

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 27 May 1999

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald)** took the Chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

RACING (SATRA—CONSTITUTION AND OPERATIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr WRIGHT (Lee) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Racing Act 1976. Read a first time.

Mr WRIGHT: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The racing industry has a proud past, and its future is partly in our hands. Racing is a very important industry and it is an essential component of our economy. The industry is also an important sporting and recreational pursuit, enjoyed by a broad cross section of the community. It employs thousands of people and is one of the biggest industries in South Australia.

The industry is of such magnitude that its betting turnover for 1997-98 was \$723 million. That was made up of TAB turnover of \$593 million; on course tote, \$51 million; and bookmakers, \$79 million. From turnover we derive the revenue to the industry: from the TAB, \$26.5 million; on course tote, \$4.1 million; and bookmakers, \$1.1 million, a total of \$31.7 million to the industry, purely from betting turnover. Further to that, the Racing Industry Development Authority (RIDA) derived \$5.1 million from TAB fractions and unclaimed dividends and special Government appropriation of \$2.5 million to RIDA for marketing, breeding, capital works, etc. That gives us a total of \$39.3 million to the industry, and Government income from racing was of the order of \$29 million. The great percentage of industry money and Government income is derived from the TAB. I note that 55 per cent of profits goes to the industry and 45 per cent goes to the Government.

In my maiden speech on 9 December 1997, some 18 months ago, I said that the racing industry requires some synergy and change, that we are in somewhat of a vacuum and that we have let a generation or two slip by. Little did I know what would unfold, that the Government would not provide the desired leadership and that the Opposition, with industry support, would fill the vacuum. This Bill is about overhauling racing administration, broadening and providing greater industry representation to the South Australian Thoroughbred Racing Authority (SATRA), and it is the first step in reforming the structure of the industry and ensuring that racing will be able to administer itself in future with decent legislation set by Government.

SATRA is the peak body that is responsible for controlling the thoroughbred racing industry across South Australia. It is not only responsible at a local level but it has a national context in the Australian racing industry. SATRA has two members on the Australian Racing Board and, if a State is not part of that board, it is relegated to picnic club status with no reciprocity of horses, personnel and no voice or standing in the Australian thoroughbred industry.

SATRA is charged with the responsibility of making the best decisions for all the thoroughbred industry in South Australia. Section 32(1) of the Racing Act 1976, which deals with the functions and powers of SATRA, states:

(a) to regulate and control the horseracing code and the conduct of horse race meetings and horse races within the State; and

(b) to prepare and implement plans and strategies for the management of the financial affairs of the horseracing code and for the development and marketing of the code.

SATRA stands above the SAJC but, at present, all five of its members are appointed by the South Australian Jockey Club. That freezes out key stakeholders from representation on SATRA. That is simply not good for the industry and can no longer be tolerated.

This Bill seeks to redress the monopoly that the South Australian Jockey Club currently has in making sole appointments to SATRA and, as a consequence, it will broaden and give greater industry representation on SATRA. It is the first step in reforming the structure of the industry, collapsing RIDA, getting the Government out of racing administration and recognising that the industry can manage itself.

It is also timely, of course, because the current SATRA appointments expire in October this year. In this Bill, section 26 of the principal Act is repealed and, in proposed section 26 of my Bill, the constitution of SATRA would be six members, as follows:

(a) Two members appointed by the South Australian Jockey Club.

(b) One member appointed by the South Australian Racing Clubs Council.

(c) One member appointed by a new body called the Thoroughbred Racing Advisory Council (TRAC).

(d) One member appointed by the presiding member of the South Australian Jockey Club, the South Australian Racing Clubs Council and the Thoroughbred Racing Advisory Council, following an advertisement in a newspaper circulating throughout the State and with the view of achieving a balance on SATRA.

(e) The Chief Executive Officer of SATRA (ex officio). The South Australian Racing Clubs Council is deliberately recognised—and so it should be. The South Australian Racing Clubs Council is the peak body of the country and provincial racing clubs and Oakbank. It represents all racing clubs except the SAJC. Its members come from Mount Gambier, Lucindale, Port Lincoln, Kimba, Strathalbyn, Murray Bridge, Woodside and Kingscote. This is very representative of the country, but currently it cannot nominate its choice to SATRA. The new Thoroughbred Racing Advisory Council will, for the first time, bring under the one umbrella owners, breeders, licensed trainers, jockeys and apprentices, bookmakers and bookmakers' clerks, one representative of stablehands and race club employees, and a representative of punters. There will be seven members, and it will bring all the major industry stakeholders together for the first time.

The Thoroughbred Racing Advisory Council would meet six times per year, and at least three meetings per year must be joint meetings with SATRA. It would provide advice to SATRA, serve as a channel for communication between the industry stakeholders and, critically, it would appoint a member to SATRA. New South Wales has a similar body on its Thoroughbred Racing Board, and I have spoken to officials in New South Wales who are delighted about how it is operating.

The qualifications and experience that are currently in the Act—for example, financial management or marketing, legal or business experience in the horseracing industry—will stay, because this is the quality of the individual who must serve the industry and be on SATRA. An important fundamental

principle is put into this Bill, that is, you cannot go direct from the SAJC, SARCC or TRAC onto SATRA because you cannot serve two masters. An appointment to SATRA is to represent all the thoroughbred industry.

Furthermore, no public sector employee can be appointed to SATRA. This constitution of SATRA achieves balance across the industry—balance for the first time. Appointments to SATRA must give consideration to the desirability of achieving reasonable diversity in qualifications and experience. Appointments will be for three years, and to avoid all appointments terminating at the one time a transitional provision applies (clause 9). Clause 9 (3) provides that one SAJC member (by lot) would be appointed for two years, and subclause (4) provides that the first member of SATRA appointed by the chairpersons of the South Australian Jockey Club, the South Australian Racing Clubs Council and the Thoroughbred Racing Advisory Council will hold office for two years.

These transitional provisions will apply only in the first year to ensure rolling starts and stoppages onto SATRA. Remuneration will be the same as currently exists, and any increases are to be the average increases paid to the South Australian Harness Racing Authority and the South Australian Greyhound Authority over a 12 month period.

In negotiations undertaken, this model has received strong industry support. The Government will talk about its review: it may try to liken this model to the old SAJC structure, which had eight SAJC members plus one provincial, one country and one trainers and jockeys—but they came from the existing pool. Qualifications were not required, and in those days there was limited representation. There is no similarity between the two. Sadly, this Government has an appalling record in racing. There is no vision. No decisions are being made and there is no leadership. This Government views the racing industry as a low priority.

Racing is screaming out for decisions. All the reports, studies, consultancies, investigations, reviews and analytical evidence relevant to the industry are in the hands of those who make the decisions. And what do they do? They call for another review. This review is a sham, a guise for a racing commission. Significantly, on TAB Radio just eight days ago the Minister refused to rule out a racing commission. The Minister also said in regard to the review, 'I think it's going to be some months.' In regard to my comments he said, 'I'm not quite sure what he exactly wants to do.' He did not even understand the difference between my calling for the venue rationalisation report to be made public and criticising another review. He did not even understand the difference.

Like the rest of the industry, Minister, I want you to be the Minister. I want you to be the real racing Minister. I want you to lead and to make some decisions, at least while you are in government. And Minister, do you know what else I want? I want a Racing Minister who wants to be the Racing Minister. The Government commenced the venue rationalisation study in 1996 and we still have no decision—three years later and still no decision from this Government. The Government announced its TAB scoping review some 15 months ago, and there is still no model for the industry to consider—and now it calls another review. How long will this one be? There is no leadership or, at best, confused leadership, and the racing industry must have and deserves better.

Every week I get calls from people in the racing industry asking me what the former Racing Minister is up to: not you, Sir, but the member for Bragg. They say that he is trying to set up a racing commission, and they also ask, 'What is the

current Minister doing?' This is all too easy for the Opposition but a disaster for the racing industry. The Opposition totally rejects a racing commission because, unlike the Government, we believe that the industry has the maturity and the intellect to administer itself. Racing can and must be given the opportunity to administer itself.

Members might think that bickering between the South Australian Jockey Club and SATRA is not conducive to the industry's administering its own affairs. However, this is the whole point of the Bill, that is, to recognise that the current arrangements lend themselves to this outcome, and this must be fixed. Over the years, Governments have in the main encouraged a welfare mentality for racing administration and supporters. The racing industry must be capable of operating in a national environment, where it must be able to function without undue interference from Government. Any speculation of Jeff Kennett introducing a racing commission in Victoria is just that—speculation. Of course, let us not forget that a racing commission jeopardises our membership on the Australian Racing Board.

With a view to Labor recognising that the industry can best manage itself, I foreshadow that Labor will remove RIDA from the racing administration. RIDA is a quasi racing commission. It has given specific powers to non-industry people. It is an authority structure that has been put in place by this Government. RIDA is not transparent; it does not consult; it has largely been a failure; and the industry has not been able to move forward without RIDA.

The Government must learn from the mistakes of RIDA and let the industry get on with it. A cooperative industry cannot be achieved while the Government dictates, as it is currently doing through RIDA. RIDA has been responsible for additional bureaucracy, confused leadership, confused marketing direction and capital funds largely being frozen, as is evidenced by carried forward funds of \$6 million. In marketing alone (and this comes from the annual report of RIDA), to the end of June 1998 RIDA spent \$1.168 million for industry marketing and promotion. The primary reason for marketing is to increase attendances, and that simply has not happened.

Let me give two or three examples of how and why marketing has failed. First, \$500 000 was spent marketing the 1998 Southern Racing Festival for a 2 per cent increase in the final total attendance for all festival meetings in 1998. Secondly, this year some \$170 000 was spent marketing Oakbank. Can members imagine marketing Oakbank? If anything sells itself, it is Oakbank. Once again, there were no corresponding increases in attendances to see the value of the money spent.

However, I have a better one. At 7 a.m. on the very day of the Derby during this year's carnival (and this is one of the biggest race meetings on the South Australian calendar), what are they advertising on the radio? They are advertising Oaks Day on the following Wednesday. They are not advertising Derby Day, which is to be held that day, to try to promote it. Rather, they are advertising the following meeting to be held some four days later, and they did the same in the *Advertiser*.

The qualified marketeers will tell us that there are lag periods and this and that, but let me tell members that they do not know anything about racing or marketing racing. They are absolute geese. That morning, if they wanted to market anything, they should have been promoting Derby Day. By the way, do members know what the crowd was for Oaks Day? They tell us that it was 2 200, which is not a good

crowd, despite the rain, but really it was only 1 500, because 700 people attended the big lunch organised by Angela Condous which is held, anyway. So, the true figure was 1 500.

However, this Bill is not about RIDA. It is about getting the constitution of SATRA correct, by giving it the opportunity to operate, and then collapsing RIDA, notwithstanding the need for some components of RIDA, such as probity, to be relocated. The Government needs to protect the public interest through mechanisms involving gambling regulation and probity issues.

Labor has a plan for the racing industry, a plan to allow it to be the master of its own destiny. It must be accountable and responsible for its own future. The Government has no plan except for another review, which will probably lead to an extension of the current arrangements unless this Bill is supported.

I commend the Bill to the House and, for the sake of the future of racing in this State, I urge that this Bill be debated and not be thwarted by Government parliamentary tactics. I do not want to see this Government do what it normally does with private members' business, that is, adjourn it and not bring this Bill on for debate. The racing industry deserves better. If the Government tries to do that it will pay the penalty.

The former Minister (the member for Bragg) said to me about this Bill, 'Nothing will happen. It might make you feel good, but nothing will happen.' What a shame we have an attitude like that. What chance does the racing have with an attitude like that? The racing industry deserves better and the racing industry must get better. This Bill deserves bipartisan support: it deserves to be debated on its merits. It needs to be considered very carefully and, in debating this Bill, the basis needs to be the merits of the Bill—not about the failures of the Government; not about the lack of interest of the current racing Minister, who does not even have the decency to be in the Chamber, not to listen to me but to show support to the racing industry and to give a signal to the racing industry that he is interested in racing.

Unfortunately, it is not just me: everyone in the racing industry knows that this racing industry Minister does not like racing, does not want to be the racing Minister and does not know anything about it. I can put up with the last one, because he can learn as he goes along, but I cannot put up with the first two. I cannot cop—and the Opposition will not cop—a Government putting someone in charge of racing who does not like it, who does not want to be the racing Minister and who does not show up. The more often he goes on TABRadio the better it is, because every time he goes on he makes a complete fool of himself.

This Bill deserves to be debated seriously: it has a lot going for it. It has the support of the racing industry. There may be some people on the SAJC who have some problems with it because, of course, they would like to maintain their monopoly control. But there have been some people on the SAJC who have said to me, 'Things must change and this has some merit.' This Bill has a lot of merit. It has been well thought out by the Opposition. A lot of consultation has taken place not only with key industry stakeholders in South Australia but also through looking at other Acts around the country.

The Government can do racing a big favour by debating this Bill, by looking at it on its merits and not by thwarting it. If the Government uses its parliamentary tactics to stall this Bill and to say that there is a review taking place and we will

wait until the review is completed, once again it will be letting the racing industry down. The racing industry will be disgusted by its actions and it will just show once again that this Government has no ideas, no vision and no leadership for the racing industry. That has to change, and this could be the first step to doing that. I seek leave to have the detailed explanation of the clauses prepared by Parliamentary Counsel inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement The measure will come into operation two months after assent.

Clause 3: Insertion of s. 24A

It is now necessary to include some definitions in Division 1 of Part 2 in connection with other amendments proposed by this measure.

Clause 4: Substitution of s. 26

This clause provides for the reconstitution of the South Australian Thoroughbred Racing Authority (SATRA).

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 27—Terms and conditions of office

A member of SATRA will be appointed for a term of three years (subject to the transitional provisions contained in this measure).

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 28—Remuneration, allowances and expenses

This clause deals with the issue of the entitlements of members of SATRA (other than the chief executive officer) to remuneration, allowances and expenses (which will be kept at their present levels for 12 months and then adjusted on an annual basis in line with the average of any adjustments for members of SAHRA and SAGRA).

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 29—Quorum, etc.

This clause makes various consequential amendments.

Clause 8: Insertion of ss. 39A, 39B and 39C

It is intended to create a body called the Thoroughbred Racing Advisory Council ('TRAC'). The principal functions of TRAC include to provide advice to SATRA on industry policy and strategic direction, to provide a communication channel between industry stakeholders and SATRA, and to provide a forum for discussions and the making of recommendations to SATRA. TRAC will also appoint one member of SATRA.

Clause 9: Transitional provisions

This clause sets out various transitional arrangements associated with the enactment and operation of the measure

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

PELICAN POINT

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I move:

That this House instructs the Government to refer the Pelican Point power station project to the Public Works Committee for its immediate consideration, that all work cease at the construction site until the committee reports and that the committee report to the House no later than 6 July 1999.

This motion is self-explanatory and I do not intend to speak long on it. The Public Works Committee on its own motion resolved that it would call upon the Government to refer the full Pelican Point power station project to that committee for consideration. The Government has ignored the request of that committee and it was felt necessary by the Opposition (particularly me, as local member) to ensure that due process follows.

The Pelican Point power station is a significant public works. When construction commenced the land was still Crown land; it was still in the ownership of the Government. Indeed, once the project is completed a significant buffer zone of land between the waterfront at Pelican Point and the beginning of the power station will still be Crown land, and major outlet and inlet pipes will be running over that land. So, part of the Pelican Point power station will be on Crown land.

On any proper reading of the Act relating to the Public Works Committee it is clear that this project should be considered by that committee in the proper process. That is not to pre-empt any outcome but simply to say that this project should go before that committee. I have said in my motion that this should be done by 6 July. We understand that work on the project is two months ahead of schedule. A four week review should occur, and it should be dealt with in that manner.

Often, the Public Works Committee has been ignored by this Government; clearly, much of its work has been ignored. The member for Hartley, chirping opposite, knows full well—because he is a member of that committee—the amount of work the committee does that is ignored. I simply move that the committee be allowed to review the project—and I am not pre-empting the outcome—in terms of enabling the proper process to be followed. All members should support the proper work of the Public Works Committee.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

The House divided on the motion:

AYES (19)

Armitage, M. H.	Brindal, M. K.
Brokenshire, R. L.	Brown, D. C.
Buckby, M. R.	Condous, S. G.
Evans, I. F.	Gunn, G. M.
Hamilton-Smith, M. L. (teller)	Ingerson, G. A.
Kerin, R. G.	Kotz, D. C.
Matthew, W. A.	Meier, E. J.
Penfold, E. M.	Scalzi, G.
Such, R. B.	Venning, I. H.
Wotton, D. C.	

NOES (23)

Atkinson, M. J.	Bedford, F. E.
Breuer, L. R.	Ciccarello, V.
Clarke, R. D.	Conlon, P. F.
Foley, K. O. (teller)	Geraghty, R. K.
Hanna, K.	Hill, J. D.
Hurley, A. K.	Key, S. W.
Lewis, I.P.	Maywald, K. A.
McEwen, R. J.	Rankine, J. M.
Rann, M. D.	Snelling, J. J.
Stevens, L.	Thompson, M. G.
White, P. L.	Williams, M. R.
Wright, M. J.	

PAIR(S)

Olsen, J. W.	De Laine, M. R.
Hall, J. L.	Koutsantonis, T.

Majority of 4 for the Noes.

Motion thus negatived.

Motion carried.

TOBACCO PRODUCTS REGULATION (SALE OF PRODUCTS DESIGNED FOR SMOKING) AMENDMENT BILL

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Tobacco Products Regulation Act 1997. Read a first time.

Mrs GERAGHTY: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Quite some time ago, the mother of a teenager raised the following issue with me on a radio program on 5AA. She

found it quite extraordinary that her daughter could purchase herbal cigarettes when she was just 13 years of age. When she made inquiries about this, she discovered the legal requirements relating to cigarettes, that is, it is illegal to sell tobacco products to minors under section 38(1) of the Tobacco Products Regulation Act 1997, which provides:

A person must not supply, or offer to supply (whether by sale, gift or any other means), a tobacco product to a child or a person who the supplier knows or has reason to believe will supply the product to a child.

That does not relate to herbal cigarettes. Sadly, her daughter's friends were pressuring the lass to smoke, and her daughter assumed that, by smoking herbal cigarettes, she would not be placing her health at risk. The health food store that supplied the herbal cigarettes told the lass that they were good for her skin. That really was just a load of rubbish.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mrs GERAGHTY: As I was saying, the store told the lass that smoking herbal cigarettes would be good for her skin.

Members interjecting:

Mrs GERAGHTY: I know; it is absolutely extraordinary.

Ms White interjecting:

Mrs GERAGHTY: It is not good for your skin, member for Taylor. A 13 year old would have no reason to doubt being told such a load of bunk. It is absolutely irresponsible of any salesperson or proprietor of a store to con a young person in this way. I understand that the Health Commission has discussed this issue with the store and explained to them their obligations. We certainly hope that such tales will not occur again.

I have also spoken to the proprietor of a health food store in the city who expressed concerns about the sale of herbal cigarettes to minors, and because of his concerns he does not sell them to minors. It is a pity that other proprietors are not so responsible. The other tales I have heard are that these herbal cigarettes are not addictive, which may be the case, but there is concern of a psychological addiction through the development of a habit. I have also heard that there are no health risks, such as those associated with smoking nicotine-based products. However, this is clearly not the case.

Research undertaken at the University of Vienna and published in the British Medical Journal the *Lancet* on 6 February this year shows that carbon monoxide levels of moderate nicotine smokers equals 11 to 21 parts per million, whereas a heavy nicotine smoker is defined as having levels over 21 parts per million. Tests conducted on smokers who did not wish to give up smoking showed that, after smoking herbal cigarettes (and they tested herbal cigarettes on smokers because they did not want to test them on non-smokers because of their concerns), there was a rise from 15 parts per million to 21 parts per million in one smoker and, after two herbal cigarettes, a rise from 21 parts per million to 28 parts per million. In another it went from 26 parts per million to 37 parts per million.

This data shows that smoking herbal cigarettes generates a similar degree of exposure to carbon monoxide as to smoking nicotine-based cigarettes. Indeed, they will increase the risk of exposure, and therefore there is a legitimate health risk. This research was done by Dr Ernest Groman and his associates. Clearly herbal or vegetable-based cigarettes marketed as an aid to stop smoking may not contain

nicotine, but they do produce levels of carbon monoxide which are a risk to the user.

I will quote Dr John Moore-Gillon, Chairman of the British Lung Foundation, as follows:

If you are burning herbal cigarettes all you are doing is substituting the burning leaves of one sort of plant for another.

He then goes on to say:

Nicotine is addictive, but it's all the other stuff that gives you lung cancer and emphysema. . . You still get tar from herbal cigarettes, which could do you as much harm.

I am sure we are all aware that tar is the most harmful of the substances absorbed by the human body during smoking. While carbon monoxide reduces the amount of oxygen absorbed in each lungful of air, it is the tar that blocks the passageways of the lungs and covers them with a sticky brown substance that inhibits the performance of vital organs. A report from Action on Smoking and Health states:

Herbal cigarettes and other non-tobacco cigarettes have no nicotine, but produce tar and carbon monoxide.

Clive Bates, the Director of Action on Smoking and Health, said:

Using herbal cigarettes is unlikely to be an effective way to give up smoking.

Although he does not feel that they would do any greater harm than continuing to smoke, he said that herbal cigarettes contain all the nasty chemicals that cigarettes contain, but they do not provide any help in dealing with nicotine addiction. Clearly a range of health risks are associated with herbal cigarettes.

