procurement Solutions and the Board, noted that ACTION had:

- undertaken detailed market research over nearly 2 years;
- decided to limit the evaluation process to buses that were currently under contract to other governments in Australia; to meet ACTION's obligations under the ACT Accessible Transport Plan and the national standards for accessible transport enshrined in the Disability Discrimination Act; and
- determined that only two suppliers could adequately meet ACTION's requirements within the specified timeframe; ACTION had determined that, of the types of bus bodies available under existing Government contracts, the steel CB60 body type was the only body that would adequately meet the Territory's requirements and included the requirement for the steel CB60 body type in their tender documentation.

(11) In house evaluation of the available body materials was conducted and based on a number of engineering principles namely, repairability, durability, serviceability and longevity, ACTION determined that bodies manufactured from steel were more suitable than other materials.

(12) Currently 90% of ACTION's fleet is bodied in steel, with the other 10% bodied in aluminium. ACTION has gained considerable experience in the repair and maintenance of both steel and aluminium body types. This experience leads ACTION to the conclusion that welded steel bodies offer a higher level of serviceability than aluminium bodies.

(13) The contract for the supply of MAN buses with Custom Coach bodies to Transport SA and the Contract for the supply of Scania buses with Volgren bodies (with a Custom Coach body option) to Brisbane City Council.

(14) Yes – the ongoing evaluation of these two contracts is the basis of the present RFT.

(15) No

(16) N/A

(17) The responses to the RFT have been subject to Value for Money analysis in accordance with the Procurement Plan endorsed by the ACT Procurement Board. The value of this procurement is its genesis in existing government contracts, which enabled highly competitive bus prices to be offered.

**Public Transport Futures Feasibility Study
(Question No 481)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to light rail:

1. Will the Public Transport Futures Feasibility Study be finished in time for consideration as part of the coming Budget, if so, when do you expect to be able to release details, if not, why not;
2. Will the Minister conduct a full cost-benefit analysis of this expensive project before committing Government funds to such a project

Mr Corbell: The answers to the Member's questions are as follows:

- (1) The draft Public Transport Futures Feasibility Study report is due to be completed in June 2003. As part of the 2003/2004 Budget the Government is giving consideration to a package of potential projects that would be consistent with the directions and preliminary findings of the Study.
- (2) The Public Transport Futures Feasibility Study will set out a vision and strategies for future public transport in Canberra. I expect that it will identify a number of short-term and long-term strategies and initiatives. Projects identified in this Plan, particularly those requiring funding will be subject to detailed assessment and analysis, prior to being included in capital works programs or other funding programs.

**ACTION—bus services
(Question No 482)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to ACTION bus services:

- (1) What is the percentage of accurate ACTION bus arrivals at all routes across Canberra;
- (2) What is the percentage of arrivals in operation records that are (a) 1 minute late (b) 2 minutes late (c) 3 minutes late (d) 4 minutes late; (e) 5 minutes late (f) more than 5 minutes late but less than 10 minutes late (g) more than 10 minutes late;
- (3) What are the total patronage statistics each month of this financial year, including February (if February figures are available);
- (4) What is the percentage increase or decrease in patronage from the beginning of the financial year to the current day;

- (5) A new timetable with 'improved' services for Gungahlin, Campbell Park and the Hospice was announced in April last year, from that time can you please provide the number of patrons for each month for each route of these new services (ie: April 2002 to February 2003).

Mr Corbell: The answer to the Member's questions is as follows:

1. ACTION currently operates an average of 99.8 % of its advertised scheduled services across Canberra. On time arrivals included services that arrive no more than 5 minutes late.
2. ACTION does not maintain records in the detail requested. Surveys are conducted regularly to monitor on time performance. Services that may be delayed due to changing traffic conditions etc are modified as appropriate to meet the scheduled running times.
3. The following table provides monthly total patronage for the period July to February for the financial years 2001-02 and 2002-03.

Month	Total Patronage			
	2001/02	2002/03	Difference	%
July	1,229,523	1,283,467	53,944	4.39%
August	1,547,629	1,571,411	23,782	1.54%
September	1,415,283	1,441,198	25,915	1.83%
October	1,314,155	1,376,266	62,111	4.73%
November	1,476,050	1,460,510	(15,540)	(1.05%)
December	1,007,230	1,077,040	69,810	6.93%
January	851,515	872,818	21,303	2.50%
February	1,359,449	1,420,633	61,184	4.50%
Total	10,200,834	10,503,343	302,509	2.97%

4. Overall patronage growth year over year for the period 1 July 2002 to 28 February 2003 is approximately 3%. Adult patronage, over the same period has grown approximately 8%.

5. The introduction of the action network since 13 May 2002:

Gungahlin

- Overall there was a 15% increase to services with 4 complete routes operating as opposed to 3 ½ under the existing network. This is a total of 205 extra services for Gungahlin.
- There was an increase from 166 to 198 services per day from Monday to Friday.

- Proportionate improvements were made to weekend timetables with an extra 34 services operating on a Saturday and 21 extra services on Sundays.
- Table 1 below shows that when comparing the period 1 July 2001 to 28 February 2002 and 1 July 2002 to 28 February 2003 there has been a 22.8% increase in the total number of passengers in the Gungahlin area travelling on ACTION services.

Table 1: Comparison of Total Passengers to and from Gungahlin for the Period 1 July 01 to 28 February 02 and 1 July 02 to 28 February 03

Period of Time	Total Number of Passengers to and from Gungahlin
1 July 2001 to 28 February 2002	508,919
1 July 2002 to 28 February 2003	624,814
Percentage Increase	22.8%

Introduction of a New Route 755 for Campbell Park and Russell Employees in Gungahlin

- A new route 755, from Gungahlin to Campbell Park and Russell, was introduced in November 2002 as a result of this demand. Based on current trends, ACTION expects growth to continue and is continually reviewing its services to meet the demand.
- The route 755 operates one service in the morning at 7.09am from Gungahlin and one service in the evening at 4.22pm from Russell Office.

Extension of the Route 33 to the Hospice

- In 13 May 2002 the Route 33 was extended on some trips to service the Hospice.
- Out of 51 trips daily between Monday and Friday, 28 trips daily service the Hospice.
- Out of 33 trips on a Saturday, 27 trips service the Hospice.
- On a Sunday out of a total of 23 trips, 9 trips service the Hospice.
- The total patronage for the Route 33 since May 2002 is:

Table 2: Total Monthly Patronage Report for the Route 33

Month	Total Monthly Patronage
May 2002	27,611
June 2002	23,709
July 2002	24,596
August 2002	26,636
September 2002	24,8952
October 2002	24,499
November 2002	24,146
December 2002	21,258
January 2003	19,729
February 2003	24,511

**Yarralumla Nursery—free plant issues
(Question No 484)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to free plant issues from the Yarralumla Nursery to new home owners:

- (1) What is the current (a) price limit and (b) number of plants that can be obtained by residents who have bought a new home;
- (2) Is this plant issue for home owners on a new block or can new home owners of an established block also apply for plants;
- (3) Will this offer be open to (a) new homes constructed following the Canberra bushfires and (b) gardens damaged following the Canberra bushfires, if so, what impact will this have on the budget;
- (4) Will the same restrictions to price and number of plants that can be obtained apply to Bushfire victims who have lost their homes or have had gardens destroyed or burnt.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The current price limit for plants that can be obtained by residents building a house on a new block is \$110, there is no limit to the number of plants this may amount to, however the maximum value of each tree purchased is \$20 and each shrub \$10.
- (2) The current plant issue scheme is only for new home owners on a new block. It does not apply to new home owners on an existing block.
- (3) This offer will now be open to all fire damaged and destroyed residential properties, where the owner has chosen to rebuild. To provide the plant issue for fire affected properties will cost \$200,000.

- (4) Yes, the same restrictions to price and number of plants, as detailed in (1) above, will apply to homes damaged or destroyed by the bushfires.
-

**TransACT—shareholdings
(Question No 493)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Treasurer, upon notice:

In relation to the rebalancing of Australian Gas Light's business and "determining the future of assets such as TransACT" (Sydney Morning Herald, Business News, 7 March 2003, pp21):

- (1) What effect will any decision have upon ACTEWAGL's involvement with TransACT;
- (2) If AGL decides TransACT is not a core asset, what is the implication for ACTEW;
- (3) What is the financial commitment at 28 February 2003 of ACTEWAGL in TransACT.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) I am advised by ACTEW Corporation, which is a minority shareholder with several other private sector investors in TransACT, that any decision by the Australian Gas Light Company (AGL) to sell part or all of its shareholding in TransACT will have no effect on any operational arrangements between ActewAGL and TransACT.
 - (2) I am advised by ACTEW that any decision by AGL relating to its TransACT shareholding will have no implications for ACTEW.
 - (3) ActewAGL is not a TransACT shareholder.
-

**Begging and busking
(Question No 494)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the laws concerning begging:

- (1) Are there any statutes in relation to begging, ie. openly soliciting for money, such as regularly occurs at Civic Bus Interchange and Garema Place;
- (2) Is there a difference in law for (1) above compared with busking, ie. singing or playing a musical instrument, and inviting payment;

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(3) Is the law enforced and if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) There is no legislation in relation to begging in public.
- (2) Currently there is no legislation in relation to busking in public and the *Hawkers Act 2003* (Section 4) explicitly excludes busking from the Act.
- (3) There is no law that exists at present to regulate either begging or busking.

**Wheelchair ramps
(Question No 495)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community, Services, upon notice:

In relation to the installation of wheelchair ramps in public housing:

- (1) What is the time-frame for installation of wheelchair ramps in public housing;
- (2) Is a distinction made between those with a disability and those who are ill, or terminally ill, in such installation, and if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Requests for wheelchair ramps and other modifications for people with disabilities are dealt with based on their priority in terms of client needs as determined by occupational therapists. In some cases it may be necessary to consider relocating the tenant to another property if there are issues about a particular property's suitability for the nature of works which would be necessary to respond to the tenants' needs.
- (2) See 1 above. No distinction is made on the basis of tenant life expectancy for humanitarian reasons.

**Glebe Park food hall site
(Question No 496)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to the status of the Glebe Park food hall:

- (1) What is the current status of the Glebe Park food hall;
- (2) Who owns this empty complex;

(3) What future plans, if any, exists for the complex.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The former food hall is part of a larger block containing parkland at the rear of the disused food court and adjacent to Glebe Park. The current owner has been negotiating with Planning and Land Management (PALM) for some time to redevelop that site. PALM refused to approve a recent Development Application (DA) to demolish the site because there is neither an acceptable proposal to redevelop the area or an acceptable management plan for the land in the meantime. The lessee has sought a review of this refusal in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)
- (2) The Amalgamated Property Group is the current owner of the land where the former Glebe Park Food hall and adjacent parkland is located.
- (3) Please refer to (1) above.

**Elder abuse
(Question No 497)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to the Government's response of 26 September 2002 to Report 11 of the Standing Committee on Health and Community Care entitled Elder Abuse in the ACT:

- (1) Has a single telephone contact number yet been established for reports of elder abuse (Recommendation 4) and if so:
 - a) What is the number,
 - b) When will it be established,
 - c) How often to 28 February has it been accessed,
 - d) If not established why not.
- (2) Has the Older Women's Boarding House crisis accommodation in Weston Creek (Recommendation 6):
 - a) Been opened,
 - b) How many residents to February 2003,
 - c) If not opened, why not.
- (3) Has the Powers of Attorney Act been examined to review existing provisions (Recommendation 9c) and has the Department of Justice and Community Safety investigated a system of monitoring for abuses of Powers of Attorney (Recommendation 9e) and if not, why not.

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- (4) Has the Community Awareness Campaign scheduled for 2003 (Recommendation 12) been implemented as yet and if not, when will it be.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) Discussions have been undertaken with community organisations and relevant agencies regarding the most appropriate mechanism for establishing a single telephone contact number. Based on these discussions, a business case has been developed and is being considered as part of the 2003-04 Budget process.
- (2) A site has been identified in Chapman to establish the eight-unit older women's boarding house. Subject to positive outcomes with the consultation process with the local community, it is anticipated that the boarding house will be operational by the end of 2003.
- (3) The Department of Justice and Community Safety is currently developing the parameters for undertaking the review of the Powers of Attorney legislation, which is proposed to commence shortly. It is noted that there are a number of issues, such as the significant proportion of enduring powers that are entered into by other than the aged (i.e. for business purposes, estate planning etc.), will also be taken into account in the review.
- (4) Following discussions with other State Government departments, ACT agencies and community groups, a business case has been developed for the community awareness campaign and is being considered as part of the 2003-04 Budget process. The broad community awareness and education campaign will be undertaken following the outcomes of the Budget process, and in close consultation with the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing.

**Gungahlin Drive
(Question No 498)**

Ms Tucker asked the Minister for Planning:

In relation to:.

- (1) Could the Minister please provide full itemised details of costs incurred between October 2001 and January 2003 on expert reports, community consultancies, engineering studies, design work, etc on progressing its plans to construct Gungahlin Drive Extension to the West of the Australian Institute of Sport.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) With the change of government in October 2001 the Department of Urban Services commissioned a series of studies investigating the construction of the Gungahlin Drive Extension. These studies covered environmental and engineering issues along the full length of the corridor from the Barton Highway to the Glenloch Interchange including adopting an alignment to the west of the Australian Institute of Sport in the

Bruce precinct as well as the extension of the road south of Belconnen Way past Aranda to the Glenloch Interchange.

This work progressed to include public consultation (including hiring of facilities and setting up of a website), publications and preparation of the Preliminary Assessment report. The majority of the work undertaken in this period will form the basis for the detailed design and construction of the road

The costs associated with this project also include additional staffing resources:

studies (including the Preliminary Assessment report)	\$1,140,000
public consultation	\$41,000
publications	\$13,000
additional staffing costs	\$76,000
TOTAL	\$1,270,000

Youth—Professor de Oliveira (Question No 499)

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to the visit by Professor Walter de Oliveira, “sponsored” by yourself and Ms Kerrie Tucker:

- (1) Who paid for Professor de Oliveira’s visit;
- (2) What was the cost of the visit and from what budget did the money come;
- (3) What was the purpose of the visit and how long was the visit;
- (4) How do other members of the Assembly sponsor visiting dignitaries, do guidelines exist for such applications and if so, what are these guidelines.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Cornwell’s question is:

1. The trip by Professor Walter de Oliveira was partially funded by the Department of Education, Youth and Family Services (Youth Services Branch and Student Support Services).
2. The contribution by the Department of Education, Youth and Family Services to the cost of Professor de Oliveira’s visit was \$3,381 shared equally between Youth Services and Student Support Services.

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Professor de Oliveira's accommodation was provided privately at no cost to the ACT government.

3. Minister Simon Corbell (as Minister for Education and Community Services) approved the visit of Professor de Oliveira in 2002 with a view to inspiring the youth and school sectors to evaluate their work in comparison to approaches used in Brazil.

Professor de Oliveira is a world expert on the issue of addressing the needs of marginalised young people. He has two doctorates (education and psychiatry) and is author of *Working with Children on the Streets of Brazil*. He is eminently qualified to speak to the youth and school sectors on youth at risk.

Professor de Oliveira undertook a variety of engagements for the department including a number of roundtable seminars for youth leaders in government and non-government agencies. He provided a number of workshops for the Youth Coalition, Health Promoting Schools Network, speaking engagements to principals, managers, directors and deputy principals in the department. He also provided a workshop to the Chief Minister's department.

Professor de Oliveira had a number of engagements outside of the Department of Education, Youth and Family Services including the Commonwealth Departments of Education, Science and Training and Family and Community Services, Australian National University, University of Canberra and Australian Catholic University.

The visit to the ACT by Professor de Oliveira was for 2 weeks.

4. The Assembly does not have guidelines for sponsoring visits by dignitaries. Visiting dignitaries and consultants are engaged by departments according to their own needs and procedures.

Australian Hungarian Club (Question No 500)

Mrs Cross asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to the sale of the Australian Hungarian Club.

- (1) When was the contract for the sale of the club executed;
- (2) Has the Minister been given a copy of the contract;
- (3) Has the Minister seen a copy of the contract;
- (4) Who are the parties (buyers and sellers) in the contract;
- (5) Who signed the contract on behalf of the Hungarian Club;

- (6) Is the Minister satisfied that the person or persons who signed the contract on behalf of the Hungarian Club, complied with the terms and conditions of the Hungarian club, complied with the terms and conditions of the club's articles of association/incorporation;
- (7) Did the Minister make any inquiries as to the terms and conditions for sale of the Hungarian club and its compliance with the club's articles of association/incorporation? If so what were those inquiries;
- (8) Is the Minister satisfied the community consultation process was upheld.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) I do not know if a contract for the sale of the club has ever been executed. An application for Minister consent to transfer the lease was submitted on 3 September 2002. The application was refused on 23 September 2002 on the basis that the transferor did not meet the criteria to hold this particular lease.
- (2) No.
- (3) No.
- (4) The application for Minister consent to transfer purported to transfer the lease from the Hungarian-Australian Club Limited to G E Shaw Associates Pty Ltd.
- (5) As mentioned above I have not seen the contract for sale and therefore, I do not know if there is a contract and if so who signed it, when, and under what authority.
- (6) These are not matters for me to consider.
- (7) As per 6 above.
- (8) In relation to the planning process - Yes

**Finance—contingent liabilities
(Question No 501)**

Mrs Cross asked the Treasurer, upon notice:

In relation to contingent liabilities:

- (1) How are litigation costs expenses expressed in the Territory accounts and where are these costs located? Please itemise each of these costs.
- (2) How are damages (liquidated and unliquidated) represented in the Territory accounts.
- (3) Does Treasury require each Department and authority to stipulate in its annual reports any litigation it is engaged in. If not, why not. How is the cost of such litigation represented in the Territory reports.

- (4) When the Territory is named as a defendant in litigation, is the claim against the Territory represented in the Territory accounts? If so, where.
- (5) Does the Australian Accounting Standard on contingent liabilities require that litigation in the Territory is party to, or is represented in financial audit accounts.
- (6) Is that accounting standard reflected in the Territory's accounting practice? If not, why not? If so, how is it reflected.
- (7) Is it the policy of the Treasurer that the costs of litigation should be easily identifiable in the Territory's accounts? If not, why not.
- (8) What is the amount of damages awarded against the Territory by courts and/or tribunals each financial year for the past five years.
- (9) What is the amount of costs awarded against the Territory by courts and/or tribunals each financial year for the past five years.
- (10) Does the Government make contingency plans in the budget for litigation each year and if so, what is the basis of those calculations? If not why not? If so, how is it represented in the budget papers.
- (11) Who authorises the limits (if any) a department or statutory authority make commit towards litigation in the Territory.
- (12) Does the Government use the principles of model litigation to determine when a court case is settled? In each instance who makes the determination whether to settle or continue a litigation.
- (13) Are there any public service guidelines that govern discretion regarding question 12? If, who determines those guidelines and what force do they have throughout the public service.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Territory accounts are prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards where litigation expenditure is recognised as a liability (SAC4) or a contingent liability in accordance with AASB 1044. Litigation expenses are recognised as a 'liability' where an obligation exists, it is probable that the settlement will be against the Territory and the litigation costs can be measured reliably.

Where expenditure is recognised as a liability the information is presented as payables in the Statement of Financial Position, and an accrual is raised as an other expense in the Statement of Financial Performance.

Litigation expenses are recognised, as a 'contingent liability' where it is unclear whether future payments will be required, or costs cannot be measured reliably. Contingent Liabilities are presented as a note to the annual financial statements. For example, note 37 of the ACT Consolidated Annual Financial Statements (2001-2002)

highlights the cost of litigation claims, and provides a breakdown of significant litigation claims on an Agency basis. This note is replicated in the attachment for your information.

- (2) The presentation of damages in the Territory accounts are dependent on whether the damages fall under the category of contingent liability or actual liability. Where the damages are liquidated it will meet the criteria of a 'liability' (SAC 4 paragraph 48-69) the damages will then be presented in the Statement of Financial Position. If damages are 'unliquidated' the expenses are classified as a 'contingent liability' (AASB 1044), the damages are shown as a note to the annual financial statements.
- (3) Treasury requires all Departments and Statutory Authorities to comply with the Australian Accounting Standards in the development of Annual Financial Statements. The treatment and presentation of litigation expenditure is dependant on the categorisation of the expenditure as a 'liability' or a 'contingent liability', as outlined in response (1).
- (4) The annual financial statements are required to be prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (AASs). Disclosure in AASs is guided by either the principle of materiality, or specific disclosure required by an AAS. Litigation expenditure, or possible future expenditure, would be included in the annual financial statements as either an actual or contingent liability.

An actual liability would exist where the Territory has been determined through litigation to make certain future payments, or settlement against the Territory is considered probable. A contingent liability would exist where a legal claim had been lodged, but settlement against the Territory was considered less than probable, or was dependent on future uncertain events. In the annual financial statements, actual liabilities are reported in the 'Statement of Financial Position' and contingent liabilities are disclosed in the notes to the annual financial statements.

- (5) The Australian Accounting Standard on contingent liabilities requires that possible future liabilities to arise from litigation be disclosed in the annual financial statements as a contingent liability where settlement of the litigation against the Territory is not considered probable, or is dependent on a future uncertain event. For all contingent liabilities the standard requires disclosure of the general nature of the liability, an indication of any uncertainties and an estimate of possible future payments, where it is possible to make an estimate.
- (6) Annual financial statements of the Territory are required to be prepared in accordance with all Australian Accounting Standards, including the standard regarding contingent liabilities. The opinion issued by the auditors regarding the annual financial statements attests to their compliance, or non? compliance, with the Australian Accounting Standards.
- (7) Annual financial statements are required to be prepared in accordance with the requirements of Australian Accounting Standards, including the standard regarding contingent liabilities. Costs of litigation would be specifically identified in the financial statements where the costs were material.

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(8) Approximate damages and settlements by the Territory, excluding Workers' Compensation awards, over the last 5 financial years are as follows:

- 1998 - \$14m
- 1999 - \$14m
- 2000 - \$12m
- 2001 - \$10m
- 2002 - \$8m

The above results include amounts paid for Criminal Injuries Compensation.

(9) Refer (8). It has not been possible to break this figure down between damages and costs.

(10) In regards to contingency plans for litigation, insurance policies put in place by ACTIA give agencies protection from litigated claims arising from public liability, professional liability and medical malpractice incidents.

(11) The authorisation of the limit a department or statutory authority may commit toward litigation depends on the nature of the litigation. If the litigation is in respect of insurable events such as public liability and medical indemnity, Directors and Officers liability and professional indemnity, then the decision to defend in court or settle rests with either Treasury or the Insurance Authority (ACTIA).

Where the event is covered by policies written by ACTIA, the Authority as the insurer makes the final decision on undertaking litigation, as the costs and risks rests with the insurer it must make the business decision.

If the litigation is in respect of insurable events not covered by ACTIA policies (generally for events that occurred prior to 1 July 1997), then the final decision rests with Treasury. In each case, the decision is reached after advice from the Government Solicitor and the Department concerned. For cases where large amounts are involved, the GSO seeks advice from legal counsel and where appropriate medical experts.

(12) Model Litigant guidelines are currently in draft, but as they are under review they have not yet been adopted. Currently, and until adoption of the guidelines, decisions regarding settlement are assessed on a case-by-case basis by individual agencies with guidance on legal issues usually supplied by the Government Solicitor's Office.

(13) Please refer to (12)

Goyder-Dalrymple streets—traffic calming (Question No 502)

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the Goyder/Dalrymple Streets, Narrabundah traffic calming plan:

- (1) When will Stage II of the Goyder/Dalrymple Streets, Narrabundah traffic calming plan come into effect;
- (2) Can the second stage of the plan be made available to interested parties, including myself;
- (3) Why was this traffic calming plan put forward in two stages

Mr Wood: The answer to the Member's questions is as follows:

- (1) Implementation of the Stage 2 measures identified in the Goyder Street Local Area Traffic Management Study will depend upon the effectiveness of Stage 1 measures and available funding.
 - (2) Stage 2 is detailed in the Goyder Street Local Area Traffic Management Study, a public document, which was subject to extensive public consultation.
 - (3) Stage 1 are high priority measures aimed at reducing the speed of traffic using these residential streets and Stage 2 involves the next level of priorities identified through public consultation.
-

**TransACT—connection waiting times
(Question No 503)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Treasurer:

In relation to TransACT connections:

- (1) What is the current waiting time of a TransACT connection in the ACT;
- (2) Is there a problem for a person signing up with TransACT who is a member of a body corporate and if so, what is the problem;
- (3) Is it true that TransACT will not sign up potential customers who are members of a body corporate;
- (4) Are there areas in the ACT where TransACT will not provide a service, eg; Urambi Village, and if so, why;
- (5) What other areas of the ACT, by name, cannot be served by TransACT;
- (6) Does this failure to provide service breach any contractual or advertising undertakings.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Given the highly competitive nature of the telecommunications industry, TransACT has advised that specific information regarding waiting times for customers wishing

to access its services is commercial in confidence and, hence, not for public release. However, I understand that if prospective TransACT customers are willing to have a phone number with TransACT's standard 6161 prefix, the connection time for TransACT's is approximately two weeks. Connection times can vary markedly depending on a range of issues, including legislated contractual cooling off periods, the time taken for customers to change telecommunications carriers and phone numbers, network availability and the customer's individual requirements.

(2) TransACT does offer its services to body corporate housing complexes. However, due to the construction and siting of some medium density complexes, it may not be commercially and/or technically feasible for TransACT to deliver its services in an efficient manner. Also, additional body corporate consents are also required before TransACT can offer services to residents in medium density complexes.

(3) See the answer for Question (2).