However, despite the fact that these products are every bit as dangerous to the health of the consumer as a nicotine-based product, they remain easily and legally accessible to minors. This would appear to be a double standard that can impact on the well-being of our youth and therefore should be addressed in the appropriate manner. In February 1999, Senator Pinsky introduced a Bill in the Assembly of Maryland to prohibit the sale of herbal cigarettes to minors, which passed at the third reading 43 to 0. His Bill defined a herbal cigarette as one composed of one or more herb products but is not a tobacco product. As far back as 1985, Mexico banned the sale of clove cigarettes.

If these other assemblies have examined and legislated against the sale of these products to minors, perhaps we should consider doing the same, as clearly there are international concerns about the dangers of smoking herbal cigarettes. There are many other research studies that I could quote but, given the examples I have presented, it is obvious that smoking herbal cigarettes does present a health risk and as such they should be treated in the same way as tobacco-based products and not be sold to minors.

I would urge all members to read the Bill and consider supporting it. I recognise that, when the Tobacco Products Bill was introduced, perhaps herbal cigarettes were not available in the quantities they are now, but there is an anomaly. We have prohibited tobacco-based products to minors and I think we should consider this Bill and ensure that we put the safety of children first. I seek leave to have the explanation of the clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Insertion of s 28

28 Interpretation

This clause defines 'prescribed product' for the purposes of Part 3 of the Act to mean a product that is not a tobacco product but is designed for smoking.

Clause 3 Amendment of s 38—Sale of tobacco products and prescribed products to children

This clause makes it an offence to supply prescribed products to children and to permit a child to obtain a prescribed product from a vending machine.

Clause 4: Amendment of s 39—Evidence of age may be required

This clause enables an authorised person to require a person seeking to obtain prescribed products to produce evidence of his or her age if the authorised person suspects on reasonable grounds that the person may be a child.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH secured the adjournment of the debate.

NORTHERN ADELAIDE AND BAROSSA WATER LEVY

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I move:

That the levy proposal forming part of the Northern Adelaide and Barossa Catchment Water Management Board Initial Catchment Water Management Plan Annual Review 1998-99, laid on the table of this House on 25 May 1999, be disallowed.

My object in moving for disallowance is to have the matter of the levy proposal forming part of this plan debated and decided upon in this place as soon as possible, given that the Economic and Finance Committee has objected to the proposal. I have used the process to expedite this matter only because the Government will not be supporting the motion. The Economic and Finance Committee has 21 days following the Minister's approval of the levy proposal to, first, object to the levy, at which time the proposal is referred to the House of Assembly; secondly, support the levy to ensure its implementation; or, thirdly, amend the levy and recommend the changes to the Minister.

The Minister may accept or reject the amendments. Based on the Minister's response, the committee can finalise its response by objecting or supporting. At the 30 April meeting, the committee determined to object to the levy proposal, ensuring its referral to and consideration in this House. The Presiding Member advised the Minister by letter dated the same day of the decision to object to the levy proposal for 1999-2000. The letter stated:

While the Committee was not opposed to the levy proposal *per se*, under the circumstances it was firmly of the view that it had insufficient time for all members of the committee to thoroughly examine the levy proposal.

Clearly, the House of Assembly now has the opportunity to debate the levy proposal and to vote either for or against it. The Water Resources Act requires only that the levy proposal be voted on. However, if the levy proposal is rejected, in effect this means that the board's plan for the coming year cannot be implemented. Without a levy in place, there is no operational structure to enable the appointed catchment board to prepare, in conjunction with the community, a comprehensive catchment plan that will define the priorities and special needs of the particular catchment area. Without a levy, the appointed catchment board will become insolvent and inoperable. However, the real losers will be the people and the environment within the catchment zone.

The environmental imperatives relate to proper water management, and the economic development which flows from sustainable water resources will be delayed for over a year. Before any development can be commenced, it must be

funded. Levies need to be struck prior to the beginning of this financial year.

A rejection of this levy proposal will mean that no further levy can be brought into operation until 30 June in the year 2000. All levies collected within catchment areas are spent within those areas. The board's funds from the levies can be used to attract National Heritage Trust funds, therefore increasing the overall expenditure on major environmental problems within the catchment areas. Salinity problems, aquifer recharge and storage, dam diversion storage and bore leakages causing pollution are only some of the impacts related to water use which, if not controlled and managed, can diminish economic development.

The rejection of this motion to disallow the regulation will enable the plans to be implemented to the benefit of the residents within the catchment zone. Having regard to the fact that the Economic and Finance Committee has stated its reasons for bringing this matter to the House, it has also stated it does not object to the levy. I ask the House to reject the motion to disallow.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): It is always interesting when a Government member must rise to his feet to move a disallowance motion to defeat a motion with which he actually agrees. That situation has occurred as a result of the incompetent handling, once again, of these matters, by the Minister for Environment.

An honourable member: Where is she?

Ms WHITE: And where is the Minister? It is again the Minister's Bill. She writes a speech for the hapless member for Waite, who must stand up and do his duty for the Minister, but she is out because a vote on a rather controversial issue is imminent. The Minister is hiding again from the issue. Perhaps she is looking at what else she is going to cull. I sometimes think that people in her department probably have a bit of a bet on how many times they can get the Minister for Environment to stand up and talk about killing animals.

Exactly one year ago we debated an identical motion from the Government to disallow the levy proposal forming part of this catchment water management board's initial water catchment management plan. That debate was introduced in this House at that time because the Minister, in her usual arrogant and contemptuous approach to dealing with the Economic and Finance Committee, provided the committee with paltry, inaccurate and contradictory information about the detail of the levy to be imposed on my constituents in the Northern Adelaide Plains, as well as about the content of the program and budget for that work. Indeed, members will recall that last year in this debate the Chair of the Economic and Finance Committee (a Liberal colleague of the Minister, I might add) stressed exactly that point to this House.

The impost under the Division 1 levy charged to water users caused the Economic and Finance Committee to object to that plan—a plan that was hurriedly devised, in a very short period of six weeks, without any consultation at all with water users who would be levied with a significant tax. In fact, the Minister used her discretionary powers at the time to exempt the process from the consultation phase.

Let no member of this House be under the false illusion that the water tax levied in my electorate is at the same rate as it is for other parts of this State. In the Northern Adelaide Plains and the Barossa, water users are being taxed approximately 1¢ a kilolitre, and that amount is made up of ½¢ per

kilolitre on water allocation and ½¢ per kilolitre on water usage.

In other regions of the State, for example the Murray River and other regions, water users are taxed at .3¢ a kilolitre. The growers on the Adelaide Plains compete against growers from the same industry sector, so they ask why the Government is taxing them at three times the rate that it taxes their competitors in other regions of the State. There is no consultation by the Minister, no detailed budget or plan of the proposed works and they face a tax three times higher than the levy collected from the same sector growers in other parts of the State. My constituents have every right to feel aggrieved at their treatment at the hands of the Minister, who is costing a good proportion of those growers an extra \$1 000 annually in additional tax.

I give credit to the Northern Adelaide and Barossa Catchment Water Management Board for the improved presentation of the detail of its budget plan this year. According to the record of budget expenditure against its initial plan estimates from last year the board has spent more than estimated on consultant fees for the development of the plan, less on economic development (\$154 000 against an estimated \$573 000, which was in the initial plan) and more under the general title 'social wellbeing' (\$749 000 against an estimated \$479 000).

For those members who need a little assistance with the maths behind those figures, it means that the board spent five times as much money on social wellbeing as it did on economic development. I am the first to acknowledge the importance of community education as a function of such a board. I acknowledge that is an important function. However, this spending pattern will remain for me a significant factor to monitor. Certainly, I will not be impressed if the hard-earned dollars paid in taxes by my constituents end up being spent on glossy brochures and sophisticated PR. Anger amongst growers in the Northern Adelaide Plains about the size of this water levy has been significant over the past year, including a lot of resentment from their association, the Virginia Irrigation Association, with some growers refusing to pay the levy until quite recently.

Not only does it seem to me that they are being taxed at a higher rate with this new tax than other water users in the State but they feel that they have come off second best with this Liberal Government. In the next motion we will be debating another water catchment board plan on which we have received considerable correspondence, as I have received correspondence on this plan. There is considerable resentment in that correspondence from industry sectors in the horticultural industry. One of the major criticisms they have had of this Minister and the way that the Minister has operated concerns the bungled approach she has taken involving a lack of consultation and the waste of time and resources, an effort that has not led to a proper consultation process.

This Government is ignoring the real and justified concerns of many growers in this State. Certainly, the growers in the Northern Adelaide Plains have not been pleased with this Liberal Government, just as they have not been pleased when, for example, we had the incident that occurred last year when the Minister announced considerable funding for reparation work on the bores down in the South-East involving \$1 million, I believe. The Minister was made aware that I would make it a significant political issue if she did not look at similar needs in the Northern Adelaide Plains.

Belatedly, we got an announcement about money for meters in the Northern Adelaide Plains.

But this is the way in which this Government operates: rather than based on need, it is all about raising additional taxes. We are going to see much more of that revealed today. The Government is not consulting with the people who have valid industry concerns. It ignores the processes. We have the Minister's contempt for the Economic and Finance Committee and its due regard for what is our primary concern, the constituents of our State (my primary concern is my constituents in my electorate in the Virginia and Adelaide Plains areas). The result of that, time and again for the second year in a row, is that this process ends up in Parliament when a competent Minister would have been able to deal with it in the appropriate place—the Economic and Finance Committee.

Mr McEWEN (Gordon): I will speak against this motion to disallow, and in so doing I make the point that I was in part responsible for bringing the matter to the House. That had nothing to do with concerns about the board but much to do with concerns about the process. If I had not been prepared to move in this way we would have been denying the member for Taylor her democratic right in relation to the matter. That comes about because of the way the Act needs to work once the Minister approves the plan. Within seven days she must refer that plan to the Economic and Finance Committee, which must respond within 21 days, and if it does not respond within 21 days it automatically concurs in the plan. It so happens that the member for Taylor would not be available within the time frame of the Minister's choosing to exercise her democratic right. Being aware of that, the committee brought to the Minister's attention the times when the member for Taylor would and would not be available and asked that the Minister take that into consideration before starting the clock ticking because, the instant the Minister starts the clock ticking, the seven and 21 days must automatically follow.

So, this has nothing to do with my view of the North Adelaide Barossa Catchment Board: it is more that my view of democracy sees us today extending to the member for Taylor the opportunity to speak to the matter in this House rather than in the Economic and Finance Committee. It would have been much more appropriate to deal with the matter in the Economic and Finance Committee, and to some degree I am sad to say that, as that did not prevail, we find ourselves addressing the matter here today.

Motion negatived.

ONKAPARINGA CATCHMENT WATER LEVY

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I move:

That the levy proposal forming part of the Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board Annual Review 1998-99, laid on the table of this House on 25 May 1998, be disallowed.

I indicate to the House as I did a moment ago that my object in moving this motion for disallowance is procedural, intended to cause this debate and seek a decision as soon as possible. I again trust that the House will reject the motion to disallow. As the background to this motion is similar to that of the earlier one, I will not repeat all the detail provided under the previous motion, except that to say that, as a consequence of the motion to reject, the House now has to debate and vote for or against the levy proposal within this plan. The Act requires that only the levy proposal be voted

upon, not the plan itself. If the levy proposal is rejected it will in effect mean that the plan cannot be implemented. Without a levy in place there is no operational structure to enable the appointed catchment board to prepare a catchment plan in conjunction with the community which would define the priorities and special needs of this catchment area. Without the levy, the board will become insolvent and inoperable. Again, the real losers will be the people in the Onkaparinga catchment zone. Before any enterprise can be undertaken, funds must be raised.

It is imperative that this matter be resolved forthwith. The Economic and Finance Committee has indicated that the reason for bringing the matter before the House is related to the calculation of the levy for individual assessment. However, the annual review process proposes a levy under which almost 90 per cent of the catchment population will have their levy increased. The Onkaparinga residents already pay a higher rate of levy than those of any other catchment in the metropolitan and rural areas of Adelaide, and therefore the proposal has to be questioned for fairness and equity. It should also be noted that the board has rescinded its motion of support for this proposal and will continue to seek as fair a means as possible to distribute levy rates across its catchment area.

The Onkaparinga levy is in a process of change. Next year the board will introduce a water based levy to replace the land based levy for irrigators in the prescribed wells area. For this coming year the levy will apply universally across the catchment. The Minister has favoured a stable, steady approach to the application of the environmental levy for its second year of operation. Additionally, it provides for a reduction of 6 per cent in the levy to all property owners in the catchment. Having regard to this responsible approach, I ask the House to reject this motion to disallow.

Mr HILL (Kaurna): Unlike with the last motion, the Opposition will not do the dirty work for the committee. The Opposition will support the disallowance. The history of this matter is simple. Last year was the first year of the operation of the Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board and it introduced a property based levy set at a single rate in the dollar which applied to all properties. As a result of that, an enormous number of complaints were registered with the board, some with my office and I guess with other members in the area. The board properly decided to look at the levy situation and undertook a process of consultation.

It employed consultants, it advertised extensively in all the local media, it organised meetings and briefing papers, held discussions and had submissions put forward to it. As a result of that extensive, open, thorough public process, it determined that a different approach should be put in place for year 2. The different approach was to cap the amount that was paid by people who had farming properties, in particular, and others who had more valuable property. It was felt by the board, I believe unanimously, that this was a fairer system and was designed to obtain the same amount of cash for the board's operations. In effect, property holders would not pay any more in the dollar at the lower level but, at the higher level, they would pay a lesser amount, and the amount was then capped. That was supported by the board and the matter was put to the Minister.

The Minister, in her wisdom, rejected the board's suggestion and I will read to the House her letter which expresses that rejection. Dated 20 April, in part the Minister's letter states:

I have noted the board's recommendations regarding the calculation of the levy for assessments in council areas but at this stage will not recommend to councils the adoption of the step method endorsed by the board.

That is it. That is the only explanation given in this letter as to why the Minister rejected the suggestion. The board had been through an extensive community consultation with the public in the district, the Minister received its recommendation and said, 'I have noted the recommendations but will not proceed at this stage.' There was no explanation as to why what was proposed was out of place.

That is another example of the pig-headed nature of the Minister, it is an example of how out of touch she is with the community that she is serving, and it is an example of her hypocrisy. The House will recall that, when some time ago suggestions were made that the recommendations of the South-East water boards were inaccurate, the Minister said that she trusted what they were doing and she had to be bound by their actions. In this case when the board, after proper consultation, unanimously supported a change in the levy, she said 'No' without any consideration at all.

I will give the House an example of some of the mail that I have received from people in the catchment area who are opposed to the original levy process. I was pleased to get a letter from the Apple and Pear Growers Association of South Australia, and I understand that that association has spent some considerable time lobbying on this matter and has had conversations with the Premier, who I also understand has given the association certain undertakings which the Minister in her rejection of the board's levy has not satisfied. That is perhaps one reason why the Minister is in trouble with her Premier and her future in the Cabinet is looking a bit gloomy. In its letter to me, the Apple and Pear Growers Association said:

On behalf of the Apple and Pear Growers Association of South Australia, we would express deep disappointment at the decision of the Minister for Environment and Heritage not to ratify the water catchment levy regime recently proposed by the Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board. . . The Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board, after receiving strong negative community reaction to the initial levy and the poor level of community consultation, was very proactive in advancing the levy review process. The board worked hard to conduct appropriate and wide-reaching community consultation through the formation of a levy review reference group. The association, along with a wide range of other community groups, was represented on this reference group.

Further, they wrote to the Minister as follows:

Why did we waste time and resources in public consultation? Doesn't the Minister trust the consultation process and/or the board?

They are good questions, Minister: I hope you get up and answer them today. It continues:

They rejected the levy, will the management plan also be rejected? What are the hidden agendas?

I, too, would like to know the answers to those questions, and I am sure the Premier would like to know the answers as well. I have also received correspondence from the Inverbrackie Creek-Mitchell Creek Catchment Group which expresses its concerns in similar terms. As I understand it, the Minister is in all sorts of trouble over this. Some sort of deal is being done whereby Cabinet will reconsider this matter on Monday and, as a result, the Minister will be rolled in her position and the catchment board's proposition for a staged levy will be accepted. Today, to allow that to happen, we will not vote on this process. We will allow deferral but, in so doing, I say that this House has had a victory over the Minister on this issue,

the community has had a victory over the Minister on this issue, and the water catchment board has had a victory over the Minister on this issue. The Minister has been rolled; she has lost; and she has got it wrong again.

Mr McEWEN (Gordon): I will correct a statement made by the Minister for Waite.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr McEWEN: Sorry, the member for Waite—the Minister in waiting. The member for Waite has fallen into a trap. He said that there has been a 6 per cent reduction. Yes, there has been a 6 per cent reduction in the rate in the dollar but, if the capital value has gone up by 6 per cent or more, it can be the other way around. Local government used that trick for years. The Minister tells me that it has been taken into account: she might need to look again at the numbers.

Let us go back to what we are really debating today. The strategic framework for water resource reform was developed by Sir Eric Neal's committee in 1993, and it was endorsed by COAG in 1994. The South Australian Water Resources Act picked up, for the first time, most of the elements of the COAG strategic framework. The Act provided for devolution of these water responsibilities to community based water catchment management boards. Under the Act, these boards are required to recommend, amongst other things, a catchment environment levy.

In the COAG developed national agenda for water reform, one of the key agenda items is 'consumption based pricing, not property taxes set to cover the costs'. This is an interesting point because we are not moving in this direction and, in fact, as a result of what we are seeing here today we are moving in exactly the opposite direction. Let me briefly scan the six boards. The board that is closest to what COAG wanted is the Murray River. That board collects levies from water users. Interestingly enough, about \$1.8 million comes from water users outside the river because it is 1¢ a kilolitre that SA Water provides to them under their licence to withdraw water—and you pay for that. Although that board is getting over \$3 million, \$1.8 million comes from users outside the board's area. However, that is consistent with COAG's policy.

The next one that is close to COAG policy is the South-East board, which collects its money from a division one levy; and it also collects a small amount from a division two levy. However, the division two levy is a flat levy on all assessments—it is not a levy based on capital value but a flat levy based on assessments.

The Patawalonga and Torrens boards are funded totally by land based levies, as are most of the northern Adelaide and Barossa boards. Today, we are dealing with the Onkaparinga Water Catchment Management Board and its desire to have a tiered property based levy. Although the average levy payment for the board area is approximately \$13, there is an enormous spread from around \$3 to over \$600. The board was aware of that and concerned about it, as was the member for Kavel and the Apple and Pear Growers Association—and a lot of other people—and commitments were given across the catchment board last year that it would be looked into.

As a result, Sinclair Knight Merz was commissioned by the board to look into a fairer system. The consultancy looked at a number of alternative approaches and suggested that a tiered structure would be more equitable. That would mean a rate in the dollar on the capital of maybe the first \$100 000 of X, between \$100 000 and \$500 000 of Y, and over

\$500 000 of Z. So, again, it brings the two ends into the middle.

As required under the Act, the Minister referred the board's plans to the Economic and Finance Committee on 20 April. In so doing, she advised the committee that she had decided not to implement the board's levy proposal. Her reasoning was in part because she felt that this would shift the burden to those owning lower cost housing and that it had social equity implications.

We are dealing with between 55¢ and \$2.65 a year: if that has social equity implications, I wonder what the Minister is saying to her colleagues about the new ETSA tax and the new emergency services tax. It would be interesting to see how she could carry this debate into those areas if she is genuine that \$2.65 a year has significant social equity implications.

The Economic and Finance Committee referred the matter back to the Minister, asking that she do some more analysis and have a look at this proposal or some other proposals. I understand that the catchment board itself is prepared to look at a number of different proposals to achieve an objective of being more equitable than at present. But again I remind members that the Minister rejected that advice and simply sent the plan back to us. At that stage we had no choice but to refer it on here and to commence this debate. However, I understand that there is another choice: at the eleventh hour another way through this has been discovered. That is why we are prepared to adjourn this debate today, to hear the magic solution that has been discovered.

We are not prepared to dump this at this stage: we do not actually trust that a solution has been found, but we are saying, 'We will give you time. Let's do what you should have done properly in the first place: let's do it now.' But, in so doing, let me remind members once again that, of the 70 000 property owners, 50 000 will pay more (up to \$2.65 a year more, some 55¢ a year more) and 20 000 will pay less (there will be some reductions from over \$600 to less than \$300). We need to bring the ends closer to the middle. Everyone accepts that this tax is unfair, not in its average but in its width. It is the scope that is causing the problem. Any fair-minded person can see the appalling injustice that the Minister is perpetrating.

Members should recall that many farmers who own these properties have annual incomes of less than \$20 000 a year, thanks to the economic rationalist policy settings of the Government and its colleagues in Canberra. We need to send a strong message to the Minister: fairness has two ends and a middle. For the sake of \$2.65 at one end and 55¢ in the middle, the Minister can lessen the burden of others by over \$300: even her own director conceded that the committee had a valid point. I ask that members support the Onkaparinga Catchment Management Board and allow the introduction of a fairer option—a tiered levy structure.

Ms WHITE secured the adjournment of the debate.

EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY

Mr CONLON (Elder): I move:

That this House establish a select committee to examine the amount of funds to be raised by the proposed emergency services levy, the method by which they will be raised and the purposes to which those funds will be applied.

The reason for this motion would be obvious to anyone who has picked up a newspaper or watched the news in the past week. It concerns the announcement of the Government's

new tax on property, the emergency services tax. We have a number of very serious concerns with the Government's announcement about this tax. To understand our concerns, we need to examine the history of this matter and some salient points.

This tax was introduced to the Parliament some eight months ago. It was put to us that it was a fairer way of funding emergency services in South Australia. It is to this Government's shame that it has paraded in the media the ALP's view that the old system was unfair as some sort of justification for its current tax grab. It is not. We said at the time, and I say again, that the old system of funding from insurance levies was inequitable. We accepted that, but one cannot use that as an excuse for this disgraceful tax grab, a tax grab which is aimed not only at punishing hard work and thrift but also at the only real property and assets to which ordinary working people aspire and which they own.

I say that it is nothing more than a tax grab for the following reasons. As I say, I want the House to consider some salient points when it considers this matter. The old fire insurance levy for which this system was to be a fair replacement raised 75 per cent of the Metropolitan Fire Service budget and 50 per cent of the CFS budget. The budgets of those two organisations last year were \$56 million for the MFS and about \$13 million to \$14 million for the CFS. So, the old levy used to raise \$40-odd million. Obviously, the Government is taking more than that. However, if members consider those figures, they realise that the entire budget last year for the MFS and CFS was \$70 million. If members allow the Government to add in State Emergency Services, which was never funded by a levy before, it will total \$72 million.

This Government is an avaricious one and wants a little sniff extra for itself. What did we find the little sniff extra was? It wants to raise \$140 million. We go from an entire budget for emergency services of \$72 million to a levy, a tax, that raises \$140-odd million. That is not a tax; that is organised thievery. This matter was going to come back before this House by way of legislation to amend the Bill because the Government is not only avaricious but, as we now well know, it is also grossly incompetent, and its original drafting was not suited to the purposes that it intended. That Bill was due for debate in this place, but it became so obvious that not only the ALP but also the Independents and half the Government's backbench were opposed to the tax grab, to the extent that we now have inadequate legislation in place because this Government does not have the courage to bring the Bill back.

By the Government's own admission, we have legislation for a wealth tax, a land tax, that is inadequately framed, but the Government will do nothing about it because it does not have the courage to bring its tax back to this place for debate. That is why we are seeking a proper debate on the Government's tax. We are seeking to have a select committee appointed to examine how much money is intended to be raised by this tax and how and for what purposes it will be raised.

Those three questions are obviously connected. First, this Government needs to explain one simple thing; that is, if emergency services funding last year was \$72 million, why does it want \$140 million? Where is the money going? Secondly, we want to know how the Government intends raising this money. There is an enormous level of hypocrisy about the Government's approach to this tax. The Local Government Bill will be further debated in another place. One of the provisions of that Bill will, for the sake of fairness,

compel councils to collect their rates in quarterly instalments. That has caused some hardship to councils but it is fair.

What is the Government's plan for its emergency services tax, a very high rate of tax? Will it enable quarterly instalments to be paid? No, it will not. It will be using the old system which local government wanted to use for raising rates and which it told local government was unfair, but it is only unfair for local government, not for this greedy Government.

Some other points about this legislation, this tax and the reason why we should scrutinise it properly relate to, as I say, this Government's sheer greed when it comes to grabbing a few extra dollars. Local government used to pay a proportion of emergency services funding. It raised that from its ratepayers and paid it to emergency services. Now, instead of that, the Government will tax those ratepayers directly. Instead of paying it through their rates to local government they will pay it to this Government directly—except they will pay much more.

But what does this Government want? For over a week it has been locked in negotiations—locked in extortion—with the Local Government Association, telling it that it also wants the windfall back from it. It has taken the money directly from the ratepayers but the money that local government used to take from the ratepayers it wants as well. Not only is it raising \$140 million: it wants to tax ratepayers and councils twice. As I said, this is not a tax: this is legislative organised thievery. It is without principle and it is merely one of the most savage tax grabs that we have seen in this place. If there is one good thing to have emerged from this piece of legislation, the recent announcements—

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Sir, I rise on a point of order. I do not expect that it is the honourable member's intention, but it is generally considered discourteous to turn one's back on the Chair.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order with respect to the traditions of the House and the traditions of debate. The honourable member will address his remarks through the Chair.

Mr CONLON: I am most chastened to have been corrected by the butler of the House. There is one good, positive point to emerge from this. The Government has found a great salesman for its policies. This Minister should be out there selling all the Government's policies. He is a genius; he has an absolute genius for it. He went out to defend this tax grab on television on Tuesday night and he said, 'It is not all bad. Not everyone is worse off. If you own a \$400 000 house in North Adelaide you will be better off.' He did not quite get the message that it was not impressing people, because he did it again on radio and on television the next day. The Premier should get this bloke to do the budget speech for him. He is a salesman. This bloke has a genius for it.

That statement of the Minister shows another one of the concerns that we have about this measure. It has been described by people on the other side as a wealth tax. Well, it might be. But it is beyond that. It does not tax the wealthy. As I said before, it taxes the results of thrift and hard work. Many people in my electorate have worked all their lives, are now retired, own only a couple of pieces of property and will own only that in their lives—their family home and their car. Those people are not wealthy, they have a very limited income, and they will be paying to this Government a couple of hundred dollars more a year.

Let us refer to the old system. This Government has been throwing around some bodgie figures. We note that when the great salesman—the Minister—was trying to sell this he sent out a set of figures to show what would be the net result of the new tax. The problem was that the first set of figures that went out were not good enough, so they changed them and sent out a second set of figures that looked better. But their further problem was that they did not get all the copies of the first paper back. So, we have two sets of figures floating around out there. And they want to know why we want a select committee to look at it. They want to know why we do not trust them. They put out two sets of figures on one day. There is no person in South Australia who does not recognise this for what it is—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

Mr CONLON:—an absolute (as the Leader says) crook tax grab. We have the Government salesperson on the radio talking about how it is all for emergency services. What utter rot! The Minister might want to respond to this debate today and tell us, of the \$140 million (given that only \$70 million was needed last year), how much extra the MFS will get, how much extra the CFS will get and how much extra the SES will get. I have had phone calls from all over the State from members of the SES. They are outraged. They are saying that they are not getting any more money: it is just that they all have to pay a levy on their houses now. They have to get up at three in the morning and go and do emergency services work and now they have to pay the Government's tax as well, and they are not getting any extra money.

What we do know—and what we want to know more about—is just how much of this money is going to the Government's utterly incompetent and misguided Government radio network. We believe that, over the period of the next few years, it may be as high as \$175 million, for a Government radio network that has blown out to \$247 million. No-one in South Australia can believe that this Government is going down a path of spending \$2.5 billion on a radio network that no-one in particular wants. The CFS, in evidence the other day—

The Hon. M.K. Brindal interjecting:

Mr CONLON: We will have a look at the Coroner's comments, and I hope you do join the debate and finally tell the truth about that matter. The CFS the other day was very lukewarm—

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. In suggesting that I 'finally tell the truth' the honourable member is implying that I have lied, and I object to that. I ask him to withdraw.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would caution the honourable member for using this terminology. It is just not acceptable in debate to imply that people lie in the House. I would ask the honourable member to withdraw the remark.

Mr CONLON: If the Minister thinks I called him a liar, I will withdraw that, because I did not. I think the Minister draws a long bow, and he is certainly a past master of high dudgeon in this place. In the time remaining I want to make a couple of very clear points. New South Wales has had one of these Government radio networks, something which the Police Association and the police in New South Wales are currently trying to get out of. This Government is intent on spending \$247 million on it. We know why: because John Olsen wrote a very ill advised letter in 1994, and we are still paying the price for it now.

Let me close by saying that we want this select committee to come back to this House with recommendations. This is

a budget matter for the Government, and there are some limitations on what we can do about it. I make no bones about this: we will do whatever we can to shame the Government into using this tax arrangement fairly. The Government is collecting too much money with this arrangement and is not applying it to its intended purposes. It is simply unfair.

I make this point: for the Minister to say on radio and on television that we supported this measure is simply not factual. We supported a fairer system of emergency services funding because, as I have said repeatedly, in this place eight months ago, outside it and again in here today, it was impossible to argue that the old system had inequities.

We never agreed to the Government's using this as an outrageous tax grab, and we never trusted the Government on this matter. One measure that we in this place sought—and the member for Stuart would know it well, because he defeated the measure with an amendment of his own—was for the matter to go on a regular basis each year before Parliament's Economic and Finance Committee so that there could be scrutiny of the new tax rate being set. Because of an amendment moved by the member for Stuart and opposition from him, we were unable to succeed with that. I put the Government on notice: if it ever has the courage to bring its flawed Bill back to get it fixed, it will not get the free hand it now has with this tax. So, we invite the Government to bring back this badly drafted measure to get it fixed, but understand this: the Government will not get away with this forever. Whenever the Minister goes on radio or television to do his absolutely disgracefully inept job of selling this tax, he could at least tell the truth about the ALP's attitude to it.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): After listening to the shadow spokesperson, I would like to say a few things. The shadow spokesperson can play the smoke and mirror tricks that we have become used to over the past 5½ years. He can grandstand, prance around and throw out a few one liners that the media might enjoy, but at the end of the day the principles of this new levy are sound, correct and right. The principles of the levy are about protecting life and property.

Mr Hanna: Fraud!

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: The member for Mitchell happened to vote in favour of this Bill when it came in. The principles are right. When we look at this during the select committee—which I am happy to support—members will again realise how tight this legislation is. I would like to place on the public record a few other matters. First, the amendments have not been withdrawn. There is no problem in debating the amendments at all, but some other amendments will be brought in. One of the most important amendments that will be brought in is to stop the Labor Party—if it ever gets into Government again—from ultimately destroying South Australia. Members of the Labor Party talk about this, that and the other, but they never apologise to South Australians for putting this State in a situation from which it is almost impossible to recover. Not only did the South Australian Labor Party not apologise for the fact that it virtually destroyed South Australia but not once in 5½ years has it tried to support—

Mr FOLEY: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I am extremely concerned that the Minister is speaking to the television cameras with his back to you, Sir. I ask that he address the Chair accordingly.

The SPEAKER: Order! I uphold the point of order, in the same way I upheld it for the previous speaker. Members will address their remarks through the Chair.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: The Opposition has never said 'Sorry' to South Australians. If we have a Sorry Day for Aboriginals, which I support, we ought to have a Sorry Day, supported by the South Australian Labor Party, for the destruction that it caused this State in the 11 years of its absolute ineptitude. Anything else that will ever happen in South Australia will pale into insignificance given the long-term damage that the Labor Party has inflicted on every man, woman and child, not only those of us who live now but generation after generation into the future. That is the problem with the South Australian Labor Party.

However, for once, the South Australian Labor Party supported the principles of protection of life and property in a bipartisan manner. That is the first time I have seen the Opposition support an important Bill to look after South Australians in the 5½ years I have been in this Parliament. What then happens down the track when the Opposition sees a chance for a little bit of political gain? With smoke and mirrors it then comes and ramps it up and carries on. Everything is transparent with this. I have no problem whatsoever with whomever it is looking at the figures. Everybody in this Parliament said, 'We have to do more for emergency services.' Everybody said it.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: The member for Mitchell says, 'Yes, that is right.' However, because they cannot add up—and that has been proven for 11 years—they think—

Mr Hanna interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Mitchell to order. The Minister listened to the Opposition's contributions in silence. I would ask the Opposition to do the same thing.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: Members of the Labor Party have never been able to add up. They came into this Chamber and said, 'We've done \$1.5 billion with the State Bank'—\$1.5 billion, and they smiled about that one. A few months later, they said, 'We have to let you know we've done another \$1 billion, and we are not even saying sorry.' A few months later they came in and said, 'We have dropped another couple of billion.' They cannot add up, and the member for Mitchell confirmed that today when he said, 'Yes, you have to do more', but he also said, 'You must do more with no more collection'. When it comes to things like the radio network, you can play around with the jokes, but I suggest that members travel around this State, as I have, to 17 different functions around rural and regional South Australia in recent times, and look at the radio network and at how dangerous it is.

I say here publicly that, if somebody dies in future because the radio network does not work or if somebody dies in future because the budget has been cut and we cannot get state-of-the-art equipment, the jaws of life, modern appliances to put out fires, the right sort of SES equipment to cut people out of road trauma situations, I will come back in here every time and remind every South Australian of the games that the Labor Party played.

Having said all that, I point out that the levy and the Act that has been passed with bipartisan support is fully transparent. More is being done. The CFS is being funded. The MFS, for one, takes \$62 million of the \$141.5 million—\$62 million just for the MFS. Does the Opposition, particularly the

member for Elder who is endorsed by the United Firefighters Union, want to cut the MFS budget? Does the member for Elder want us to continue spending \$5.6 million this year with 16 new fire pumpers to protect life and property? Of course he does, but we are supposed to do it with less money.

This is about fairness and equity. Some will be paying more and some will be paying less, but at the end of the day why should the multinational company insuring offshore and taking the rent revenue in Adelaide not contribute to emergency services when the pensioner has already been contributing? This is a replacement levy: this is not a new tax. It is a replacement levy, and it is quarantined and dedicated to emergency services funding, and the pensioners will now get a concession of at least \$40. They were not getting the \$40 concession before. My mother is a pensioner and she cannot afford not to have comprehensive insurance on her car. She is paying around \$28 or \$30 already.

I refer to the two sets of different figures. One set of figures show what the people are currently paying in 1998-99 with their existing levy. We have shown the levy under the new system with bipartisan support from all colours of political persuasion in this Parliament. We have shown what it will be for 1999-2000. New levy or old levy—and members should make no mistake about this—just to get some of the band-aids fixed to try to further improve the level of protection of life and property in this State, there would have to be a minimum of at least a 25 per cent increase in funding for emergency services next year. That is a fact. Therefore, you have to compare apples with apples.

If we are to bring in a levy for 1999-2000, we have to look at the costs for 1999-2000 under the existing levy. That is a fact. I stand by that, and that is where those figures are. I look forward to the Opposition's examining this matter during the select committee. It could have done it during the Estimates Committee, but that may not have provided quite the opportunity for grandstanding. At the end of the day, this is one of the tightest pieces of legislation ever passed by the Parliament. I support the select committee inquiry, and I am happy to nominate those on our side.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): If there was ever a reason for a select committee, it is to understand what is driving this hapless Minister. For the most junior Minister in Government outside of Cabinet to be responsible for one of the largest taxes this State has had in decades sends the alarm bells ringing, particularly in light of the contribution he just made.

The Treasurer has been silent on this matter. We have heard nothing from the finance Minister of this State as he has been allowed to watch a junior Minister in a marginal seat grapple with what is a complex, detailed and significant tax being imposed upon this State. I do not hold the Minister responsible for the fact that he is being set up by the Treasurer, who clearly has designs on one day leading the Liberal Party and who wants to keep as far away from controversy as possible.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: Leader down here. This tax is \$141 million. The Government and every observer knows it is not just about funding emergency services. It goes well beyond that. It will be about plugging the block hole that this Government has developed over its last three or four budgets. At the end of the day, when the Government has been silent, what happens to that money already coming out of Consolidated Account that is appropriated to emergency services? That money will be taken out and used to fund other programs

within government. It is an accounting sleight of hand as this Government—

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I do not believe it is within Standing Orders to anticipate a debate. The budget is coming down this afternoon. I believe that the matter of relevance is important to this debate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I accept the point of order.

Mr FOLEY: I can understand why the member for Unley is very nervous. I can understand why the member for Hartley, the Minister himself, and any Government Minister sitting under about 7 per cent would be terrified at what this tax will do to their electoral fortunes at the next State election, because you are gone, you are gone, the member for Adelaide is gone, and you will be swept from government for the disgraceful way in which you have taxed the people of South Australia.

At the end of the day, this has little to do with funding emergency services. As I said in the committee meeting yesterday when the head of the CFS was before us, 'Do you have the champagne bottles on ice for tomorrow night's budget when you will celebrate this doubling and trebling in funding that the Government keeps telling us you will receive?' He said to me, 'Well, sir, we are a very frugal lot in the CFS.' Clearly by what he said, they do not expect to get a doubling of resources, as this Government would want us to believe.

When this measure was debated in this House, the message given by this Government was that it would replace the existing insurance levy in the order of about \$40 million to \$50 million, yet we come into the House on Tuesday to find that it is \$141 million, on the back of an ETSA tax of a further \$100 million. The taxpayers of this State have been dealt the most massive tax impost this State has seen in decades. The hapless Minister has a grin on his face. I can tell you, tax man, when you go doorknocking in the seat of Mawson at the next State election, you will be dogged by the fact that you are the tax man of this Government, you have brought into this State the most significant tax burden in generations, and you will be responsible for that politically.

We want to have this select committee and have Treasury officers appear before it. We want to look at the modelling as to how they have arrived at these numbers. We want to look at budget allocations. We want to see how much has been appropriated extra to the CFS, the MFS, surf lifesaving and the police. We want to look at the impact of the bungled \$247 million radio contract that no emergency service is keen to have. If you had seen the face of the head of the CFS yesterday when we asked him for his views on the radio network, you would know it was less than a ringing endorsement, spending \$250 million of yet uncollected State taxes on a radio system that nobody wants and is clearly double if not three times the price that any comparable system should cost.

This Government should hang its head in shame for the absolutely disgraceful way it has managed the State's finances, and for what is nothing more than an accounting sleight of hand when it comes to the construction of this State budget. The Government at the end of the day must think that the public of this State and the Opposition are mugs and that we are unable to see through this accounting sleight of hand, this trickery done by this Government, as it simply plays with the State's finances, its books and its budget, and rips from the good people of South Australia another \$141 million on

top of the \$100 million ETSA tax. It should hang its head in shame.

If there has ever been a need for a select committee to look at how we arrived at this point, it is this select committee. I look forward to the Treasury officer sitting opposite me on that select committee and explaining to me the modelling, how the budget has been framed and how that money will be allocated. The Minister suggests that pensioners in this State should be somewhat pleased and gratified that the Government is giving them back \$40 for a tax which they were not perhaps previously paying and which they were certainly not paying to the extent that they will be asked to pay now.

Members interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: You are going to slug them \$200 and give them back \$40. You are going to hit them two or three times what they were paying before and you will take back \$40—what a heartless move by this Government. What a heartless move by the Liberal Government and by this Liberal Premier to hit the pensioners of this State. I pity the pensioners of this State. John Olsen and his Government are Robin Hood in reverse.

Members interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: The member for Unley can shake his fist—

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order.

Mr FOLEY:—and do what he likes, but on the Government's own analogy—

Mr SCALZI: Sir, I rise on a point of order. I believe that the member for Hart is not properly addressing the Minister by his title.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I uphold the point of order, as I have done so twice today. Members will address their remarks through the Chair.

Mr FOLEY: I am taken aback by the vicious onslaught from the member for Hartley as he counts down the 18 months to losing his seat in office. No wonder the member for Unley is quite relaxed about this tax because, on the modelling put forward by this Minister, people with \$400 000 will make a saving. We can understand why perhaps the member for Unley does not think this is a bad tax. I can tell members as a member of Parliament, like my colleague who represents a lot of people who can ill afford a \$200 to \$500 tax impost, that it is right not only that we should vent our anger but also that we should pick through this tax and expose it for what it is so that when we go the next State election every elector, particularly the electors in Hartley, are made aware of what is involved.

I look forward to personally doorknocking in Hartley with the Labor candidate at the time. We will make every voter in this State absolutely aware of what sleight of hand and what budget trickery the Government has put in place with this tax. Members opposite should hang their heads in shame.

Mrs MAYWALD (Chaffey): I support the motion to establish a select committee to look at the establishment of this new tax on the people of South Australia. I am not quite as dramatic as the members for Hart and Elder, because I believe that it is up to the select committee to analyse those figures. It should not be done here in the Parliament, pre-empting what might happen in a proposed select committee to look into this issue. I am, however, very concerned about the understandings that were given to me when the original legislation in respect of this emergency services levy was passed.

The understanding I was given was that no-one who was contributing under the existing fire levy collection framework would be disadvantaged, recognising, of course, that an extra contribution would be required of approximately 25 per cent over and above what people were contributing in the next year's budget. That is fair enough. An increase of 25 per cent is what the Government told us would be likely to be introduced to the fire levy if we did not go ahead with this emergency services levy.

It was unfair, in my view, that only 70 per cent of the population contributes to that fire levy as it currently stands; 29 per cent of that figure are under-insuring, so they are not contributing as they should be—30 per cent are having a free ride. That, I believe, is unfair. I believe that the original principle of the emergency services legislation was very good, aiming as it did to broaden the base and to ensure that everyone in the State contributed towards emergency services. However, in the interim that 25 per cent has blown out considerably. Even though the Minister has tried to say within the figures he has presented to the public that he has incorporated the 25 per cent increase to compare apples with apples, in my calculations it still does not work out.

Currently, the emergency services budget is about \$85 million. If the Government were not to go ahead with the emergency services levy and had to increase the existing fire levy by 25 per cent, I calculate that is about \$13 million, which gives us a \$68 million contribution from the fire levy, and then the State Government and local government would take that up to \$98 million. From where all of a sudden does the \$141 million come?

That is the question the select committee needs to be addressing. On what are we going to be spending this money and how will we be improving services? Have funds been taken from emergency services that should not be taken from them because the Act is specific in terms of emergency services and the fund? That is my major concern. In briefings I have had over the past few days—and there have been many to try to avoid the establishment of the select committee—it was suggested that we needed to compare apples with apples and that we needed to incorporate into the figures given to the public a likely 25 per cent increase. Interestingly enough, a comment made flippantly was, 'Why did you pick 25 per cent and not 50 per cent or 100 per cent?'

Surprisingly, if you do pick a 100 per cent increase on the fire levies you come out with about \$141 million being raised. That is a really interesting equation in my view. The other interesting aspect is that the figures presented in the public arena involve the value of a house, what the insurance reductions may be and what the average contributions are that ratepayers have been making through councils, assuming that there would be a saving to ratepayers; of course that is not the case as the State Government has also talked about clawing back 25 per cent of the savings.