(4) TransACT's current business plan involves providing:

- a range of telephony services utilising Telstra's existing infrastructure; and
- broadband services, such as Internet and Video On Demand, via its optic fibre cable which is installed on ActewAGL's existing above ground electricity network.

Eventually, TransACT plans to offer services to all areas of the ACT. However, due to the progress in rolling out the TransACT network, technical and/or commercial reasons, connections may not be possible for all residences. Connections to residences such as Urambi Village are assessed on an individual basis, considering the issues identified under Question (2).

(5) TransACT can provide telephony services to all areas of the ACT. Broadband products and services can only be delivered via TransACT's network. As at April 2003, TransACT had completed the rollout of its network in the following suburbs.

Ainslie	Farrer	Kaleen	Red Hill
Aranda	Fisher	Kingston	Reid
Barton	Forrest	Latham	Rivett
Braddon	Garran	Lyneham	Scullin
Campbell	Giralang	Lyons	Stirling
Chapman	Griffith	MacGregor	Torrens
Chifley	Hackett	Mawson	Turner
Curtin	Hawker	Monash	Waramanga
Deakin	Higgins	Narrabundah	Watson
Dickson	Holder	O'Connor	Weston
Downer	Holt	Oxley	Yarralumla
Duffy	Hughes	Pearce	

Source: TransACT Communications Pty Ltd website (<http://www.transact.com.au>).

In those areas of Canberra with underground cabling, where there are no ActewAGL poles to support its network, TransACT is currently assessing different technologies to find the most efficient and cost effective architecture to deploy in these areas with the aim of providing all of its services to all parts of the ACT, subject to commercial viability.

- (6) TransACT has advised that it believes that it has not breached any of its contractual or advertising undertakings
-

Community Safety Orders (Question No 504)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Attorney General, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to Community Safety Orders (CSO):

- (1) Has the Government restored CSO funding to the Department of Justice and Community Safety;
- (2) If so, how much funding has the Government provided;
- (3) If so, on how many occasions to date have magistrates or judges used this alternative sentencing option;
- (4) If so, have there been any instances where people sentenced under this scheme have breached their obligations under it;
- (5) If there have been breaches of obligations under the scheme, what consequences have there been for a breach of obligations;
- (6) If the Government has not yet restored CSO funding, is it still committed to restoring funding in the future.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) As promised in Labor's Action Plan for ACT Corrections, the Government has provided ongoing funding for CSOs.
- (2) In the budget for the financial year 2001-2002, \$ 359,960 was allocated for CSOs. In the first eight months of the current financial year to the end of February, \$ 236,761 has been expended on CSOs.
- (3) Between 1 July 2001 and 30 June 2002, 292 new offenders registered to serve a CSO. Between 1 July 2002 and 28 February 2003, there were 138 new registrations.
- (4) There were 79 instances of breaches of CSOs between 1 July 2001 and 30 June 2002. Between 1 July 2002 and 28 February 2003, 48 breaches occurred.

- (5) When a breach occurs, the decision regarding the consequences of this breach is made by the Courts. The original order is revoked and possible consequences include no action being taken, an extension of the duration of the order and the imposition of fines. The offender may also be given a new order, which could be a new CSO, a Periodic Detention Order or a recognizance.
 - (6) The Government regards CSOs as an important alternative sentencing option and is committed to providing ongoing funding for CSOs, to encourage the use of this sentencing option by the Courts.
-

**Bushfires—Deek's Run restoration
(Question No 505)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the use of Deeks Run and Deeks Walk in the Stromlo pine plantation:

- (1) What is the Government doing to restore Deek's Run to full functionality?
- (2) What schedule is the Government using to restore Deek's Walk?
- (3) What is the scheduled cost?

Mr Wood: The answer to the Member's questions is as follows:

- (1) This area was part of the pine plantation that was burnt on 18 January 2003. ACT Forests is currently harvesting any saleable burnt logs in this area. It will also start chipping some of the debris in Deeks Forest Park in mid April.

Clean up operations will continue in Stromlo for a few months. It is unsafe for the public to use these areas until ACT Forests has finished its clean up operations.

Any decision on rehabilitating Deeks Run will not be made until after the Non Urban Land Study and the Spatial Plan review are completed.

- (2) It is unsafe for the public to use Deeks Walk until the clean up operations are finished. Any decision about rehabilitating Deeks Walk will be made after the Non Urban Land Study and the Spatial Plan review are completed.
 - (3) It is premature to estimate the cost of rehabilitating Deeks Run and Deeks Walk until the clean up operations and the reviews have been completed.
-

**Library book returns
(Question No 506)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the recent ACT Public Library amnesty on overdue library materials:

- (1) How many books were returned to the ACT Public Library in the Amnesty which concluded March 9?
- (2) What was the approximate value of these books?
- (3) What is the estimate of the number of books still outstanding and how many years are allowed before an outstanding book is "written off".

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The total number of returns for the Amnesty period (28 February 03 – 9 March 03) was 51,754. This figure covers those items that clients may have returned as part of the Amnesty and General returns for the period. This number was lower than expected due to interruptions to normal client behaviour as a result of the bushfires.
- (2) In processing returned items in the period (28 February 03 – 9 March 03) no differentiation of items returned under the Amnesty or General returns was undertaken. Therefore no calculation of the value of items returned under the Amnesty is possible.
- (3) ACT Library and Information Services defines long term overdue items as overdue for longer than two years. There are currently 99,227 outstanding items. Outstanding library items are written off after seven years.

Parking signs (Question No 507)

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to parking signs in the ACT:

- (1) Are parking signs a standard size throughout Australia with the exception of the ACT;
- (2) Are ACT parking signs reflective while elsewhere in Australia they are non-reflective;
- (3) Is there a price differential between the cost of ACT parking signs and those elsewhere in Australia and if so, what are the relevant costs;
- (4) Has consideration been given to standardising ACT parking signs with those elsewhere in Australia and if so, why has it not been done;
- (5) If no consideration has been given at (d) above, why not.

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Mr Wood - the answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) Parking signs are slightly wider in the ACT than some other jurisdictions as some words are included with the new symbols and as a result the signs are wider.
 - (2) Reflective background material is used for parking signs in the ACT. Other jurisdictions use reflective as well as powder-coated signs. Reflective signs provide night-time visibility. Given the general urban nature of the ACT, and that most parking signs are around town centres and shopping areas, night time visibility is required at these locations.
 - (3) Powder-coated signs are about 10% to 20% cheaper than reflective signs.
 - (4) No. The inclusion of some words together with the new symbols has been well received and can continue given that it eliminates any confusion to the public.
 - (5) The use of powder-coated signs has not be considered given the urban nature in the ACT.
-

**Parking fines
(Question No 508)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to illegal parking at the Australian National University and University of Canberra:

- (1) Are fines levied and if so, by whom;
- (2) Do ACT parking inspectors issue the tickets and if not, who does so;
- (3) Does the revenue from these fines go back to the university concerned and if not, why not;
- (4) If the revenue does not go back to the university, where does it go.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Yes - the Australian National University operates and enforces parking laws under the Australian National University Parking Statute.

Yes - the University of Canberra manages parking on university grounds using the ACT Road Transport legislation.

- (2) No - ACT parking inspectors do not issue parking infringements within the Australian National University. The university employs its own parking inspectors to issue infringements under the Australian National University Parking Statute.

Yes - ACT parking inspectors are invited onto University grounds and do issue parking infringement notices within the University of Canberra.

- (3) Yes - the revenue collected from parking fines issued at the Australian National University goes back to the Australian National University.

No – the situation at the University of Canberra is explained below.

- (4) The University of Canberra is responsible for parking management on its grounds. The University of Canberra has requested the ACT Government to enforce the ACT Road Transport legislation within these grounds. The revenue collected from parking fines issued at the University of Canberra goes to the ACT Government. Under the ACT Road Transport legislation there is no provision for revenue from parking infringement notices to be shared with other organisations or agencies.

Football—Kangaroos agreement (Question No 509)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Sport, Racing and Gaming, upon notice, on 11 March 2003:

In relation to the AFL Kangaroos new agreement to play matches in Canberra:

1. The *Canberra Times* reported on 21.03.03 that the new contract will soon be finalised, are there any changes to the contract from the one signed off by the former Liberal Government in September 2000, if so, what are the changes;
2. Did the Government suggest any changes to the contract;
3. Is there any cost to the ACT Budget in regard to this deal, if so, please provide details;
4. Does the Government expect to generate any revenue from the arrangement with the Kangaroos, if so, please provide details, if not, why not;
5. Will there be an out clause in the contract, if so, will it come at a cost to either the ACT or the Kangaroos;
6. Will Manuka Oval generate revenue from hosting Kangaroos matches;
7. Will Manuka Oval receive additional Government assistance to maintain the oval for AFL matches;
8. Will the Kangaroos still be required to conduct National AFL talent identification camps in Canberra;
9. Will the Kangaroos continue with the Junior Roo development program;

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10. Will there still be a requirement to televise, on at least 3 occasions, matches held in Canberra.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. Typically, there will be a range of changes to any new agreement, however negotiations for this agreement are incomplete and certain details are yet to be finalised.

The major change to these contractual negotiations is, that unlike the previous agreement, the proposed agreement acknowledges the role of the Manuka Oval Management Company (MOMC) as the managers of Manuka Oval. Also, a number of obligations that were formerly that of the Territory in the previous agreement are now the responsibility of the MOMC and are to be negotiated on a commercial basis by MOMC, the AFL and the Kangaroos in a separate hiring agreement. The Territory is not a party to this hiring agreement.

2. The changes noted in respect to question 1 were suggested by the Territory. The main agreement has otherwise been the subject of negotiation by the Territory, the AFL and the Kangaroos.

3. Under any new agreement the Kangaroos would again be paid performance payments. The terms of the proposed agreement are still under negotiation.

4. Revenue generation is a commercial matter for the MOMC, the AFL and the Kangaroos under the hiring agreement referred to earlier.

5. The existence of any out clause in a new agreement is still the subject of negotiation.

6. Revenue arrangements between the MOMC, the AFL and the Kangaroos are a matter for negotiation between those parties under the relevant hiring agreement.

7. MOMC/ ACT Cricket have maintained the oval for the term of the current agreement so it is not envisaged that any additional funding will be required to maintain the oval in the future for the same level of usage by the Kangaroos. The hiring fee for the Kangaroos to use the ground will take into consideration the cost of maintaining and preparing the oval for these events. This is still a matter of negotiation between the parties under the relevant hiring agreement.

8. I assume that you are referring to the Draft Camp organised by the AFL that is generally conducted in the ACT in October each year. The continuation of this camp in the ACT is still a matter for negotiation, however it is proposed that the AFL will be required to continue the conduct of this camp in the ACT.

9. Although still under negotiation, it is proposed that the Kangaroos continue to conduct a range of junior development activities in the ACT and region. Any new agreement will seek to ensure that such activities are conducted in a far more coordinated manner than under the current agreement and that the Government is provided with formal reporting on any such activities.

10. This matter is still the subject of negotiation, however it is proposed that the AFL will use its reasonable endeavours to televise each of the premiership season matches.
-

**National Dinosaur Museum
(Question No 510)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Economic Development, Business and Tourism, upon notice, on 1 April 2003.

1. Has the Minister been involved in any discussions with the operators of the National Dinosaur Museum and did the Government know prior to The *Canberra Times* article on 22.03.03 that the operators were considering moving interstate;
2. Has the Government offered the National Dinosaur Museum support of any nature, if so, please provide details, if not, why not;
3. Is the Government concerned that relocation of the National Dinosaur Museum interstate will leave a hole in tourism activities in Canberra;
4. Is the Government concerned that relocation of the National Dinosaur Museum interstate will impact on other tourist attractions at Gold Creek like Cockington Green;
5. Would the Government consider some sort of agreement between the Education Department, CTEC and the Dinosaur Museum to maximise and increase school groups (local and interstate) visiting the museum, if not, why not;
6. What is the Government doing to increase tourism in the Territory following the bushfires;
7. Is the Government working with the Commonwealth to maximise opportunities that may be forthcoming following the Federal Tourism Minister's announcement of the 'See Australia' campaign, if so, what is the ACT doing to be involved in that campaign, if not, why is the ACT not involved.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. Has the Minister been involved in any discussions with the operators of the National Dinosaur Museum and did the Government know prior to The *Canberra Times* article on 22.03.03 that the operators were considering moving interstate;

Mr Stan Russell, proprietor, of the National Dinosaur Museum (NDM) wrote to the Government on 14 March 2003 stating the Museum's position prior to the publication of the article in The *Canberra Times* on 22 March 2003.

2. Has the Government offered the National Dinosaur Museum support of any nature, if so, please provide details, if not, why not;

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The Government contacted Mr Russell to discuss issues affecting the museum and suggested that they approach the Canberra Business Advisory Service (CANBAS), a business advisory service funded by the ACT Government to access advice in areas such as business development and marketing.

A representative of CANBAS has met with Mr Russell twice to discuss issues facing the NDM and offer a possible resolution.

The Government offers numerous programs that provide support to local tourism industry operators. These include cooperative marketing opportunities through CTEC's marketing brochures, inclusion on the CTEC website and information services through the Canberra Visitors Centre. The NDM has had the opportunity to participate in all these programs and has done so on many occasions.

The NDM is also a key player in the National Capital Educational Tourism Project (NCETP). The Government currently supports the NCETP in partnership with the National Capital Authority and the National Capital Attractions Association.

3. Is the Government concerned that relocation of the National Dinosaur Museum interstate will leave a hole in tourism activities in Canberra;

The Government is naturally concerned with the loss of any attraction from the ACT, as it can have an adverse effect on potential visitor numbers. The combination of national attractions such as the Australian War Memorial with smaller attractions like the NDM provides the ACT with the diversity of attractions that many destinations in other states cannot offer. The ACT needs to maintain this diversity to be able to compete effectively in domestic and international tourism markets.

4. Is the Government concerned that relocation of the National Dinosaur Museum interstate will impact on other tourist attractions at Gold Creek like Cockington Green;

The Government acknowledges that the NDM is a unique product that attracts many visitors including approximately 21,000 school students to Canberra each year. Whether this would impact on a significant number of visitors to the area is debatable as there are other attractions and a vast range of galleries still remaining at Gold Creek.

5. Would the Government consider some sort of agreement between the Education Department, CTEC and the Dinosaur Museum to maximise and increase school groups (local and interstate) visiting the museum, if not, why not;

Visits by school children to educational institutions and attractions that have a cultural or educational element are already included in individual school programs. These decisions are made by the principals of each educational establishment. As said previously, the Government supports the NCETP whose focus is to encourage interstate school groups to visit national capital attractions. CTEC participates extensively in promoting the NDM to maximise visitors to the ACT. (See answer to question 2)

6. What is the Government doing to increase tourism in the Territory following the bushfires;

The Government has developed a new domestic, marketing campaign that led into the 2003 autumn marketing campaign to promote Canberra and increase tourism in the Territory. Implementation strategies include a television advertising campaign supported by a marketing brochure to be distributed extensively to the travel trade and consumer.

7. Is the Government working with the Commonwealth to maximise opportunities that may be forthcoming following the Federal Tourism Minister's announcement of the 'See Australia' campaign, if so, what is the ACT doing to be involved in that campaign, if not, why is the ACT not involved.

The Government, along with other states and the Northern Territory, has worked closely with the Commonwealth on its See Australia Campaign to maximise awareness of Canberra as a desirable domestic tourist destination. Recently, the Federal Government has initiated a new campaign as the domestic market is facing substantial challenges due to the:

- drought and bushfire impact on infrastructure.
- Iraqi War and
- Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) health scare.

The Government is already running a recovery campaign for the domestic market and the new 'See Australia' campaign is complimentary to what is already being undertaken.

Charity bins (Question No 511)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to charity bins:

- (1) Has the Minister received any complaints about the messy state of some charity bin sites across Canberra, if so, how many and in what areas;
- (2) Does the government have any jurisdiction over the collection of goods from charity bin sites;
- (3) Does the government have any power to authorise for collections to take place on a more frequent basis;
- (4) If not, is there anything the government can do to assist charity groups to collect goods at charity bin sites more frequently;
- (5) Can the government issue any sort of warning for untidy and unsightly sites that become quasi-dumping grounds;

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Eight letters were received by my office in 2001 relating to various parts of town, none in 2002, and one so far this year relating to the Page shops.
- (2) The government has jurisdiction where the bins are placed on unleased Territory land. Such placements require a permit under the *Roads and Public Places Act 1937*.
- (3) The above mentioned permit requires the bin site to be inspected at least twice weekly, and any donated items or rubbish lying on the ground within a 3m radius of the bin is to be cleared when discovered or within 24 hours of receipt of advice from the Department.
- (4) A committee comprising all Canberra charities who have bins and officers from my Department is implementing a jointly developed Strategic Action Plan aimed at optimising the successful operation of the charity bin network and minimising problems associated with clothing bins.
- (5) Untidy sites are being addressed through a range of measures in the Strategic Action Plan. This issue can also be addressed by invoking provisions in the *Roads and Public Places Act* permit including its termination.

**Lake Burley Griffin—sewerage spill
(Question No 512)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Environment, upon notice:

In relation to the sewerage leak that closed sections of Lake Burley Griffin on 22 March 2003:

- (1) What was the cost of the clean-up of this spill.
- (2) What was the name of the contractor concerned.
- (3) Will there be any permanent damage to the environment as a result.
- (4) How did the accident occur and will action be taken against the contractor by way of fines and recouping of clean-up costs.
- (5) If no financial penalties are to be made, why not.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) Initial costing of repairs to the rising main pipework, site clean up and monitoring of lake waters as a result of the ruptured main is \$11,925.50.
- (2) An ActewAGL crew was on site at the time of the incident. Investigations are continuing into the incident to determine how it happened and who was responsible.

- (3) The Environment Protection Authority is seeking independent advice as to whether there is likely to be permanent damage to the environment as a result of the spill.
 - (4) The *Environment Protection Act 1997* does provide for penalties where pollution occurs. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is currently investigating the incident. The outcome of that investigation will determine what actions are available to the EPA under the *Environment Protection Act 1997*.
 - (5) The EPA's investigation will determine what action can be taken against those responsible for the effluent leak into the lake.
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Housing—seniors (Question No 513)

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to ACT Labor's Plan for Older Canberrans that Labor will "require that a designated number of blocks be set aside for purpose built but lower cost housing for older people in land releases for new developments":

- (1) How many designated blocks have been set aside, by development, in each of the new developments since Labor took office;
- (2) Do such new developments include developments acquired from the previous government's land release program and if so, how many developments by name from (1) above and if not included, why not;
- (3) What is the criteria for establishing 'a designated number of blocks' for this purpose, how will the lower cost of the housing be achieved and is there a ratio of such blocks per size of new development;
- (4) How many such lower cost houses have been (i) built (ii) occupied since Labor took office;
- (5) If the responses to (1), (2) and (4) are negative, why is this so.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Strategies for implementing the housing elements of the Plan for Older Canberrans are well advanced. Mr Cornwell has identified one element of the approach adopted by Government to provide services to older Canberrans

In February 2002, the Government established the Affordable Housing Taskforce to examine in detail implementation of the Government's Plan for Older Canberran's. The Taskforce's brief was to make recommendations to Government for strategies to address affordable housing, including those issues posed by Mr Cornwell.

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The Taskforce has made detailed enquiries and sought the views of the community sector. Their report, including a number of recommendations relating specifically to land use and planning considerations, including requiring a proportion of affordable housing to be included in residential developments, and this report is being considered by the Government.

Another element of the Government's policy, changing the Community Facility Land Use Policy to allow it to be used for aged care accommodation is in place. This will allow such housing to be provided in areas where the need for such accommodation is the greatest.

Land is also being released with a requirement that units be constructed to adaptable and accessible standards. This ensures that a variety of housing types are available throughout the city to provide accommodation that meets the changing requirements of older people.

(2) See parts 3 and 4.

(3) The Affordable Housing Taskforce's report will assist the Government in setting criteria for purpose built, but lower cost, housing for older people in new land releases. The Taskforce considered that, for larger developments (10 units/blocks or more), a certain percentage of blocks or dwellings should be set aside for affordable housing. An indicative figure of 3-4 per cent of units per development was proposed and, along with other Taskforce recommendations, this is under consideration by the Government.

(4) Since taking office, the Government has released land at the Yerrabi II Estate and this area included sites for adaptable and accessible housing. To date, through ACT Housing and the Land Release Program, the Government has not acquired lower cost purpose built houses for older people.

No separate statistics are available on lower cost, purpose built houses for older people constructed by the private sector in new greenfield developments however the Government is strongly encouraging the private sector to do so. Older person's housing developments are generally covered by the community land components of the Land Release Program and these sites are almost predominantly in established areas where older people wish to re-settle.

(5) As indicated above, the Government is considering the report of the Affordable Housing Taskforce and the issues raised by Mr Cornwell are covered in that report.

The need to provide appropriate accommodation for older people is an important component of the Government's Land Release Program and announcements about the forthcoming Program will be made in the 2003 Budget context.

From 1 July 2003 the Government's new Land Development Agency will be established and one of the Agency's first tasks will be to facilitate the introduction of direct Government involvement in greenfields land development. Among other

things, Government land development will enable far greater control over the cost of land as a component of housing.

As part of the Government's direct negotiations over land sales for community purposes, discussions are being held with providers of older persons' accommodation in respect of a number of sites across Canberra. These sites include assisted and independent, self-care accommodation. As these developments proceed (and certain proposals for assisted care require Commonwealth Government aged care funding), the supply of housing for older people will increase.

Housing—rents
(Question No 514)

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, upon notice:

In relation to house rents:

- (1) Since the government increased housing rents in July last year has there been an increase in requests for (a) rental assistance and (b) the amount of tenants in arrears for longer than 2 weeks;
- (2) What has the government done to ease the burden on tenants who experienced an increase in rent and required assistance;
- (3) Can the Minister advise what the increase in revenue intake from increased housing rents is to date this financial year.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Since the public rental rent review of September 2002 (a) the number of applications for rental assistance lodged with ACT Housing has fluctuated and is currently more than before the rents were reviewed; and
(b) the number of tenants who are more than 2 weeks in arrears has fluctuated and is currently less than before the rents were reviewed;
 - (2) If a rental review brings a tenant's rent to more than 25% of their income they may apply for a rental rebate. Tenants may request a review of the rental review decision. If a tenant is not satisfied with the outcome of a review of the decision they may appeal to the Residential Tenancies Tribunal;
 - (3) \$1.65 million to 31 March 2003, after rebates have been applied (ie the amount payable by tenants).
-

**Housing—expenditure
(Question No 515)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, upon notice:

In relation to rent received for public housing tenancy:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what percentage of rent collected from Public Housing Tenants is reverted back into public housing;
- (2) Can the Minister advise what percentage of rent paid by tenants is spent on:
 - (a) Cleaning
 - (b) Landscaping
 - (c) Maintenance
 - (d) Security.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) 100%;
- (2) Based upon rent receivable from tenants to 31 March 2003, the percentages of that rent spent on the following classifications of expenditure are:
 - (a) and (b) 3.98% for common area cleaning and ground maintenance for the multi-unit complexes;
 - (c) 15.53% for maintenance; and
 - (d) 0.51% for security services.

**Burnie Court site
(Question No 517)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, upon notice:

In relation to Burnie Court:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what the current status of the development at the site of the former Burnie Court in Lyons;
- (2) How is the development progressing and is it progressing to schedule, if not, why not;
- (3) What is the scheduled completion date of new works on the site;
- (4) Have there been any changes to the development plans approved by PALM in July

2001 for four blocks in the private sector and one retained by ACT Housing for the construction of 26 Older Persons Units.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) A development application for 24 older persons' units was lodged with PALM in April 2003 and is currently being publicly notified. New leases for three of the other blocks are expected to be finalised shortly enabling sale of these leases to proceed. The final subdivision will occur as part of the decision on the development application for the older persons' units;
- (2) Please see 1 above;
- (3) The older persons' units are expected to commence construction next financial year, depending on the timing of the approval and any appeals. Other developments, including the construction of the roads will be dependent on the timing of applications by the new owners;
- (4) The plans approved by PALM in July 2001 were for the demolition of the previous Burnie Court. PALM's subsequent approval to the subdivision specified residential use and did not prescribe ownership. ACT Housing still intends to proceed with the construction of older persons units and progressive sale of the balance of the site over the next financial year.

**Dental health services
(Question No 518)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

In relation to the Dental Health Service:

- (1) What is the waiting list and waiting times as at 31 March 2003 for adult dental health services in all categories of patients;
- (2) What is the waiting list and waiting times as at 31 March 2003 for children dental health services in all categories of patients;
- (3) What is the waiting list and waiting time for a client who needs a new set of dentures.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is:

- (1) *What is the waiting list and waiting times as at 31 March 2003 for adult dental health services in all categories of patients.*

Adult Restorative Waiting list

2490 clients waiting and the waiting time 24 months

Adult Waiting list for General Anaesthetic (GA)

70 clients waiting with the average waiting time 17 months.

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4 Dental Officers provide treatment under General Anaesthetic. 2 are Visiting Dental Officers who undertake more complex oral surgery. As well the Principal and Senior Dental Officers in the Program undertake treatment under General Anaesthetic. There is 1 General Anaesthetic list a week at both Calvary and TCH and between 2 and 4 clients are treated.

(2) What is the waiting list and waiting times as at 31 March 2003 for children dental health services in all categories of patients.

General assessment and treatment services

No waiting list for general assessment and treatment services for children and young people under the ages of 18. Waiting time 0 – 6 weeks depending on the demand for service at the 4 Child and Youth Dental Clinics.

Child/Youth Waiting list for General Anaesthetic

43 children waiting and the waiting time is 14 months.