Figures are known by the public and whether or not we are comparing apples with apples on a 25 per cent increase is irrelevant when we are talking about aspects of the tables presented to us which do not ring true in the first instance. Also, those perceived savings are in a climate where local government is under enormous pressure. Local government has been subject to rate capping for some time. For the State Government to come out and say it will be highly recommending that local government give that money back to ratepayers is unconscionable, in my opinion. What one level of government does with its money is of no concern to another level of government and the State Government should

not be directing local government as to what it should be doing with the rates it is collecting. The State Government would and does take exception when the Federal Government tries to do that.

I will not speak further on this. I believe the committee has a lot of work to do but it is a fair and equitable way of exposing to the public what the emergency services fund will be used for and how the money will be raised. It will recommend to the Parliament whether we believe it is a fair and equitable measure.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): In supporting the motion for a select committee there are a few facts that need to be laid on the table. I am pleased that the Independents are speaking about this. I was telephoned by the South-East television station, which told me about the concerns of the Independents on this tax and here is the opportunity for the Independent members to prove it. The simple fact is that what we are really deciding today is whether the 1997 State budget was a total fraud. We all remember what the then Treasurer, Steven Baker, said, 'We are in the black, we are on track and we are going to be in surplus. There is no need to increase taxes, no need to sell ETSA and we are on the home straight and debt reduction is proceeding apace.' Straight after the election we had not just the ETSA sale proposal but also the \$250 million tax increases in last year's budget, and now we have the total fraud of this emergency services tax and John Olsen's ETSA tax. I use the word 'fraud' wisely.

The simple fact is that every member of this Parliament (as well as every member in the Liberal Party room, where there was a brawl yesterday—and there has just been a brawl out in the corridor) and people in the community (I also include briefings to the Opposition and others) were told that this emergency services levy would simply be a replacement of those existing levies which raise between \$40 million and \$50 million a year but which will now be \$141 million. It was a con, a fraud, a deliberate attempt to put in a new tax behind the guise of our brave emergency services. The emergency services personnel in this State, both permanent and voluntary, are being used by this Government to impose a new tax that will hit all the things that families aspire to own, such as their own home and a car, boat, trailer—all those things that people regard as being necessary for their lives and their enjoyment. We are seeing a new tax; not an emergency services levy, but a \$100 million slug.

It was interesting that, when the member for Hart was taking about the impact on pensioners, there was the member for Unley putting on a turn but laughing, and there was the member for Hartley laughing—and he still is. There was the hapless Minister, the member for Mawson—

Mr SCALZI: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: I ask members that if they rise on a point of order they actually say they have a point of order, and do not just stand in their place.

Mr SCALZI: My point of order is that I was not laughing at the time; it is a serious matter.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The Leader.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Then there is the member for Mawson, the Minister for the emergency services tax. It is interesting to see that, with a marginal seat which on the last Federal election figures needs a 1 per cent swing for him to lose—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will address his remarks through the Chair.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: It needs a 1 per cent swing for him to lose that seat, but what did we see? Suddenly, the Premier will not answer questions about John Olsen's new tax—his EST. We saw Rob Lucas suddenly become shy, even though he is protected in the Upper House. They let the hapless member for Mawson out there on his own, looking like a startled rabbit, and what did he say to the journalists yesterday? 'Don't panic; don't panic,' like Corporal Jones in a scene from *Dad's Army*. When asked whether people would be worse off, he said, 'No, not people in North Adelaide with \$400 000 homes; they will be better off.' Those words will be plastered in every single house in his electorate, and those constituents will say, 'Thanks a lot, Rob; thanks for giving us the EST.' The Premier has hung the Minister for Emergency Services—the member for Mawson—out to dry, and they have stamped the words 'emergency services tax' on his forehead for the 2½ years to the next election.

This is a forced agreement today for the Minister to allow a select committee—but it has to be a real select committee. My advice to the Independents is to go down to the South-East and the Riverland and hear evidence of the select committee. Give pensioners the chance to have their say. Give not only pensioners but also the rural community a chance to have their say, because the President of the Farmers Federation said yesterday that there has been no real consultation. Give the real estate industry and small business a chance to have a say, with real hearings in a real select committee, not a con job where the Independents are coerced to go a certain way by the Government.

Mr McEWEN (Gordon): I put on the record that I did not particularly appreciate that lecture. Notwithstanding that, we have a responsibility as a Parliament to scrutinise the rate. We have passed the Act, and it is now our responsibility to scrutinise the rate, and in so doing we will be passing the lifeline to many Liberals. Many of them are saying to us, 'Go and scrutinise the rate.'

Mr Foley: Name them!

Mr McEWEN: I will certainly not name them. I need to make the point that, in supporting the select committee, I am party to extending a privilege to the Opposition to be part of the process. In so doing, I put on the record that the Opposition needs to show some political maturity in terms of this privilege. It needs to show some responsibility and it needs to show some vision. We need to approach this matter as a team and, if we do that, we will use this—

Members interjecting:

Mr McEWEN: The member for Hart and the member for Elder say that we can trust them, and I thank them for that. This is an opportunity for this Parliament to show some leadership, to accept some responsibility and duly scrutinise this rate because every South Australian is asking us to do it.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Like all speakers before me on this issue, I say that what has been presented to me this week with regard to this levy has almost stunned me. It has astounded me for quite a few reasons.

Mr Foley: Almost stunned you?

Mr WILLIAMS: Well, if it had stunned me I would not be standing here, would I? It has astounded me on two levels. First, the quantum, the amount of money, that the Government has decided to raise through this measure concerns me. What has astounded me even more is that it is a conservative

Liberal Government that is bringing in this measure. I doubt whether a Labor Government would have been game to bring such a measure before the people of South Australia. It is ironic that Labor Party members are calling for a select committee into a wealth tax introduced by a Liberal Government, which they probably would not be game to introduce into the State of South Australia, so they can win a few political points off the Liberal Government.

Mr McEwen: Shame!

Mr WILLIAMS: Shame! I supported the enabling legislation and it received virtually unanimous support from the House because we were led to believe that the Bill would redress some of the inequities in the prevailing system. I accepted that there were inequities, and in some cases gross inequities, where up to 30 per cent of people were escaping the net through the insurance levy and were not contributing their fair share.

It is ironic that the effect of this new levy is that a great number of people will still escape the net. One of the things that the select committee should address is whether the new system is more equitable. A lot of people will escape the net. It transfers the burden from tenants to landlords, and it does so in a big way with regard to Housing Trust tenants. I know that Labor Party members would argue that that is the way it should be because those people are the less well off in our society. I suggest that is not necessarily the case. A new group has been created who will escape making a contribution to the emergency services of this State through this legislation. I seriously question whether the new measure is any better than the old one.

One of my major concerns is the impact that this levy will have on the people I represent in rural South Australia, because a large number of them are asset rich and income poor. That is why I am amazed that a conservative Liberal Government has been a party to perpetrating this sort of skulduggery because many Government members represent rural people. They represent struggling farmers, who it is recognised nationwide are invariably asset rich but income poor. Their contributions will rise. Some of the modelling that I have seen indicates that their contributions will double.

It is rather interesting that the media hand-out that the Minister has used over the past couple of days refers to a farm in Millicent, which is in the heart of my electorate. It seems that the average farm with a \$2 million asset will be \$129 worse off—and that does not include its contribution via mobile assets or property. I suggest a property such as that would have three or four vehicles at least, so there is another \$100. It would be \$229 worse off. If I was just being parochial—

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: Thank you, Minister. This is the figure out of your document. If the Minister can contain himself for a moment, I am quoting from his own document which purports to take off the savings. This is the net figure—the Minister's net figure. Since the Minister has raised the matter, in the documentation that he circulated to the press he has not told anyone about that other arm of Government out there. He has included a column showing the savings we will get through our contributions to local government rates, but there is another arm of Government out there, and some of his mates are telling local government they will be forced to contribute 25 per cent of what they used to put into emergency services back into the State coffers. That is the principle which nearly got me: a South Australian conservative Liberal Government telling local government, through its rating

system, capital based-wealth tax, that it will contribute money to the coffers of the general revenue of this State. I am absolutely appalled. I will come back to that shortly.

I have had an interest in this matter for some time as a result of the work I perform on the Public Works Committee. I would like to quote from a couple of documents. The first document is a report to the Minister for Justice and the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services about funding arrangements for emergency services, and it is dated 15 May 1998. It refers to the GRN and states:

The most recent advice provided to the steering committee (by the Department of Treasury and Finance) was that the emergency services component of the GRN will equate to an ongoing funding requirement of approximately \$25 million *per annum*. It is assumed that most of this expenditure (based on use) would be related to the greater Adelaide area.

When the Public Works Committee was investigating the GRNC, Mr Keddie, who was representing the CFS—and, to be fair to him, I believe he was representing the CFS in a technical capacity—was asked by Mr Scalzi:

With respect to the ongoing costs to maintain the present system, do you think it would be more or less than maintaining the GRNC system?

Mr Keddie replied:

My understanding is that the GRNC is cost neutral which includes maintenance.

So, the CFS thought it was going to be cost neutral. The Department of Treasury and Finance also gave evidence before the Public Works Committee, as follows:

The GRNC cost will be fully funded through the appropriation process. The method of financing the development will be sourced from two areas, namely:

1. Recovery from agencies of funds included for acquisition of existing radio equipment.
2. Specific allocation of \$185 million set aside in the 1998-99 budget and forward estimates for this purpose.

Unfortunately, the table which is attached shows that \$185 million is set aside in the budget, but \$13 million will be drawn back from agencies. There is also a note to explain that of the \$185 million this will be partially offset by the appropriate level of recovery from the emergency services levy.

I contend that at least \$25 million a year is going out of the emergency services levy into the GRN, which is something that this committee should seriously look into. It has been announced that \$13 million is going in. Of the \$20.6 million that is going towards emergency services provided by other Government agencies, there is an offset that general revenue will be funding the police share of the GRN to the tune of some \$12 million. It comes up to the figure that we were talking about last May. I contend that at least \$25 million is coming directly out of this levy to fund the emergency services.

I see that the clock has almost wound down, and I said that I would come back to something about the role of the conservative Liberal Government. In my maiden speech in this House about 18 months ago I said in my concluding remarks:

May I remind the Liberal members that they are the custodians of conservatism in this State; that many South Australians are relying on them to demonstrate to the electorate over the next four years that they are capable of shouldering that responsibility.

I am very saddened: on this matter I think that they have abrogated that responsibility.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I am sad to hear the member for MacKillop say that, because I have assurances from the Minister for Emergency Services, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer, as well as from the Premier himself, those matters to which the member for MacKillop drew attention are not matters about which there needs to be any concern. Nonetheless, I am pleased that there is to be a select committee. The most important benefit that the select committee will provide is the opportunity for the education of everyone in South Australia about the impact of this levy, which we have passed through this Chamber and the other place. It is law. I recognise the validity of the observations made by the member for Gordon and the member for MacKillop in drawing attention to that fact: it is law. We all supported that Bill.

More particularly, the select committee will provide everyone with a chance to understand what that legislation intended and what is in fact happening. I will be able to rely, I know, on the assurances that I have received from those Ministers to whom I referred at the outset of my remarks because, if we cannot rely on them, what can we rely on? There will most definitely be benefits to people living in the country and there will most definitely be benefits to people living in Housing Trust accommodation who can demonstrate the need for assistance in ameliorating the impact on their lower incomes, as is also the case for pensioners in their own private dwellings or privately leased dwellings outside the Housing Trust. More particularly, the Government has also taken into consideration the effect it would have—which needs amelioration—on self-funded retirees. For better or for worse, that is the decision that has been made.

The other thing that I am sure this committee will discover and enable the public at large to better understand is that volunteer organisations will themselves benefit. I am talking not about the volunteers in the emergency services but about charities, churches, youth groups and the like which own vehicles for one purpose or another. Equally, primary producers will not have to pay this levy on those vehicles that simply cross from paddock to paddock over a public road and thereby require registration and third party insurance against the risk of bodily injury in any collision that may occur. They will not have to pay a levy on those movable assets, if you like—the vehicles that are involved.

I know also that a fair deal has been struck with local government. We have been assured of that again by the Ministers to whom I have referred, and we have to be able to trust that information. I know that they would not in any way mislead either me or anyone else in this place about that matter. I know that I can rely on that, and I have to rely on that: I have nothing else to rely on.

It is for those reasons then that I strongly support the establishment of the committee, in the certain belief that we will all have a clearer understanding once the committee has finished its inquiries and brings it report to the Parliament. I commend the motion to the House.

Motion carried.

The House appointed a select committee consisting of the Hon. R.L. Brokenshire, Mr Conlon, the Hon I.F. Evans, Mr Foley and Mrs Maywald; the committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records, and to adjourn from place to place; the committee to report on Tuesday 6 July 1999.

STUDENT UNIONISM

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I move:

That this House—

- (a) is committed to ensuring that South Australian university programs and students are not disadvantaged and is therefore opposed to voluntary student unionism; and
- (b) recognises the valuable contributions that student organisations make to academic studies, acknowledges that university community encourages participation and development of tomorrow's community, social and business leaders and supports the universal contribution of all students in recognition of the services which are provided for the benefit of all students.

With only a few minutes remaining before we must adjourn, I realise that I will be cut off in my prime. However, I will make a few very important points about this motion, which is aimed specifically to do one thing, that is, to get every member of this House to state clearly their opposition to voluntary student unionism.

The Liberal Party in this State has been hedging its bets. It has been making noises to the students of South Australia, saying, 'Yes, we are with you.' However, I suspect something different, particularly given the Commonwealth legislation which is before the Federal Parliament and which will introduce voluntary student unionism.

This move has been opposed by the whole of the university sector right across the nation—the academics, the non-academic staff, the students, the Australian Vice Chancellors Committee—and by most commentators and most newspapers, because people in this country realise that this will have a detrimental effect on university campuses around the nation.

I move this motion for two reasons, the first of which is the legislation that is currently before the Federal Parliament, and the second reason being that the Government has made noises to the student associations that it is with them. However, although acknowledging that the Senate is taking submissions to their inquiry, the South Australian Government (and this morning I checked this with the secretary of that Senate committee) has failed even to make a submission to that committee.

The Acting Premier at the time, the Hon. Rob Kerin, wrote to one of the student associations in South Australia on 5 May 1999, and I will read his letter into *Hansard*. The letter is addressed to the Vice President/VSU Liaison Officer, Adelaide University Union, and states:

Thank you for your letter of March 15, 1999, regarding voluntary student unionism legislation. As you are aware the Commonwealth has introduced legislation to prevent compulsory student union fee collection at universities. A Senate inquiry into the proposed Bill, expected to commence on May 7, 1999, will provide an opportunity for wide consultation and consideration of all the issues.

At this stage the South Australian Government is not proposing to introduce such legislation and will continue to involve the interest of the stakeholders.

This Government has a commitment to ensuring that the South Australian university programs and students are not disadvantaged. We recognise the valuable contribution that student organisations make to academic studies and the services which are provided for the benefit of all students.

The letter is signed 'Rob Kerin, Acting Premier,' and it is dated 5 May 1999. I read that letter into *Hansard* purposefully so that all members of this House can recognise that much of the wording of the motion that I have moved here today comes directly from the letter of the Deputy Premier (acting in his capacity as Premier) to students in South Australia. That was the guarantee that he gave students of South

Australian universities. However, I draw members' attention to the qualification that he put in his letter: that 'at this stage' the Government will not be introducing legislation.

One may ask: if the Federal Liberal Party is introducing such legislation, what role has the South Australian Government? The universities in South Australia are set up under State legislation and, as we have seen in another State, such a move towards voluntary student unionism has been legislated. Western Australia has already gone down that path and, next week when I have some more time allocated to me, I will talk about what has been the consequence for student unions, university campuses and services to students in Western Australia.

This move is necessary to find out once and for all from the Liberal Party in this State whether it will stand by the promises that it has made to South Australian students over a number of years now. Over the past couple of years, similar, almost identical letters to student associations giving a similar guarantee have been signed by the Premier and two former Ministers of higher education in this State. But where was the State Government when the Federal Senate inquiry was taking submissions? Not one word. All the university campuses have been standing up clearly and loudly and the whole Australian community has been telling this Government to stop this ideological push just to attack student associations—which are not industrial unions; they are student associations.

Mr Hamilton-Smith: Then why call them unions? Why not call them associations?

Ms WHITE: They are called associations, member for Waite. If members of the Liberal Party cannot tell the difference between an industrial union and a student association they really do not understand what is happening in universities at this time. The total recognition of the whole community is that the services provided by student associations cannot be met out of university budgets. There have been massive cuts by the Federal Government to universities around the nation, yet it is trying to deny student associations, and every university has come out and said they do a very good job in providing to students services such as counselling services, legal services, academic and other services, sporting facilities, cafeterias, libraries and all those sorts of facilities. Minister Kemp is threatening to withdraw universities' funding if they continue to allow the compulsory levying of students for those services through the student associations.

The contribution made by student associations to student services cannot be met from campus funds, and the attack by the Government on these services is driven purely by ideology and is just a payback because students are standing up for themselves and saying that they want better funding for their universities in Australia, particularly in South Australia.

Debate adjourned.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

ASSENT TO BILLS

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Bills:

Collections for Charitable Purposes (Definition of Charitable Purpose) Amendment,
Criminal Law Consolidation (Intoxication) Amendment,
Criminal Law Consolidation (Juries) Amendment,
Evidence (Confidential Communications) Amendment,

Evidence (Miscellaneous) Amendment,
Nurses,
Road Traffic (Miscellaneous No. 2) Amendment,
Second-hand Vehicle Dealers (Compensation Fund) Amendment,
Soil Conservation and Land Care (Appeals Tribunal) Amendment,
Statutes Amendment (Commutation for Superannuation Surcharge),
Statutes Amendment (Restraining Orders),
Supply,
Tobacco Products Regulation (Smoking in Unlicensed Premises) Amendment,
Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (South Australia),
Wingfield Waste Depot Closure,
Year 2000 Information Disclosure.

APPROPRIATION BILL

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

FINANCIAL SECTOR REFORM (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) BILL

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

FINANCIAL SECTOR (TRANSFER OF BUSINESS) BILL

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

HOUSING TRUST RENTS

A petition signed by 541 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to ensure that changes to the Housing Trust rent to income scale are amended to reflect the scale which operated prior to 27 March was presented by Ms Breuer.

Petition received.

FINFISH

A petition signed by 536 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to impose a moratorium on the commercial taking of native finfish in the River Murray fishery was presented by Mrs Maywald.

Petition received.

QUESTION TIME

STATE FINANCES

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the massive increases in taxes that have occurred and that have been announced since the 1997 State election, was the then Treasurer Stephen Baker misleading the public and this Parliament when he said before the election that the budget was in surplus and that there would be no increase in the tax burden on South Australian families after the 1997 election?

Stephen Baker, the former Treasurer, described his final budget as 'a remarkable and historic turnaround'. We were apparently on track, in the black, with debt reduction proceeding apace.

During the election, when Labor asked whether the budget was still on track, the Treasurer said, 'I can assure you we will get across the line.' The Treasurer also stated on 19 September 1997, 'We are not out to get an increase in the quantum of tax.' At the same time, the Premier was saying that ETSA would never be sold and did not need to be sold. Did the former Treasurer mislead the public and the Parliament about the state of South Australia's finances?

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no need to ask the question at the beginning and at the end of the explanation.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: If the Leader of the Opposition really wanted to help the finances of South Australia, he could convince Bob Carr that the Grants Commission recommendations of a five year review ought to have been those which were accepted, and that would have saved South Australia \$47 million. It is a Labor Premier who has thwarted this State of \$47 million. We went to the recent Premiers' Conference and the Commonwealth Grants Commission—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader will come to order.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Leader for interjecting after he has been called to order.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Coming back to the point, the Commonwealth Grants Commission recommendation had two choices: a three year review, which has been adopted, or a five year alternative. We went to the Premiers' Conference and argued for the adoption of the five year review. South Australia secured the support of every State and Territory, with the exception of New South Wales. Because it was not unanimous, in the Loan Council and the Premiers' Conference, the Prime Minister was not prepared to vary the recommendation, despite the fact that we had won the support of every State and Territory but for the Labor Premier of New South Wales.

I would also put forward the fact that it was this Government that has fought for, won and secured horizontal fiscal equalisation, a proposal that once again the Labor Premier, Bob Carr, attempted to dismantle, and in that instance we had thwarted Bob Carr's thrust. But there is a more important issue at stake here, and it is the credibility—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Leader for the second time for continuing to interject after he has been called to order.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The credibility of the Opposition remains in tatters. I note that a number of journalists are starting to pick up this theme. Here is an Opposition which wants us to spend money on a whole range of capital works projects and on 18 per cent wage claims being put by some union officials to the Government, which we are rejecting. Labor also wants for there to be no increases in taxes and charges. It is a formula that simply does not equate, and it is the indication of an Opposition that clearly has no policy direction and no plan.

That reinforces its track record in government, because it was the Labor Party, this Opposition, when in government which had stewardship of the State Bank and which was prepared to invest in aeroplanes in Florida, farms in South Africa, and property in London, New York and Tokyo. It was this Labor Opposition, when in government, that built that

Myer-Remm centre in Rundle Mall that cost us as taxpayers \$1 150 million, for which we received \$150 million when it was sold. A cool \$1 billion was wasted by Labor on the Myer-Remm centre—not to mention what they wasted by ignoring the warnings from the State Bank. If only the Labor Party had acted when the first warnings were put forward to Ministers and individuals. When the Premier was not listening, I know that people went to individual Ministers and asked them to take up the issue with then Premier Bannon to do something about it, but he would not.

Instead of stopping the slide at that time, the slide just continued until the election period and they had to front up and explain how much they had actually lost as a result of the State Bank debacle. So members opposite should not come into this Chamber and preach economic fortitude or economic capability—their track record and performance indicates that they have absolutely none. Despite the fact that we have inherited this problem from the Labor Party, and despite the fact that the Labor Party created the problem and is not prepared to assist with a solution to the problem, we will continue to plan effectively for this State to rebuild the finances of this State so that the kids of this State have a future.