There are 2 sessions a month at The Canberra Hospital and an average of 3 children are treated.

Child/youth Orthodontic waiting list

61 children waiting and the waiting time is 3 months.

This is a very limited interceptive orthodontic service that provides simple removable or simple fixed appliances that often achieve favourable results. The eligibility is for children and young people under the aged of 18 who are beneficiaries of a current Centrelink card. The Program does not provide more complex Orthodontic services for children requiring braces and banding.

(3) What is the waiting list and waiting time for a client who needs a new set of dentures.

94 clients waiting and the waiting time is 4 months for priority 1 clients and 8 months for priority 2 clients.

Priority 1 clients urgent cases

Examples

- clients who have completed a course of care from the restorative waiting list and need dentures, no front teeth that would affect the client's ability to get work
- Old age 80+
- Clients requiring full clearances or General Anaesthetic/complete lack of denture
- Severely compromised general health

Priority 2 clients non-urgent cases

Example

- Have an existing denture that needs replacing
-

**Disabled persons—access works
(Question No 519)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice:

In relation to disabled access:

- (1) What has been delivered for the \$69,000 expended as at 31 December 2002 as part of the minor new works.
- (2) Have any more works taken place between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, please provide details of the amount spent and purpose of that expenditure.
- (3) Is there a list of works still to be completed as part of this project, if so, please provide details of the amount to be spent and purpose of that expenditure, if not, why not.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mrs Burke's question is:

- (1) For the minor new works item – disabled access, the following works were delivered for the \$69,000 expended as at 31 December 2002:
 - Canberra High School (\$18,000) part payment for modifications to the lift
 - Malkara School (\$2,000)– playground equipment modification
 - Kambah High School (\$24,000) – automatic doors to front entrance
 - Calwell High School (\$25,000) – automatic doors/air lock to entrance
- (2) During the period 31 December 2002 to 31 March 2003 additional expenditure of \$58,000 occurred as follows:
 - Southern Cross Primary (\$19,000) – automatic doors/air lock and ramp to entrance
 - Canberra High School (\$14,000) - part payment for modifications to the lift
 - Gold Creek School (\$25,000) – part payment for lift to stage
- (3) Yes. The need to provide disabled toilet and shower facilities at Southern Cross Primary School at an estimated cost of \$40,000 has been identified and the department is seeking to identify additional funding within the program for this purpose.

**Housing—landscape projects
(Question No 520)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, upon notice:

In relation to a response given in Question 393:

(1) In Part 5 of that question you noted that funds remaining from the project were transferred to other multi-unit landscape projects. Could you please advise:

- (a) which multi-unit facilities were the benefit of these funds;
- (b) what work was undertaken at each site; and
- (c) how much money was spent at each site.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (a) Jerilderie Court and Illawarra Court;
- (b) Landscape works at Jerilderie comprised hard and soft landscape improvements, secure perimeter fencing, security lighting, a new waste management enclosure and a new playground and cost a total of \$577,272. Illawarra Court works comprised minor landscape enhancements, repair to existing hard landscape areas and a new playground and cost a total of \$119,287;
- (c) See (b) above. The funds referred to in question 393 were used to enable more extensive works at both sites than had originally been planned.

**ACT Housing—tenants
(Question No 521)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, upon notice:

In relation to tenancy:

- (1) How many Public Housing tenants have been evicted (a) to date this financial year, (b) in 2001-02;
- (2) How many Public Housing tenants received warnings (a) to date this financial year, (b) in 2001-02;
- (3) What are the current rules for a tenant who engages in anti-social behaviour (ie: loud parties, drug use) affecting the quiet enjoyment of other tenants;
- (4) Is there a strategy in place regulating how many warnings a tenant will receive before an eviction notice is served, if so, can you provide details, if not, why not;
- (5) How are tenants dealt with that are caught (a) using drugs in public housing, (b) selling drugs;
- (6) Can tenants who are obeying the terms of their tenancy report anti-social behaviour of other tenants, if so, how and what action will then be taken.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) (a) 82, up to and including 4 April 2003;
(b) 47;
- (2) (a) 789 tenancies have received 961 Notices to Remedy (to 2 April 2003);
(b) 1510 tenancies received 1904 Notices to Remedy.

Note that these figures are debt-related; ACT Housing does not have a record of the number of Notices to Remedy (Other) that were issued;

- (3) In the first instance tenants are given informal warnings/requests to cease the conduct. ACT Housing offers support from a Housing Manager Specialist, who may refer to other agencies if appropriate and if the tenant agrees. If there is a neighbourhood dispute, Conflict Resolution Service will be suggested.

If the conduct continues the Housing Manager serves a Notice to Remedy. If this does not stop the conduct a further Notice to Remedy is served, followed by a Notice to Vacate. Legal proceedings under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 may be considered if this process does not succeed. In many circumstances the behaviour may be a matter for Police, Environment ACT (noise) or other agencies to attend to;

- (4) See response to (3);
- (5) If a tenant is charged and convicted of (a) and/or (b), legal proceedings under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 would be considered;
- (6) Anti-social behaviour may be reported to ACT Housing in several ways, namely: report the matter to the Housing Manager for the area, write to ACT Housing or call ACT Housing's Complaints Line. ACT Housing investigates all reports of anti-social behaviour to see if there are tenancy issues, which will have the appropriate action taken as per the response to (3).

Public housing assistance (Question No 522)

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, upon notice:

In relation to ACT Housing Assistance for tenants:

- (1) The AIHW Report has revealed that during the financial year of 2000-01, 12,502 households received public housing assistance in the ACT, of these 84% of households received a rebate to assist with the cost of rent. Could the Minister provide the current percentage rates (as at 31 March 2003) of:
 - (a) ACT Housing tenants in receipt of the rental rebate;
 - (b) ACT Housing tenants who are paying full market rent.

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(2) What is the average amount of rent payable for tenants in (a) and (b) above.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) (a) 82.46%;
(b) 17.54%.
 - (2) (a) \$77.21;
(b) \$190.85.
-

Housing—maintenance (Question No 523)

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, upon notice:

In relation to Public Housing maintenance requests:

- (1) What is the process for tenants to order maintenance works for their properties;
- (2) How many maintenance requests are currently before ACT Housing;
- (3) Is there a time frame for completing maintenance requests, if so, what is that timeframe, if not, why not;
- (4) Can the Minister advise the nature of maintenance requests currently before ACT Housing;
- (5) Does ACT Housing undertake maintenance audits, if so, can the Minister provide details about that process, if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) ACT Housing tenants ring 62071500 for responsive repairs and they are handled through 24 hour call centres operated by the two Total Facility Managers (TFMs), Resolve FM and Transfield Services. Other works are determined by ACT Housing and the TFMs through condition assessment audits and customer service visits. Since 2001 each tenant has been given a copy of a tenants' guide to repairs and maintenance – a copy will be forwarded to your Office.
- (2) Approximately 45-50,000 works orders are raised for responsive repairs annually. Around a further 15,000 orders are raised for other works. In 2002-03 over 80% of properties have had works raised;
- (3) Responsive repairs have to be addressed within 4 hours for urgent works; a week for priority works; and a month for normal works. Other non-urgent works are programmed and carried out as part of larger packages;

- (4) See 2 above;
 - (5) The contracts with the TFMs require a full condition audit to be completed by 30 June 2004. The condition audit will involve an assessment of the condition of the elements of each property.
-

**Community Enterprise (SPICE) scheme
(Question No 524)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to the Students Participating in Community Enterprises (SPICE) scheme:

- (1) How much funding did this service receive in the current budget;
- (2) Is that amount more or less than in (a) 2001–02 and (b) 2000–01;
- (3) Is there any scope for more funds to be allocated;
- (4) How many students have accessed this service each month from July 2002 to 31 March 2003;
- (5) What are the benefits of this service;
- (6) Will the government continue to financially support this service.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mrs Burke's question is:

- (1) The SPICE project was not funded in the current budget. It received no funding in the 2002–2003 budget.
- (2) This program was funded for the first time in the 2001–02 budget. It did not operate prior to this time.
 - (a) The SPICE program received \$12,975 in the budget 2001–2002.
 - (b) No funding was provided in 2000-01.
- (3) There is no scope for further funds to be allocated at this time. This program was funded for the first time in the 2001–02 budget. The funding was given as 'kick-start' funding under the Schools as Communities program.

These funds are made available to community groups on the understanding that the funding is not recurrent.

Planning for sustainability after the funding has ceased is the responsibility of the funded organisation.

- (4) Due to the size of the program and the level of funding provided, the organisation was not required to provide monthly data. It was funded to operate during the 2002 school year and report on the overall performance of the program. The report on SPICE indicated 17 students in total participated in the program during this period.
- (5) The program aimed to keep students, at risk of leaving the education system, motivated by involving them in work placements once a week over a period of four weeks. This served as an opportunity to gain work place skills and develop self-confidence.

There is some overlap between the SPICE program and existing pre-vocational programs. The department recognises the need for vocational education programs and alternative community-based learning options for Year 9 students and beyond.

- (6) As mentioned previously, the program was funded on a non-recurrent basis. Organisations who apply for this funding are aware that funding will not be ongoing and are asked to consider how they will sustain the program or program outcomes, once funding has ceased. There are no plans to continue funding this service.

ACT Housing—tenant consultations (Question No 525)

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services, upon notice:

In relation to consultation with housing tenants:

- (1) What consultation takes place between tenants and ACT Housing in relation to tenancy issues;
- (2) Are there any bodies set up in ACT Housing for consultation (ie: like the ACT Health Action Council in Health or the Education Advisory Board in Education), if so, can you provide details, if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) ACT Housing consults with tenants:
 - in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* in regard to annual inspections; if their accommodation is to be refurbished and while work is carried out;
 - at their request;
 - regarding neighbourhood complaints about them;
 - in response to issues they raise;
 - during relocation ;
 - when dealing with debt recovery matters;

- (2) Yes, the Housing Advisory Council, Community Sector reference groups and several residents' committees.
-

**National Hockey Centre
(Question No 526)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Sport, Racing and Gaming, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to upgrades to the National Hockey Centre at Lyneham:

1. Can the Minister provide details about a scheduled meeting between the ACT Government and the Prime Minister's Department regarding funds to upgrade the National Hockey Centre at Lyneham?
2. Will funding be forthcoming, if not, why not, if so, are details of the amount available?
3. Have you received advice from Hockey ACT about the visitor number and economic benefits of the Champions Trophy being held in Canberra in 2005?

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. On 17 February 2003, officers of Sport and Recreation ACT met with officers of the Office of Prime Minister and Cabinet to discuss potential funding opportunities from the Commonwealth for the capital works required for the National Hockey Centre to host the Champions Trophy in 2005. The Commonwealth undertook to consider this matter and to respond as soon as practicable.
 2. The ACT Government is yet to receive a formal response from the Commonwealth, therefore details, if any, are not available.
 3. No.
-

**Gorman House and Manuka Arts Centre
(Question No 527)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to upgrades to Gorman House and Manuka Arts Centre.

- (1) Can the Minister advise if work has started on (a) upgrades and renewals at Gorman House, and (b) Manuka Arts Centre, if, so, what work has been undertaken and at what cost, if not, why not.

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- (2) As at 31 December no monies had been expended on both of these projects. Will they be completed as scheduled by June 2003 or will the funding be rolled over into the next financial year;
- (3) If the funding is rolled over can the Minister guarantee that it will be spent on the two projects listed in (1) above, if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

(1) (a) Gorman House – Work has commenced at Gorman House on priority upgrades identified in consultation with Gorman House management. These are:

- a contract for \$40,000 has been awarded for new theatre seating in Choreographic Centre to meet BCA and OH&S requirements;
- a contract for \$26,000 has been awarded for paving under walkways;
- the tender has closed for new theatre seats at Canberra Youth Theatre to meet BCA and OH&S requirements;
- a range of minor work has been approved;
- design work for alterations to café and a theatre space is underway.

A total of \$95,442 has been committed to this project as at 8 April 2003.

(b) Manuka Arts Centre - The relocation of radio station ArtSound to Manuka Arts Centre is a complex project with a number of technical issues to be resolved.

A design study based on the technical requirements of ArtSound has been completed at a cost of \$9,900. There are insufficient funds this financial year for a full relocation so a phased relocation is being investigated. This will involve further design and documentation.

- (2) Gorman House - All funds for this project will be committed this financial year, with all works due to be completed by end July 2003.

Manuka Arts Centre - The remaining funds from this financial year will be rolled over to 2003-04.

- (3) Manuka Arts Centre - Should phased relocation be feasible all rolled over funds will be expended on this project.

**Canberra Stadium—events
(Question No 528)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Sport, Racing and Gaming, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to events at Canberra Stadium:

1. How many (a) sporting and (b) cultural events have been held at Canberra Stadium to date this financial year? Can the Minister please provide the name and date of each event?
2. Are there any other events scheduled this financial year? (please provide name and date of event)
3. Is the amount of events held at Canberra Stadium an increase or decrease on the amount held last financial year?
4. What were (a) the hiring fees for these events and (b) costs worn by the Stadiums Authority for holding these events?

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The following events have been held to date this financial year:

(a) Sport – 11 events

Soccer

Colo Colo v Aust U/23's 24 Jul 2002

Rugby Union

ACTJRU Finals 14-15 Sep 2002

ACT Brumbies v Stormers 14 March 2003

ACT Brumbies v Bulls 22 March 2003

Rugby League

Canberra Raiders v Knights 14 July 2002

Canberra Raiders v Warriors 27 July 2002

Canberra Raiders v Tigers 11 August 2002

Canberra Raiders v Roosters 17 August 2002

Canberra Raiders v Bulldogs 25 August 2002

Canberra Raiders v Storm 07 September 2002

Canberra Raiders v Dragons 29 March 2003

(b) Cultural – 2 events

Celtic Crossroads 4-5 Oct 2002

Riverdance 11-15 Feb 2003

2. The following events are scheduled during the remainder of this financial year:

(a) Sport – 9 events

Rugby Union

ACT Brumbies v Chiefs 06 April 2003

ACT Brumbies v Waratahs 18 April 2003

ACT Brumbies v Crusaders 09 May 2003

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ACT Brumbies v Fiji	22 June 2003
ACT Brumbies v Tonga	29 June 2003

Rugby League	
Canberra Raiders v Bulldogs	25-27 April 2003
Canberra Raiders v Panthers	17-18 May 2003
Canberra Raiders v Eels	6-8 June 2003
Canberra Raiders v Broncos	13-15 June 2003

(b) Cultural - nil

3. The number of events has increased by nine (9.)

4.

(a) Hiring fees

Hiring fees are varied and in the case of the major hirers quite complicated. Their basic hiring fee falls in the range of 8-15 % of gross ticket revenue, not including memberships and corporate suites as these are subject to their respective revenue sharing arrangements. The ACTJRU Finals did not attract a specific hiring fee as the cost of this event was covered by sponsorship and the ACT Rugby Union.

Celtic Crossroads was an in-house production and, accordingly, a hiring fee was not applicable. The Stadiums Authority considers the Riverdance hiring fee to be commercial-in-confidence information, which, if revealed, could undermine future revenue opportunities.

Further information may be found in previous Stadiums Authority Annual Reports.

(b) Costs

Costs for each event vary depending on items such as: attendance, whether it is day or night event, and catering, audio-visual and security requirements.

Further information may be found in previous Stadiums Authority Annual Reports.

**Canberra Stadium—seating
(Question No 529)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Sport, Racing and Gaming, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to Canberra Stadium:

1. How many people currently hold Canberra Stadium memberships, is this figure up on previous years, if so, why, if not, why not?

2. How many corporate boxes are there for use at Canberra Stadium?
3. How many corporate boxes have been utilised at events held to date this year?
4. How many corporate suites are booked for an entire season of (a) Rugby Union, (b) Rugby League, (c) other?
5. What is the current (a) seating capacity of Canberra Stadium, (b) standing room only capacity of Canberra Stadium, (c) total crowd capacity at Canberra Stadium?

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. Canberra Stadium has 129 Club Stadium members this year. There were 46 members in 2002.

Prior to 2002, the membership scheme in operation was one established by National Venue Management under the former Government at the time of the stadium's redevelopment. This scheme was subsequently scrapped at the end of 2001, as it was unworkable.

2. There are 59 corporate boxes.
 3. The stadium's major hirers exclusively sell corporate boxes and accurate figures are not available.
 4.
 - (a) 32 single and 2 triple suites
 - (b) 12 single and 2 triple suites
 - (c) Nil
 5. (a) There are 24,531 "fixed" seats. Corporate suites contain external fixed seats and a number of additional internal "loose" seats, thus allowing for increased patronage. The maximum number of loose seats in any suite is determined by licensing restrictions calculated on a square meter basis. While a single corporate suite could hold up to 22 people (12 fixed seats and 10 loose seats) stadium management currently limits the number of loose seats available in a single suite to a maximum of 8.
 - (b) The stadium is legally capable of accommodating up to 5,000 standing patrons, however stadium management currently considers this to be too many from an event management perspective and limits standing room on a case-by-case basis. For management purposes, stadium staff, casual staff and team officials numbering up to 400 on some match days are considered to be standing patrons, however are not included in official spectator figures.
 - (c) While total spectator capacity could be about 30,000, the largest crowd for any event was limited to 27,449 for the 2000 Super 12 final.
-

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**Canberra Connect—internet links
(Question No 530)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the Canberra Connect Website.

- (1) Why is there not a link to Sport and Recreation on the Canberra Connect home page, topic areas;
- (2) Was there a link to sport and recreation on the home page in previous times;
- (3) Will you look into creating a link to Sport and Recreation on the Canberra Connect home page, if so, when, if not, why;

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) There is a link to "Sports, Leisure, Parks and Forests" on the Canberra Connect home page. When a mouse is placed over this link, the user is provided with more detail, which includes, "recreation facilities, keeping active, leisure sports, major attractions in Canberra, parks, reserves, forests and lakes. The user is therefore able to identify and access information and services regarding sports and recreation matters directly from the Canberra Connect home page.
 - (2) No
 - (3) See (1) above.
-

**Sport and recreation—expenditure
(Question No 533)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to Minor New Works in sport and recreation ...

- (1) As at 31 December 2002 \$79,000 had been spent on minor new works in the sport and recreation area, can the Minister provide a breakdown of the expenditure detailing costs, works undertaken and site of works;
- (2) Has the government done any planning to advise where the remaining \$171,000 for this project will be spent.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The actual expenditure to 31 December 2002 was \$48,383.

This consisted of:

- minor improvements to Little Athletics centre at Cook Oval - \$11,719
- restoration of playing surface at Torrens Oval - \$32,462
- improvements to drainage in car park at Majura Enclosed Oval - \$4,202

(2) The remaining funds will be used to carry out a range of minor improvements and refurbishments to sportsgrounds and swimming pools managed by the department.

Some examples are:

- Contribution to Department of Education, Youth and Family Services project for improved parking areas to service adjoining schools and sportsgrounds at Waramanga and Kaleen – two projects, \$20,000 each.
- Replacement of dilapidated fence around O'Connor Enclosed Oval – \$35,000
- Refurbishment of office area – Manuka Swimming Pool – approximately \$25,000
- Stabilisation and rectification of cracking in walls at Manuka Swimming Pool – approximately \$10,000-\$15,000
- Minor irrigation improvements at Page Oval – approximately \$7,000

Sport and recreation—grants (Question No 534)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Sport, Racing and Gaming, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to sports funding:

1. How many sporting organisations have received sports grants to date this financial year, can you (a) name the organisation, (b) detail the amount of funding they received, and (c) what the funding was for;
2. Will any more grants be handed out before the end of the financial year;
3. Is the total amount of sports grants allocated more or less than what was allocated in (a) 2001-02 and (b) 2000-01; and
4. What is the breakdown of grants allocated to (a) women's sport organisations and (b) men's sport organisations.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

1. Please see the attached spreadsheet (Attachment A).
2. To date \$2,277,430 of \$2,457,000 has been allocated from the 2002/03 Sport and Recreation Grant Program (SRGP) budget. The remaining funds (\$179,570) will be

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distributed prior to the end of this financial year. The distribution of funding throughout the financial year is consistent with the protocol used in past years.

3. The nominal budget of SRGP has increased in the past two financial years, in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). However, the 2001/02 budget was increased by \$150,000 due to a 'Treasurer's Advance' that was allocated to SSS FM. The following table illustrates the exact levels of funding:

Year	Budget
2000/01	\$2,344,000
2001/02	\$2,547,000 ***
2002/03	\$2,457,000

*** \$2,397,000 (nominal budget) + \$150,000 Treasurer's Advance

4. I am not prepared to authorise the use of the very considerable resources that would be involved in providing the detailed information required to answer the Member's question. The question is open to various interpretations, any of which would require detailed data extraction.

There is no definitive response to this question based upon current data. Sport and Recreation ACT would need to conduct a comprehensive audit to provide data relating to funding allocated to women's sport organisations and men's sport organisations. If such an audit was conducted the following would dramatically distort the data outcomes:

- SRGP funding is not provided on the basis that it must be utilised proportionally for a particular gender, nor a specific target group.
- The majority of sport and recreation organisations in the ACT are not gender biased thus provide participation opportunities for both sexes.
- Most traditional sports have progressed toward the amalgamation of gender-based organisations (eg. hockey, lawn bowls) to increase efficiency, share resources and provide a common strategic direction for the activity for all participants.
- Projects allocated under the SRGP that target women or men might not be at the exclusion of all other participants.

For example, Triennial Assistance provided to ACT Rugby Union (\$42,000) is to assist in the provision of services to both female and male members/participants. Whilst the majority of participants of ACT Rugby Union are male, the organisation cannot be categorised as a men's sport organisation.

[Table attached to the reply was lodged with the Chamber Support Office].

V8 supercar race (Question No 535)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Economic Development, Business and Tourism, upon notice, on 1 April 2003.

1. Where were the barriers and other equipment used in the construction of the former V8 Supercar event being kept;
2. How much of that equipment has been sold and did the Government make any money out of equipment sold;
3. How much of that equipment is still being stored;
4. What was the cost at 31 March 2003 of storing this equipment;
5. What does the government plan to do with the equipment still in storage;
6. On Budget Paper 3 (Page 206) it states that the Commonwealth Avenue pavement rehabilitation stages 2 and 2a would be deferred due to 'site storage issues and the V8 Supercar race'. Can the Minister explain what was meant by this statement.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. The barriers and other equipment used in the construction of the former Supercar event is stored at the Boral Quarry in Mugga Lane.
2. The written down value of V8 assets as at 1 July 2002 was \$894,000. The following equipment has been sold.

2 x Track Block spanning stairs	\$3,100
1 x Timing Cable	\$3,500
1 x Portable Building	\$20,000
1 x Conveyor Belt	\$3,000
Temporary Security Fencing	\$206,000
540 Concrete Barriers	\$168,998
Total	\$404,598

A net position for the Government will not be available until all the assets are disposed of.

3. All the 'overtrack' signage and bridges used for the event, 7000 tyre bundles and approximately 1500 concrete barriers are in storage.
4. The cost of storing the equipment as at 31 March 2003 has been nil. The nil cost to Government is the result of a contra arrangement between Boral and CTEC. Negotiations are currently underway regarding future arrangements.
5. The Government plans to continue to seek avenues to dispose of the assets. Meanwhile, the Subaru Rally of Canberra is using over 200 concrete barriers in the forest areas during the 2003 Subaru Rally of Canberra.

6. The statement in Budget Paper 3 (Page 206) meant that the Commonwealth Avenue pavement rehabilitation work being undertaken by the Department of Urban Services would be deferred to avoid disruptions to the V8 event. This work was deferred at the time, but has now been completed.

**City Walk sculpture program
(Question No 536)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Arts and Heritage, upon notice:

In relation to the Public Art Program:

- (1) Has work started on the Art and Soul – City Walk Sculpture Program, if so, please provide details of work undertaken so far and associated costs, if not, why not;
- (2) What will Canberrans see once this project is completed;
- (3) What was delivered for the \$8,000 already expended on this project;
- (4) Will this project be completed by the end of June 2003 as scheduled, if so, when, if not, why not and can the Minister guarantee that the funding allocated to this project will be rolled over into next financial year and spent on this particular program.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) A new public artwork has been commissioned for the ACT Health Building in Civic West. The commission has been advertised, expressions of interest received, and one project has been selected to proceed. It is currently in the final design stage.
- (2) The selected project is an artwork using light entitled Laserwrap by Geoffrey Drake-Brockman and Richie Kahaupt. Once the work is complete, Canberrans will see the ACT Health Building transformed at night by a laser light artwork.
- (3) Expenditure to date has been on advertising for expressions of interest, concept design fees for four shortlisted artists, and other administrative costs.
- (4) The project has been scheduled for completion in September 2003. We anticipate that this project will be completed according to schedule. The funding allocated to this project will be rolled over into next financial year and spent on this particular program.

**Glassworks project
(Question No 537)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the development of the Glassworks project (Contemporary Glass Centre).

- (1) Can the Minister advise where work on this project is up to and provide a breakdown of the total expenditure of \$58,000 as at 31 December 2002 and what was delivered for that funding;
- (2) When can we expect this project to be completed;
- (3) As at 31 December 2002 there was still \$2.842m to be expended on this project, will all of these funds allocated be used on this specific project, if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) A project Steering Committee was established in December 2002 to assist in the development of a business plan. The expenditure of \$58,000 has been as follows:
 - \$38,000 toward the completion of a building options study; and
 - \$20,000 toward the development of a business plan for the management and operations of the Centre.
- (2) The business case for the Kingston Powerhouse option will be considered in the context of the 2004-05 budget deliberations. If the Government progresses this option, then the Glass Centre could be completed by end 2005.
- (3) If the proposal is supported all remaining funds will be used for this project.