SMALL BUSINESS

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Bragg): Will the Premier inform the House of the recent indications of small business confidence in South Australia?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I thank the honourable member for his question, and I am delighted to be able to report to the House some particularly good news and reports as they relate to the small business sector. Following the good news about the Government's investment attraction programs, to which I referred in the House yesterday, is further evidence that we are getting this State back on track. As I have repeatedly stated, job creation is a high priority of this Government, and an important component of this is the confidence in the economy of the small business sector. The small business sector, as many people have described it over many years, is the engine room of the economy.

If the small business sector is confident and performing then the economy generally is. An important component is that confidence in rebuilding. The *Yellow Pages Small Business Index* is a quarterly survey of small business activity over the past quarter, expectations for the next quarter and confidence in the small business sector. The most recent survey, covering the three months February to April this year, was issued yesterday, 26 May. According to that index South Australian small businesses have enjoyed their best sales and profitability quarter in over 4½ years.

The index is another demonstration of South Australia's current strong economic performance and shows that the very good recent overall economic indicators for the State are fully reflected in the activity in the small business sector. Small business in the State is doing better currently than interstate counterparts and has more confidence in the future. Quite often we benchmark ourselves against national or interstate averages. Given our export performance, which is outperforming other States, and given the job advertisement survey to which I referred yesterday, we are well ahead of other States and well ahead of the national average.

Confidence by small business in South Australia in this survey has remained at very high levels—higher than in any other State except Western Australia: 72 per cent of small

businesses in this State are either fairly or extremely confident about their prospects for the next 12 months, with only 13 per cent pessimistic about what the next year might hold; and 33 per cent of small businesses in South Australia say that they expect economic conditions to be even better in 12 months—more than three times the 10 per cent who expect them to deteriorate. Just add that to the Access Economics' monitor report to which I referred in the House yesterday which said there will be an employment growth in South Australia out to 2002 and 2003. When was the last time that this State had reports and economic indicators—the signposts to the future—with that sort of level of confidence and robust nature?

Mr Scalzi: Sir Tom's day.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes, I think it was about that time: it certainly was not during the 1980s in any Labor Government period. Certainly the fact that our employment-unemployment statistics are at their best levels for over 10 years, that is, at their best levels since just prior to the announcement of the State Bank collapse, clearly indicates that the hard work and effort that has been put in over the past five years, or so, is starting to generate.

Sales in the State's small business sector in the quarter have risen again over the previous quarter to the highest level since October 1994. The overwhelming majority of the State's small businesses expect sales in the next quarter to improve even further and 39 per cent expect a better sales performance over May-July than the previous quarter. Profitability from small business also rose substantially in the February-April quarter for the State's small businesses with 20 per cent reporting increased profits. We all know increased profits equal job creation, equal new plant and equipment, equal chasing new markets, equal further advertising and equal better economic activity. Unless you have the profits, you cannot underpin the growth, expansion and the employment of South Australians.

The performance that I have referred to—sales profitability—is reflected in employment levels in the State's small business sector: 16 per cent of small business in the State increased staff levels in the quarter, a greater proportion than any other State except New South Wales, with only 7 per cent reducing. This is the fourth successive quarter of jobs growth for small business in the State and the net increase in employment in this quarter amongst South Australia's small business is equal highest since October 1993. Those indicators clearly demonstrate that the economy is on the improve, that small business—the engine room of the economy—is once again selling, is profitable and is employing. That is the thrust and direction that our policies have put in place here in South Australia. The budget to be delivered shortly will continue that approach in the future. The momentum that has been gained is a momentum that we want to continue and the beneficiaries of it are South Australians.

EDUCATION BUDGET

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Given the statement by the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training that the education budget has been cut by \$39 million, can the Minister confirm that the announcement in today's press of \$60 million to be spent on schools is not additional money but a rebadge of existing programs, such as the flexible initiatives funding of \$28 million? Can the Minister detail all existing programs which have been rolled into this

\$60 million announcement? Are you not just rebadging existing programs?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I thank the member for Taylor for her question and I would say that in probably about 50 minutes she will find the answer.

VICTORIAN BUDGET

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Premier explain the implications for South Australia of the Victorian budget brought down earlier this month?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The implications of the Victorian budget are significant and have the potential to be quite significant for this State. The Victorian budget shows, again, the capacity that the Government of an effectively debt-free State has to deliver more and better services to its people. If you unshackle from the debt you have the capacity to create greater services, greater infrastructure and a greater economic climate for job creation. The improvement in the business climate is particularly important for investment and the creation of jobs. Most importantly, it is further clear evidence of the way that South Australia's competitive advantage over Victoria and other States will be rapidly eroded unless we similarly and quickly dispose of our debt problem so as to be able to match initiatives being launched interstate to create jobs and stimulate activity in the growth industries of the future.

It is absolutely fundamental and critical that we do not allow Victoria to be better positioned than South Australia in investment attraction. That is the way to export jobs. According to the figures in the Victorian budget, Victoria's debt to Gross State Product ratio is now down to 4.2 per cent, having nearly halved from 7.9 per cent as recently as 1997-98. It has been halved in the course of the last year. Our debt:GSP ratio is 18.1 per cent, more than four times that of Victoria.

The Hon. Dean Brown: Where was it when we came to government? It was 28 per cent.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It was 28 per cent; that is right. The budget figures will show today that there is a trend line down in terms of our GSP net debt percentage figure. Only 3 per cent of Victorian Government outlays will go on debt servicing, down from 13 per cent in the 1990s. Its debt servicing costs next year are 3 per cent of outlays. In South Australia, 8.6 per cent of outlays currently go on debt servicing—three times the Victorian figure on debt servicing costs.

The absence of the debt burden that South Australia faces has enabled the Victorian budget to bring in \$383 million of new spending and deliver \$89 million of tax cuts. That is the flexibility that can be created if the debt burden is eliminated. It has increased funding substantially in the key areas of service delivery to the Victorian people: education spending is up, health spending is up and police spending is up. In addition, 400 new police will be recruited and a target of 50 000 additional traineeships and apprenticeships has been set. I am talking about Victoria. How does it have the capacity to do that? It is because it has fixed its debt problem. In retiring debt, it has created the flexibility to reinvest in the economy in Victoria.

In terms of stimulating business activity, the Victorian budget has reduced payroll tax from 6 per cent to 5.75 per cent, and we know that New South Wales has already moved to reduce its payroll tax. The significant point about that for this State is that the new rate is one-quarter of 1 per cent

below the South Australian rate of 6 per cent. Even the economic illiterates opposite ought to be able to work out what that will mean for businesses calculating whether it is more cost effective to establish new ventures or expand old ones in Victoria or South Australia. If we add to that the power cost reductions in Victoria compared with South Australia, we start shifting the competitive advantage that we had over the border.

We have been trying to hang onto the competitive advantage in this State for investment, for jobs and for our children. Because we are constantly being blocked in Parliament from doing these initiatives, the competitive advantage is shifting to Victoria. In the next three to five years, that will mean a redirection of investment, and that means a redirection to Victoria of jobs for South Australians. Let us look at the population figures, and we all remember the Leader at the Tollgate at the start of the last election campaign. Let us stop—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Just wait a minute. The Leader was at the Tollgate saying, 'We have to stop our kids from going to Victoria.' Well, we have. In that year, 8 000 went to Victoria. Now that is down to about 3 000 leaving the State, and more than 4 000 are coming in. We have turned the tide of net migration loss of about 8 000 a year into a positive gain. Not only do we have the birthrate but we have people coming into South Australia, but that will be put at risk if the Opposition gets its way in terms of stalling, blocking, inhibiting and restricting us from a range of policy initiatives that we want to put in place. Clearly the position is this: unless we see the warning signs, over the course of the next five years we will create the reverse of what we are seeing now—economic growth, a competitive advantage, new investment, new jobs and population gain for South Australia.

SHOP TRADING HOURS

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): As the Minister responsible for the Shop Trading Hours Act, will the Minister for Government Enterprises as a matter of urgency consult with the Attorney-General on amending the Retail and Commercial Leases Act to end the confusion surrounding the issue as to which parties are entitled to vote on the changing of core shop trading hours pursuant to section 61(2) of the said Act following the Government's extension of shop trading hours?

Following the Government's decision to extend shop trading hours from 8 June this year, many lessors and lessees are confused as to who is eligible to vote on changes to the core trading hours of shopping centres. The confusion surrounds section 61(2) of the Retail and Commercial Leases Act, which provides that each lessor is entitled to one vote, as is each lessee of a retail shop affected by changes to core trading hours. Disputes have arisen in cases involving leases entered into between lessors and franchisors and the subleases entered into between franchisors and franchisees. Section 61(2) of the Act does not answer the question as to whether franchisors receive a vote as a lessee or as a lessor.

If they vote as a lessor, does the shopping centre owner also receive a vote? If the franchisor is regarded as a lessee, is the franchisee who occupies the retail shop affected by the change in trading hours entitled to a vote? It's another fine old mess you've got us into, Ollie!

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I am delighted to answer this question. If there is confusion there, I will certainly speak to the Attorney-General in relation to the Act under his

control. What there is no confusion about with the extension to shop trading hours is the fact that it will confer great advantages on the people of South Australia who wish to use them. That, of course, is the reason why the Government made its decision. I remind the House that we made that decision and received basically universal praise for it. That is interesting, because it is a matter which the previous Government was not able to deal with without having a huge hullabaloo and one on which, frankly, the Opposition thought that we would trip ourselves up when attempting it this time. It was interesting to note that one of the most vociferous supporters of the Government's move was in fact the SDA.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: On occasions I am forced to agree with the member for Spence, and this is one of those occasions. In this instance, the SDA is an extraordinarily perspicacious group, because it could see the advantages that would flow to the people of South Australia.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Look it up in your dictionary and you will see. It means that they were wise, farsighted and realistically intelligent. However, at the end of the day, 8 June is the day upon which people will be able to shop under the extended hours. I have had a number of discussions with a number of people, in particular, a number of supermarkets. One in particular that I have seen near the market is looking forward to the day. It is already opening at 12.1 in the morning, and will take every possible advantage it can to extend for the extra time that the legislation will allow.

Interestingly, I spent some time out at its Firlie store, which has a most interesting example of how the company has transformed its employment record from basically casuals to full-time employees. It is an initiative greatly to be supported and, of course, the more time we give shops to be open and the more people who shop in them, the more people will actually be able to be employed, and that will be a great advantage to all South Australians.

DOCTORS, COUNTRY

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Human Services outline to the House some of the successes—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Flinders has the call.

Mrs PENFOLD:—and recent initiatives in recruiting and retaining health professionals in rural areas?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I had the opportunity about three weeks ago to travel to six of the country hospitals on Eyre Peninsula, and to visit the communities and meet with the general practitioners. It is very obvious how crucial the GP is in those communities to the life of the town, to the success of the hospital and, very importantly, to the care of the aged.

All these country hospitals now provide not just acute services. Basically, they provide acute services, nursing beds, hostel accommodation and, in many cases, independent living accommodation—and, combined with that, the medical clinic itself, because the doctor in many cases has now moved into the hospital—and, of course, also community health services.

The retention and the recruitment of doctors and other health professionals in rural areas is one of the great challenges throughout the whole of Australia. One of the problems is that, for every doctor in the country, there are about 1 500

people. For every doctor in the cities—and it does not matter whether it is Sydney or Adelaide—there are only about 500 people. So, the imbalance is about three times in favour of the cities compared to the country.

In South Australia at present we have a shortage of about 40 to 50 GPs. So, the State Government has established the round table, and out of that round table I have started a number of initiatives. One of the most important is to try to overcome the immediate shortage of doctors by recruiting overseas. I am delighted to say that we have had success in that area, and there now appears to be 22 suitably trained overseas doctors who look like coming to South Australia as a result of those initiatives. All those doctors will go to country areas, because that is the only location in which they will get a provider number. But for the first time for many years we seem to have stabilised the situation in the country and I think that, over the next two years, we will probably start to reverse it.

There has been some good news, though, in the past few weeks. In the past, overseas doctors have been allowed to come here for only a two or three year period to practise. For the first time the Federal Government is willing to offer those doctors permanent residency, provided they stay in the country for five years. We are in constant discussion with the Federal Minister on this, but I think we are within at least a couple of months of coming to an understanding. We have had negotiations with the Medical Board as well and it has decided to change the qualifications that need to be met by the overseas trained doctors to give them a choice between what they call the AMC and the Royal Australian College of GPs examination. The vast majority of these doctors would rather sit for the latter one, whereas in the past they have always had to sit for the former one.

In the past also there has been a 25 point disadvantage imposed by the Federal Government for any doctor trying to come to Australia and seek permanent residency. That is now being removed and, as a result, if they are willing to work in the country, provided they are suitably trained, they will get a provider number and they will get permanent residency for Australia—provided, of course, ultimately they pass one of the two examinations. That is the first big achievement. I know from a number of the doctors I have seen both on Eyre Peninsula and in the Mallee that they are absolutely thrilled. There are overseas doctors at places such as Lameroo, Pinnaroo, Kimba, Wudinna and Port Lincoln. Those towns up until now have been facing the prospect of losing their GP in the next year or so. This now gives them the first hope of having a permanent GP stay in those towns.

We are also putting increased effort into the area of nursing. We now have a scholarship scheme going that was initiated by the former Minister for Health. That is starting to show benefit, because we have been able to get some of those nurses from country areas back into country areas. We have also put \$1 million extra, as part of the enterprise agreement negotiations in the past year, into specifically training nurses in country areas, because there is a shortage of suitably trained nurses in country areas. There are a number of other schemes as well, but I highlight to the House that, for the first time in a number of years, due to a combination of programs by the Federal Government and the State Government, we appear to be stabilising the situation with respect to health professionals in the country, and I think we may actually be reversing it. But that does not mean that we do not have a long way to go and it does not mean that it will not take a great deal of continued activity to make sure that

we start to deliver to people in the country health care services which at least start to relate and equate to the care that they would receive in the metropolitan area.

FINGERPRINT EVIDENCE

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): Will the Minister for Police assure the Parliament and the public that the Government has not been giving house burglars an added advantage over their victims through extended delays in fingerprinting of items at the scene of break-ins? On 4 March this year, I asked a question about a constituent whose home had been broken into three times in three months and who was told that there was a three month delay in the processing of fingerprinting evidence. The constituent believes that these delays have hindered the apprehension of the offender. In response to my question, the Minister has confirmed that, due to staff illness and staff transfers, 'the delay in searching all prints received has been exacerbated over the last 18 months'. You should have fixed this a long time ago.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is now commenting.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: The honourable member has answered her own question. Improvements are being put forward in this area, including recent advertising to get more people into that area. However, at the end of the day, it is a pity that the honourable member did not speak about the fact that, with 313 000 taskings last year, including the priority A and B taskings, the average response time was nine minutes.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: Of course, the Opposition does not like that. It does not like any good news about the South Australian Police Force. If we look at the priority A tasking responses, we see that the response times are much less than even the nine minute average. Given what is going on at present with some excellent policing work, the police are doing a very good job of catching criminals.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): Will the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training inform members of calls by outgoing teachers' union President Janet Giles that the Government needs to spend more of its budget on education?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: What a survey it was—the mother of all surveys, we would have to say about this one. It was stunning in the depth of its questions. It was nothing more than a desperate act by a desperate President who is on her last hooray, and yet another stunt of the AEU. The AEU commissioned McGregor Marketing to undertake a survey of some six hundred adults. We might ask, 'Who sponsored it?' I am not quite sure. I do not know whether it was the Opposition in marginal seats, but I think not.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: As the member for Spence says, I don't think so. It was probably out of hard earned teachers' wages. The stunt rates on an equal level with those stunts related to the wages offer from the Government to the teachers' union—13 per cent, and they tell us it is not enough. Six hundred people were asked whether they thought enough money was being spent on education, and—surprise, surprise!—80 per cent said that they would like more money to be spent on education. Another surprise, particularly for

the union, was that 70 per cent said education ranked as a high priority. Mr Speaker, you, I or anybody else in this House could have stood in the middle of a shopping centre on Saturday morning and got exactly the same answer without going to a survey.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: As the member for Unley says, I am surprised it was not 100 per cent. When you ask an obvious question such as, 'Would you like more money to be spent?'—and that is very much in depth; it is a pretty hard question!—I would have thought the result would be 100 per cent. It is just another stunt of the union. The other real surprise is that the union even bothered to put out a press release on this matter because, honestly, anybody could have told you that answer. The reality is that this President is in the last months of her term. I am sure she cannot wait to get back into the classroom, because she has been absent for eight years.

Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, and members of Parliament that education is a high priority. We spend nearly one-third of the total State budget on education. This State is second only to Tasmania in the dollars spent per student, with \$5417 spent per student. We have not changed class sizes. We have not reduced SSO hours. We have the lowest class sizes of any State in Australia, and we have lower class sizes than those in Independent schools in this State.

We are committed to progress in education in this State. We are committed to making sure that we lower the numbers of the bureaucracy and get teachers back into schools so they are on site, teaching in schools where they are supposed to be, in both the country and metropolitan areas.

SMOKE ALARMS

Ms RANKINE (Wright): Will the Minister for Human Services advise how far the Government has progressed in installing smoke alarms in South Australian Housing Trust houses, and will all trust homes be fitted with smoke alarms by 1 January 2000 as required under the Development Act? Last week it was reported in the media that a woman and her three children were saved from their burning Housing Trust home by two passers-by. Some 70 per cent of the house was destroyed, with damage estimated at \$70 000 but, according to this report, no smoke alarm was fitted.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I am glad the honourable member has raised that because in the Housing Trust we put the fitting of smoke alarms as a high priority indeed. If I remember, we set down a three year program and when there was a slight under expenditure on some of the capital works programs for this year, I asked them to proceed with the installation of more smoke alarms for this current year. In the Housing Trust, compared to the program we put down, we are now ahead of that schedule, but it has been a very extensive program to put smoke alarms in all houses.

As the honourable member has said, by next year all Housing Trust homes will have smoke alarms fitted. There are a couple of homes that need the more expensive ones for those people with hearing impairment, and that is being looked at as well, but the important thing is the fundamental program on smoke detectors is on schedule; in fact, ahead of schedule, and it will continue to be a high priority of the Housing Trust to make sure that that objective is met.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Can the Minister for Emergency Services advise the House of the importance to the people of South Australia of having effective emergency services to assist the people of this State?

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The honourable member would not know anything about anything, let alone emergency services!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: I know how concerned the honourable member is about ensuring there are adequate emergency services in his electorate. When, sadly, there is a trauma up that way, whether a bushfire or road accident, particularly because of the vast distances between the various towns, emergency services and their effectiveness is of paramount importance. Clearly the most important area of Government when it comes to life first is that of emergency services. I would defy anybody in this Parliament who is serious—even the member for Elder who smiles every time I talk about the importance of life and property—to deny that the most important protection for the South Australian community for life and property is to have an effective emergency services.

Let us look at a few examples where we have not had effective emergency services in the past in Australia. I read with great interest only recently a report from the results of the Lynton tragedy when five firefighters lost their lives during active duty in that difficult circumstance. I have actually experienced a fireball coming towards me in a national park situation, and I know what it is like. I know what it is like when you are in a difficult spot. One of the most important things you require when you see fireballs coming towards you or a roaring intense fire front is an adequate emergency services radio network.

Apparently those firefighters at Lynton did not get the radio call to tell them that there was a wind change and, as a result, five people lost their lives. We will not let that happen in South Australia while we are in Government. If Opposition members want to allow that to happen then that will be on their heads. The Opposition is complaining that, at the moment, there is some increase in expenditure for emergency services. Instead of going out to the community and ramping up the issues around funding for emergency services, why does the Opposition not go down to the Rundle Mall right now and ask the community who are walking around shopping whether they would prefer to spend an increase on emergency services in the protection of life and property or spend \$2 million a day (over \$700 million a year) in funding dentists' overseas bank accounts as a result of the massive debt the Labor Party incurred on every South Australian.

I know what those people in the Rundle Mall would say that they would much rather spend the money on emergency service protection than \$2 million a day on Labor's debt. But, of course, we will never see the Labor Party going out and asking a sensible question such as that. New South Wales had very big problems handling its hail storm damage situation. In the end, South Australia's SES went to New South Wales to give some assistance. Our SES personnel are highly trained in vertical rescue, but it is important that they receive further training and it is important that they be further funded. It is about providing effective emergency services.

Other examples include the Rescue 1 and Rescue 2 helicopters, the retrieval teams and the helipads that have

been built into hospitals to accommodate those retrieval teams to deliver people involved in road trauma. They are saving lives. What cost to save life? It is the most important funding area and it is important that we continue to increase funding to emergency services.

RADIOACTIVE WASTE

Mr HILL (Kaurna): Does the Minister for Environment and Heritage support the establishment in South Australia by the Commonwealth Government of a national radioactive waste facility, given the refusal by the Commonwealth Government to rule out the use of the facility for the storage of long-lived intermediate radioactive waste to be brought into South Australia from France? A memorandum from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library Information—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Stuart will come to order.

Mr HILL: —and Research Services states:

ANSTO (Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation) has made arrangements with Cogema in France to reprocess the non-United States spent fuel rods and this reprocessed waste is expected to be returned to Australia in time to be stored in the South Australian facility.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I have been expecting this question. The shadow Minister for the Environment has been making a lot of statements about the Federal Government's intention as far as the radioactive waste repository is concerned and several areas of misinformation have been highlighted. The honourable member is not the only person to comment on this issue: some of his political friends have been making similar comments but a couple of aspects need to be made clear. The Federal Government's consultation processes in this instance have involved a repository for low level radioactive waste, or short-lived medium level radioactive waste, such as smoke alarms, exit signs, and a certain amount of material from hospitals, universities and research facilities.