Megalo Access Arts relocation (Question No 538)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the relocation of Megalo Access Arts:

- (1) Has the relocation of Megalo Access Arts taken place, if so, where is the new location, if not, why not and when will it take place;
- (2) As at 31 December 2002 no monies had been expended on this project, why is this so when the project had a completion date of December 2002.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) Megalo Access Arts signed a sublicence for its tenancy of Canberra Technology Park in Watson (former CIT Campus) at end of March 2003. The Department of Urban Service opened the tender on 5 April 2003 for the fitout of the premises and the project is expected to be completed in July 2003.

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- (2) Delays in commencing the fitout of the premises were experienced due to the complex nature of negotiations concerning the terms of Megalo's tenancy at the premises.

\$22,960 has been expended on this project for items such as a design report, temporary storage of Megalo's equipment and approvals. The balance of funds will be committed when a contract for the fitout is awarded.

Rally of Canberra (Question No 539)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Economic Development, Business and Tourism, upon notice, on 1 April 2003.

1. Where is the Government up to in regards to clearing fire ravaged sites that will be used as part of the Rally of Canberra;
2. Will all clearing be completed in time for the event on 25 April;
3. After record crowds travelled to Kowen Forest last year for the Super Special Stage why has this year's special stage been moved to Fairbairn Park, and will the site change come at an additional cost, if so, how much, if not, how much money will be saved;
4. Will the Super special stage be conducted in the Forest area again this year;
5. How many nominations have been received for the Rally to date, are there any estimates of whether the total number of entries will be up or down on last year;
6. When will Canberrans know about ticket price for entry to the Rally;
7. Have there been any issues regarding public liability insurance for 2003 Rally of Canberra.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. The only spectator point affected by the fire that would have had an impact on the Subaru Rally of Canberra was the mineshaft spectator point and this has been cleared. ACT Workcover and the Emergency Services Bureau will be inspecting the site prior to the Rally to ensure that optimum safety conditions will apply during the event.
2. Yes. The forest will be cleared in time for the event.
3. A *Super Special Stage** was not constructed in the Kowen Forest in 2002. However, a *Special Stage** was constructed incorporating a tunnel and flyover. This will be used again on Sunday to provide a fitting finale to the event. The reintroduction of the *Super Special Stage* is an important factor in rebuilding the event's status in the international arena. The selection of a permanent site (Fairbairn Park) for the

construction of the *Super Special Stage* significantly reduces infrastructure costs in later years, while providing a world class venue in a designated motor sport facility.

*A *Super Special Stage*, in rally terminology, is a constructed spectator site, often located in, or close to the city where the event is held that allows spectator viewing of the entire stage and often features vehicles racing side by side.

* A *Special Stage* is a spectator point that provides premium viewing on a 'section' of a total rally stage.

4. No. However, a *Special Stage* will be constructed in Kowen Forest on Sunday, 27 April 2003. (See answer to question 3)
5. 39 entrants to the event have been confirmed as at 2 April 2003. Initial indications are that the entries will be the same as in 2002, In 2002, there were 17 international and 22 national entrants to the event.
6. Tickets for the 2003 Subaru Rally were released for sale at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 19 March 2003.
7. There have been no issues relating to public liability insurance cover for the 2003 Subaru Rally of Canberra.

Dragway (Question No 540)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Sport, Racing and Gaming, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to the Dragway:

1. Has the Government expended any funds this financial year on the future of a dragway in Canberra, if so, can details of the associated expenditure and works/research undertaken be provided?
2. In an article in *The Canberra Times* on 25.03.03 (page 8) a spokeswoman for the Minister said in regards to the Dragway "...we undertook to study it in closer detail, which we have done." Can the Minister please provide details of the further study undertaken on the dragway?
3. Has the Government undertaken any research regarding a new site for the dragway, if so, please provide details?

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. No.

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2. The Department of Treasury has undertaken an assessment of the Canberra International Dragway (CID) revised proposal that was submitted in December 2002 and has advised the Government that there is no fundamental reason for the Government to change from the position it adopted in response to the first CID proposal.
3. No. Previous studies show that there are severe limitations on siting a dragway in the ACT. The site that has achieved the most attention over the last several months has been Mr Develin's preferred site (Block 52 Majura), which was extensively studied in 2001/02.

Late last year, in the period between the Government's response to the original proposal and the revised proposal, Government officers, aware of the existing lease encumbrances on Mr Develin's preferred site, did canvass with him whether further investigation of other sites might be worthwhile. Mr Develin's clear position was that CID was not interested in reopening the examination of further sites, as only Block 52 Majura suits CID's purposes from a commercial point of view. I have now written to Mr Develin indicating that the Government remains willing to assist CID with the purchase of a suitable site. However, it must be said that, taking into account both the environmental limitations identified in the earlier studies and CID's commercial concerns, there are no alternative sites immediately apparent.

Mr Develin has also been advised through my letter to him and through correspondence from PALM that government assistance in purchasing a lease would also be dependent upon Mr Develin negotiating the transfer of a lease with any existing leaseholders and subject to a business plan that does not rely on government funding for construction or running costs for a new dragway facility.

**Disabled persons—court access
(Question No 541)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Attorney-General, upon notice, on 1 April 2003:

In relation to disabled access to court:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what works will take place as part of this project and associated costs;
- (2) What was delivered for the \$9,000 expended on this project as at 31 December 2002;
- (3) Were any funds expended on this project between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, can details please be provided, if not, why not;
- (4) As at 31 December 2002 there was \$1.405m still to be expended on this project, is it running according to schedule for an end of June 2003 completion, if not, why not;
- (5) If not, can the Minister confirm if the funding for this project will be rolled over and used for this actual purpose and not reallocated.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

(1) ACT Procurement Solutions has been engaged by the Department of Justice & Community Safety to manage the procurement of design and documentation services relating to the following works;

- Disabled access requirements at the Supreme Court building
- Actively managing self-harm risks associated with the internal balcony areas at the Magistrates Court

The successful Architect at select tender is currently undertaking design and documentation of the required amenities to improve disability access at the Supreme Court. Feasibility studies, including Final Sketch Plans and Document Readiness, for each of the floors and the basement areas are proceeding to determine compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act, the Building Code of Australia and the relevant Australian Standard (AS1428).

The study will prioritise and cost all of the works to enable the Department to make decisions regarding a final scope of work to be undertaken. It is anticipated that the project outcomes will include:

- suitable public access for disabled persons between all floors in the building;
- suitable restricted access for disabled persons between all floors in the building, potentially also improving secure access for judicial staff, court staff and prisoners in custody.
- disabled access through the main public entrances.
- disabled access to all functional areas of at least one courtroom, including modification of the jury box, jury room, toilet and associated amenities
- disabled access compliance with all other areas of the Court building including corridors and basement library storage areas.

(2) The project initially commenced in July 2002. In September 2002 public tenders were called for design, documentation and construction to agreed specifications. Prior to the tender evaluation process being completed, the project was suspended as Government was considering a proposal to completely replace the existing Supreme Court building with a new facility. \$6,500.00 was expended as project management fees for the work done to that point.

(3) The project was reactivated in February 2003 when it became clear that the capital funds required for a new Supreme Court building were unlikely to be available in the medium term. ACT Procurement Solutions was retained to manage a select tender process to advance both capital projects to full documentation stage, including costing for each segment of the projects. Since that time, a further \$12,500.00 in fees have been incurred, out of a total committed project management cost of \$77,143.00.

(4) The suspension of the project between September 2002 and February 2003 means that the entire project is running behind the original schedule. However, the re-

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specified project is on schedule with full documentation readiness being achieved by 30 June 2003.

- (5) The issue of approving the roll-over of the balance of the project funds will be closely considered as part of the 2003-04 Territory Budget process.

**Magistrates Court
(Question No 542)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to minor new works at the Magistrates Court

- (1) Can the Minister provide details regarding works that will be undertaken as part of this project:
- (2) As at 31 December 2002 no monies has been expended on this \$240,000 project, have any funds been expended between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, please provide a breakdown of expenditure and work undertaken;
- (3) Will this project be completed as scheduled by the end of 2003, if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answers to the member's questions are as follows:

- (1) Works to be undertaken include:
 - Upper roof – repairs to flashings, downpipes, overflows and gutters;
 - Lower roof – repair to defective membrane
 - Basement – drainage
 - Facade – repairs to seals between precast panels
 - Soffits – install dripmould, repointing all edges and joints with waterproof sealant
- (2) This project has required extensive investigation work on the various items to ascertain the most appropriate method of remediation. Some of this work is ongoing. Procurement Solutions has received approximately \$17,000 in claims to date.
- (3) It is anticipated that this project will be completed by 30 June 2003 provided wet weather or other unforeseen factors do not intervene.

**Kippax Library
(Question No 543)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to planning for an expanded Kippax Library:

- (1) Can the Minister provide details regarding what has been delivered for the \$35,000 total expenditure that has gone into this project, in particular, the \$8,000 expended as at 31 December 2002 this financial year;
- (2) Why had only \$8,000 of the \$73,000 in this year's budget been expended as at 31 December 2002;
- (3) This project was scheduled for completion in June 2002, are there any works still to be completed with the \$65,000 outstanding authorisation, if so, please provide details, if not, where will the \$65,000 be reallocated.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The Kippax Library and Belconnen Region Services Study was undertaken, and has been delivered and released to the public. The \$8000 was a part payment towards the completion of the Study.
- (2) The \$8,000 (including GST) was part payment towards the Kippax Library and Belconnen Region Services Study work that was completed in December 2002. The remainder was paid after that date.
- (3) The Kippax Library and Belconnen Region Services Study is now completed and released to the public. There is further planning work in progress with a local architectural firm to undertake siting and costing that will account for approximately \$25,000 of the outstanding allocation. Any funds remaining are expected to be returned to the Budget.

Roads—on-road cycling works (Question No 544)

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to on-road cycling:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what the status of the on road cycling projects between (a) Belconnen Way and Parkes Way and (b) Belconnen Way and Barry Drive is and provide a breakdown of the total expenditure as at 31 December 2002;
- (2) Where does the on road cycling at (a) and (b) above currently start and finish;
- (3) Where will the remaining funds for (a) and (b) above be directed;
- (4) These projects were to be completed in June 2002, can the Minister advise what the new completion dates for these projects are.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

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- (1) The on-road cycling improvements on Belconnen Way, Barry Drive and Parkes Way have now been completed. The total expenditure at 31 December 2002 was approximately \$359,000.
 - (2) The Belconnen Way / Barry Drive on-road cycling works are from Firth Road to Coulter Drive. The Parkes Way works are from the Glenloch Interchange to Acton Tunnel.
 - (3) The funding for this project has been fully expended.
 - (4) The project was completed in February 2003.
-

**Belconnen lakeshore refurbishment
(Question No 545)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to Belconnen Lakeshore Refurbishment -

- (1) What work will take place as part of this project;
- (2) \$50,000 has been expended on this project as at 31 December 2002, what was provided for that \$50,000;
- (3) Why has the Belconnen Lakeshore Refurbishment project been revised down from a total expenditure of \$500,000 to \$300,000 for this financial year;
- (4) Will the remaining \$200,000 be spent on the Belconnen Lakeshore Refurbishment project, if so, when and has a completion date been discussed, if not, where will that \$200,000 be transferred to;
- (5) Will the expenditure of \$300,000 on the Belconnen Lakeshore Refurbishment project be completed as scheduled on June 2003, if not, why not?

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The work will involve redevelopment of the plaza space between "The Sails" Building complex and the lake foreshore (a portion of the Foreshore Promenade Precinct).
- (2) The \$50,000 was expended on project final design and management fees.
- (3) The project funding remains at \$500,000 but it is spread over two financial years (2003/03, 2003/04).
- (4) All of the \$500,000 authorisation will be spent on the Belconnen Lakeshore Refurbishment. A completion date for the works of October 2003 has been programmed.

- (5) As per above. This project involved extensive community consultation, which delayed completion of the preliminary sketch plan report (which forms the basis for the final design).
-

**Parkwood Road resource recovery estate
(Question No 546)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the Resource Recovery Estate at the Parkwood Road Recycling Estate (formally known as the West Belconnen Landfill).

- (1) Can the Minister provide details regarding the purpose of this project?
- (2) As at 31 December 2002, no monies had been spent from \$473,000 allocated for this project in the current budget, what works are still to be completed on this project and at what cost?
- (3) When will this project be completed?

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The purpose of this project is to provide improved services that include metered water supply and all weather access to the existing licensed lots, rationalise storm water drainage so that the estate can be drained through the landfill water management system and to provide additional lots of land for resource recovery activities.
 - (2) By 31 March 2003, a sum of \$240,000 has been expended. The remaining works include 40% of the storm water works, 10% of water services, 80% of limited flexible pavement works and all of the landscape works at a cost of \$260,000.
 - (3) This project is expected to be physically completed by late June 2003.
-

**Canberra Balloon Fiesta
(Question No 547)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Arts and Heritage, upon notice:

In relation to the Canberra Balloon Fiesta:

- (1) How much was allocated to the organisers of the Balloon Fiesta for Canberra Day celebrations;
- (2) Is this more, less or equivalent to last year's allocation;

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- (3) If the funding was less, why, if more by how much more in comparison to what was allocated for Canberra Day 2002 and why;
- (4) Were there any concerns in regards to public liability insurance for the Balloon Fiesta, if so, can details be provided.
- (5) Does the government have a commitment that the Balloon Fiesta will be back for Canberra Day 2004.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) A total of \$57,000 was provided to Canberra Balloon Fiesta Inc by the ACT Government to present the 2003 event. The organisation received \$18,000 through the 2003 ACT Festival Fund, \$22,000 through Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation's (CTEC) Event Assistance Program and an additional \$17,000 of unexpended grant monies received from the Festival Fund and CTEC for the 2002 event, still held by the organisation, and approved for use for the 2003 event.
- (2) \$60,000 was allocated in 2002, with only \$43,000 expended. The remaining \$17,000 was rolled over and included in the \$57,000 allocation for the 2003 event. The total allocation for the 2003 event was therefore similar to 2002.
- (3) It is \$3,000 less because \$17,000 was rolled over from the previous year.
- (4) Whilst the organisers successfully secured public liability insurance they did experience increased premium costs from \$8,000 to \$20,000.
- (5) No commitment has been made at this time.

**Canberra Day
(Question No 548)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Arts and Heritage, upon notice:

In relation to the Canberra Day Festivities:

In previous years ACT Alive has been held as part of the Canberra Day celebrations. It is my understanding that this event was not held as part of the Canberra Day celebrations this year, if so, why was the event not held and did it have anything to do with public liability insurance.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is:

The decision not to include ACT Alive in the Canberra Day celebration was not related to public liability insurance. This year celebrations were focused on supporting community based and managed activities under the banner of 'Celebrate Canberra'.

**Clean Up Australia Day
(Question No 549)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to Clean up Australia Day:

- (1) How much funding did organisers of Clean up Australia Day in Canberra receive for this year's event;
- (2) Is this amount more, less or equal to the previous year, if less, why was funding reduced, if more, why was more funding allocated;
- (3) Is there a timeframe in which Clean up Australia Day bags are to be collected after the event occurs, if so, please provide details, if not, why not;
- (4) Following Clean up Australia Day on 2 March 2003 there were still Clean up Australia Day bags laying idle on the side of roads well after the event, who's responsibility is it to collect these bags and why were there some bags not collected more than 2 weeks after the event;
- (5) Will the government undertake to collect any bags that are still lying on roadsides immediately?

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Clean Up Australia received \$4,000 for this year's Clean Up Australia Day event.
 - (2) Last year Clean Up Australia received sponsorship of \$8,000 for the event. The allocation of funds this year reflected the considerable level of funding for litter, recycling and waste initiatives provided by the Department of Urban Services. Against competing priorities a decision was made to reduce the level of sponsorship for Clean Up Australia Day
 - (3) The removal of items from urban roadsides, including bags collected during Clean Up Australia Day, is performed by Canberra Urban Parks and Places service providers for horticultural and cleaning maintenance services. The completion time specified in the relevant contract is 10 working days.
 - (4) Unfortunately this year there was a misunderstanding regarding the collection of rubbish from some sites and this should not occur in the future.
 - (5) All rubbish from registered sites for this year's event has been removed.
-

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**Rugby World Cup
(Question No 551)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Economic Development, Business and Tourism, upon notice, on 1 April 2003.

1. Can the Minister advise what work has been undertaken to date for Canberra to host World Cup Rugby events;
2. Has a separate body been established to work on Rugby World Cup in Canberra, if so, can details of the members of the body be provided, if not, what area is looking after details regarding World Cup Rugby;
3. What costs have been borne by the ACT to date to host World Cup Rugby, can a breakdown of items and costs please be provided;
4. Will the government be using World Cup Rugby to promote tourism in Canberra, if so, what plans are in place to do so, if not, why not.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. Can the Minister advise what work has been undertaken to date for Canberra to host World Cup Rugby events;

The following work has been undertaken to date by the Stadiums Authority for Canberra to host Rugby World Cup 2003 matches.

A Taskforce Organising Committee (TFOC) was established on 21 August 2002. This committee is chaired by the CEO of the Stadiums Authority. The committee meets on a bi-monthly basis to develop the plans and policies necessary to support the operational aspects of the event. TFOC is made up of representatives from:

- Stadiums Authority
- ARU
- Australian Federal Police (AFP) and Emergency Services Bureau
- ACTION Buses
- ACTRU
- National Capital Authority (NCA)
- Canberra Tourism & Events Corporation (CTEC)

The primary role of TFOC is to support the ARU in hosting the events successfully and to build a range of supporting activities during the period of 10 October to 22 November 2003 to maximise the social and economic benefit for the ACT.

- To date the TFOC has finalised the Venue and Precinct Hiring Agreement with the ARU (July 2002)
- All operational, catering, security and venue management plans have been submitted. The Stadiums Authority has to date met all planning requirements of the ARU and the Rugby World Cup management body.

- The TFOC has assisted the ARU in establishing training venues and accommodation facilities for the visiting teams during the event.
- The TFOC is developing and coordinating a city festivities plan, with a focus on banners, flowerbeds, tournament scoreboard and countdown clock presentations.
- The TFOC has written to the Chief Minister and requested the Major Events Security Act 2000, be implemented in the lead up and during Rugby World Cup 2003 tournament.

In addition, CTEC has commenced a Canberra and region tourism marketing strategy Rugby Celebration Canberra 2003 – a ten month program incorporating all ACT Brumbies matches, the Rugby World Cup and Australian Masters Games Rugby. (See answer to question 4 for more detail)

2. Has a separate body been established to work on Rugby World Cup in Canberra, if so, can details of the members of the body be provided, if not, what area is looking after details regarding World Cup Rugby;

TFOC has been established to promote the operational aspects of Rugby World Cup 2003. In addition, a steering group has been established by the Government to promote the tourism, business opportunities and marketing aspects of Rugby Celebration Canberra 2003. The steering group is made up of representatives from:

- CTEC
- Stadiums Authority
- ACT Rugby Union
- Business ACT
- ACT Office of Multicultural and Community Affairs

3. What costs have been borne by the ACT to date to host World Cup Rugby, can a breakdown of items and costs please be provided;

As at 31 March 2003, the Stadiums Authority financial statements relating to the Rugby World Cup include the following (actual) expenses:

Salary related	\$54,456
Consultants	\$36,865
Print and Stat	\$ 558
Travel & Accommodation	\$17,001
Misc	\$ 2,048
Total (actual - rounded)	\$110,930
Budget	\$188,223

CTEC is managing a total budget of \$798,000 for Rugby Celebration Canberra 2003 across financial years 02/03 and 03/04. As at 31 March 2003, CTEC's financial statements include the following (actual) expenses and commitments:

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Administration	\$8,051
Travel Costs	\$53,160
Consultants / Contractors	\$87,852
Mobile Phones costs	\$213
Marketing	\$111,085
Other Services	\$8,787
Sponsorship Costs	\$20,500
TOTAL (actual)	\$289,649
Budget	\$798,000

4. Will the government be using World Cup Rugby to promote tourism in Canberra, if so, what plans are in place to do so, if not, why not.

CTEC has commenced a Canberra and region tourism marketing strategy Rugby Celebration Canberra 2003 – a ten month program incorporating all ACT Brumbies matches, the Rugby World Cup and Australian Masters Games Rugby. A steering committee guides the activities of Rugby Celebrations Canberra 2003 and is made up of representatives from:

- CTEC
- Stadiums Authority
- ACT Rugby Union
- Business ACT
- ACT Office of Multicultural and Community Affairs

The following outlines CTEC's strategy for leveraging the opportunities presented by the Rugby World Cup.

Aims of Rugby Celebration 2003

- To generate as many visitors as possible to Canberra and the region from the international, national, and regional markets.
- To work with local business, attractions, arts, cultural and community groups to develop a welcoming attitude, support events, attractions and hospitality to encourage visitors to stay in Canberra for as long as possible.

Key Tourism Strategies

All elements in the program have been developed with a view to achieving the dual aims of generating large numbers of visitors to Canberra and then keeping them here for as long as possible.

The approach is based on four key strategies. It will target international, national and regional visitors and work with the local community, business and attractions to ensure that there is plenty to offer those who are considering, and ultimately come to Canberra.

International

This strategy aims to attract as many visitors to Canberra as possible from international markets.

Key Markets

- **Wales and Italy.** The Welsh and Italian teams have advised that they will use Canberra as their base for Rugby World Cup 2003. Both teams will bring about 50 players and staff to Canberra and, as a minimum, each team is expected to be in Canberra for at least four weeks. One of these teams can be expected to qualify for the quarter finals, which will mean their stay will be extended by another week.
- On their visit to Canberra in September 2002, the Welsh Rugby Union advised they expect between 6,000 and 10,000 supporters to travel to Australia for Rugby World Cup 2003.
- **Other Competing Countries.** Through the ACT Rugby Union (ACTRU), an invitation will go out to all 20 competing national unions to bring as many masters teams as possible to the Australian Masters Games Rugby. Rugby World Cup 2003 visitors will be travelling as part of their own rugby community and can be expected to participate in such a competition. To support this initiative special marketing collateral will be produced. In addition, CTEC will work closely with Australian Masters Games staff on this initiative.
- **Media.** Rugby World Cup 2003 will attract a television audience of 4 billion people in 203 countries. Every opportunity will be exploited to ensure maximum media exposure for Canberra as a destination.

National

This strategy aims to attract as many visitors to Canberra as possible from interstate markets.

Key Markets

- **Italian Community.** Italy will play three of their four pool games in Canberra. Effectively to see Italy play in Rugby World Cup 2003, visitors will need to come to Canberra. A targeted campaign will be run to attract people from the Italian communities in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and regional NSW.
- **Pacific Islanders.** A campaign will be developed to attract members of the Pacific Islanders community in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne to Canberra during the planned rugby matches that will involve Fiji and Tonga.
- **Rugby Clubs.** A campaign will be developed to attract interstate rugby clubs to Canberra for the Australian Masters Games rugby competition. We will work

with ACTRU and the ARU to build a series of incentives to attract the clubs and link Rugby World Cup 2003 with a clubs involvement in the Australian Masters Games.

Regional

The purpose of this strategy is to:

- attract as many visitors as possible from the surrounding regional and rural areas of the ACT,
- establish partnering relationships with other tourism agencies and industry in the surrounding region, and
- maximise media exposure for Canberra as a destination.

Key Markets

- **Rugby Clubs.** CTEC will work to attract regional rugby clubs to Canberra or use regional rugby club events to attract rugby supporters to Canberra.
- **Peak Tourism and Business Bodies.** A consultation process will be undertaken to establish relationships with regional peak bodies with the aim of seeking joint opportunities to meet tourism goals.
- **Media.** A widespread regional media (TV, radio, and press) campaign will be run to attract regional visitors to Canberra.

Local

The purpose of the strategy for the local market is to:

- encourage Canberrans to invite their friends and relatives to stay and participate in Canberra's Rugby program;
- encourage Canberrans to participate in Canberra's Rugby program; and,
- work with business, industry and community to establish a program of supporting events and activities that supports Canberra's Rugby program.

Key Markets

- **ACT Brumbies Supporters.** CTEC will ensure the ACT rugby community understands our key messages.
- **Peak Tourism and Business Bodies.** CTEC will ensure the peak tourism and business organisations understand the key messages and will work with them and support initiatives that are consistent with program aims.
- **Welsh, Italian and Pacific Islander Community Groups.** CTEC will ensure the Welsh, Italian and Pacific Islander community groups understand the key messages. CTEC will work with them and their support initiatives that are consistent with program aims.

- **General Community.** CTEC will ensure the general community is aware of the key messages.
-

**Land grant requests
(Question No 552)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to direct land grants:

- (1) Since coming to Government how many requests have you received for direct land grants;
- (2) Of those requests can you provide details for:
 - (a) Who the request came from;
 - (b) When the request was received;
 - (c) Was the request agreed to or denied;
 - (d) What was the date of the Minister's decision; and
 - (e) Why was the request actioned or denied?

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's questions are as follows:

- (1) Since coming to Government, there have been approximately 28 applications received for Direct Grants of land.
- (2)
 - (a) The number of direct grants approved are provided in the quarterly statements tabled in the Assembly. A copy of those statements is attached. Details of those requests not approved are not on the public record and I will not be providing this advice. The requests came from various community organisations, commercial businesses, school organisations, and other associations etc;
 - (b) The requests were received between November 2001 to the present;
 - (c) See (a) above;
 - (d) The date of decision is when the Government agrees to the direct grant;
 - (e) Requests are actioned if they meet the criteria as prescribed in the Disallowable Instruments made under the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991 and the

provisions of the Territory Plan. However, there may be circumstances that could prevent the application from proceeding. These may include constraints on the development of the land or the ability of the applicant to proceed.

**Advertising—costs
(Question No 554)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Economic Development, Business and Tourism, upon notice, on 1 April 2003.

1. How much did the production of this advertisement cost, can a breakdown of each cost please be provided;
2. Was there a fee for the appearance of Jimmy Barnes in this commercial;
3. How much will the government spend on air time alone of this commercial and how many hits will this funding buy, please break down into (a) 60 second slots and (b) 30 second slots;
4. Can the Minister please provide a list of the regional New South Wales towns that will see this advertisement;
5. Can the Minister please provide a breakdown of funding sources for the commercial;
6. Have any programs been delayed or deferred as a result;
7. Are there any estimate costs on the Winter campaign to start in May, where will the funding come from.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. How much did the production of this advertisement cost, can a breakdown of each cost please be provided;

The cost of producing the television advertisement is \$182,273.

The breakdown of the costs for production of the commercial is as follows:

\$4,500	Concept development
\$46,085	Shoot (Includes cameraman, assistant, crane, crew costs, equipment hire and film stock, balloon hire x 3, special equipment freight shoot 2, insurance shoot 2 Pre-production 1,200 including casting and pre-production)
\$1200	Pre-production
\$12,560	Producer/Director
\$20,705	Talent
\$6,500	Production supervision

\$600	Courier/freight
\$780	Courier/freight (Special equipment freight)
\$230	FACTS (Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations approval)
\$2,200	Project Management
\$1,500	Media Planning
\$280	Props
\$610	Audio record
\$950	Voice over talent
\$4,000	Hair/makeup
\$25,750	Post production (Includes film processing, transfer and grade, online and offline edit, broadcast design)
\$1,035	Audio post production
\$30,000	Music Track (Includes original composition and performance by Jimmy Barnes; music rights for 12 months from first on air date; two days studio recording and hire of session musicians)
\$728	Dubs (1x60 Interstate TVC x3 signals x2 stations; plus 1x30 Interstate TVC x3 signals x2 stations; plus 1x60 Local TVC x1 signal x3 stations)
\$1,115	Indemnity & stock insurance
\$835	Catering
\$1,040	Closed captioning
\$2,500	Contingency (To date has covered legal advice, parachoot costs, child AWM talent, extra audio costs for variations to Jimmy's tracks)
\$165,703	Subtotal
\$16,570	GST
\$182,273	TOTAL

Note: The National Institutions have contributed \$58,000 towards the production of this commercial.

2. Was there a fee for the appearance of Jimmy Barnes in this commercial;

Jimmy Barnes did not appear in this commercial. He was engaged to write and perform the song specifically for this commercial. He was paid \$30,000 for the music track which included composition and performance by Jimmy Barnes; music rights for 12 months from the first air date; two days studio recording and hire of session musicians.

This song can be played on radio stations and is available through the internet but it cannot be sold commercially.

3. How much will the government spend on air time alone of this commercial and how many hits will this funding buy, please break down into (a) 60 second slots and (b) 30 second slots

Total amount spent on the TV commercial is as follows :

Sydney Metro	60 seconds	\$312,400
	30 seconds	\$298,200
Northern NSW	60 seconds	\$57,200
	30 seconds	\$54,600
Southern NSW	60 seconds	\$55,000
	30 seconds	\$52,500
SBS (national)	Both 60 & 30	\$50,000
AASC Levy (Australian Advertising Standards Levy)		\$308
Canberra	60 seconds	\$21,060
TOTAL :		\$901,268

Total times (hits) shown are as follows :

Sydney Metro	60 second spots	30
	30 second spots	76
	Total	106
Northern NSW	60 second spots	38
	30 second spots	87
	Total	125
Southern NSW	60 second spots	31
	30 second spots	73
	Total	104
Canberra	60 second spots	36
	30 second spots	(see note below)
	Total	36*
National (SBS)	60 second spots	7
	30 second spots	12
	Total	19

** Local Canberra stations have provided generous support to the purchased media schedule and have provided an excellent level of value adding. This means that significantly more advertisements will appear in Canberra additional to the purchased schedule. This is largely up to the discretion of the stations.*

Note: As Canberra actually comes under the Southern NSW signal, the 30 second appearances as detailed under Southern NSW, will also appear in Canberra. The 60

second advertisements however, will be the local version rather than the out-of-Canberra version that the rest of Southern NSW will see. Therefore, appearances in Canberra will be through both the local Canberra and Southern NSW signal.

4. Can the Minister please provide a list of the regional New South Wales towns that will see this advertisement

Please find enclosed signal coverage map designates the Northern NSW, Southern NSW and Sydney Metropolitan signals.

All towns that fall within the footprint of these signals will have the television commercial aired.

Note: Research on awareness levels will be conducted at the end of the campaign.

5. Can the Minister please provide a break down of funding sources for the commercial;

\$100,000	extra appropriation from ACT Government
\$450,000	allocated from CTEC's existing marketing budget
\$500,000	ACT Government funding as part of the Bushfire Recovery Program
\$25,000	contribution from the Australian War Memorial
\$25,000	contribution from the National Capital Authority
\$5,000	contribution from Old Parliament House
\$3,000	contribution from the National Library of Australia
Total	\$1,108,000

6. Have any programs been delayed or deferred as a result;
No

7. Are there any estimate costs on the winter campaign to start in May, where will funding for this campaign come from.

Approximately \$120,000 will be spent on a winter campaign activity. This will be funded out of CTEC's existing marketing, publishing and distribution budgets.

[A map attached to the reply was lodged with the Chamber Support Office.]

**Speed cameras
(Question No 557)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the operations of red light cameras to detect speeding offences in the ACT:

(1) How many such cameras operate in the ACT;

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- (2) What was the total revenue collected in 2001-02;
- (3) How many offences does the figure at (2) represent;
- (4) Can the figures at (2) and (3) be broken down to individual cameras and if so, what revenue did the Northbourne Avenue/Barry Drive camera collect in the period above.

Mr Wood: The answer to Mr Cornwell's question is as follows:

- (1) There are 9 fixed red light and speed camera locations in the ACT. There were 3 installed for all of 2001-2002. Three new cameras were installed in December 2001 and 3 new cameras installed in March 2002.
 - (2) Total revenue collected for 2001-2002 was approximately \$3.9 million.
 - (3) The number of offences for this period was approximately 30,000.
 - (4) Total revenue collected from the camera at the intersection of Northbourne Avenue/ Barry Drive for the period 2001-2002 was approximately \$1.3 million. This equates to 10,000 infringements.
-

Development—replanting burnt areas (Question No 558)

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to cleared land adjacent to Scrivener Dam and opposite the National Zoo and Aquarium:

- (1) When was the area burnt?
- (2) When was it cleared?
- (3) Have discussions taken place with the National Capital Authority regarding replanting?
- (4) When will action be taken to replant?
- (5) Why the delay in replanting?

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The pine plantation on this site was burnt in the Christmas 2001 fires. The remaining trees were burnt in October 2002.
- (2) The burnt pine trees were harvested between January and April 2002. The unsaleable logs were pushed into heaps in May 2002 ready for burning in the spring.

- (3) A number of discussions have taken place with the National Capital Authority on how to rehabilitate these areas burnt in the Christmas 2001 fires.
- (4) No action will be taken to replant until the National Capital Authority releases its management plan for rehabilitating these burnt areas by the lake. However, over the next few months, the burnt pine stumps and logs will be mulched and the weeds will be sprayed on the Territory's area.
- (5) It is important to be consistent with the National Capital Authority's management plan for the burnt areas between the lake and the Tuggeranong Parkway. When the management plan is released, the Territory will decide what trees should be replanted on this site.

**Bushfires—block clearing
(Question No 559)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 2 April 2003:

In relation to the block clearing following the January 18 bushfires:

- (1) How many blocks have (a) Bovis Lend Lease (b) other contractors undertaken to clear;
- (2) What is the approximate waiting time for clearance of (a) and (b) above;
- (3) Is it a fact that residents cannot obtain the \$5000 government assistance unless they contract the block clearance with Bovis Lend Lease;
- (4) If the reply to (3) above is affirmative, why is this so;
- (5) What was the per block contractual price between Bovis Lend Lease and the Government.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) No individual or company has undertaken to clear a set number of blocks of land. The Government has contracted Bovis Lend Lease as project manager to find demolition and clean up contractors for property owners who want to use their services. Notwithstanding this, in relation to (a) to date 411 property owners have sought quotes from Bovis Lend Lease. (b) The number of property owners seeking to use other contractors is not known as this is a matter for the individual property owners and the contractors. However, the Taskforce has been informed that GIO Suncorp has made its own arrangements for its 45 policy holders.
- (2) (a) An approximate waiting time for property owners going through Bovis Lend Lease is not available as times vary according to the number of properties to be cleared by individual contractors and when the property owner applied for clearance.

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- (b) An approximate waiting time for clearance for property owners going through other contractors is not known as this is a matter between the property owner and the contractor.
- (3) No, Bovis Lend Lease does not enter into contracts with resident/property owners. Contracts are between property owners and demolition contractors. However, applicants for the grant must have their site clean up managed through Bovis Lend Lease. Residents who had signed a contract with a demolition contractor prior to the announcement on 10 February 2003 that Bovis Lend Lease had been contracted to manage the clearance of sites are able to receive the grant of up to \$5,000.
- (4) Bovis Lend Lease was contracted by the Government to manage the site clean up in order to ensure the bushfire clean up is completed systematically, and as quickly as practical to minimise the cost to individual households of clearing destroyed or uninhabitable homes. It was also considered important to adopt a project management approach to the bushfire clean up which would ensure consistent safe work methods and acceptable traffic management.
- (5) There is no per block contractual price between Bovis Lend Lease and the Government. Contracts for clearance are between the property owner and contractor based on the best price from three quotes (for packages of houses) which are obtained by Bovis Lend Lease.
-

**Bushfires—recovery appeal
(Question No 560)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 2 April 2003:

In relation to the Canberra Bushfire Recovery Appeal:

- (1) What is the specific criteria for allocation of funds from the Canberra Bushfire Recovery Appeal;
- (2) What is, in detail, the points system set up to allocate funds;
- (3) How many applications for funds have been received at the official close of fundraising (April 3) out of how many estimated to be eligible.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

The Appeal is a community-based fund guided by a Management Committee comprising broad representation from the welfare and business sectors, the Indigenous, aged and multicultural communities, and the ACT and Commonwealth Governments. The Management Committee is co-chaired by Bishop George Browning and Michelle Thorne.

Given that the arrangements for the conduct of the Appeal is the responsibility of the Management Committee, including the allocation of funds, you may wish to write to Bishop Browning at the following address:

Right Reverend George Browning
Co-chair
Canberra Bushfire Recovery Appeal
C/- The Public Trustee
GPO Box 515
CANBERRA ACT 2601

**Bushfires—damages
(Question No 561)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to damages following the bushfires:

- (1) How many houses has the government deemed to be destroyed by the Canberra bushfires as at March 31 2003;
- (2) How many structures such as garages, sheds and shearing sheds has the government deemed to be destroyed in the bushfires in January as at March 31 2003;
- (3) How many houses have you deemed to be significantly damaged but not destroyed in the bushfires as at March 31 2003;
- (4) Of these significantly damaged houses, how many have been determined as not being habitable until they are repaired;
- (5) Are any of these significantly damaged houses likely to be determined as being not suitable for restoration;
- (6) What processes are being followed with house owners of significantly damaged houses to establish whether restoration is possible;
- (7) Are there any avenues of appeal open to these house owners if they are not satisfied with the decisions that have been made about their house;
- (8) How many development applications have you received from lessees to replace houses and structures lost in the bushfires to date;
- (9) How many of these development applications have been approved to date;
- (10) How often have the development applications for structures been fast-tracked for structures destroyed;

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- (11) How often have normal planning processes applied for structures destroyed in the bushfires;
- (12) What criteria is used to determine whether a development application submitted for a replacement structure destroyed or significantly damaged in the bushfire is fast tracked.

Mr Corbell: The answers to the member's questions are as follows:

- (1) 497 houses considered destroyed by the bushfires.
- (2) 89 reported to PALM as damaged or destroyed.
- (3) 86 houses.
- (4) 54 houses were investigated under the Building Act by a consulting engineer. Eight were considered structurally in need of repair. All eight lessees were contacted and five had already begun repairs. Letters to 'effect' repair were sent to the other three.
- (5) None of the houses investigated in 4 above were considered by the consulting engineer to require demolition. Some lessees and their insurers are separately making decisions to demolish houses or other structures on economic or personal grounds.
- (6) See 5 above.
- (7) A decision is a matter between lessee and insurer, the only avenue of appeal is to the Insurance Ombudsman.
- (8) 16 applications for destroyed residences
12 applications for outbuildings/structures
=28 applications lodged
- (9) 10 approved new residences
9 approved outbuildings/structures
= 19 applications approved
- (10) To date, 16 applications have been classified as Category 2 and as such have undergone a streamlined development assessment process. These DAs have usually been approved on the same day they were lodged. PALM has established a separate DA assessment team to deal with bushfire DAs.
- (11) To date, 12 applications have been publicly notified. These are classed as Category 3 proposals.
- (12) Applications can be classified under three categories:

Category 1: Rebuilding consistent with previously approved plans.

Category 2: Replacing the destroyed residence with another that is no more than 15%

larger in floor area, of a similar height and is consistent with Territory Plan building setbacks.

Category 3: Replacing the destroyed residence with another that is substantially different.

**Abortion
(Question No 562)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Health, upon notice:

In relation to abortions in the ACT:

- (1) How many abortions have been performed in the ACT between 1 October 2002 and 31 March 2003;
- (2) How many abortions were performed in the ACT between 1 April 2002 and 30 September 2002;
- (3) How many abortions were performed in the ACT between 1 October 2001 and 31 March 2002;
- (4) Can you advise of how many of the patients who had abortions were from the ACT and how many of the patients were from other states and territories for each of the periods outlined above;
- (5) Could you further advise of which states and territories the interstate patients were from during each of the periods specified above.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is:

- (1) The following pieces of legislation dealing with the issue of abortion were passed in the Legislative Assembly on 21 August 2002:
 - the *Health Regulation (Maternal Health Information) Repeal Act 2002*;
 - the *Crimes Amendment Act 2002*; and
 - the *Medical Practitioners (Maternal Health) Amendment Act 2002*.

As a result of the legislative changes which came into effect on 9 September 2002, there is no longer a requirement to collect abortion data. As most abortions are conducted in the private sector, information on the number of abortions carried out in the ACT between 1 October 2002 and 31 March 2003 is not available.

- (2) The number of abortions performed in the ACT between 1 April 2002 and 8 September 2002 was 522.
- (3) The number of abortions performed in the ACT between 1 October 2001 and 31 March 2002 was 598.

- (4 & 5) There has not been a requirement to collect data on the state of residence of women who elect to have an abortion in the ACT, and therefore no data is available in response to questions 4 and 5.

**Stromlo Forest temporary landfill
(Question No 563)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the Stromlo Forest Temporary Landfill:

- (1) What is the approximate amount of asbestos being stored at this site;
- (2) What prospect is there of the asbestos entering the environment through water run-off while it is open and after the site closes in June;
- (3) How often will ACT Environment monitor the site to check that it is still safe;
- (4) Could you specify the precautions to protect the environment from asbestos and other hazardous material that is being stored on the site;
- (5) Have you consulted with Environment ACT about the storage of hazardous materials such as asbestos on the site. If so, what was their advice;
- (6) Will the site be suitable for other uses such as housing in the foreseeable future, and what special precautions will be necessary before it is available for other uses.

Mr Wood: the answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Bulk asbestos cement sheeting is not accepted at the Stromlo Forest site and must be taken for special disposal at West Belconnen Landfill. Only small quantities of asbestos sheeting mixed in ash and rubble from destroyed houses will be interred.
- (2) Nil. Water run-off from the landfill is captured in a specifically designed sediment dam to prevent any contaminants entering the environment. Asbestos is inert in landfill and is not a concern once buried.
- (3) Fortnightly during landfill operations.
- (4) Site access is restricted to authorised users who must abide by strict rules. All loads arriving at the site must be covered and damp. Loads tipped at the site are compacted and covered with cleanfill. Upon completion of filling, a final capping of cleanfill will be applied and the area grassed. Sediment control dams have been installed to capture runoff. A cut off drain has been installed to divert groundwater and overland flow around the site. Water bores have been installed below the site to monitor any leachate. All trucks must be washed down prior to leaving the site.

- (5) Yes. Environment ACT has issued an authorisation under the Environment Protection Act 1997 for the landfill activities at the site. The authorisation contains conditions to ensure impacts on the environment are minimised.

The facility is not licensed for the disposal or storage of hazardous materials by Environment ACT. Site access is restricted to authorised users who must abide by strict rules. All loads arriving at the site must be covered and damp. Loads tipped at the site are compacted and covered with cleanfill. Upon completion of filling, a final capping of cleanfill will be applied and the area grassed. Sediment control dams have been installed to capture runoff. A cut off drain has been installed to divert groundwater and overland flow around the site. Water bores have been installed below the site to monitor any leachate. All trucks must be washed down prior to leaving the site.

- (6) A site assessment to determine the suitability for the proposed land use(s) would be required in accordance with the requirements of Environment ACT. This would form part of the normal planning process where a change in land use is proposed. It is unlikely that the tipping area at the Stromlo Forest would be suitable for houses because it may be too unstable for foundations. Capping the site with cleanfill will allow many other landuses such as forestry and recreational facilities.

Transport—accessibility upgrades (Question No 564)

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to accessible public transport facilities:

- (1) What works will be undertaken as part of the minor new works project for accessible public transport facilities;
- (2) Why hadn't any funds been expended on this project at 31 December 2002, have any funds been expended since that time up to 31 March 2003, if so, please provide details of expenditure and works undertaken;
- (3) Will this project be completed as scheduled at the end of June 2003, if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The minor new works project will upgrade bus stop facilities on ACTION's bus route numbers 312 and 315 between Spence and Theodore, in accordance with the Accessible Public Transport Standards.
- (2) While no expenditure had been recorded up to 31 March 2003, the value of the design work completed at that stage was approximately \$20,000.
- (3) The construction contract is expected to commence in June 2003 with completion in

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September 2003. The design and public consultation work has taken longer than anticipated.

**ACTION—statistics
(Question No 565)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to the performance of ACTION, for each of the years 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03 up to 31 March:

- (1) How many passenger boardings were there;
- (2) What was the average number of kilometres travelled per boarding;
- (3) What proportion of boardings travelled were:
 - (a) less than two kilometres;
 - (b) between two and ten kilometres;
 - (c) more than ten kilometres;
- (4) What was the average cost to ACTION of each passenger boarding;
- (5) What was the cost to ACTION of passenger journeys of:
 - (a) less than two kilometres;
 - (b) between two and ten kilometres;
 - (c) more than ten kilometres;
- (6) What was the total cost and cost per kilometre to operate a bus;
- (7) Of the total cost of operating a bus, what proportions were due to:
 - (a) labour;
 - (b) fuel;
 - (c) repairs and maintenance;
 - (d) overheads;
- (8) How much revenue was earned from fares;
- (9) What proportion of total costs was covered by revenue from fares;
- (10) What proportion of operating costs was covered by revenue from fares;
- (11) What proportion of operating costs was covered by fare revenue for journeys of:
 - (a) less than two kilometres;

- (b) between two and ten kilometres;
- (c) more than ten kilometres;

(12) What was the average capacity utilisation of each bus on journeys of:

- (a) less than two kilometres;
- (b) between two and ten kilometres;
- (c) more than ten kilometres;

(13) What was the cost of collecting fares (a) in total and (b) per average fare.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

(1)

Total number of Passengers 2000 – 01	Total number of Passengers 2001 – 02	Total number of Passengers July 2002 – March 2003
15,646,000	15,789,000	12,071,000

(2)

Average number of km per boarding 2000 – 01	Average number of km per boarding 2001 – 02	Average number of km per boarding July 2002 – March 2003
1.05km	1.06km	1.06km

(3) ACTION does not have information on the length of journeys travelled by commuters and therefore cannot provide data on distance.

(4)

Cost per passenger 2000 – 01	Cost per passenger 2001 – 02	Cost per passenger July 2002 – March 2003
\$4.26	\$4.26	\$4.28 (ACTION estimates this to be \$4.24 for the full year 2002-03)

(5) ACTION's fares system is not based on distance travelled and therefore does not have information on the length of journeys travelled by commuters.

(6)

Total cost to operate a bus 2000 – 01	Total cost to operate a bus 2001 – 02	Total cost to operate a bus July 2002 – March 2003
\$183,500	\$185,300	\$142,300

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Cost per in-service kilometre to operate a bus 2000 – 01	Cost per in-service kilometre to operate a bus 2001 – 02	Cost per in-service kilometre to operate a bus July 2002 – March 2003
\$0.011	\$0.011	\$0.011

(7)
(a)

Proportion of labour costs 2000 – 01	Proportion of labour costs 2001 – 02	Proportion of labour costs July 2002 – March 2003
43%	45%	47%

(b)

Proportion of fuel costs 2000 – 01	Proportion of fuel costs 2001 – 02	Proportion of fuel costs July 2002 – March 2003
10%	9%	9%

(c)

Proportion of repairs and maintenance 2000 – 01	Proportion of repairs and maintenance 2001 – 02	Proportion of repairs and maintenance July 2002 – March 2003
4%	5%	5%

(d)

Proportion of overheads (indirect) 2000 – 01	Proportion of overheads (indirect) 2001 – 02	Proportion of overheads (indirect) July 2002 – March 2003
43%	41%	39%

(8)

Fares revenue 2000 – 01	Fares revenue 2001 – 02	Fares revenue July 2002 – March 2003
\$16,455,000	\$14,434,000	\$11,583,000

(9)

Fares revenue proportion to total cost 2000 – 01	Fares revenue proportion to total cost 2001 – 02	Fares revenue proportion to total cost July 2002 – March 2003
24.7%	21.5%	22.4%

(10)

Fares revenue proportion to operating (direct) cost 2000 – 01	Fares revenue proportion to operating (direct) cost 2001 – 02	Fares revenue proportion to operating (direct) cost July 2002 – March 2003
43.4%	36.6%	37.0%

(11) ACTION's fares system is not based on distance travelled and therefore does not have information on the length of journeys travelled by commuters.

(12) ACTION's fares system is not based on distance travelled and therefore does not have information on the length of journeys travelled by commuters.

(13)

(a)

Total cost of collecting fares*	Total cost of collecting fares*	Total cost of collecting fares*
2000 – 01	2001 – 02	July 2002 – March 2003
\$754,100	\$727,500	539,400

* The total cost includes the cost of cash collection, ACTION Ticket Sellers and commission to agents.

(b)

Total cost per average fare	Total cost per average fare	Total cost per average fare
2000 – 01	2001 – 02	July 2002 – March 2003
\$0.046	\$0.050	\$0.047

Belconnen Remand Centre upgrades (Question No 566)

Mr Smyth asked the Attorney General, upon notice, on 2 April 2003:

In relation to the upgrades at the Belconnen Remand Centre:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what upgrades will take place at the Belconnen Remand Centre as part of the various upgrades funded in the 2002-03 Budget;
- (2) Has any work on these various upgrades been started or completed as at 31 March 2003, if so, please provide details of the upgrade and cost, if not, why not;
- (3) No funding has been expended on this project as at 31 December 2002 and the project was scheduled for completion in September 2002, when will this project be (a) started and (b) completed;
- (4) If it won't be completed this financial year can the Minister confirm that this funding allocation will remain with this project.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The upgrades at the Belconnen Remand Centre relate to the induction area and consist of:
 - A new medical room
 - A new detainee clothing store
 - Minor renovations to the existing control room
 - Repainting of the induction area

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- A new induction counter
 - New floor coverings for the induction area.
- (2) The new induction counter has been completed, at a cost of \$ 7,000. A tender has recently been selected for the remainder of the work. The total project budget excluding GST and including the \$ 7,000 already spent is \$ 135,000.
- (3) (a) Apart from the induction counter, which has been completed, the rest of the upgrades will commence by mid-April.
(b) The upgrades will be completed and paid for by 30 June 2003.
- (4) The work will be completed by the end of this financial year as this is a condition of the contract with the successful tenderer.
-

**Bushfires—car bodies
(Question No 567)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the bushfire recovery process and removal of car bodies:

- (1) How is the government coordinating the removal of car bodies from fire ravaged forest areas?
- (2) When does the government expect all car bodies to be removed from the burnt out areas?
- (3) The Land Rover Club recently found 45 car bodies in a number of bushfire ravaged areas. The Land Rover Club worked with ACT Forests and removed 11 of those vehicles. Have the remaining 34 vehicles been removed from the area, if not, why not?

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The dumping of car bodies in the forest is illegal. Most of the car bodies are either unregistered or stolen. The stolen car bodies cannot be removed until the insurance companies give approval. ACT Forests works closely with the Rural Police, the City Rangers and volunteer groups like the Land Rover club in removing these stolen vehicles as soon as possible.
- (2) The removal of car bodies from forest areas is ongoing as people continue to dump vehicles illegally in the forest. ACT Forests will continue to remove these car bodies from the forest areas as part of its community service obligations. The Bushfire Recovery taskforce has facilitated a no cost disposal arrangement with the Stromlo metal recycling operation, the Theiss operation at Mugga tip and MG Metals at Fyshwick for burnt car bodies.

- (3) ACT Forests and the Land Rover club have worked closely to remove these illegal car bodies over the past few years. There were approximately 40 car bodies removed from the forest last year by volunteer and commercial operators. The ACT Forests' rangers locate these car bodies during regular patrols of the forest areas. The Rural police and the recreation users also inform ACT Forests of any car bodies they find in the forest.