Drawn into that has been the Pangea resources issue, which has headed people off. That is a pretty easy way of scaring people. I take my hat off to this Federal Government for the way in which it has gone about this. It has gone through a process which everyone has understood. The Federal Government has been out in the community and an enormous amount of information has been distributed. I will give members a bit of history on this—

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: We have an agreed process with the Federal Government. We have not signed off on it. In terms of consultation, the Federal Government has told us what it intends to do. There are geological and Aboriginal health and native title issues that need to be addressed. There is a whole range of issues, such as water, because groundwater is an important matter. When we are satisfied with all the answers, we will make a decision. It is forgotten that they tend to point the finger at the Coalition in Canberra, which is really doing the right thing. If we dig back and look at the history of this issue, we see that not all Federal Governments have done the right thing.

In 1993 we did not get much in the way of consultation when the Keating Government sent a heap of this material to Woomera. The matter goes back to 1986 when Federal Labor talked to the State Labor Government at the time. In 1991 the Federal Labor Government sought a further site selection

study and again the State Labor Government in South Australia gave full cooperation. On 21 October 1991 the then Deputy Premier, Dr Hopgood, wrote to the Commonwealth endorsing the need to develop a site. Perhaps some of that literature has disappeared over time. In April 1992 Federal Minister Crean wrote to the South Australian Premier as follows:

The Commonwealth Government strongly supports the prospects of radioactive waste disposal at Olympic Dam and would welcome South Australia's support for the study.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Yes, it is a story that has not been told. The former State Labor Government gave that support and the current Leader of the Opposition was a member of Cabinet at that time. In December 1992 the former South Australian Minister for Health, Mr Evans, presented a detailed summary to Cabinet on all developments and advised that a preliminary study had been completed on the proposal to use the Olympic Dam site.

Compared with what the Commonwealth Government is doing at the moment, where isolation for the site is a major factor, the Olympic Dam site now incorporates a large town which was undertaken by a former Liberal Government with a bit of help from Norm Forster. The then Labor Government was looking at putting the repository against the town, which neither we nor the Commonwealth Government in Canberra is looking at. Cabinet at that stage endorsed the continuation of negotiations and in September 1993 Premier Arnold signed into Cabinet a note which briefed Cabinet on the latest developments.

The note also referred to the issue of a temporary storage site at Rangehead near Woomera. Never at any stage did the Labor Government oppose either the moves to identify a permanent disposal site, including the detailed consideration of South Australian sites, or the Commonwealth's proposal for a temporary storage site in South Australia. In fact, in early 1995 the Federal Labor Government initiated the transfer to South Australia for storage at Woomera of radioactive waste which had been stored at the St Marys munitions factory since 1979. Certainly, the current Coalition Government leaves that Government for dead so far as consultation goes.

The ALP has been talking about insufficient public consultation, but that claim is incorrect and we need only talk to the people of the north to find that out. A discussion paper was released in 1992 with 1 300 copies distributed and 124 public submissions received. You do not get 124 public submissions without doing consultation. The process has gone through a phase two discussion paper and a phase three. The Opposition ought to have a good look at its own record in this regard. Federal and State Labor Governments tried to sneak a radioactive waste repository into South Australia without anywhere near the level of consultation that we are now seeing.

As to whether or not we support the proposal, we have made clear our position from day one. Every now and then the member for Kaurna and others throw up the suggestion that this proposal is other than that put forward by the Federal Government. It has been clear—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Yes. We have made it absolutely clear all along that we have a long list of conditions that need to be satisfied. The Federal Government is going through a process of doing that and a decision will then be made.

YEAR 2000 DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): Can the Minister for Year 2000 Compliance advise the House of the early take-up rate of usage of the so-called good Samaritan legislation and how it is beginning to benefit business in South Australia, particularly?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I thank the member for Heysen for his question. I am sure that all members of Parliament are interested in the response to this question because it is the direct result of legislation that passed through this Chamber.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: While the member for Ross Smith might not have understood the legislation, I am sure that his colleagues did, because they assisted by ensuring that the Bill was one of those rare pieces of legislation that passed through both Houses in less than 24 hours. At the time the legislation passed through the House, I gave an undertaking to come back at a very early stage and report the progress of its take-up.

Disclosure has already been made at a rapid rate by companies, both national and South Australian, and their disclosure statements, pleasingly, have been published on the Internet so that they are readily and easily available to the public. A number of well-known companies have ensured that they have taken advantage of the legislation, including Internode Systems, Knight Frank, Electricity Corporation, Telstra, Westpac, Bankers Trust and OzEmail.

They are just a few of the companies that have provided extensive year 2000 disclosure statements under the legislation passed by this Parliament to ensure that their customer base and other organisations and individuals who rely on them can determine the state of preparedness of those companies. The number of statements now emerging is extremely encouraging. However, of concern I note that there is a barrier to an even larger number of companies disclosing their status and that appears to be legal advice that is imparted to companies by their legal representatives. Regrettably, some legal firms or individuals in our State see fit to advise their clients that they should say nothing.

To those lawyers—and there are a number of lawyers in this Chamber who may have legal associates to whom they can pass on this request—I request and implore them to go through the legislation carefully and see that it provides protection to their clients. The companies that I have revealed in the House today as having publicly disclosed have determined through their legal representatives that the legislation provides the protection they seek while at the same time enabling them to provide a level of comfort to organisations and individuals with whom they deal. Those companies have made their statements in good faith, they have sensibly used the legislation, and I hope that many other South Australian businesses will take advantage of the opportunity that this Parliament, in true bipartisan spirit, has made available to them.

SOUTH WARD YOUTH REPORT

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): Is the Minister for Youth aware of the needs of youth in the Trott Park and Sheidow Park area as outlined in the South Ward report prepared by the Marion Council? What steps will the State Government take to help Marion Council implement the recommendations of that report?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The answer to the honourable member's question is that I have been alerted to the fact that the council to which he referred recently released a report and I have asked for a copy of that report. As to whether I am across the specific details of the report, the answer is that I have not read the report, so therefore I am not. As to whether this Government is across issues specifically pertaining to youth, the answer is that we are trying as hard as we can to understand what those issues are and to address those issues.

There are profound issues for the youth of South Australia, but I would say to the honourable member and to every member of this House that, whilst those issues are pertinent to youth in various areas, especially in some of our more disadvantaged socioeconomic groupings specific to those areas, nevertheless most youth across this State share a commonality of problems. Whether they are the areas that the honourable member outlines or areas that would be dear to the member for Taylor or to the member for Kaurna, the issues that are problems for youth are shared by all youth in this State, whether they live in the so-called leafy suburbs or in the northern, southern or Marion districts. This Government is seriously committed to addressing those issues and looking at the problems.

For that reason we are doing a number of things. We have set up a number of structures. We are looking at the operations of Youth SA. Indeed, members will hear in the budget that we are looking at all matters pertaining to youth, because they are a serious part of this State. I will not insult the members of this House with the comment that youth are our future, because it is almost trite. But the fact is that they are the only and the greatest investment that we can make. Why do members of this House think that the Premier has put such an emphasis on employment? If there is occasional criticism of our employment policy, it is that some people believe that it is skewed towards youth. I maintain that our approach is balanced, but if there is a skewing I put my hand up and say yes, if there is a skewing at all it should be skewed towards young people, because young people are just entering the work force; young people have not made these problems.

Therefore the answer is no, I am not aware, but we will do everything we can in addressing both the specific problems and the generality of the problems of youth.

BAROSSA VALLEY HEALTH FACILITY

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Is the Minister for Human Services able to give any details about the forward planning for the new health facility in the Barossa Valley?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: If ever a member should get a medal for persistence, it is the member for Schubert, because unofficially he asks me this question every day that Parliament sits! I commend him on the fact that today he has asked it officially. I have visited the Angaston Hospital and am aware that it is an older facility. We are aware of the need to buy some land and start planning for a new hospital in the Barossa Valley to cover the entire valley, and we have been looking at various parcels of land. In fact, we have approached the owners of two of those parcels of land. Either they want outrageous prices for them that we are not prepared to pay or (in one case) the buyer was not willing to sell.

However, I am delighted to tell the honourable member that we have found a third piece of land that we think is ideally suited, and we are currently negotiating with the owner. I hope that we will be able to secure the land and start to plan for a new health facility for the Barossa Valley in the

longer or medium term. I acknowledge the honourable member's concern: let him be assured that we are working hard to try to resolve the question of the land and to provide a broad health service and modern facilities for the whole of the Barossa Valley.

BUSINESS, SOUTHERN REGION

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): Will the Minister for Industry and Trade advise what action is being taken to attract new business to the south, particularly to the two major industrial areas of Lonsdale and Hackham? I have attended several meetings lately, including a meeting of the important Lonsdale Business Association, where business people have expressed the view that State Government assistance goes principally to the north and that some businesses thinking of coming to the south have been encouraged to locate in the north.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Obviously, I do not have a suburb by suburb breakdown of the industry attraction. I am happy to get a breakdown of the attraction to the south. We all know that 97 per cent of business attraction goes to businesses that already exist in South Australia, but I am happy to get a breakdown regarding the south for the honourable member.

ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING HOURS) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

BUDGET PAPERS

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I lay on the table the following budget papers: Budget at a Glance 1999-2000; Budget Guide 1999-2000; Budget Paper No. 1, Budget Speech 1999-2000; Budget Paper No. 2, Budget Statement 1999-2000; Budget Paper No. 3, Estimates Statement 1999-2000; Budget Paper No. 4, Portfolio Statements, Volumes 1 and 2, 1999-2000; Budget Paper No. 5, Capital Investment Statement 1999-2000; Budget Paper No. 6, Employment Statement 1999-2000; and I move:

That papers Nos 2, 3, 4 and 5 be printed.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act for the appropriation of moneys from the Consolidated Account for the year ending 30 June 2000, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The SPEAKER: Does the Premier wish to have leave to continue his remarks?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes, Mr Speaker.

Leave granted.

The SPEAKER: Admit the honourable Treasurer.

The Treasurer (Hon. R.I. Lucas) was admitted to the Chamber.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer): Mr Speaker, thank you again this year for your hospitality.

Mr Clarke: Why don't you reciprocate?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I will later on, Ralph. Mr Speaker, last year the Government authorised a four-year financial plan designed to shape the growth and financial framework for the future of our State. It was a plan that required bold and decisive action by Government. It was a plan to allow us to take our State proudly into the next millennium.

This year's budget builds on the foundation established by last year's budget in tackling the major challenges facing our State.

Mr Speaker, those challenges were and still are:

- to create jobs
- to reduce State debt
- to boost investment in economic and community infrastructure
- to manage public sector wage pressures
- to maintain and improve the quality of our public services.

The Government's financial plan was built on a balanced policy mix of revenue increases, expenditure reductions and asset sales to provide the financial foundation for tackling these challenges.

The Parliament was given a clear choice of either supporting the sale or lease of ETSA and Optima and the associated ongoing financial benefits to the budget or if it opposed such a sale or lease then it would have to accept the alternative of tax increases or expenditure reductions.

Sadly for the people of South Australia the Labor Party and others have chosen the second option and this budget therefore sees the introduction of the Rann power bill increase on all households.

As I foreshadowed in this place one year ago, such a course of action, whilst undesirable and indeed regrettable for families and households in this State, is nevertheless necessary. The revenue from this tariff increase will help replace the asset sale budget premium already built into the forward estimates and the fall of electricity business dividends into the budget since the start of the National Electricity Market.

The fact that neither the Leader of the Opposition nor the Shadow Treasurer have been prepared to promise to get rid of the power bill increase immediately if elected is recognition of the fact that such a promise would mean a \$100 million cut in the number of teachers, nurses, and police employed in our public sector.

Mr Speaker, I cannot emphasise this more strongly—the Government's preferred course is to sell or lease the electricity businesses. But if Parliament continues to block the sale, then the Government is left with no alternative.

If the impasse within the Parliament can be broken however, then the Government will immediately move to drop the power bill increase.

One of the Government's major reasons for the sale of our electricity businesses has been the need to avoid the risk of competing in the National Electricity Market with the resultant negative impact on dividends and taxation flows into the budget.

Opponents of the sale have continued to claim that the Government was receiving \$300 million per year from the electricity businesses and would continue to receive \$300 million per year even after the former monopoly situation had been replaced by a competitive market.

Those opponents then argued that the interest savings from debt retirement if assets were sold would mean there is no ongoing financial benefit to the budget from a sale.

This argument is obviously entirely dependent on the heroic assumption that the budget will forever receive \$300 million per year in dividends and taxes.

Since the commencement of the national market the Government's electricity businesses have forecast a significant decline in the level of distributions to the budget. In fact, projected distributions are estimated to fall by \$159 million over the four-year planning period when compared to last year's budget estimates. After taking account of the power bill increase this cumulative shortfall reduces to \$79 million.

For the next three years the average estimated distribution to the budget is \$164 million—not \$300 million.

These estimates are a massive blow to the credibility of the opponents of a sale—but they are also a massive blow to the challenge of maintaining a balanced budget.

The risks of Government owned businesses competing in this market are enormous.

Just last month for example, ETSA Power, which is the State owned electricity retailer, had to spend \$2.6 million over an 8½ hour period buying power at an average price of \$1440 per MWh, because of an unexpected reduction of the interconnector with Victoria.

Optima Energy, which operates the Torrens Island plant, could incur losses of around \$1 million for each hour of a double outage of its 'B' unit. Flinders Power, which operates generators at Pt Augusta and Leigh Creek, could lose \$10 million over an eight hour period in the event of two double outages of its plant on a high demand day.

Just one of the Government's electricity businesses has projected pre-tax profit figures for next year ranging from a loss of \$74 million to a profit of \$2 million with a most likely estimate of a loss of \$30 million.

I stress that these are not the profit projections of the Government but the best estimates of the Board and management of this business.

It is also worth noting that we will not see a really intensive competitive market in SA until extra supply is available late next year when the Pelican Point power station enters the market.

Given the need to compete in the national market and to maintain service standards, the businesses are projecting capital works projects of \$690 million over a five year period. This estimate doesn't include proposals such as the \$180 million repowering of the Torrens Island proposal by Optima. Any further increase in capital projects will further reduce distributions to Government.

Mr Speaker, I cannot emphasise more strongly that these risks and the numerous others that lie ahead fall straight onto the taxpayers of this State.

To those members present who are expecting future South Australians to thank them for keeping the electricity businesses in public hands, I say just two words—STATE BANK.

Mr Speaker, the inability to sell our electricity businesses has of course meant the State's crippling debt burden remains and we continue to have to pay \$2 million a day in interest costs.

Whilst it is true that debt as a proportion of Gross State Product is no higher now than it was a generation ago it is not true that this means debt is not a problem.

Mr Speaker, there are two very fundamental problems with such comparisons.

First, borrowing in previous generations was necessary to fund the infrastructure needs of a growing population, which in turn created growth in the tax base to service that borrowing. This no longer holds true. This debt has to be serviced from a tax base that is growing only slowly.

Second, we have to compete for job creating investment in a world where the bar has been lifted quite dramatically in recent years. For example Victoria has reduced its debt from \$30 billion to \$3 billion and is now able to lower payroll tax. To claim that debt levels are acceptable because they are no worse than a generation ago is to assume that the world itself is unchanged. With substantially lower debt levels around Australia, our relative attractiveness as a place for investors is going to be difficult to sustain.

To illustrate this point, Mr Speaker, a recent Access Economics report showed that at 30 June 1998 this State held 19 per cent of all the State and Territory debt in Australia. By 2003, Access estimates that will have grown to 22 per cent. If NSW were to sell enough of its electricity assets to repay its debt then that figure would soar to 43 per cent.

For investor perceptions, the fact that Access undertook and published these calculations is as significant as the numbers themselves.

Mr Speaker, eight per cent of the Australian population resides in this State. How do we expect we can compete as a State with that sort of debt burden hanging over our heads?

Mr Speaker, it is for all these reasons and more that the sale or lease of our electricity assets is such an important part of any strategy to move beyond the mendicant mentality of the past and to prepare our State to play its rightful role in a vibrant Australian economy as we move into the next millennium.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

In framing the 1999-2000 Budget the Government's principal objective was to stick with the fundamentals set out in the four year financial plan that we announced one year ago.

It needs to be noted that this financial strategy differed in a number of significant aspects to the previous strategy. It no longer budgeted for zero wage increases with the cost of any wage increase to be fully funded by the agencies through staff reductions and it also provided in a structured way for unexpected cost pressures and new policy initiatives approved by Cabinet during the four year period.

Such a strategy has obviously assisted the integrity and sustainability of the budget and allowed it to cope with the inevitable pressures throughout the year.

Since the 1998-99 Budget and the launch of the four year plan, significant events have created additional challenges and this has necessitated a number of adjustments to the budget strategy to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the plan.

Mr Speaker, these challenges were:

- Parliament's blocking of the electricity assets sale legislation—necessitating the introduction of the new power bill increase
- the impact on distributions from the electricity businesses of entry to the National Electricity Market
- Commonwealth Grants Commission recommendations on Commonwealth funding
- continued high growth in demand for health services brought about by an ageing population, much lower levels of private health insurance and the impact of

new technologies—necessitating an increased funding allocation to the Department for Human Services

- cost pressures across a variety of Government projects and programs including, for example, the new Government Radio Network, with additional funding sourced from the provision set aside in the 1998-99 budget and forward estimates for unforeseen cost pressures
- pressure from public sector unions for wage increases beyond the level provided for in the four year plan—to date all increases agreed to by the Government have been within the forward estimates parameters
- the need to fund new, emerging community priorities, such as regional development infrastructure and expanded employment programs particularly for young people.

Mr Speaker, there appears to be a naive view from some that once a budget is balanced it is balanced forever and the State no longer has a need to raise extra revenue or reduce expenditure. Of course nothing could be further from the truth.

One only has to consider wage costs to illustrate this point. Treasury has estimated that moderate and reasonable wage increases for teachers, nurses, police and public servants will add an extra \$450 million to our total wage bill in 2002-03 when compared to 1998-99. These increases are all budgeted for within our forward estimates and are at levels consistent with wage forecasts included in Commonwealth Budget papers. To go beyond the \$450 million—would clearly require either extra revenue or further reductions in teacher, nurse and police numbers.

In recent weeks there have been a number of claims made that there has been a blow out in wage costs in the budget and that the Rann power bill increase and the emergency services levy were required in part to fund a black hole created by this wage blow out.

Once this claim had been made by one commentator everyone scrambled over each other to be the first political lemming to throw itself over the cliff of credibility.

What then are the facts?

- all wage settlements have been settled within the budgeted forward estimates
- in fact we have been unable to settle an argument with the AEU for nearly a year because we have refused to increase our offer above the budgeted forward estimates
- wage increases in the SA public sector in 1998 were at less than half the level of the private sector whereas in 1994, 1996 and 1997 wage increases in the public sector were significantly higher than private sector wage increases.

So Mr Speaker any claims of wage cost blowouts are entirely unsupported by the facts.

One of the adjustments included in this budget has been the decision to extend the target from thirty to forty years for eliminating past service superannuation liabilities.

Given the financial challenges facing the State we can no longer afford to be reducing this liability at a rate much faster than all other States undertaking such action. For example both NSW and Victoria have adopted a fifty year funding strategy.

Mr Speaker, through this series of adjustments the Government's commitment to a balanced budget is maintained. That the Government has been able to adjust the budget strategy to accommodate some very substantial shocks without compromising the fundamental tenets of the plan, is

in itself a testimony to the improved structural integrity of the budget.

In addition, the forward estimates continue to make provision for unforeseen cost pressures and emerging new priorities.

Some of the key features of the budget Mr Speaker are:

- that it is a balanced budget, in 1999-2000 and in the three outyears, measured in accordance with ABS Government Finance Statistics standards
- a significant increase in funding for employment programs, building on the successful program established in the 1998-99 Budget
- a package of carefully targeted spending measures to address the most outstanding community priorities, with the largest component of this package going into health
- a strong program of capital investment of over \$1 billion—creating essential social and economic infrastructure
- whilst net debt as a percentage of Gross State Product continues to fall—net debt remains unacceptably high and total interest costs remain at \$735 million.

Mr Speaker, above all else this is a responsible budget, consolidating the hard work of the past five years, adjusting to accommodate adverse events but remaining true to the path of fiscal responsibility so vital to the future of this State.

This budget also continues the very useful reforms in budget presentation, which were commenced last year. The accrual approach to presenting the budget—incorporating the full cost of service provision, including depreciation, and disclosure of all financial obligations accrued each year, including superannuation and long service liabilities—was a clear improvement to public accountability.

This year the output presentation is more fully developed and performance indicators are provided for most outputs. The Parliament can be assured that the quality of financial and non-financial information provided with the budget is second to none in Australia.

Once again I want to acknowledge publicly the hard work of Treasury officers who, together with Ministers and their staff and portfolio staff work tirelessly to prepare the budget.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Mr Speaker, South Australia experienced solid economic growth during 1998-99, with strong household consumption spending playing a key part. A strong increase in wheat and wine production has been accompanied by solid growth in exports.

After several years of impressive growth, business investment is estimated to have fallen slightly in 1998-99, mainly because of the completion of major investment at Olympic Dam. Nevertheless, business investment in South Australia remains at relatively high levels by historical standards.

Employment grew by an estimated 1¼ per cent during 1998-99 and this rate of growth is expected to slow to around 1 per cent in 1999-2000, as a result of the expected weakening in the national economy.

Unemployment in South Australia fell during the year to 8.3 per cent—down from 9.5 per cent a year ago and much lower than the high of over 11 per cent under the previous Labor Government. While unemployment is at its lowest level since 1990, it still remains above the national average, as has been the case for the past three decades.