Removing these car bodies by a commercial operator is a costly business and is funded from the community service obligation appropriation to ACT Forests. It costs approximately \$250 per vehicle for a commercial operator to remove the car bodies.

Illegal dumping of vehicles is an ongoing problem. ACT Forests will continue to remove the car bodies as part of its annual works program with help from such organisations as the Land Rover Club.

Periodic Detention Centre upgrade (Question No 568)

Mr Smyth asked the Attorney General, upon notice, on 2 April 2003:

In relation to the Periodic Detention Centre (PDC) upgrade:

- (1) Can the Minister provide a breakdown of the cost and upgrade details that have taken place at the PDC for the \$ 2.578m expended as at 31 December 2002;
- (2) What will the remaining \$ 205,000 be expended on, please provide breakdown of cost and upgrade details;
- (3) Has any funding been expended between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, please provide the breakdown of expenditure and upgrade details.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The upgrade was performed in order to convert the existing Periodic Detention Centre facility into a higher security temporary remand facility. This upgrade required:
 - The construction of twelve new two-bed cell units
 - The construction of a new induction area
 - An upgrade of the existing control room
 - Upgrading of perimeter fencing and installation of a boom gate
 - Installation of boundary cameras linked to the new CCTV equipment
 - Upgrading of both internal and external roof security

It should be noted that the total funding for the work, \$ 3.1m, was distributed over two financial years: \$ 0.4m in 2001/02 and \$ 2.7m in 2002/03. The 2001/02 funds were fully expended.

- (2) The \$ 205,000 figure you refer to relates to upgrades at the Belconnen Remand Centre, which are detailed in the response to Question on Notice 566 (1). The remainder of the PDC Capital funding (total \$ 3.1m) related to the total cost of the PDC refurbishment, as detailed above.
 - (3) The balance of the total figure of \$ 3.1m, allocated for the conversion of the PDC to a temporary remand centre, was fully expended by the end of February 2003. In essence, there were a series of progress payments made via ACT "Procurement Solutions", who managed the upgrade detailed in (1).
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**Public liability insurance
(Question No 569)**

Mr Smyth asked the Treasurer, upon notice:

In relation to public liability insurance:

- (1) How many non-profit groups have sought assistance from the Government in obtaining public liability insurance since the establishment of your new public liability assistance programs;
- (2) How many applications for assistance have been (a) successful and (b) unsuccessful in obtaining public liability insurance as the result of assistance by your Department;
- (3) If possible, could the Treasurer please advise of the average increase in premiums that these groups have had to pay in order to obtain insurance;
- (4) How many small businesses have sought assistance from the Government in obtaining public liability insurance since November 2001;
- (5) How many small businesses have been (a) successful and (b) unsuccessful in obtaining public liability insurance as a result of assistance from the Government.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the members' question is as follows:

1. The Insurance help line has received 126 calls from identified non-profit groups. Additionally, approximately 750 representatives of non-profit groups attended Departmental Insurance Seminars in 2002. So far, in excess of 120 registrants, representatives of community groups and government contract officers who service the relationships with community groups are scheduled to attend full-day risk seminars between now and the end of June 2003. It is anticipated the total attendees for the courses will exceed 200. The course sizes are capped at 15 participants to allow for greater interaction.
2. The Community Care Underwriting Agency Group Insurance Scheme commenced operation on 16 December 2002. The ACT was the first jurisdiction outside NSW to have the Scheme and it commenced in the ACT on the same day as in NSW. To date, there have been 106 ACT community contacts with the scheme: 15 policies

bound (issued), 49 proposals under consideration, 31 offers of insurance, and 11 duplicate contacts. No records are maintained on insurance obtained from other sources.

3. The Government does not have this information.
4. The Insurance help line has received 38 calls from identified small businesses with respect to public liability and other business insurance. In addition, Departmental seminars were conducted to assist tourism and hospitality operators. The Department participated in comprehensive, business sponsored risk awareness seminars for the broad spectrum of small businesses as part of its business focus. The Government takes a graded response to business insurance issues. It has legislated to assist the security industry in response to insurance market failure.
5. The Government does not have this information.

**GIO House and Allara House
(Question No 571)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to capital expenditure to “make good” GIO House and Allara House:

- (1) What does “make good” entail;
- (2) Why do these buildings have to be made good;
- (3) What works are planned as part of this \$626,000 project;
- (4) What is the completion date for this project;
- (5) Who owns these buildings;
- (6) What will the work add to the market value of these buildings;
- (7) Is the work to “make good” these buildings in preparation for their sale.

Mr Wood: The answers to the member’s questions are as follows:

- (1) The requirement to make good is a standard commercial lease requirement whereby at the end of a lease, the lessee is required to return the premises to the condition as existed at the commencement of the lease. It usually refers to the removal of all fixtures and fittings and repair of any damage caused by such removal, fair wear and tear excepted.
- (2) Making good is a requirement of the agreement between the Lessor and the Lessee. This is a common practice for leased premises under a commercial lease.

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- (3) As this will be a financial settlement, the make good work which may be undertaken by the owner is unknown. However, the work required to take premises back to the condition at the beginning of the lease would usually include: removal of all tenant fitout and returning of building services (mechanical, heating and cooling, fire safety systems possibly including sprinklers) light fittings and ceiling rectification back to base building configuration.
- (4) The timing of the works would be at the owner's discretion.
- (5) GIO House is owned by Sandran Pty Ltd. Allara House is owned by Commonwealth Custodial Services Ltd.
- (6) Unknown
- (7) Unknown.

**Floriade 2002
(Question No 572)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Economic Development, Business and Tourism upon notice on 2 April 2003.

1. What was the cost to the Territory of hosting Floriade 2002, is this amount more or less than in the past five years (please provide figures);
2. What was the profit made by the Territory of hosting Floriade 2002, is this amount more or less than in the past five years (please provide figures);
3. Will the Government continue to hold Floriade in Commonwealth Park or is it considering relocating the floral festival.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. What was the cost to the Territory of hosting Floriade 2002, is this amount more or less than in the past five years (please provide figures);

The cost to the Government of hosting Floriade in the past five years is as follows;

2002	\$1,853k
2001	\$1,843k
2000	\$1,393k (entry fee charged, main entry fee reduced in 2000*)
1999	\$1,193k (entry fee charged, main entry fee*)
1998	\$1,138k
1997	\$1,108k

*Fee Structure

1999

Adult single entry	\$10.00
Concession	\$5.00
Groups	\$5.00
Adult Season	\$15.00
Concession Season	\$10.00
Children under 17 years free	

2000

\$5 entry fee for all adult single entry visitors and \$4 for concessions.
Children under 17 years free

2. What was the profit made by the Territory of hosting Floriade 2002, is this amount more or less than in the past five years (please provide figures);

The following is the profit (operating surplus/deficit) in the past five years.

2002	\$100k approximate unaudited figure
2001	\$7k
2000	\$219k
1999	\$35k
1998	(\$878) operating deficit
1997	\$187K

3. Will the Government continue to hold Floriade in Commonwealth Park or is it considering relocating the floral festival.

The Government is committed to exploring permanent site options. While there has been consideration over a number of years about alternative sites, the clear preference of Canberrans and visitors gathered from market surveys is for Floriade to remain in Commonwealth Park.

The Government is currently examining options for the siting of Floriade in future years.

**Civic Library strategy
(Question No 573)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the Civic Library Strategy:

- (1) Why hasn't a start date for this project been determined;
- (2) When will a start date for this project be announced;
- (3) Will the project be completed by June 2003 as scheduled;

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- (4) What was the result of \$65,000 expenditure as at 31 December 2002;
- (5) Can the Minister provide a breakdown of what the remaining \$435,000 will be spent on as part of this project.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) It is believed Mr Cornwell is referring to the Libraries Improvement Program for which a budget of \$500,000 was approved. The Libraries Improvement Program commenced in August 2002 with a scoping of the works required in various libraries. Since then Tenders for various packages of works have been called, let and work commenced.
- (2) The program was announced in the 2002-3 Budget and work has commenced.
- (3) The project involves a range of works and all components are on schedule and will be completed by end June 2003.
- (4) The \$65,000 expenditure was a part payment for the schedule of work at Erindale Library.
- (5) The remainder (\$435,000) is to be spent on the scope of works currently in progress at Belconnen (\$107,000), Civic (\$48,000), Griffith (\$149,000), Tuggeranong (\$55,000), and Woden (\$76,000) Libraries. The works address items identified in Condition Audits and include OH&S, fire, air conditioning and disabled access. The works includes such items as improving internal lighting, bringing lift services up to the current standard for the disabled, replacing obsolete Fire systems, and replacing ageing components of air conditioning and heating systems.

**Holt, Ainslie and Garran shopping centres
(Question No 574)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to funds for three new suburban precincts:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what works will be undertaken as part of this project and in what areas;
- (2) As at 31 December 2002 \$25,000 had been expended on this project, what was delivered for this expenditure;
- (3) Where will the remaining \$225,000 be spent.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The work involves undertaking Forward Design studies for Holt, Ainslie and Garran shopping centres.

- (2) Initial consultancy fees for Holt, Ainslie and Garran shopping centres.
 - (3) The remaining funds will be spent on completion of the above studies. Balance of funds will be carried forward to advance the urban refurbishment construction program.
-

**ACT Government Shopfront—waiting times
(Question No 575)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to ACT Government Shopfront customer service.

- (1) What is the average waiting time for clients who use ACT Government Shopfronts.
- (2) What is the maximum time the Government finds acceptable for a resident to wait at an ACT Government Shopfront
- (3) How many counters should be operational at all times in ACT Government shopfronts and is it acceptable to only have three counters open at 11.45am
- (4) Is there a complaint mechanism for residents who feel they had to wait an extraordinary amount of time at an ACT Government Shopfront, if so, who should a resident contact, if not, why not
- (5) Can the Minister explain why a resident would have to wait 30 minutes to pay a car registration renewal (on Friday 21st March, time on ticket said 11.18am) at an ACT Government Shopfront
- (6) What amount of time is considered acceptable to wait at ACT Shopfronts.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The average waiting time at ACT Government Shopfronts in March 2003 was 6 minutes 52 seconds. Since the introduction of the automated queuing system in October 2002 the average waiting time has been: 6 minutes 34 seconds.
- (2) The 2002 – 2003 Budget output measure is for ACT Government Shopfront queue times to be less than 7 minutes 80% of the time. There is no defined performance measure for a maximum time.
- (3) The automated queuing system enables each shopfront to accurately match staff rosters to customer demand. This ensures resources are managed efficiently while delivering excellent customer service. The majority of staff work part-time and are rostered to maximise availability and reduce the need for staff to be absent for traditional lunch breaks.

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On the 21 March between 11am and 12pm:
Belconnen had 7 counters serving
Civic had 5 counters serving
Tuggeranong had 7 counters serving
Woden had 7 counters serving

In the course of a normal customer transaction it is necessary for staff to photocopy documents to adhere to procedures. The often complex nature of Shopfront transactions can also involve staff temporarily leaving a counter to make a phone call for advice to ensure customer transactions are completed accurately.

- (4) Yes, Canberra Connect has a customer comments mechanism which can be accessed by completing a form available in the ACT Government Shopfront and either handing to a counter assistant, mailing or faxing. In addition, comments can be provided online at www.canberraconnect.act.gov.au or by phoning 132281. For convenience, there are Internet terminals and Call Centre Hotlines in the Shopfronts. A reply is provided to all who chose to include contact details.
- (5) In the time period 11.15am – 12pm on Friday 21 March the average waiting time at each Shopfront was:
- Belconnen – 5.02 minutes
 - Civic – 23.30 minutes
 - Tuggeranong – 4.06minutes
 - Woden – 12.10

Unexpected staff absences were experienced at Civic together with experienced staff being provided to a new systems testing requirement. Less experienced, newly trained staff were taking longer to complete transactions.

- (6) ACT Government Shopfront performance measure for waiting time is 7 minutes 80% of the time.

Gungahlin bike path (Question No 576)

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the bike path between Gungahlin and the City

- (1) Can the Minister advise what the status of this project is and provide a breakdown of the \$22 000 spent as at 31 December 2002;
- (2) Where does the bike path currently start and finish;
- (3) Where will the remaining \$78 000 be directed;
- (4) This project was to be completed in June 2002, but \$85 000 was rolled over into the current budget, what is the new completion date for this project.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The project is ready to tender subject to National Capital Authority works approval. The \$22,000 spent to date has been expended on design and project management.
- (2) The bike path currently links in to the main trunk path along Sullivans Creek to the south and runs to the Netball Courts to the north.
- (3) The remaining \$78,000 will be directed in to the construction of the path.
- (4) To avoid abortive work the project was delayed until the Barton Highway duplication was completed. Negotiations with Yowani Golf Club and approval by the National Capital Authority have taken longer than expected.

**Playgrounds—safety upgrades
(Question No 577)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the current status of Playground Safety Program.

- (1) Can the Minister advise what playgrounds are on the list for safety upgrades;
- (2) As at 31 December 2002 \$195,000 had been expended on this project, what works have taken place for the expenditure and at what sites;
- (3) Has any further expenditure on this project occurred between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, at what cost and what sites.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The Playgrounds still remaining on the Playground Safety Program 2002/2003 list for upgrade are:

Package 1
Liffey Cres, Kaleen
Malindi Pl, Giralang
McDermott Pl, Belconnen
Shakespeare Cres, Fraser
Warring Pl, Giralang

Package 3
Alberga St, Kaleen
Burkitt St, Page
Oakover Cct, Kaleen
Teague St, Cook
Plowman Pl, Flynn

Package 4
Billson Pl, Wanniasa
Halfrey Cct, Wanniasa
Karney St, Kambah
Marconi Cres, Kambah
Maxworthy St, Kambah
Summerland Cct, Kambah

Package 5
Copland Dr, Melba
Delaney St, Melba
Mildenhall St, Fraser
Rechner St, Flynn
Sculptor St, Giralang

Package 6
Fadden Pines

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**ACT Housing—customer service
(Question No 578)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Disability Services, Housing and Community Services, upon notice:

In relation to training to improve ACT Housing Customer Service:

- (1) How many ACT Public Housing tenants were consulted as part of this study;
- (2) How many staff from ACT Housing were involved with the study;
- (3) Has the Government received the results of the survey, if so, what were the key findings of the study (please provide details), if not, why not;
- (4) Will you table the survey's findings in the Legislative Assembly for other interested parties.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) ACT Housing provides a number of staff training courses to assist in the improvement of Customer Service however I am not aware of any study and hence the answer is, nil;
- (2) Nil;
- (3) Not applicable;
- (4) Not applicable.

**Community IT Advisory Group
(Question No 579)**

Mrs Burke asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 2 April 2003:

1. In regards to the Community IT Advisory Group:
 - a) what is its role;
 - b) what is its terms of reference;
 - c) what is its reporting structure;
2. How did the Government determine the amount of resources needed to meet the digital divide needs of the community;
3. Has there been any change to the outlook on the Digital Divide since the Digital Divide Taskforce was established in 2001, if so, please provide details;
4. Was there any funding left from last year's Digital Divide funding, if so, how much;

5. If there was funding left over from last year's Digital Divide funding where has that money been allocated;
6. The Government recently produced an IT Training Booklet at a cost of \$25,000:
 - a) what new information does the booklet contain, other than information already flowing out in the community;
 - b) where can copies be obtained.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. With regard to the Community IT Advisory Group:

a) Role: The Community IT Advisory Group was established in June 2002 to provide advice to the ACT Government on strategies aimed at addressing equity of access to IT and Internet services, and related matters, within the ACT. The Group met seven times between July 2002 and December 2002 and, as the primary consultative mechanism through which the community can inform the Government of their connectivity needs, provided invaluable input into the development of the Community IT Access Plan.

b) Terms of Reference:

- ◆ Take a key role in assisting the Government develop and implement policies to address a broad range of issues related to the digital divide.
- ◆ Identify priorities and propose actions that will promote and guide a range of initiatives designed to provide a framework for the Community IT Access Plan.
- ◆ Identify and initiate research and provide advice on matters referred by the Minister or raised as a result of community consultation.
- ◆ Draw on the expertise of its members and their links to the broader community to assist in progressing issues under consideration.
- ◆ Consult regularly with relevant community organisations and individuals to identify concerns and propose relevant action. Act as a link between these particular groups and the government on such issues.
- ◆ Establish links to and draw on expertise from other bodies and organisations addressing a similar range of issues.
- ◆ Offer the opportunity for members to develop partnerships, alliances and other mutually beneficial relationships, to support the development of new digital divide initiatives.

c) Reporting: The model for the Community IT Advisory Group provides for regular reporting to the Minister on significant achievements and issues. The development of the Community IT Access Plan was the most significant achievement of this Group and this Plan was provided to me as the Minister in December 2002.

2. Resources for community digital divide needs were determined in the context of budget priorities and with regard to ACT Labor's Information Society Policy.

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Funding details for digital divide initiatives were provided in answer to Question on Notice 473.

3. The outlook on the digital divide has changed significantly since the Digital Divide Taskforce, primarily as a result of the Government's consultative process. Input from the Community IT Advisory Group has informed this Government throughout the development of the Community IT Access Plan. This Plan has established the strategic framework that will allow the Government to work toward closing the digital divide in the ACT.

The wide ranging initiatives in the Plan include: IT awareness raising among the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; providing IT access to the mobility impaired and their careers; investigating the establishment of a PC Reuse scheme; and providing IT training and access for disability housing residents.

In addition to increasing public IT access, the Plan places an emphasis on teaching people basic IT skills which will allow them to benefit from the new technologies. In every respect the approach taken by this Government has improved the outlook on the digital divide.

4. Unspent funds of \$198,000 from the Digital Divide grants program of 2001-2002 were rolled into this financial year. This provides for a total budget allocation of \$724,000 for 2002-2003.
5. The rollover from 2001-2002 digital divide funds has been made available for use in supporting the strategic initiatives identified in the Community IT Access Plan.
6. The cost of producing the IT training guide "*Welcome to the world of computers and the Internet*" was \$20,137.
 - a) Originally developed by the Canberra Institute of Technology as part of the IT roving trainer program, this training guide has proved to be a valuable resource for people with no or limited IT skills. Anecdotal evidence for this comes not only from clients but also from reports that some community groups with access to the limited copies produced by CIT were photocopying the booklet for their clients. Prior to its release the guide was updated to reflect feedback from the CIT trainers and community groups and as such contains information that is centralised, easy to follow and targeted.
 - b) "*Welcome to the world of computers and the Internet*" is available to the public, free of charge, through ACT Public Libraries, ACT Government Shopfronts, various community groups and the digital divide website:
www.cmd.act.gov.au/digitaldivide

[Attachments to the reply were lodged with the Chamber Support Office].

**Canberra Institute of Technology—Roving Trainer program
(Question No 580)**

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice, on 2 April 2003:

In relation to the CIT 'Roving Trainer' program:

- (1) Did the Roving Trainer program receive government funding in the current financial year, if so, how much and for what purpose, if not, why not;
- (2) Is this funding allocation more or less than what was allocated in:
 - a) 2001–02; and
 - b) 2000–01;
- (3) What quantifiable reports are issued by CIT to justify funding consideration for this program;
- (4) Does the government make public such information, if so, where can copies be obtained, if not, why not;
- (5) Is the Roving Trainer program providing quality service for money expended on it;
- (6) What reports or publications are currently available about this service and where can copies be obtained.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mrs Burke's question is as follows:

- (1) Under the Community IT Access Plan, the CIT Roving Trainer program was allocated funding of \$250,000 for the financial year 2002-03.

The purpose of this funding is to allow the current roving trainer program to continue to expand in its role of providing IT training to the ACT community in places and circumstances that those on the disadvantaged side of the digital divide feel comfortable.

- (2) The funding of \$250,000 for 2002-2003 is an increase on the \$100,000 allocated to this program in each of the years 2001-02 and 2000-2001.
- (3) Funding consideration for the continuation of the CIT program was based on success as reflected in: feedback to the Community IT Advisory Group, which emphasised the importance of training in its contribution to the Community IT Access Plan; in the recommendations of the June 2002 ANU report *A study into Connectivity Issues for Disadvantaged People*; in the Digital Divide Grants Program Evaluation, which highlights the correlation between successful grant programs and the use of the roving trainers; and in reports from community groups, CIT and the trainers themselves.

- (4) The information that informed the decision to continue funding the CIT roving trainer program is contained in the Community IT Access Plan, the *Study into Connectivity Issues for Disadvantaged People*, the Digital Divide Grants Program Evaluation and in reports supplied by CIT. This information is available publicly via the ACT Government Digital Divide Website, with the exception of some CIT reports in which individual participants may be able to be identified.
- (5) The feedback from organisations participating in the CIT roving trainer program indicate that community groups and their clients consider this program is providing a quality service. The Digital Divide Grants Program Evaluation highlighted the importance of the roving trainers in encouraging participants to develop their IT skills and this feedback is reflected in the decision to expand the program to libraries, schools and a broad range of community organisations. The Evaluation showed that the CIT program achieved notable success with a diverse range of participants, including community centre staff, women's refuge clients, people living with a disability, homeless youth and, in particular, seniors. Information gathered during the evaluation process indicates that this is a value for money service.

Value for money is, however, only one factor used in determining the worth of this program. Numerous stories such as those of refuge residents who have been able to safely contact their families via email, people who are able to access and read stories in their own language, and the many seniors who say they now feel part of the 21st century – all as a result of the work done by the roving trainers – indicate the quality of life improvements that the provision of this basic IT training can bring.

- (6) Reports and publications which refer to the roving trainer program are available at www.cmd.act.gov.au/digitaldivide.

**Disabled persons—IT access
(Question No 581)**

Mrs Burke asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 2 April 2003:

In relation to IT accessibility issues:

- (1) What is the government doing to improve IT accessibility for people with a disability:
 - (a) In general terms;
 - (b) In catering for an ageing population;
- (2) Is the government meeting guidelines in relation to accessibility under the Disability Discrimination Act, Section 24, and can you provide documentation to show this is the case, if so, please do, if not, why not;
- (3) What are the current audit procedures for compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) in relation to the government web site and links;

- (4) What level of training and expertise do ACT Government web site developers undertake in order to be web site managers.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) A study into Connectivity Issues for Disadvantaged People prepared by the Charles Sturt University, publicly released through the Digital Divide Website in September 2002, has identified the specific access requirements for each disadvantaged group. This study informed the Community IT Access Plan, publicly released in March 2003, which includes specific initiatives for the provision of IT access to persons with disabilities and an ageing population.

a) The Digital Divide Grants Program is a key part of the Government's approach to bridging the Digital Divide. To date approximately \$100,000 has been provided to organisations who listed people living with a disability amongst their target groups. One of these organisations deals exclusively with people with a disability. More detailed information regarding these Grants is provided at <http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/digitaldivide>.

In addition a number of initiatives to improve the provision of IT access for people with a disability have been planned and funded under the Digital Divide program, including:

- improved community access options at schools, community organisations and libraries, (including funding for additional PC's and large screen monitors);
- provision of one on one training via the Roving Trainer program, including training and access to Disability Housing Residents;
- the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services being funded to consult with carers and other relevant disability groups. Information gathered will be used to develop and implement a pilot program aimed at providing access and training to carers of the mobility impaired; and
- funding will be provided to the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services to pilot a residents IT training and access program;

b) To dated approximately \$90,000 from the Digital Divide Grants Program has been provided to community organisations who cater for an ageing population. At least two of these organisations list seniors as their primary target group.

Initiatives to improve the provision of IT access for an ageing population are being addressed in a similar fashion to those for people with a disability, including:

- improved community access via the expansion of library IT services, the utilisation of the ACT School Infrastructure;
- the exploration of access possibilities for the mobility impaired;
- provision of one on one training at community organisations; and
- subsidising access via the PC Reuse Scheme.

- (2) Yes. ACT Government Agencies when establishing and maintaining their websites are required to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Websites must also use and comply with the Australian Government Locator Service (AGLS) metadata standard. See copy of relevant page of policy at Attachment A.

In addition the recently publicly released Community IT Access Plan provides the strategic framework necessary to ensure that all members of the ACT community have equitable access to information technology and connectivity to online information and services.

- (3) ACT Government Agencies, when establishing and maintaining their websites, are required to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The current audit procedures are contained in the ACT Government Website Policy. This includes a requirement for periodic audits of all ACT government websites to measure their overall compliance.
- (4) Each ACT Government Agency is responsible for maintaining the integrity, confidentiality, accessibility, storage and disposal of information on their websites. The training and/or recruitment of personnel for these positions is undertaken at Agency level.

Attachment A

Government Website Policy

Each agency is required to designate internal staff to be responsible for maintaining the integrity, confidentiality, accessibility, storage, and disposal of information. A Website Manager is to be identified to take responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the agency website.

4.2 Content

All material intended for public access should be made available online. Where this is not practical, information should be discoverable through the website (for example, details of where to obtain a hard copy).

Agencies must ensure the accuracy, currency and appropriateness of the website content. All agencies must review their web pages regularly and make revisions to ensure relevancy and accuracy.

Content should reflect the values, principles and obligations outlined in the *ACT Public Sector Management Act 1994*.

4.3 Design and Accessibility

All ACT Government websites should follow a user-centric structure. Information should be organised in a manner meaningful to the user.

The user should not be required to have an understanding of the internal

structure of government in order to find the information or service they require.

ACT Government Agencies, when establishing and maintaining their websites, are required to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The purpose of these Guidelines is to maximise the accessibility of information and services to all users, irrespective of physical, environmental or technical circumstances.

ACT Government Agencies are also required to comply with the Australian Government Locator Service metadata standard to improve overall visibility and accessibility of information and services on agency websites.

4.4 Legal Issues

There are various legal requirements that apply to the electronic delivery of information and services. ACT Government websites must comply with the relevant legal provisions of their enabling legislation and with the relevant provisions of the appropriate Acts.