Mr Speaker, despite the more positive outlook over the last twelve months, job creation remains the top priority of the Government. The rate of youth unemployment in particular is well above the national average and this situation is not acceptable to the Government.

Notwithstanding the significant financial constraints on the budget, our commitment to action on job creation is a major focus in the budget. The Government is releasing an Employment Statement with the budget today. I will come to some of the details later.

Mr Speaker, South Australia's rate of population growth continues to improve. The main reason for the improvement has been the dramatic fall in the level of interstate migration losses. In 1995 South Australia suffered a loss from net interstate migration of almost 8000. But in the twelve month periods to September 1997 and September 1998 the losses were 3900 and 2900 respectively—a very positive sign for the State.

Mr Speaker, the budget assumes reasonably conservative estimates of future growth in GSP and employment, estimates that are below those for the national economy.

The challenge for Government is to create an economic environment in which these estimates can be exceeded.

COMMONWEALTH/STATE RELATIONS

Mr Speaker, the last twelve months have witnessed the emergence of significant reforms in Commonwealth-State finances.

At the Premiers' Conference on the 9th of April this year the Premier, along with the Prime Minister and other Premiers and Chief Ministers, signed the multi-lateral "Intergovernmental Agreement on the Reform of Commonwealth-State Financial Relations".

Under the Agreement, 1999-2000 is the last year in which States and Territories will receive Financial Assistance Grants from the Commonwealth. Instead, the entire proceeds of the GST will go to the States.

The States have also agreed to abolish some of their most inefficient taxes, including financial institutions duty, bank debits tax and various stamp duties such as those on business conveyances, leases, cheques and credit arrangements.

The proposed reform is a major one and is supported by all State and Territory Governments as a means to ensure access to a revenue base offering much greater prospects for growth than currently available.

In the transitional years, the Commonwealth has guaranteed that the budgetary position of each individual State and Territory will be no worse than under current arrangements.

Projections of GST revenue in future years show that all States, including South Australia, will benefit considerably from the reform.

Under the reform, the annual Premiers' Conference will be largely replaced by a new Ministerial Council to be established from 1 July 1999 to oversee operation of the Inter Governmental Agreement. The Council will be chaired by the Commonwealth Treasurer and will consist of the State Treasurers.

Of course, these reforms are subject to the Commonwealth gaining passage of the relevant legislation. Given that this State stands to gain substantially from the reforms, Mr Speaker, it can only be hoped that the minor parties do see their way clear to act in the national interest.

REVENUE

Revenue measures taking effect in 1999-2000 will result in increased revenue. These measures include:

- the power bill increase necessitated by Parliament's blocking of the ETSA sale legislation
- introduction of the Emergency Services Levy, as announced last year
- a proposed increase in stamp duty rates on transfers of properties valued at over \$500 000

Whilst own source revenue growth shows an 11.9 per cent increase in real terms in 1999-2000 this is largely the impact of the "one-off" increases in SAAMC dividends. If the SAAMC dividends are excluded, real terms revenue growth is 5.9 per cent next year followed by real terms decline in two of the following three years.

Mr Speaker, I have referred elsewhere to the power bill increase. In reality it has no significant effect on the four year financial plan as it simply makes up for the loss of the electricity businesses sale premium and for part of the reduced distributions from the electricity business.

As foreshadowed in last year's budget, the new emergency services levy commences on 1 July 1999, replacing the existing fire services levy on insurance companies. It applies to owners of fixed and mobile property irrespective of whether the property is insured. The cost of the levy will therefore be shared by all property holders.

Mr Speaker, it is important that I emphasise that the net addition to revenue from the levy is fully hypothecated to support costs associated with the provision of emergency services including police services, State Emergency Services, improved communication systems, fire service costs previously funded by local government, volunteer and research grants together with costs associated with the collection and monitoring of the levy. Further details are provided in other budget papers.

I now turn to the stamp duty measure. Mr Speaker, South Australia has one of the lowest marginal rates of stamp duty on property value in excess of \$500 000.

To assist the Government to meet its budgetary objectives, marginal rates of stamp duty on high value property transfers will increase from 4 per cent to 4.5 per cent on that part of property value between \$500 000 and \$1 million, and from 4.5 per cent to 5 per cent on that part of property value in excess of \$1 million. For a property transfer of \$1 million, stamp duty will increase from \$38 830 to \$41 330.

The revised duty rate structure is estimated to raise \$7.5 million in 1999-2000 and \$8.1 million in a full year.

The increased rates of duty will impact predominantly on commercial property transfers, very few residential contracts will be affected given that the increases apply to dutiable value in excess of \$500 000.

The measure will also effectively be time limited if national tax reform goes ahead. Under the Commonwealth's proposed New Tax System, stamp duty on non-residential conveyances would be abolished in about 2005-06.

Mr Speaker, while these increases will be an extra burden for families, they have been designed so as to operate as fairly as possible. Concessions will apply to the power bill increase and to the emergency services levy, while the stamp duty increase is specifically targeted at the very high end of properties.

Mr Speaker the Government has again steered clear of any increase in payroll tax and tried to minimise the impact on

businesses to ensure the right environment for job creation is maintained in South Australia.

Even after introduction of these new taxation measures it is estimated that in 1999-2000 State taxation per capita in South Australia will still be the third lowest of all the States and Territories. Compared with the national average, taxes will be \$89 lower for every man, woman and child in South Australia, even after increases announced in the budget.

OUTLAYS

Mr Speaker, total outlays will rise by 5.2 per cent in real terms in 1999-2000. This increase is largely the result of a 49.1 per cent lift in capital outlays, with current outlays growing only 1.7 per cent in real terms.

While I come specifically to capital investment spending later, the real picture for current outlays is one of continuing restraint. Current outlays excluding interest and superannuation payments are unchanged from 1998-99 levels and in fact are expected to remain almost constant throughout the forward estimates period.

Mr Speaker, a key indicator across the forward estimates is the trend in final consumption expenditure excluding past service superannuation payments. This indicator is the best measure of discretionary spending by Government. The dominant component of this measure is wage and salary payments.

If wage movements are out of control, then it will certainly show up in this measure. Mr Speaker, I am glad to say that real growth in final consumption expenditure excluding past service superannuation payments averages less than 1 per cent per annum over the next four years—a clear indication that wage settlements agreed to date are reasonable and have not adversely affected the budget outlook.

Mr Speaker, while outlays had to be reduced as part of the Government's 4 year strategy to eliminate the deficit, with the financial position now stabilised, it has been possible in the last two budgets to return benefits to the community in the form of extra funding for services. This is now evident in the budget aggregates that show outlays in the budget are above 1994-95 levels in real terms.

In key areas of service delivery, outlays are up substantially, reflecting concerted efforts to reallocate spending within the budget to areas of high priority.

Mr Speaker, the two most important examples are that:

- health outlays are up 16 per cent in real terms
- education outlays are up 8 per cent in real terms.

Whilst there have been real increases in health spending, significant increase in demand for services in all States, has left health systems under great financial stress.

Despite a 4.5 per cent increase in funding for 1999-2000 the health portfolio will have to achieve savings of around \$46 million from the level of real spending that occurred in 1998-99. The boost in real spending in the last 2 years has been funded in part by a significant run-down in cash reserves in the portfolio.

The 1999 Employment Statement builds on the 4 year \$100 million package of initiatives announced in last year's statement. It involves new spending and extensions to programs worth \$28.5 million over the next three years and aims to provide a further 7400 people with job and training opportunities.

In addition, there are a number of significant budget initiatives which are also aimed at increasing economic and employment growth.

These include addition funding totalling \$77 million consisting of:

- \$49 million over three years to maintain forward commitments and ensure expansion of assistance in industry and tourism development and attraction
- \$4.5 million per annum over three years for a new Regional Infrastructure Development Fund
- \$2 million for developing biotechnology opportunities
- \$12.5 million over three years aimed at increasing tourism growth by funding existing and new major events and festivals.

The 1999-2000 budget provides for a gross capital investment program totalling \$1150 million including some allowance made for project delays. In addition, expenditure in the order of \$200 million is anticipated on private sector funded infrastructure projects making a total program of \$1350 million.

Growth between years 1998-99 and 1999-2000 is a consequence of the funding of new initiatives, increased expenditure associated with works in progress and works carried over from previous years.

It is estimated there will be an increase of around \$270 million in the public sector investment program in comparison to the estimated outcome for 1998-99—much of this increase attributed to works carried forward from previous years.

Significant growth (\$139 million) has also occurred in the private sector provision of infrastructure initiatives. This is primarily as a result of the Pelican Point power station, which is expected to cost in the order of \$400 million over a two year construction period.

The Government is investing to enhance the delivery of key community services including:

- health \$91 million—with a \$29 million investment in strategic metropolitan hospital redevelopment at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Lyell McEwin Health Service, Modbury Hospital, Noarlunga Health Service and the Repatriation General Hospital;
- housing, with investments that include renovations of some 950 houses, acquisition of 30 established houses and construction of 150 new houses. Further, an investment of \$9.6 million will be made in urban regeneration projects and an investment of \$9.1 million in Aboriginal housing and crisis accommodation;
- education, with new major projects worth in excess of \$60 million across primary and secondary schools planned for 1999-2000;
- \$22.4 million in 1999-2000, has been provided for investment in TAFE colleges including the Adelaide Institute of TAFE Centre for Performing and Visual Arts, the Onkaparinga Institute redevelopment at the Victor Harbor campus, the Regency Institute stage 2 redevelopment and the new facility at the Spencer Institute, Kadina campus;
- in justice and public safety, investments include completion of construction of the Adelaide Youth Court, commencement of the Christies Beach Magistrate Court complex and commencement of Stage 1 of the Supreme Court upgrading, together with the replacement of the Mt Gambier and Glenelg police complexes and significant investment is planned in Police communications.

SUMMARY

Mr Speaker, as we start to open the door to the new millennium we can see that as a State we face many challenges but also many opportunities.

This budget is part of a coherent financial plan which is geared to best prepare South Australia to grasp these opportunities.

As with any bold vision for the future there will always be difficult decisions—therefore there will always be opportunities for some to oppose and obstruct implementation of the plan.

Yes—it will be easy to oppose every asset sale

Yes—it will be easy to oppose every new revenue increase

Yes—it will be easy to oppose every school closure or cut in service

And yes—it will be easy to cheer chase on the steps of Parliament House and support union leader demands for 18 per cent wage increases.

But will this approach balance a budget and reduce debt:

- is this political leadership?
- is this a plan to take SA into the future?
- is this in fact a policy?

Mr Speaker, to face the challenges and grasp the opportunities that present themselves South Australia doesn't need political chameleons capable of blending instantly into any political environment.

SA actually needs a bold vision to take us into the next millennium—it needs political strength and leadership to pursue a course because it is right for the State and all South Australians.

It needs a budget which will assist in the task.

I commend the budget to the House.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I seek leave to have the remainder of the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Clause 1 is formal.

Clause 2 provides for the Bill to operate retrospectively to 1 July 1999. Until the Bill is passed, expenditure is financed from appropriation authority provided by the *Supply Act*.

Clause 3 provides relevant definitions.

Clause 4 provides for the issue and application of the sums shown in the schedule to the Bill. Subsection (2) makes it clear that the appropriation authority provided by the *Supply Act* is superseded by this Bill.

Clause 5 is designed to ensure that where Parliament has appropriated funds to an agency to enable it to carry out particular functions or duties and those functions or duties become the responsibility of another agency, the funds may be used by the responsible agency in accordance with Parliament's original intentions without further appropriation.

Clause 6 provides authority for the Treasurer to issue and apply money from the Hospitals Fund for the provision of facilities in public hospitals.

Clause 7 makes it clear that appropriation authority provided by this Bill is additional to authority provided in other Acts of Parliament, except, of course, in the *Supply Act*.

Clause 8 sets a limit of \$50 million on the amount which the Government may borrow by way of overdraft.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

**STAMP DUTIES (CONVEYANCE RATES)
AMENDMENT BILL**

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training) obtained leave and

introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Stamp Duties Act 1923. Read a first time.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

To assist the Government to meet its budgetary objectives, stamp duty rates on high valued property are to be increased. Stamp duty rates on high valued conveyances were last increased in 1992-93 when a marginal rate of 4.5 per cent was introduced for that part of property value in excess of \$1 million.

As part of the 1999-2000 Budget, the marginal rate of duty that applies to property value between \$500 000 and \$1 million will increase from 4 per cent to 4.5 per cent; that part of property value in excess of \$1 million will attract a marginal rate of 5 per cent instead of 4.5 per cent.

The new rates will apply to documents lodged for stamping on or after the date of assent of the amended legislation, except for documents relating to written agreements entered into prior to the Budget announcement on 27 May 1999; these documents will continue to be taxed at the old rates. The revised rate structure is estimated to raise \$7.5 million in 1999-2000 and \$8.1 million in a full year.

The increased rates of duty will impact predominantly on commercial property transfers; very few residential contracts will be affected given that the increases apply to dutiable value in excess of \$500 000.

Stamp duty payable on \$1 million properties will continue to be lower in South Australia relative to Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. For property values of \$5 million and above, stamp duty payable will continue to be lower in South Australia relative to New South Wales, Victoria, and the two Territories.

The measure will also effectively be time limited. As part of National Tax Reform, stamp duty on non-residential conveyances is to be abolished. The date of abolition will depend on the speed with which the new funding arrangements generate additional funds to provide the State with the financial capacity to repeal stamp duty on non-residential conveyances. On current estimates, a likely repeal date is 2005-06.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Amendment of schedule 2

This clause revises the rates of duty chargeable on conveyances with a value exceeding \$500 000.

Clause 3: Application of amendments

The amendments will apply to instruments first lodged for stamping on or after the commencement of this measure. However, the amendments will not apply to an instrument if the Commissioner is satisfied that the instrument gives effect to a written agreement entered into before 27 May 1999.

Ms WHITE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I want to raise two issues in the short time available to me. The first issue relates to the deal that workers in my electorate get under the new deregulated WorkCover arrangements. Secondly, I want to complete some remarks I made yesterday about the failure of the Federal Parliament to pass a motion to disallow regulations providing exemptions from the Disability Discrimination Act under sections of the South Australian Education Act and the effect that that will have, particularly for children with disabilities within our South Australia system—in other words, what it means to South Australia.

To begin, I want to read to the House a letter I received from a constituent dealing with his experience after a work

injury. I often speak in this place about what has happened in recent years under this Liberal Government to workers and their rights when they are injured and the extremely traumatic processes that they have to go through and the stress that causes. This letter is not chosen by me because it is the worst case that I have seen but because it is a typical experience—as bad as that is—of many of my working constituents who have been injured. I will not include the individual's name or street address but will just read the text of the letter. I ask most constituents, because these are detailed and involved cases, to write some of the history of what happened to them and their experiences, and this letter was written to me in this context. I get many such letters every day and this letter, dated 12 May 1999 addressed to me, is as follows:

I was asked to compile a list of my complaints with regard to WorkCover. First off, it would be appropriate to say what my problem is. In April 1991, I was injured while working under a car carrier trailer. A hydraulic ram slid off the tines of a forklift which twisted my lower back causing facet joint injuries. As a result of this injury my employment was terminated. I have been able to secure employment since then in the transport industry but have been unable to sustain this employment. I was retained by WorkCover as a driving instructor and acquired employment with Gawler Truck Driving School. After nearly three years with this company and after many arguments as to the condition of his training vehicles, my doctor put me on restricted hours.

As this still did not help me in the vehicles (semi-trailers), the doctor took me off work completely. On the doctor's suggestion, I filed for workers' compensation. On doing this I was sacked by my employer. As the claim was not accepted on first submitting it, I went on to sickness benefit. I then hired a lawyer and took the Workcover agent, which was FAI at the time, to court. It took 12 months to get them into court and they were forced to accept my case as it was claim No. 5 because of the same problem, aggravation of my original injury.

Each time I have claimed WorkCover and their agents end up putting me back into trucks. This of course starts the whole thing over again. Whilst I was on sickness benefit and awaiting the court case, I applied for a veteran's service pension. This was accepted within a week of my application going through, so I was taken off sickness benefit and placed on this pension.

Then after the court case and FAI was forced to take my case, I was taken off the pension and placed back on WorkCover. Now my two year review has come up (after 12 months) and after many ups and downs with promissory jobs that never eventuated, back on trucks I might add, I am informed by my doctor that I could be kicked off the system.

Now my complaint is this: as I received a section 43 payout of \$32 000 back in 1996 and I was already on a pension for a permanent disability, and after four claims with the same problem, why try to put me back into trucks? The payout was basically spent as soon as I got it, catching up on the bills, which mounted up because of the lower wage from WorkCover. Why are we condemned to a lower wage because of an injury? Was it my fault the employer (who was not licensed to drive a forklift) dropped the half ton ram on to my back?

Since FAI lost their contract with WorkCover, I was assigned to Mercantile Mutual insurance, and since then I have had nothing but emotional harassment. Personnel Placement Consultants are in charge of finding me employment. I have assisted them as much as possible in trying to find employment, especially within the restrictions placed on me by my doctor. For 12 months I have had to put up with these job offers which fall through as soon as they hear of my injuries. To me, anybody with common sense would say, 'Put him back on a pension.' I don't want a pension but I also don't want to put up with these suggested promises of employment, either. Even though I would give my eye teeth to get back on the road again, I doubt that I would last too long at it.

I have copies of the functional capacity evaluation and a vocational report done by Mercantile Mutual to help find me a job. These reports say I would make a good truck driver, but as my doctor doesn't want me back in trucks, why are they pushing? I am told that even though my injury is slowly getting worse there will be no more section 43 payout. What am I to do? I will only aggravate my injury by returning to trucks. I cannot survive on the low wage I am

receiving and if I can't get a payout I will lose my house and all that goes with it.

With all the Government charges being whacked on by State, Federal and local councils, how I am supposed to survive? As I cannot afford to get photocopies done of any paperwork you might want, I am hoping you could do this for me. Anyway, I don't know if my problem has come through but I've tried to explain it as best I can. I thank you for your time, and await the outcome.

The letter was signed by the constituent. I put that letter into *Hansard* to issue a challenge to the Minister for Government Enterprises. Years ago it used to be that we would negotiate with the Minister responsible for WorkCover to get solutions for our constituents. It used to be that the Government paid some interest in our constituents. That no longer happens. What happens now is that we in the electorate offices negotiate with lawyers, private insurance companies and with our constituents in a long, drawn-out and very difficult process which often is not successful, because of the changes affecting injured workers that this Liberal Government has heartlessly introduced.

I issue the challenge to the Minister to take an interest in just one of my constituents—this one. This is a very typical, not unusual case, and it is the sort of case I get day in, day out, every single day of the week. I issue a challenge to him to help one of my constituents and then I will try for the rest.

I informed the House recently of the changes to the disability discrimination Act and the exemption of two sections of the South Australian Education Act from the Federal legislation. The problem that I did not have time to tell the House about on that occasion is that, because anything done in compliance with these sections of the Education Act in South Australia will be exempt from complaint under the Commonwealth Act, many children with disabilities in our schools will be disadvantaged. The ministerial council on education (MCEETYA) is currently developing disability standards. It is a consultative process, a task force has been set up and some progress is being made. Now the Federal Government has decided to exempt the South Australian Education Act, totally overriding that process. That sends a clear signal to disabled people in this State.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I rise to speak about yet another success in my electorate of Schubert. Tarac Australia Limited has been involved in the wine industry in the Barossa for almost 70 years, having commenced its operation in Nuriootpa in 1930. This company has played an integral role in the overall success of the Barossa and continues to support and be part of the current wine industry boom. Along with the Deputy Premier (Hon. Rob Kerin), I was privileged to attend the opening by him of the new facility at Tarac a couple of weeks ago. This facility uses world, leading-edge technology and plant which enables Tarac to extract an additional 5 per cent yield from the grape crush, which will provide an estimated four million litre boost to the State's annual wine production.

Tarac, a South Australian based company, is the largest privately owned distiller in Australia. It will recover high quality wine from about one tenth of Australia's grape marc with this new technology. I remind the House that grape marc is the skins, unused juices and seeds that are left over after the crushes of the normal wine process. I know Mr David Obst, the company's Chief Executive, and he advised me that the company's objective was to process 10 000 tonnes of premium red grape marc annually, adding an estimated \$35 million to \$50 million a year to the value of the wine industry's production. That is no mean feat.

Tarac's red wine recovery facility, which recovers red wine by processing the residual grape skins from the press, is the first in the world and provides the Australian wine industry with an added advantage over our international competitors. I commend the investors and the directors of Tarac for taking what could be seen as a risk to undergo a process that has no peer. There is nothing to copy. This is first class, world technology. This production process, which is a world first and is Australian patented, further enhances the State's reputation as the international leader in innovative wine technologies.

Mr Obst said that the recovery facility will be expanded in future years as demand increases. Tarac has become Australia's largest facility for recycling and value adding winery by-products. After processing the marc, it goes to the distillery as it normally would and then it becomes a very valuable mulch and soil conditioner. The company has invested \$11 million in this extensive upgrade at Nuriootpa, which includes a new \$2.5 million cellar door facility, and many members may have seen it on the Barossa Valley Way at Nuriootpa.

This is the only facility of this type in Australia to offer customers a range of spirits and liqueurs for tasting and purchase. It also provides opportunities for visitors to see the production methods for the world's major categories of spirits. Many members have noted these bottles in my office here in Parliament House—how attractively they are packaged and how wonderful the product is inside the bottles. It is a pleasure to have an industry such as this in one's electorate. A very distinguished feature of the cellar door is a traditional Australian brandy pot still, manufactured in South Australia in 1928. The Tarac Technologies Red Wine Recovery Facility and the Barossa Distillery Cellar Door represent a totally new investment in South Australia of \$11 million, which provides 18 new jobs on top of the existing large work force.