It is a requirement of this policy that access be provided on all ACT Government web pages to suitable copyright, disclaimer, and privacy statements.

ACT Government websites are Territory records, and as such, should be managed in accordance with provisions outlined in the Territory Records Bill 2001.

4.5 Security Issues

All websites should be implemented and maintained in a manner consistent with ACT Government IT Security Policy.

Canberra Institute of Technology—Digital Divide program (Question No 582)

Mrs Burke asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice:

- (1) Does CIT have a role in providing services to address issues relating to the Digital Divide;
- (2) Has the Department of Education, Youth and Family Services ever conducted a survey of client IT use and corresponding needs, if so what was the outcome of costs in terms of support to the community sector, if not would the Department consider undertaking such a survey.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mrs Burkes' question is:

- (1) CIT provides a range of services to support the ACT Government's Digital Divide program. These include:
- The development and production of self-help materials to be available at Community Access IT Centres for people who have not previously used a computer;
 - The recruitment of people suitable to be trained to be roving tutors;
 - Training, employment and management of roving tutors to provide support of people using Community IT Access Centres;
 - Training of Community IT Access Centre personnel in ways of supporting diverse users of their centres;
 - Community liaison to identify and to organise new sites and tutor input to these;
 - Monitoring the performance of tutors and providing support where necessary;
 - Regular network meetings of centre providers to identify issues they are facing and to facilitate discussion to address them.
- (2) No, the department has not conducted a survey of client IT use and corresponding needs and has no plans to do so. The department has a disparate client group whose IT use and needs are not easily quantified through a survey. The government's Information Management Strategic Plan 2002 - 2005, released in June 2002, recognises matters concerning IT access of ACT citizens. The department is actively working with government agencies charged with responsibility for addressing Digital Divide issues and client access to government services.
-

**Development—applications and approvals
(Question No 583)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to development applications and approvals

- (1) How many development applications have been lodged with the government in each month for Calendar year 2002 and up to the end of March 2003;
- (2) For each month of Calendar year 2002 and until to the end of March 2003 how many development applications were approved;
- (3) How many development applications received under (1) have been approved up to the end of March 2003;
- (4) What is the value of works for which development approval was sought during the 15 month period from January 2002 to the end of March 2003;
- (5) What is the value of works approved during the 15 month period from January 2002 to the end of March 2003;
- (6) Of the development applications received and approved over the 15 month period from January 2002 to the end of March 2003, what is the value of works approved.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

(1)

Month	No. Applications Lodged
January 2002	280
February	494
March	495
April	424
May	511
June	420
July	507
August	1018
September	484
October	497
November	509
December	463
January 2003	269
February	468
March	504
Total	7343

(2)

Month	No. Applications approved
January 2002	284
February	461
March	438
April	440
May	444
June	454
July	502
August	658
September	524
October	622
November	667
December	407
January 2003	276
February	540
March	488
Total	7205

(3) 6911

(4)

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Month	Value of Works for applications lodged
January 2002	\$21,676,500
February	\$58,960,545
March	\$128,195,628
April	\$39,796,938
May	\$83,820,456
June	\$300,912,673
July	\$79,815,343
August	\$184,125,550
September	\$52,689,494
October	\$66,514,663
November	\$80,371,281
December	\$62,102,476
January 2003	\$36,405,877
February	\$52,375,015
March	\$129,451,810
Total	\$1,377,214,249

(5)

Month	Value of Works Approved
January 2002	\$49,706,157
February	\$58,471,884
March	\$48,045,378
April	\$33,747,753
May	\$45,949,403
June	\$56,319,700
July	\$41,735,001
August	\$92,210,078
September	\$374,165,064
October	\$95,953,178
November	\$100,105,404
December	\$43,569,198
January 2003	\$36,496,046
February	\$123,596,736
March	\$90,849,903
Total	\$1,290,920,883

(6)

Month	Value of Works Approved
January 2002	\$9,926,024
February	\$40,295,664
March	\$27,264,267
April	\$32,102,623
May	\$45,437,394

June	\$55,954,199
July	\$41,471,038
August	\$92,210,078
September	\$374,165,064
October	\$95,953,178
November	\$100,105,404
December	\$43,381,818
January 2003	\$36,496,046
February	\$123,596,736
March	\$90,849,903
Total	\$1,209,209,436

**Higgins shopping centre
(Question No 585)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the Higgins Shopping Centre refurbishment project:

- (1) What refurbishments will be undertaken as part of this project;
- (2) Has the government consulted with the community regarding works to be undertaken;
- (3) As at 31 December 2002 \$30,000 had been expended on this project, can the Minister provide a breakdown of what works were undertaken with this expenditure;
- (4) Are plans running to schedule to complete the refurbishment at the end of June 2003.

Mr Wood: The answer to the Member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The proposed works will include the replacement of furniture, areas of pavement, lighting, planting, signage and public art. Widening of the footpaths at road/pedestrian cross-overs (pedestrian blisters) will be constructed to improve pedestrian and vehicular movement and access. Improvements will also be made to the courtyards through the installation of a new all weather canopy, a shade structure, tree planting and artworks.
 - (2) An extensive consultation process was conducted as part of the Forward Design Study for Higgins Shopping Centre, completed in January 2002. The aim of the consultation process was to ensure that community and stakeholder input was acknowledged and retained throughout the design development process.
 - (3) \$30,000 was expended on preliminary design and project management fees.
 - (4) The project has been delayed due to the resolution of design issues and the estimated project completion date is now August 2003.
-

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**Canberra Connect—internet links
(Question No 586)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the Canberra Connect Home page.

- (1) Why is there not a link on the Canberra Connect home page to the ACT Office for Women;
- (2) Would the government consider creating a link for Women's Affairs, if so, when, if not, why not;
- (3) If the government won't create a link to Women's Affairs, would it consider creating a link for Multicultural (which also doesn't have a link) and Community Affairs encompassing the Office for Women, Indigenous Affairs and Multicultural Affairs, if so, when, if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) There is a link to 'Community and family' on the Canberra Connect home page. When a mouse is placed over this link, the user is provided with more detail, which includes "services for women". The user is able, within two 'clicks' to identify and access information and services regarding services for women, including the ACT Office for Women.
- (2) The Canberra Connect web site provides a connection to the ACT Office for Women within two 'clicks'. It is considered that this provides excellent access to information of relevance to women.
- (3) The Canberra Connect web site also provides a connection within two 'clicks' to 'Multicultural and Community Affairs', which includes links to the ACT Office for Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs and the Office of Multicultural Affairs. It is considered that this provides excellent access to information about these matters.

**State of the Territory report
(Question No 588)**

Mr Smyth asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 3 April 2003:

In relation to the State of the Territory Report:

- (1) Will the Government still release a State of the Territory Report (or your equivalent) as foreshadowed last year;
- (2) If so, when will it be released;

- (3) Is the time for release listed above the original release date or is it a rescheduled date;
- (4) If the release of the State of the Territory Report has been delayed, why has it been delayed.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. As I have stated previously, a report with a sustainability focus will be produced this year.
 - 2, 3 & 4 The ACT community and the Sustainability Expert Reference Group have signalled their enthusiasm to be involved in the development of sustainability reporting indicators. The involvement of the community and the Sustainability Expert Reference Group in this process will lead to better reporting outcomes, however this requires that an extended period be given to indicator development. Accordingly, I expect that the report will now be completed by the end of this year.
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**Public Service—early retirements
(Question No 589)**

Mr Smyth asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to public service early retirements:

- (1) A new study has found that up to a quarter of Commonwealth public servants will retire in the next five years. Can the Chief Minister advise whether the ACT Government has undertaken a similar study to that undertaken by the Commonwealth Government, if so, where the results can be found, if not, will the government consider undertaking such a study;
- (2) Has the Government undertaken any work that reveals how many public servants are considering retiring in the next five years;
- (3) Has the Government undertaken any work that reveals how many of the following public servants are considering retiring in the next five years:
 - a. teachers;
 - b. nurses;
 - c. salaried medical officers;
 - d. sworn police officers.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The ACT Government undertook a study into the retirement intentions of all ACT public servants aged 45 years or over as at the end of June 2002, who were covered by the Public Sector Management Act and whose records were stored on the Perspect Human Resources system. This was a total of 5,362 staff. Copies of the full report

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and summary report have been available online since their release in September 2002, at www.psm.act.gov.au.

- (2) The results indicated that in excess of 2,300 employees aged 45 years and over intended to retire in the next two to five years.
- (3) Teachers, nurses and salaried medical officers employed under the Public Sector Management Act, aged 45 years and over at 30 June 2002 and whose records were stored on the Perspect Human Resources system, were included in the survey group. Sworn police officers were not surveyed as they are not ACT employees.

Bushfires—recovery grants (Question No 591)

Mr Smyth asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to the bushfire recovery:

- (1) How many applications has the Government received for grants of (a) \$5,000, (b) \$10,000 and (c) additional grants of \$5,000 for people without contents insurance, under its emergency payment scheme as at March 31, 2003;
- (2) Of these applications for assistance, how many are (a) still awaiting a decision and (b) been rejected;
- (3) In February it was reported that around 190 applications had been rejected for not meeting requirements, what are the requirements that fire victims have to meet for all of the grant categories;
- (4) Is any assistance available to people under the grants scheme whose houses were damaged significantly in the bushfires in 18 January but were deemed to be still habitable;
- (5) How many people whose houses were significantly damaged by the bushfires are still habitable have been considered to be ineligible for the scheme;
- (6) What was the average time to process applications.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

As part of the Governments' bushfire recovery process, the ACT Government offered two sorts of contributions for emergency household relief:

- \$5,000 per household for all households who are owner occupiers or renters in the ACT whose homes are uninhabitable; and
- a further \$5,000 per household (a total of \$10,000) for those who do not have household contents insurance.

- (1) Applications for these grants were to close on 31 March 2003, but the application date was extended to 3 April 2003 to be consistent with the closing date for applications for the Canberra Bushfire Recovery Appeal. The following table provides information extracted from applications as at 31 March and 3 April 2003.

	Number of applications as at:	
	31 March 2003	3 April 2003
Total Applications	731	733
Applications without Contents Insurance	248	250

- 2) (a) Two applications received on Wednesday 2 April are awaiting a decision regarding the first \$5000 grant.

There are also around 16 applications waiting on a decision for payment of the grant where there was no household insurance cover.

Mr Trevor Boucher, retired Commissioner of Taxation, has been engaged to review decisions where applicants request such a review.

13 applicants have requested a review by Mr Boucher, and these are still under consideration.

- (b) 193 applications fell outside the eligibility criteria.

- 3) As part of the Governments' bushfire recovery process, the ACT Government offered two sorts of contributions for emergency household relief:
- \$5,000 per household for all households who are owner occupiers or renters in the ACT whose homes are uninhabitable; and
 - a further \$5,000 per household (a total of \$10,000) for those who do not have household contents insurance.

Financial assistance under this Program was not designed to replace insurance and is provided as a measure of assistance and not compensation for losses.

To be eligible for the grant persons must be:

- either an owner/occupier or renter of a property located in the ACT which is declared no longer habitable by the Property Assessment and Recovery Team being coordinated by PALM; and
 - for the additional \$5,000, uninsured for contents and personal effects.
- 4) The Government has determined to offer the above formal support to householders whose homes were destroyed or inhabitable.

Assessments around habitability were made using the following criteria:

- whether the house is structurally sound to provide a safe environment. This should also consider the proximity of surrounding unstable structures;

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- whether the residents are living in the affected dwelling;
- whether the residents have all normal utility services (water, sewerage, gas electricity, etc), also transport, access to municipal services like garbage, etc; and
- whether the residence has functioning bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom and toilet services such as power, heating, etc.

Clearly this process will permit payment to residents whose houses had significant damage.

It is also acknowledged that other properties also experienced varying levels of damage. However the vast majority of householders had insurance and it would be extremely difficult to establish clear and workable criteria for further payments which did not overlap with insurance payments. Nevertheless the Recovery Centre offers ongoing support to all householders, habitable or uninhabitable, in the fire affected areas. In particular, it provides:

- Information;
- Access to material assistance;
- Case Management;
- Personal support; and
- Access to counselling services.

5) See answer to Question 4 above.

6) It is difficult to affix an average time of payment of the grant as some payments were made before the end of January, but where additional information had to be collected, then payments may not have been made up for 2 months. An estimate of the median time is 3 weeks.

Social Plan—budget allocations (Question No 593)

Mr Smyth asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

- 1) How much has been allocated to develop the Social Plan in the additional appropriation bills for the 2001-02 budget and in the 2002-03 budget;
- 2) How much of these allocations have been expended to date;
- 3) How much has been spent on consultancies and research for the Social Plan;
- 4) Do you have a current estimate of the final cost of developing the Social Plan, and if so, what is it;
- 5) When will you release the Social Plan;

- 6) What was the original release date of the Social Plan and if there has been a delay in its release date, what caused it.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. No funds have been allocated in the additional appropriation bills for the 2001-02 or 2002-03 budget to develop the Social Plan. Nevertheless, significant resources from CMD have supported the development of the Social Plan.
 2. Not applicable.
 3. The following key reports have been commissioned from existing CMD appropriations:
 - The National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling Report, *Locating poverty in the ACT* (approximately \$38,000)
 - The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Report *The need for and provision of human services in the ACT* (approximately \$38,000)
 - The ACT Council of Social Services Report *Addressing Disadvantage in the ACT* (approximately \$30,000)
 - The Australian Institute of Criminology Report *What works in reducing young people's involvement in crime* (approximately \$10,000)
 - The Review of Service Purchasing and the consultation in April with non-government organisations will also inform future service delivery and enhance government and community sector partnerships (consultation cost approximately \$42,000).
 - The Government has also continued to support additional detailed demographic studies (approximately \$100,000). A social and demographic profile of multicultural Canberra was released on 14 April 2003, with *A social and demographic profile of Indigenous Canberrans* planned for release later in the year following the key ABS *Indigenous Social Survey* in July 2003.
 4. The Social Plan is funded within the resources of CMD. To date, approximately \$157,000 has been expended on consultancies that inform the development of the Social Plan. It is anticipated that around \$50,000 will be expended on printing the draft and final versions of the Social Plan, consultation and consultancies. However, an accurate estimate of the final cost of developing the Social Plan is difficult to determine, in that work is also being undertaken across various government agencies, and resources are being dedicated to the development of strategies that will inform the Social Plan. An example of this is the Children's Strategy, being developed by the Department of Education, Youth and Family Services.
 5. The Draft Social Plan is expected to be released mid 2003, with the final version due before the end of the year.
 6. The original release date of the Social Plan was the end of last year. The date has changed to accommodate outcomes of consultancies and community consultations for *Your Canberra Your Say*.
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**Youth Justice Services
(Question No 594)**

Mr Smyth asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to Youth Justice Services:

- (1) How many clients did Youth Justice Services receive from the ACT Children's Court during 2001-02;
- (2) How many Community-Based Orders on these clients were Youth Justice Services responsible for enforcing during 2001-02;
- (3) How many instances of non-compliance with these orders were there during 2001-02;
- (4) What actions were taken against clients who did not comply with their Community-Based Orders.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Smyth's question is:

- (1) During 2001-02, Youth Justice Services received 436 Community Unit clients from the ACT Children's Court. There were 246 admissions of young people to the Quamby Youth Detention Centre. It is noted that approximately 86% of these admissions occurred after business hours.
- (2) During the 2001-02 period, there were 1355 community-based orders supervised by Youth Justice Services. A number of young people have dual orders.
- (3) During the 2001-02 period, less than 4% of all community based orders result in breach. There were a total of 54 court orders breached, 28 were a breach of bail and 26 were a breach of a community based order. If a young person has multiple orders and any one of these orders are breached, it may result in all of the orders being breached.

It should be noted that on occasions breaches have been instigated by other agencies, including the Australian Federal Police.

- (4) Young people on orders are ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with the conditions of their orders, under the supervision of Youth Justice Services.

Where a young person is at risk of breaching their order all reasonable attempts are made to advise the young people of that risk and the possible consequences. Staff endeavour to engage the young person and re-connect them back into regular supervision sessions.

Clients are advised through first and final warning letters when they are not complying with the conditions of their court orders and attempts are made to locate the young person via telephone contact or in person.

Breach action is available in instances of non-compliance, but this is only considered as a last resort. Breach action involves taking the young person before the Magistrate, at which point a further order can be made. In some instances the charges are dismissed by the Court, especially if the young person has been generally compliant over the duration of the court order.

**Poverty report
(Question No 595)**

Mr Smyth asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

- (1) In response to Question 412 you noted that \$39,600 as at 5 March 2003 was paid to NATSEM for the Locating poverty in the ACT report. In looking at the web site to locate this report the only document found was from December 2000 – is this the document that \$39,600 was spent on or is there another and what is the direct link to find it.

Mr Stanhope: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

The December 2000 document is not the document relating to this request.

It was my understanding that the NATSEM report on locating poverty in the ACT was placed on the NATSEM website. As a matter of course, NATSEM places most of its research in the public domain. I have since been informed that on this occasion, NATSEM decided not to put the report on its website due to the sections which identified disadvantaged suburbs in the ACT.

The report will be published in the near future as part of the work on the Addressing Disadvantage Project. The report has not as yet been printed. A copy of the NATSEM report will be forwarded to Mr Smyth's Office when it is printed.

**Mitchell Resource Recovery Centre
(Question No 596)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the Mitchell Resource Recovery Centre:

- (1) How many tonnes of rubbish, per month, has been taken to the Mitchell Resource Recovery Centre since it opened;
- (2) How much of that rubbish has been able to be recycled;
- (3) Has there been a reduction in the amount of waste going to landfill since the opening of the Mitchell Resource Recovery Centre, if so, by how much has waste going to landfill been reduced, if not, why not;

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- (4) Has the government measured if the ACT is on target to meet its goal of no waste by 2010, if so, can details be provided, if not, why is the government not measuring if we will reach that goal.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) An average of 1600 tonnes per month since May 2002.
- (2) An average of 44 tonnes per month.
- (3) Waste to landfill reduced from 224,225 tonnes in 2000/01 to 220,328 tonnes in 2001/02. Current data on landfill tonnages indicates that there will be a further reduction in waste to landfill for 2002/03.
- (4) Yes. Each year ACT NOWaste compiles statistics on the waste to landfill and resource recovery in the ACT. In 2001/02 the ACT recovered more than 64% of materials that would otherwise be disposed to landfill.

**Erindale Library
(Question No 597)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services:

In relation to the Erindale Library Refurbishment:

- (1) Why hasn't a start date for this project been determined;
- (2) When will a start date for this project be announced;
- (3) Will the project be completed by June 2003 as scheduled;
- (4) Why was funding allocated to refurbish Erindale Library, what refurbishments are needed, is there a draft breakdown of the cost for certain works;
- (5) Is there any danger to staff or clients if this refurbishment is not undertaken as scheduled.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The Department of Urban Services issued a Media Release advising the general public of the commencement of refurbishment work on 2 January 2003. Plans are on display in the Library.
- (2) The refurbishment program was announced in the 2002-3 Budget and work commenced in January.
- (3) The refurbishment works are progressing on schedule, with some stages already completed, with final stages to be completed by June 2003.

- (4) Erindale Library had been operating in its largely original condition and the facility had been slowly degrading with some OH&S issues becoming evident. Some elements of the refurbishment work include; new main entrance with air lock and improved disabled access \$60,000, staff area relocation for more efficient use of space \$30,000, shelving upgrade to meet disabled access standards \$20,000, lighting/electrical/data upgrade \$60,000, new entry from Erindale college with youth area \$42,000, front counter upgrade \$25,000, and new carpet and vinyl flooring \$75,000.
 - (5) The refurbishment work has addressed OH&S issues that may have been unsafe for staff and clients had the works not progressed.
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**Mugga Lane landfill
(Question No 598)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to the Mugga Lane Landfill Disposal Trench.

- (1) What is the purpose of this project?
- (2) Has work started on this project, if not, why not, if so, what work has been undertaken;
- (3) This project was scheduled to commence in October 2002 why then was there nil expenditure as at 31 December 2002 on this project;
- (4) Will the project be completed by June 2003 as scheduled, if not, why not, and will the funds be rolled over to the next financial year or will the project be withdrawn, if so, can the Minister advise of a completion date;
- (5) Can the Minister provide a breakdown of where the \$2.4m allocated to this project will be spent, if not, why not.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The purpose of the construction of a new disposal trench is to provide a lined disposal cell at Mugga Lane Landfill to ensure uninterrupted disposal of waste in the ACT. Landfill disposal capacity will be required up until 2010 when the 'No Waste by 2010' strategy will be fully implemented.
- (2) Design review and tender documentation were completed in November 2002 and Tenders were called in December 2002. Since the tender submissions received did not offer value for money and were largely non-conforming, tenders were called again in February 2003. The tenders received are being evaluated at present and the contract is expected to be let in early May 2003.

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- (3) As at 31 March 2003, a sum of \$64,000 has been expended against the design review and the preparation and processing of tenders.
- (4) The construction on site is expected to commence in May 2003 and the expenditure in 2002/03 will be of the order of \$200, 000. The balance funds of \$2.2m will need to be rolled over into 2003/04. The construction is expected to be completed in October 2003 so that Stage 2 works could commence straight after to have the new disposal trench commissioned by March 2004.

This project cannot be withdrawn because the new disposal trench should be made available by March 2004 to ensure continued garbage disposal in the ACT.

- (5) It is expected that the \$2.4m will be spent on the provision of Mugga Lane Landfill Disposal Trench.

Street lighting (Question No 599)

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to street lighting:

- (1) \$150,000 was allocated to street lighting in the 2002-03 budget as at 31 December 2002 none of that had been expended, why is this so;
- (2) Have any funds been expended on this project since 31 December, if so where has work been undertaken;
- (3) What streets (and in what suburbs) are on the list for this project;
- (4) This project had various start dates and the entire project is scheduled for completion in June 2003. Will the entire \$150,000 be expended on street lighting this financial year or will some be rolled over into next financial year;
- (5) If an amount is to be rolled over are you aware of what that amount will be.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) The funds from this project were allocated for lighting at Margaret Timpson Park at Belconnen. The design of the lighting was delayed in order to resolve issues relating to the Belconnen Town Centre Public Domain Manual including the style of column and luminaire to be used.
- (2) In February 2003, ActewAGL were engaged to undertake the replacement of the public lighting in Margaret Timpson Park and the adjoining pedestrian spine between Benjamin Way and Emu Bank. Construction work has commenced and should be completed in June this year.

- (3) As mentioned previously, ActewAGL will replace pedestrian lighting in Margaret Timpson Park and the adjoining pedestrian spine between Benjamin Way and Emu Bank.
 - (4) The entire \$150,000 will be expended this financial year.
 - (5) No funds from this project will be rolled over.
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**Bushfires—TransACT restorations
(Question No 600)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Treasurer, upon notice:

In relation to Transact connections following the bushfires:

- (1) How many Transact customers are still waiting for the following services to be restored following the bushfires:
 - (a) telephone services to be restored after the bushfires;
 - (b) pay television services;
 - (c) video on demand;
 - (d) Internet services;
- (2) When does the Minister expect that the services listed in (a), (b), (c) and (d) above will be fully restored;
- (3) Is there a timetable for restoration of each of the above services for each suburb affected by the bushfires, if so, can details please be provided, if not, why not.

Mr Quinlan: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- 1(a) TransACT has advised that all of its telephony customers had their telephone services restored by 31 January 2003.
- 1(b) As of 31 March 2003, there were approximately 150 TransACT customers still without TV, Video On Demand or Internet services (broadband). These services rely on TransACT's optic fibre cable and there are sections of cable that need to be replaced in the badly affected bushfire areas. This cable replacement cannot occur until damaged infrastructure, such as poles, which is owned by other entities, has been replaced. Significant levels of electronic equipment in Chapman and Duffy were destroyed.
- 1(c) See the answer for 1(b) above.
- 1(d) See the answer for 1(b) above.
- (2) TransACT is a private company and its relationship with the Government is through ACTEW Corporation's minority shareholding with several other private sector investors in the project. As such, the Government is not responsible for, and cannot

control TransACT's day-to-day operations. TransACT has advised that it is working hard to restore its full range of services in the affected areas and, as soon as infrastructure is replaced, it can commence work on its cabling and electronic equipment.

- (3) Noting the Government's relationship to TransACT, outlined in Question (2), ACTEW has advised that, although TransACT does have an indicative timetable for the replacement of its infrastructure, it is contingent on the replacement of infrastructure owned by other entities.

**Parking—ticket costs
(Question No 601)**

Mr Cornwell asked the Minister for Urban Services, upon notice:

In relation to estimated cost to motorists for ticket pay parking in Belconnen and Tuggeranong.

This Question on Notice relates to Question on Notice No 403 – the Minister advised that ticket (voucher) machines will be used for pay parking in Belconnen and Tuggeranong.

Are there any estimates of what cost a motorist will pay for:

- (1) 0 – 30 minutes;
- (2) more than 30 minutes but less than 1 hour;
- (3) more than 1 hour but less than 2 hours;
- (4) more than 2 hours but less than 3 hours;
- (5) more than 3 hours.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) up to 30 cents;
- (2) up to 55 cents;
- (3) up to \$1.65;
- (4) up to \$3.30;
- (5) cost will depend on the length of time over 3 hours. Cost of 3rd hour is \$1.65. Cost of all day parking (depending on location of parking area) will be similar to Woden at \$3.30 and \$4.50.

**ACTION—operating subsidy
(Question No 602)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

- (1) What operating subsidy has been provided to ACTION Authority during 2002-03, as at 31 March 2003;
- (2) Has the Minister received advice based on the results of the recent Booz Allen Hamilton study or other suitable research, as to what the impact on the quantum of this operating subsidy if average fares charged by ACTION were reduced by 50 per cent, if so, can he please provide details of this advice;
- (3) Has the Minister received advice as to what would be the impact on the quantum of this operating subsidy if ACTION did not charge any fares, if so can he please provide details of this advice;
- (4) How do fare elasticities in the ACT compare with elasticities identified or estimated in other Australian jurisdictions;
- (5) When is it expected that the nature of the proposed new funding model for ACTION Authority will be finalised;
- (6) What action is being taken to resolve the differences in approach between ACTION Authority and the Commission of Audit, as set out in its Report No. 2, towards achieving significant operating efficiencies in the cost of ACTION Authority.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The operating subsidy provided to the ACTION Authority during 2002-03, as at 31 March 2003 was \$37.570 million;
- (2) No.
- (3) No.
- (4) Refer response item 2 above. I am yet to be briefed on this study. Any information on these matters will be considered when the final report is provided.
- (5) This work is expected to be completed this financial year.
- (6) The difference in approach between ACTION Authority and the Commission of Audit mainly related to the principles underpinning the definition of 'achievable savings' and the 'cost of government ownership'. The report also highlights that those differences in opinion on the principles were largely resolved through the process, and that both the Board and the Commission agreed that there are a number of areas that could be targeted for better practice. They also agreed that those should be subject of discussion between the Government and the Board. Nevertheless, it is

not unexpected that there will be differences of opinion in relation to timing and practicality of some of the measures. The Department of Urban Services, the Department of Treasury and ACTION have discussed a process for assessment and consideration by the Government of the issues impacting on ACTION's cost structure. These arrangements are yet to be finalised.

**Land—auctions
(Question No 603)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to the land auction on Thursday 27 March. For each lot put up for auction:

- (1) Who was the successful bidder;
- (2) What was the final price paid for the lot;
- (3) What was the reserve price for the lot;
- (4) How much stamp duty will be paid;
- (5) What is the final date for payment of the purchase price;
- (6) When must the stamp duty be paid.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) and (2)

Lot 1 Block 70 Section 1 Dunlop – Canberra Investment Corporation Ltd, Brinete Pty Ltd and Tatebrook Pty Ltd - \$7,350,000

Lot 2 Blocks 55,56 Section 299 Conder – Jeseeka Pty Ltd - \$11,550,000

Lot 3 Blocks 23,24 Section 1 Gungahlin – Canberra Land Development Pty Ltd - \$25,300,000

Lot 4 Block 6 Section 157 Belconnen – Madison Constructions Pty Ltd \$5,550,000

Lot 5 Block 1 Section 21 Bonython – Katarina Homes Pty Ltd - \$1,250,000

Lot 6 Block 78 Section 29 Fyshwick – Chris and John Convine - \$365,000

- (3) The reserve price is undisclosed.
- (4) The stamp duty payable will be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Duties Act 1999 and The Taxation Administration Act 1999.

- (5) The successful bidder is required to pay a deposit of 10% of the purchase price at auction, and the balance within fifty six days. The balance is due on 22 May (settlement).
 - (6) Stamp duty must be paid within 90 days from the date of settlement.
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**Georgetown Apartments
(Question No 604)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to Units Plan 928, known as Georgetown Apartments and correspondence sent to the Minister from one of the unit owners in Units Plan 928 who is concerned about what appears to be illegal structures in the roof space of unit 4:

- (1) Is it an approved structure;
- (2) If so, was it approved before construction or was it approved afterwards;
- (3) If it was approved after construction, did it need to be modified to obtain approval;
- (4) Is the structure a breach of the Covenant on the leasehold restricting the gross floor area to not more than 4800m²;

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) I understand this concern is about a unit holder making alterations to the roof space of his unit to provide a storage area. The proposal was approved by the Units Corporation. A private building certifier provided building approval on 3 October 2001. Internal alterations such as this do not require development approval under Schedule 1 of the Land (Planning and Environment) Regulations 1992.
 - (2) I understand the private building certifier granted the approval during the construction of the roof space storage area.
 - (3) No.
 - (4) Yes, it appears that with this additional floor area, even though it is only for storage purposes and does not change the overall bulk of the building, the gross floor area limit in the Crown lease is exceeded by about 45 square metres. Planning and Land Management have sought advice from the ACT Government Solicitor on this matter. It is unusual for a residential units plan to have such a limitation and the Units Corporation could seek to have the units plan (lease) varied to either remove or vary that provision.
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**Georgetown Apartments
(Question No 605)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to Units Plan 928, known as the Georgetown Apartments and correspondence received by various Ministers from one of the unit owners in Units Plan 928 who is concerned about what appears to be illegal structures in the roof space of unit 4:

- (1) Was the work done by the unit owner before seeking approval of the Body Corporate for Units Plan 928;
- (2) Is the space common property or does it form part of unit 4;
- (3) If it is common property, to what purpose can it be applied by the Body Corporate;
- (4) Is it necessary for a Body Corporate to unanimously agree to modifications to the units plan;
- (5) Has the Body Corporate for Units Plan 928 agreed to modifications to the units plan in relation to the roof space in unit 4.

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) This issue was an internal matter between the Body Corporate (now referred to as an Owners Corporation) and the unit owner.
- (2) According to legal advice received from the ACT Government Solicitor's Office, this area forms part of the common property and not part of unit 4.
- (3) An Owners Corporation may, by an unopposed resolution, grant special privileges to unit owners for the enjoyment of the common property or parts thereof.
- (4) Yes, but only if the Owners Corporation applies to Planning and Land Management for the modifications to be permanently recorded against the registered Units Plan.
- (5) The Owners Corporation has not applied to Planning and Land Management for approval for modifications of the Units Plan.

**Narrabundah—land use study
(Question No 606)**

Mrs Dunne asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice:

In relation to the resolution of the Legislative Assembly of 10 April 2002 in relation to Animals A Float which resolved to immediately commence a draft variation over block 3, section 129, Narrabundah to change the use of broadacre, and the Minister's decision instead to commence a land use study of the block:

- (1) Who is conducting the study?
- (2) What progress has been made on that study?
- (3) When does the Minister expect to receive the results of the study?
- (4) Will the Minister consult with the present lessees of block 3, section 129, Narrabundah about the land use study before the Minister makes any decisions about land use?
- (5) When will the Minister inform the Legislative Assembly on progress in accordance with the resolution of 11 April 2002?

Mr Corbell: The answer to the member's questions is as follows:

- (1) PALM has conducted the study and engaged SMEC Australia Pty Ltd (SMEC) to assist in this work.
- (2) SMEC submitted a report and recommendations to PALM in March 2003.
- (3) PALM and Land Group have examined these recommendations and presented the results and a suggested response to the review for my consideration.
- (4) The current lessees have been consulted throughout the study process. PALM will continue to keep the current lessees informed following consideration of the findings of the review.
- (5) I will advise the Assembly of the findings of the planning review following my consideration of the report and the recommendations of PALM and the Land Group.

**Emergency Services—Hume helipad
(Question No 607)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to the additional Helipad at Hume:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what works have been undertaken as part of the \$28 000 spent on this project at 31 December 2002;
- (2) Has this project been completed or are there more works still to be undertaken;
- (3) What are the benefits to Canberra residents due to this project expenditure;
- (4) Can the Minister explain why there was a \$13 000 overspend on this project.

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Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The \$28 000 to 31 December 2002 was for expenditure to that date for a Feasibility Study covering both an Accommodation Options study for the Emergency Services Bureau (ESB) Headquarters as well as a new helipad for the ACT Bushfire and Emergency Services on the Snowy Hydro SouthCare Base in Hume.
 - (2) The study is ongoing and will be completed in the current financial year within budget.
 - (3) The Feasibility Study when completed will determine the benefit to the community, as well as to the ACT Bushfire and Emergency Services.
 - (4) Following on from my answer to (1), ESB are undertaking a joint Feasibility Study in order to minimise administrative costs, with costs being apportioned to each component on a pro-rata basis. The \$28 000 to 31 December 2002 was a total study expenditure for both projects as opposed to helipad expenditure alone. This reporting matter has been rectified in the March financial quarter. Helipad expenditure to date is \$11 000.
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**Australian Federal Police—security arrangements
(Question No 608)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

- (1) Has the Australian Federal Police:
 - a) established a 24 hour police operations centre for the duration of hostilities against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq;
 - b) tightened security around embassies and High Commissions for the duration of hostilities against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq;
 - c) tightened security around vital infrastructure such as dams for the duration of hostilities against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq;
 - d) tightened security around national institutions such as Parliament House for the duration of hostilities against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq;
 - e) tightened security around Commonwealth Government Departments and agencies for the duration of hostilities against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq;
- (2) If so, how may additional resources have been devoted to each task and what is the approximate cost.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

It is Australian Federal Police (AFP) policy not to comment on issues of national security. Whilst AFP ACT Policing has declined to specifically answer the questions asked, the public is assured that appropriate security arrangements have been enacted. The following information about ACT Policing security arrangements in the current climate of war have to date been released to the public:

- uniformed patrols of key premises, establishments and facilities in the ACT have been increased;
- an ACT Policing liaison officer has been maintaining close liaison with the AFP national headquarters which is monitoring national security arrangements through an Incident Coordination Centre;
- the ACT Police Operations Centre is on “immediate activation” alert to respond to any major incidents that may arise;
- the Specialist Response and Security team is equipped and remains on alert; and
- members have been rostered and placed on standby to provide appropriate response to any protests.

**Autism
(Question No 609)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice:

In relation to facilities for students with autism:

- (1) What has been delivered to students with Autism for the \$21,000 expended as at 31 December 2002 as part of this project;
- (2) Were any more funds expended between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, please provide funding details and what was delivered for that funding, if not, why not;
- (3) What will be delivered for the remaining funds - \$84,000 as at 31 December 2002.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Pratt’s question is:

- (1) The funds expended to 31 December 2002 were spent at North Ainslie Primary School for the minor upgrade of the existing autism unit as well as providing an enclosure for this unit.
- (2) The following funds were expended between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003:
Palmerston Primary School (\$10,000) – establishment of an autism unit
Campbell High School (\$20,000) - establishment of an autism unit.
Maribyrnong Primary School (\$4,000) – modifications to fencing for autism unit

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- (3) A new autism unit is being tendered at The Woden School. The anticipated budget for this project is \$50,000.
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**Gungahlin Childcare Centre
(Question No 610)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice:

In relation to childcare parenting infrastructure:

- (1) What was delivered for the \$167,000 expended on this project at 31 December 2002, can the Minister provide a breakdown of costs, works undertaken, area/suburb that benefits;
- (2) Have any funds been expended on this project between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, please provide details, if not why not;
- (3) Can the Minister advise what works will be undertaken with the remaining \$3.055m for this project.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

- (1) Up to 31 December 2003 an amount of \$162,500 was spent on design and documentation for Gungahlin Childcare Centre. In addition, \$4,500 was spent on professional fees for expansion of 6 child care centres namely Alkira Community Preschool and Child Care Centre at Charnwood, Greenway Child Care Centre, Conder Child Care Centre, Teddy Bears Child Care Centre at Curtin and Totem House Multicultural Early Childhood Centre at Kaleen.
 - (2) Between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, a further \$78,000 was spent on the Gungahlin Childcare Centre, which commenced construction in March 2003.
 - (3) Of the \$3.055m remaining as at 31 December 2002, approximately \$2.1million will be spent on the Gungahlin Childcare Centre, due for completion by October 2003, and \$0.9 million will be spent on expansion of the 6 child care centres, which are scheduled to be completed by September 2003.
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**Emergency Services—Belconnen centre
(Question No 611)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to Joint Emergency Services Centre in Ginnindera:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what works have progressed on:
 - (a) the Belconnen Joint Emergency Services Centre;
 - (b) the West Belconnen Joint Emergency Services Centre;
- (2) What works are still to be undertaken on (a) and (b) above;
- (3) In (a) above there is a \$330,000 outstanding authorisation and in (b) above there is a \$601,000 outstanding authorisation. Can the Minister confirm if those funding allocations will remain with these two projects and not be reallocated elsewhere;
- (4) When will these projects be completed.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Preliminary planning is underway for the Belconnen Joint Emergency Services Centre (JESC) and detailed planning and consultation with the relevant stakeholders is being undertaken for the West Belconnen JESC.
- (2) Following from my first answer, detailed design, Development Application submission and approval followed by construction are yet to be undertaken for both Belconnen and West Belconnen JESCs. Belconnen JESC will also require a preliminary design process similar to the one previously undertaken for joint stations.
- (3) There is no expectation that current authorisations for both Belconnen and West Belconnen JESCs will not remain with the projects as planned.
- (4) The recent Bushfire emergency in the ACT has dictated alternative priorities for the Belconnen and West Belconnen JESC stakeholders (both Management and Operational) and revised project delivery timelines will be determined following further design work.

Lanyon Neighbourhood and Youth Centre (Question No 612)

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice:

In relation to Lanyon Neighbourhood and Youth Centre:

- (1) What is the status of the capital works project at Lanyon Neighbourhood and Youth Centre;
- (2) As the project was scheduled for completion in April 2001, why is there \$15,000 still not expended for prior years funding as shown in the December 2002 Quarterly Capital Works Progress Report;
- (3) What is the purpose of the remaining \$15,000;

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- (4) What percentage of this project has been completed;
- (5) Will that \$15,000 be spent on the Lanyon Neighbourhood and Youth Centre or will it get rolled over into another project within the department.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

- (1) Construction of the Lanyon Neighbourhood and Youth Centre was completed in April 2001.
 - (2) The amount of \$15,000 shown in the December 2002 Quarterly Capital Works Progress Report is the amount of outstanding authorisation for the project. The amount is forecast for expenditure in 2002-03.
 - (3) The remaining \$15,000 is the balance of the project budget and has been retained in case any late claims for payment are made on the project and/or to address any defects.
 - (4) The project is physically complete and is to be closed off as financially complete at 30 June 2003.
 - (5) A late claim for payment of consultant design fees was received in early 2003 for a sum of \$6,115. This amount has been paid. Further claims are not anticipated. There will be no rollover of remaining funds to another project.
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**O'Connell Centre relocation
(Question No 613)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice:

In relation to the O'Connell Centre relocation:

- (1) What is the current situation with relocation of the O'Connell Centre;
- (2) What was delivered for the \$27,000 expended as at 31 December 2002 on this project;
- (3) Have any funds been expended on this project between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, please provide details of cost and reason for cost;
- (4) When will a final decision be made on the relocation of the O'Connell Centre.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

- (1) Plans are under way to relocate the Centre for Teaching and Learning Technologies from the O'Connell Centre to the Canberra College (Weston campus). The project is at Final Sketch Plan stage and documentation work is proceeding with a view to the project going to construction tender in June 2003. The project is expected to be completed by December 2003.

- (2) Design documentation and ACT Procurement Solutions fees comprise expenditure up to 31 December 2002.
 - (3) No expenditure was incurred in the period 31 December 2002 to 31 March 2003 although design work was proceeding.
 - (4) The decision has been made for functions at the O'Connell Centre to be relocated to the Canberra College (Weston campus).
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**Schools—refurbishment
(Question No 614)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice:

In relation to older schools refurbishments:

- (1) What schools have benefited from the \$35,000 expended as at 31 December 2002 on this project, and can the answer please detail works undertaken, amount of expenditure;
- (2) Have any further funds been spent between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, please provide details, including the school, amount of expenditure and works undertaken;
- (3) Can the Minister provide any details about how the remaining funds will be expended - \$2.465m as at 31 December 2002 – if so, please list school, amount of expenditure and works to be undertaken.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

- (1) Lyneham High School and Dickson College are the two schools in the program. Payments related to construction insurance and design and documentation works have been made. Some work had commenced at Lyneham High School by 31 December 2002, but this work was not invoiced.
- (2) An amount of \$501,000 was spent in the March 2003 quarter. This was a progress payment relating to a range of works undertaken at Lyneham High School, including a major refurbishment of the main toilet areas, resurfacing of all main traffic corridors and painting of all corridors and the hall.
- (3) Major works are programmed for both schools, including:

Lyneham High School: refurbishment of classroom floor surfaces, painting etc; renovation of the home science areas; OH&S upgrades to stairwell handrails; the provision of increased security to designated areas; renovation of all remaining toilets throughout the school; installation of a new toilet and kitchenette for staff; a boardroom installation; upgrades to fire and emergency warning systems; renovation of the agricultural area and other minor works.

Dickson High School: an extensive renovation of classroom floor surfaces, painting etc; upgrading of toilets throughout the school; a new theatre extension; the provision of increased security to designated areas; OH&S upgrades to stairwell handrails;

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upgrades to fire and emergency warning systems; the installation of a new kiln and other minor works.

It is anticipated that some work will be undertaken in the July school holidays and an amount of \$500,000 is to be carried forward to 2003-04. Full expenditure of \$2,500,000 is anticipated. Funding is to be approximately equally distributed between the schools.

**Schools—liability for absent students
(Question No 615)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to school liability for absent students:

- (1) Has the Minister received advice as to whether a school is liable if a student is injured while not on school grounds, if so what is the substance of the advice;
- (2) Has the Minister received advice as to whether a note from a student's parents frees the school of concerns about liability if a student is injured while not on school grounds during school hours, if so what is the substance of the advice;
- (3) Do schools check with parents if notes are legitimate if there is any danger in the child leaving the school grounds ie: to attend a protest where the student could be injured;
- (4) Can the Minister advise how many students have been absent from school this year to participate in anti-war protests and what percentage of these students had permission to leave school grounds.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

- (1) No
- (2) No
- (3) Students are required to submit a note if they intend to leave the school grounds during school hours. If the school has any reason to believe the note may not be genuine, the parents are contacted to verify the authenticity of the note.
- (4) School records indicate that 237 ACT government school students were absent from school to attend the war protest on 5 March 2003, and that 280 students were absent from school on 24 March to attend a second war protest.

The majority of students provided notes to schools giving them permission from their parents to leave the school grounds. 19% of the students who left school on 24

March failed to provide a note. Parents/carers of these students have been informed in writing that their son/daughter left school without permission.

**Quamby Youth Detention Centre
(Question No 616)**

Mr Pratt asked the Attorney-General, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to the Quamby Youth Detention Centre facilities improvement program:

- (1) Given this project was scheduled for completion in June 2002 but there is still a \$63,000 outstanding authorisation, what works are still to be completed and what works have already been completed?
- (2) Will this project be completed by June 2003, will the spending be deferred again, or will it be reallocated elsewhere?

Ms Gallagher as Minister responsible for Youth Justice, the answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

- (1) The initial allocation of funding was to develop a feasibility study for the upgrade of the Quamby Youth Detention Centre. The feasibility study was the initial process in the Quamby Forward Design program.

On 12 December 2002, the Facilities Improvement Section of the Department of Education, Youth and Family Services sought approval from Treasury requesting that the outstanding \$63,000 be transferred into the funding for the Quamby Youth Detention Centre Forward Design Project. This request was approved.

- (2) As outlined above, these funds have already been allocated to the Quamby Youth Detention Centre Forward Design Project that will be completed in July 2003.
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**Quamby Youth Detention Centre
(Question No 617)**

Mr Pratt asked the Attorney-General, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to the Quamby Youth Detention Centre upgrade:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what works are planned at Quamby as part of the \$300,00 allocation in the 2002-03 Budget and is this project running according to schedule;
- (2) When will works start on this project;
- (3) When will the works be completed.

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Mr Stanhope: The answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

- (1) No works are planned at Quamby as part of the \$300,000 allocation for the Forward Design Project. The \$300,000 for the Forward Design Project is for a study on future infrastructure needs and design concepts for Quamby. This has comprised contracting an architect through a tender process to undertake a study and provide full sketch plans on possible upgrades to the Centre.

The Forward Design Project will be completed in July 2003 at which point the results of the study, including full sketch plans, will be available.

(2) Not applicable.

(3) Not applicable.

**Schools—safety facilities
(Question No 618)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice:

In relation to safety facilities in various schools:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what has been delivered for the \$11,000 expended as at 31 December 2002 on this project;
- (2) Have any further funds been spent between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, please provide details, including the school, amount of expenditure and safety measures implemented;
- (3) Can the Minister provide any details about how the remaining funds will be expended - \$789,000 as at 31 December 2002 – if so, please list school, amount of expenditure and safety measures to be implemented.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

- (1) The \$11,000 expended on safety facilities prior to 31 December 2002 was spent on the following:

Construction Insurance		\$4,000
Roof Safety	Mawson Primary School	\$7,000

- (2) Between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003 money has been spent on the following safety facilities:

Roof Safety	Melrose High School	\$44,000
Electrical Safety Switches	Melrose High School	\$6,000
School glazing	Consultants' fees for various schools	\$18,000

(3) The expenditure of remaining funds on safety facilities is proposed as follows:

School Glazing Replacement Program

Glazing upgrade and replacement totalling \$311,000 are to take place at Tharwa Primary School, Hall Primary School, Lyons Primary School, Curtin Primary School, Narrabundah College, Hughes Primary School, Garran Primary School, Macquarie Primary School, Mawson Primary School, Torrens Primary School, Aranda Primary School and Cook Primary School.

Electrical Safety Switches

Installation of electrical safety switches totalling \$210,000 is to take place at: Campbell High School, Canberra High School, Belconnen High School, Ginninderra District High School, Wanniasa High School, Melba High School, Kaleen High School, Gold Creek Senior Campus, Canberra College (Woden & Weston Campus), Lake Tuggeranong College, Erindale College, Copland College, Hawker College, Lake Ginninderra College, Narrabundah College.

Roof Safety

Installation of roof safety equipment at Canberra College (Woden Campus) and installation of ladder brackets at various schools (mostly in primary schools) is to take place at an estimated cost of \$200,000.

**Transportable Amenity program
(Question No 619)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to the Transportable Amenity Program (TAIP):

- (1) How many schools have taken up the offer to install air conditioning in transportables as part of this program, can the Minister list schools that have taken up the offer and used funds for air conditioning, and how much funding did each school/transportable receive;
- (2) What purposes have schools used the TAIP funding for outside of air conditioning, please list schools, purpose and amount allocated to the school per transportable;
- (3) Will this program be continued as part of the 2003/04 budget.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

- (1) Seven primary schools accepted an offer to install air conditioning in transportable classrooms in 2002/03.

Four of these have requested reimbursement and have been paid:

- Gilmore Primary - \$21,000
- Gordon Primary - \$10,000

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- Miles Franklin Primary - \$9,000
- Monash Primary - \$10,000

A further three have been approved but a request for reimbursement has not been received and paid:

- Chisholm Primary
- Gowrie Primary
- Isabella Plains Primary

The department will reimburse up to \$5,000 for each transportable classroom.

(2) Funds have been used only for airconditioning.

(3) The 2003-04 budget has not been released.

Schools—transportable classrooms (Question No 620)

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to transportable classrooms:

- (1) Can the Minister advise what schools have benefited from the \$345,000 expended as at 31 December 2002 on this project, and can the answer please detail the provision of any new transportables to particular schools;
- (2) Have any further funds been spent between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003, if so, please provide details;
- (3) Can the Minister provide any details regarding which schools will need to access the remaining funds - \$1.535m as 31 December 2002 – as part of this project;
- (4) Does the government expect the remainder of these funds to be expended by the end of the financial year.

Ms Gallagher: The answer to Mr Pratt's question is:

(1) The schools that have benefited from the program expenditure of \$345,000 up to 31 December 2002 are as follows:

- Gold Creek Senior – 4 classrooms
- Ngunnawal Primary – 2 classrooms
- Palmerston Primary – 2 classrooms

These schools received new transportable classrooms and the expenditure represents progress payments up to 31 December 2002.

- (2) An additional \$446,000 was spent between 31 December 2002 and 31 March 2003 on progress payments relating to acquisition of transportable classrooms mentioned in (1).
- (3) Of the amount of \$1.535m, \$446,000 is already spent, a further amount of \$299,000 is to be spent on progress payments relating to the acquisition of transportable classrooms mentioned in (1) and additional car parking at Palmerston Primary School is to be provided as part of the expansion of the school.
- (4) No. It is expected that approximately \$790,000 will be rolled over to 2003-04.

**Woden police station
(Question No 621)**

Mr Pratt asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 3 April 2003:

In relation to the Woden Police Station;

- (1) Can the Minister advise what work has been undertaken on this project as at 31 March 2003 and what work is still to be undertaken;
- (2) What was delivered for:
 - (a) the \$30,000 expended in prior years on this project;
 - (b) the \$30,000 expended as at 31 December 2002;
- (3) Will the remaining \$4.94m allocated to this project be spent on this actual project or reallocated;
- (4) How much money has been expended on this project as at 31 March 2003;
- (5) Will this project be completed by the end of June 2003 as scheduled, if not, why not and is there a new completion date.

Mr Wood: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) As at 31 March 2003 the Department of Justice and Community Safety has finalised a draft Functional Brief for Woden Police Station and this is being reviewed by Government and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) in advance of commencing preliminary design, detailed design, Development Application submission and construction.
- (2) The \$30,000 expenditure in 2001/02 and 2002/03 (as at 31 December 2002) was for a Feasibility/Site Options Study and Principal Arranged Insurance respectively.
- (3) There is no expectation that the remaining \$4.94m will not remain with the project as planned.

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- (4) Expenditure as of 31 March 2003 is approximately \$30,000.
 - (5) The Woden Police Station will not be completed by the end of June 2003. The Government, the Department of Justice and Community Safety and the AFP are in the final stage of evaluating the most feasible Woden Police Station model to suit the needs of the Woden community and the AFP. Once this has been determined the design of the police station can commence with a probable completion date in late 2004/05.
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