To be investing \$11 million in unproven technology speaks volumes about the kinds of people we have in our industry. I wish Tarac all the best, and I am totally confident of the product it is now producing, a sample of which I have in my office and have shown members. The quality and colour of this product can be up to 32 times the colour of normal red wine, depending on the grade. This product can be used in industry to boost wines of much lesser quality, certainly in the way of colour and natural alcohol. It is a magic product. This investment shows real confidence in this State and in the region. It is a real success story for the Barossa, and I am very proud to be the local member. The State should also be proud: this investment further contributes to the economic benefit of South Australia.

Also today I welcome the announcement by the Minister for Transport, the Hon. Diana Laidlaw, that at last the Government will fund the Gomersal road. We have funding to seal the road, which I remind members is an alternative route to the Barossa, leaving the Sturt Highway in the approximate area of Sheoak Log and journeying almost

directly east to come onto the Barossa Valley Way just south of Tanunda—the area commonly known as Tanunda South. I have been campaigning long and hard for this with my colleague the member for Light; the road actually passes through his territory but goes to a town in mine. I also appreciate the cooperation that we have had from the Minister (via the report that was prepared and a further report that she is undertaking on facilitating the actual road) as well as from the two district councils—Kapunda-Light (through which most of the road travels) and Barossa.

It certainly has been a long and hard lobbying process. Most members would know the name of Gomersal road, because not too many opportunities have been missed to remind them. It makes it worthwhile for a member of Parliament finally to get a reward such as this. I acknowledge the \$2.2 million that the Government is putting toward this project and I also acknowledge the large amount of money that both district councils will put in. My only concern is that I believe that this road should come under State Government control and not be under local government control, as it currently is. I believe that this road is far too busy a corridor to the north of Adelaide to remain under the jurisdiction of the Kapunda-Light Council and that it should be taken up by the State Government, even via a swap transaction. I am sure that the council could take over responsibility from Government in some other area.

That was the only area in which I was disappointed: I am totally thrilled with the rest of it, as will be all my constituents in the Barossa Valley. The Minister emphasised the rail option. Certainly, we can do much more with the rail corridor that we are fortunate to have. More work will be done there and I only hope that we are able to upgrade the railway between Nuriootpa and Angaston for the Barossa tourist train to go to the end of the trip. I note that the funding is there: all we need now, via my colleague the Hon. Graham Ingerson, is to facilitate the maintenance charges, which is a difficult thing. But I am confident: he has pulled off marvels before and he will do it again. Without putting him in, I hope that the negotiations with the private owner will see the Barossa train go to the end. However, if it is not to be, we still have a magic facility. Many members have travelled on the Barossa tourist train. It is a marvellous experience and is having great success.

I know that budget day is not exactly the easiest day for a Government, but we have much to be positive about. I urge members on both sides to think of the good things in our State and the progress that has been made by the Government, some of it (although not a lot) with bipartisan support. I would like to see more of that, and I encourage members to say that we have a great State and together we can make it greater. I am honoured to be the member for this region. It is very easy to stand here and talk about positives, because I do represent a very positive, productive and go-ahead area.

Motion carried.

At 4.6 p.m. the House adjourned until 1 June at 2 p.m.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 25 May 1999

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

NATIVE VEGETATION

7. **Mr HILL:** How many land clearance applications are currently before the Native Vegetation Council in relation to horticultural and viticultural projects and in each case, who are the proponents and how many hectares are to be cleared?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Currently there are 24 applications for native vegetation clearance, relating to horticultural and viticultural projects, for which final determinations have not yet been made by the Native Vegetation Council.

The requested information for those projects is as follows, listed in chronological order in terms of receipt of applications. Reference is made to tree numbers where the application relates to scattered trees in developed pasture situations and to an area of land (in hectares) where the application relates to clearance of more intact native vegetation or of native vegetation regrowth.

1. Applications relating to Horticulture

Kermel Pty Ltd	12 trees
Nangkita Holdings Pty Ltd	469 trees
MJ & SB Longbottom	82 trees
A Fischer	89 trees
RH & ML Badman	14 trees
DJ & KL Treloar	4 trees
LJ & LF Rowntree	20ha
R Legoe	80 trees
JD (et al) Maney	39 trees
DK & JM Herrmann	48 trees
I Schulz	4 trees
CR Cranwell	5ha
Nangwary Pastoral Co	18 trees
Applications relating to Viticulture	
MA Ledson	152 trees
PS & SJ Wooding	30 trees
SJ Secker & ML Thomas	8 trees
D & L Hutton	10 trees
Y Kais	1.2ha
LW & KA Eldredge	12 trees
Cave Ridge Estates	18 trees
R Melino	6 trees
NA McLean	7 trees
GO & DE Noack	6 trees
Bevington Pty Ltd	4 trees

In considering these figures, the following points also need to be borne in mind:

- as a general policy, the Native Vegetation Council tends to treat applications of a large scale as 'broad-acre clearance' that cannot be considered for approval as they are so seriously at variance with the Native Vegetation Act and beyond the discretion of the NVC;
- it is usual in such cases to recommend to the landholder that the application be reviewed with a view to substantially reducing the number of trees under application. This in fact has occurred with Nangkita Holdings, with the NVC deferring its decision pending a revision of the application by the landholder;
- the figures should not be taken to be actual tree removal totals as they represent amounts applied for by the proponents, as the final approvals by the Native Vegetation Council may vary significantly from the above;
- in reaching its decisions, the Native Vegetation Council uses strict criteria to determine whether clearance should be permitted or not; and
- in most cases, clearance which is permitted is subject to rigorous conditions, such as a requirement for re-establishment of native vegetation or other conservation measures elsewhere on the subject properties, such that the overall effect is a long-term environmental gain for South Australia.

HOME DETENTION

21. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** How many South Australians are currently on home detention, what are the resources needed to monitor these people and how many offenders have broken their home detention conditions in the past year?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services has been advised by the Department for Correctional Services that there are two categories of Home Detainees, those persons placed on bail by the courts who may be subject to Home Detention conditions, and sentenced prisoners nearing the final stages of their period of imprisonment.

Whilst the Department for Correctional Services is responsible for the placement of sentenced prisoners onto Home Detention, both groups of Home Detainees are supervised by Department for Correctional Services personnel.

Staff resources required to monitor these people comprise 9 Home Detention Supervisors and 3 Administrative Officers. Equipment and telephone costs for the past twelve months have amounted to \$218 000.

For the 12 month period 1 January 1997-31 December 1998, the number of persons on home detention are 147 Bailees and 280 Sentenced Prisoners, giving a total of 427.

60 Sentenced Prisoners broke their home detention. The reasons for revocation are as follows:

- 49 (82 per cent) breached conditions,
- 5 (8 per cent) escaped,
- 2 (3 per cent) committed an offence,
- 2 (3 per cent) voluntarily returned to custody, and
- 2 (3 per cent) returned to custody for other reasons.

80 Bailees broke their home detention conditions. The reason for revocation is not recorded electronically for Bailees.

CRIMINAL LAW (UNDERCOVER OPERATIONS) ACT

61. **Mr. ATKINSON:** Will the Government amend the Criminal Law (Undercover Operations) Act 1995 to allow for operations to gather evidence of serious criminal behaviour that has already taken place?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: No. The legislation authorises the use of undercover operations for the purpose of criminal investigation. Undercover operations enable the police to provide persons engaging or about to engage in serious criminal behaviour an opportunity to manifest that behaviour or to provide other evidence of that behaviour.

The Criminal Law (Undercover Operations) Act 1995 was enacted to clarify the law of entrapment following the High Court decision in Ridgeway. It was not intended as a means of obtaining evidence in relation to offences that have already taken place.

The Act confers powers upon police in this State, which are already unprecedented in other Australian jurisdictions, and was reached by a careful tri-partisan consensus at the time it was enacted. That consensus was necessary so that the Bill could be enacted in a very short time so as to save a number of prosecutions under threat, or thought to be under threat, from the Ridgeway decision. There is no evidence whatsoever that a similar legal problem exists in relation to serious criminal behaviour that has already taken place. Ridgeway is limited to condemnation of police participation in the creation of the crime and does not extend to the detection of the crime after the event.

0 The conferral of similar wide ranging powers on police to 'entrap' suspects who are believed to have committed a crime in the past would pose significant dangers. For example, Parliament has enacted laws which are designed to balance the rights of the suspect against the powers of the State in the investigation of crime, including restriction on the powers to arrest, search, seize and interrogate. A licence to ignore the legal restrictions enacted by Parliament in this area (for example) would create havoc.

LAKE ALEXANDRINA WETLANDS

89. **Mr HILL:**

1. What protections have been put in place to ensure that developments in the area near Lake Alexandrina and its tributary wetlands are consistent with the RAMSAR Wetland Agreement?

2. Why was an irrigation plan approved that allowed drainage of saline water from the Finnis tributary to Black Swamp?

3. Did departmental officers who approved the plan have any knowledge of the Tookayenta Catchment Plan's specific provision to preclude water transfer to and from the catchment and what

qualifications and training in the environmental impact of irrigation practices did these officers have?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:

1. The Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs, together with key stakeholders from the community, has been formulating a management plan for the Ramsar wetlands. I expect to release this for public comment in 1999.

The draft management plan contains measures aimed at bringing about consistent zoning in the flood plain of both Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert in the council areas of the Rural City of Murray Bridge, Alexandrina Council and Coorong Council.

Representatives of the Department have already met with an officer from Planning SA and council representatives, to begin the formulation of a project to undertake the necessary planning investigations as the basis, if necessary, for coordinated Plan Amendment Reports under the provisions of the Development Act 1993. The project is being carried out as an extension of a Natural Heritage Trust project entitled 'Sustainable Development Along the Murray'.

The draft management plan also has provisions relating to the rationalisation of the Ramsar boundary to make this more definable, ecologically relevant and to ensure the inclusion of wetlands.

2. Due to the limited information provided in the question, the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs is unable to definitively determine which particular development the question is referring to. It appears likely however, that the question refers to the development of a vineyard by Sorrell's Vineyard and Winery Pty Ltd, utilising River Murray water transferred to their property.

Approval to the application to transfer water was subject to completion of a comprehensive irrigation, drainage and management plan (IDMP), which assesses the irrigation and drainage impacts of the proposal. An IDMP is required prior to approval being given to use transferred water on a property. The IDMP provided by the Company indicates that current best management practices for vineyards are to be used in the development of the site, thereby minimising the drainage impacts.

The impact of drainage leachate to Black Swamp, which is a natural site for the discharge of regional groundwater, was also considered. Groundwater under the site is of reasonable quality and any drainage water is not anticipated to be highly saline. Depending on the depth of any underlying groundwater and the properties of the underlying soils and rock, the time lag between irrigation application and discharge is considered to be in the order of decades. In addition, the Sorrell property is underlain by low permeability clay, which is expected to significantly reduce the speed of drainage leachate. Efficient irrigation techniques are required however, to ensure that localised waterlogging does not occur causing production losses on the land in question.

The requirement for an irrigation, drainage and management plan to be submitted prior to approval being given for the use of water on land is a standard procedure for all water allocation transfer requests where water is taken from the River Murray Prescribed Watercourse.

3. Officers within the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs who consider applications for irrigation plans are aware of the provisions in the Tookayerta Catchment Plan, and one officer contributed to the development of that plan. The author of the plan has confirmed that the specific provisions precluding water transfer to and from the catchment are related to the headwaters of the catchment and not to the downstream reaches, where the Sorrell's development is being undertaken. These provisions aim to control development in the upper catchment to protect the environment and downstream users.

All applications, which involve the taking of water from the River Murray Prescribed Watercourse, which includes its tributaries, are currently considered in accordance with the Water Resources Act 1997 and the River Murray Water Allocation Plan only. It is envisaged however, that catchment and other plans prepared by local groups, which do not currently have any legal status, will be formally recognised in the comprehensive catchment water management plan being prepared by the River Murray Catchment Water Management Board. This plan will provide a more integrated holistic approach to water resource management throughout the River Murray Catchment.

Three officers from the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs conferred on the Sorrell's Vineyard application. All have greater than ten years experience in the assessment of water use impacts and catchment management, in-

cluding the environmental impacts of irrigation practices. Two of the officers have related tertiary qualifications.

TOOKAYENTA CREEK

90. **Mr HILL:**

1. Is water being pumped by a private entity from the Tookayenta Creek to five other properties including a nursery through a metered system and, if so, is the supply being operated as a commercial venture?

2. Were these properties subdivided from a larger allotment and, if so, what effect did this water supply have on the value of these properties?

3. Is the inlet to this supply located within metres of the boundary of the Murray Darling Basin?

4. Has the Minister examined the legality and appropriateness of the pumping arrangements and, if so, what were the results?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:

1. Water is being supplied by a private entity to four allotments through a one and a quarter supply line, which has been metered by the supplier. The supplier charges the recipients of the water to cover electricity and maintenance costs only. Only two of the landowners are currently using water. One landowner has a house only; the other has a house and operates a very small cut flower nursery. Records kept by the supplier indicate that approximately 700 kilolitres of water have been used over a period of five to six years.

The supplier also winter pumps from Tookayerta Creek to a series of holding dams, and pumps water for irrigation of vines whenever possible. Water stored in the dams is used to finish irrigation when the Creek runs dry.

2. The properties were not created from the subdivision of a larger land allotment. Land values have not been affected by the supply of water to the properties.

3. The inlet to the supply is located just within the boundary of the River Murray Prescribed Watercourse, which is described as the 1956 flood level. At the pump site Tookayerta Creek flows downstream to Lake Alexandrina, with no flow of Lake water back up due to wind action or pump extraction. Movement upstream to this point would only occur at a flood above or equal to 1956. Tookayerta Creek usually runs dry about the end of January or early February.

4. The Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs is currently undertaking a comprehensive examination of the history of the pumping arrangements before making a determination on the legality and appropriateness of those arrangements.

AUCTIONEERS

98. **Mr ATKINSON:** Are auctioneers able to derive fees or commissions from both the vendor and buyer and what are the circumstances where this practice is unlawful under current State legislation?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: In this State auctioneers may derive fees from both the vendor and the purchaser in any given transaction. The fees charged by an auctioneer in any particular transaction are simply a matter of contract between the auctioneer and the other contracting party, with nothing preventing an auctioneer from contracting with both sides to a transaction and obtaining fees from them both. The case where an auctioneer obtains a fee from the purchaser is commonly known as a 'buyer's premium'.

Current South Australian legislation does not render this practice unlawful. The Sale of Goods Act has provisions concerning the conduct of auction sales generally, but it does not deal with the imposition of a buyers premium.

However, there may be instances in which the actions of an auctioneer in obtaining a buyers premium will offend against the provisions of the Fair Trading Act 1987.

The Fair Trading Act contains a specific provision, in section 58(g), prohibiting the making of false or misleading representations with respect to the price of goods and services, including interests in land. If an auctioneer has not provided information to the purchaser as to the constitution of the selling price then they may, in effect, falsely represent the 'true' selling price of the goods and services. In those cases a purchaser who has suffered loss or damage as a result of the auctioneer's behaviour may be able to recover the amount of that loss from the auctioneer.

The Act also covers the situation where an auctioneer auctions land. Section 59 provides that a person shall not make a false or misleading representation concerning, amongst other things, the price payable for land. A failure to disclose the true nature of the price,

whether a buyers premium applies and the manner in which it is calculated, may lead to a breach of this section with resultant remedies being available to a purchaser.

In the case of any sale by auction, the auctioneer should provide information regarding the make up of the sale price to potential purchasers prior to the commencement of the auction. The information provided should clearly outline if an amount will be payable in addition to the purchase price, and if so the method by which the amount will be calculated.

The appropriate time for an auctioneer to inform potential purchasers of the constitution of the sale price, as a matter of policy and good practice, is prior to the commencement of the auction sale. Many auction houses act in an entirely appropriate manner in this regard by notifying the general public through their advertisements in the press that a buyers premium will apply to the auction sale.

SPEED CAMERAS

99. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** What have been the top 5 speed camera sites located within the Electorate of Peake in terms of revenue raised during the past 4 financial years and for each site, how much revenue has been raised, how many expiation notices were issued, how many times were these sites operated and how many reported casualty accidents have occurred at or near these sites?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: I have been provided the following response by Police that the top 5 speed camera locations within the Electorate of Peake for the period 1 July 1994-30 June 1998 are as follows:

Road	Suburb	Notices Issued	Revenue Approx.	No. of Times Worked	Casualty Crashes
Burbridge Road	Brooklyn Park	13 440	\$1 559 000	340	31
Port Road	West Hindmarsh	4 105	\$476 000	153	70
South Road	West Hindmarsh	2 833	\$328 000	111	60
Henley Beach Road	Brooklyn Park	2 573	\$298 000	91	59
Grange Road	Kidman Park	2 366	\$274 000	112	67

Revenue is an approximation based on the average revenue received from speed camera expiation notices issued in 1997-98.

MOUNT THEBARTON ICE ARENA

100. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** How many separate incidents of larceny, vandalism, motor vehicle theft, prohibited drugs and break and enter occurring at the Mount Thebarton Ice Arena and adjoining streets have been reported since 1997?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: I have been advised by the Police the following statistics concerning reported crimes that have occurred in the vicinity of Mount Thebarton Ice Arena from 1 July 1997 to 31 December 1998:

Offences Category	July 1997-Dec 1998 Reported	Cleared
Murder	0	0
Attempted Murder	0	0
Manslaughter	0	0
Driving Causing Death	0	0
Serious Assault	8	4
Minor Assault	36	16
Assault Police	4	4
Rape/Attempt.	4	2
Sexual Offences nec	2	0
Robbery with Firearm	0	0
Robbery other weapon	2	0
Other Robbery Unarmed	4	0
Other Offences	4	2
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON	64	28
Break & Enter—Dwelling	70	2
Break & Enter—Shop	16	0
Break & Enter—Other	34	6
Fraud/Forg/Misap	12	14
Receiving /Unlawful Possession	4	4
Larceny/Illegal Use	48	4
Illegal Interference	6	0
Larceny from Motor Vehicle	88	4
Larceny from Shops	10	6
Other Theft	106	16
Property Damage—Arson/Explosives	6	0
Property Damage—Not Arson/Explosives	90	6
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY	490	62
Hinder/Resist Police	6	6
Firearm/Weapon Offences	4	4
Disorderly/Offence Behaviour	8	8
Drug Offences	14	14
Drink Driving Offences	64	64
Dangerous, Reckless or Negligent Driving	2	2
Other Offences	30	16
OFFENCES AGAINST PUBLIC ORDER	128	114
TOTAL RECORDED OFFENCES	682	204

AUSLAN PRE-SCHOOL

101. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** What is the expected opening date for the AUSLAN Pre-school at Klemzig, why has there been a delay and how many children were due to commence in the first term of 1999?

The Hon M.R. BUCKBY: In South Australia fifty two (52) children with hearing impairment and children of Deaf adults access their local pre-schools. Additional support for children with hearing impairment includes transport assistance and specialist teaching and support delivered through the Preschool Support Program. Children with hearing impairment receive an average of two sessions of preschool support per week.

The proposal for an Auslan pre-school program at Klemzig Primary School would offer a bilingual/bi-cultural Auslan program, supporting intensive early exposure to signing which may facilitate improved educational outcomes for children in the target group.

Klemzig Primary School already provides a focus for Auslan across its curriculum and attracts children whose first language is Auslan. The establishment of a preschool program would be a logical extension of the school's educational program, if sufficient demand for a new specialised preschool service can be established.

Klemzig Primary School and the Deaf Society of South Australia have provided information on numbers of children who might participate in the program. A total of six hearing impaired children and children of Deaf adults between the ages of three and a half and five years would be eligible to use the service during 1999.

Klemzig Primary School estimates that a maximum of six hearing-impaired children and children of Deaf adults would access such a preschool program in any given year. Available data from the school indicates that the number of 4 year olds whose parents have expressed an interest in enrolment at a Klemzig preschool is approximately nine in 1999, three in 2000 and two in 2001. Some of these children may also access early and pre-entry sessions.

The small number of children who might use the service means that the cost of establishing and maintaining the program is high. The costs associated with transport assistance for children living across the metropolitan area, the provision of specialised staff and the modification of an existing classroom and outdoor area to meet early childhood standards are significant.

Information from Klemzig Primary School indicates that two children aged 4 years, and three eligible for early/pre-entry sessions may have enrolled in term 1 1999 if a preschool program had been available. These children are able to access their local preschools with those in their term of pre-entry (ie. one session per week) receiving additional preschool support to facilitate learning and communication outcomes. Where possible, preschool support staff with Auslan signing skills will be employed to support these children.

I have instructed departmental officers to undertake further work on the viability of a pilot program at Klemzig utilising existing resources, and establishing closer links between the Klemzig Primary School and the Klemzig Preschool. I anticipate that this work will be completed early in term 2 1999.

ELECTORAL OFFICES, DURESS ALARMS

103. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** What action is taken by the South Australian Police when a duress alarm is activated in an electorate office, what are the expected response times and how many incidents were reported during 1998?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: I have been advised by the Police that the action taken with respect to attending a duress alarm activated from an electorate office, is no different from any other duress alarm activation.

Police categorise duress alarms as a priority A incident due to the expectation that the activator is in immediate physical danger. A patrol is despatched for immediate attendance without delay.

During 1998 police attended 17 624 Category 'A' alarms. This figure includes hold-up alarms, intruder alarms and duress alarms. At this stage SAPOL is unable to provide a breakdown to specific duress alarm attendance rates. The response time for patrol attendance, based on the initial call until police arrival at scene, is approximately ten minutes.

It is planned that the current Common Computer Aided Despatch project involving Police, Fire and Ambulance Services will enhance the capacity to provide refined statistical data in the future.

MOTOR VEHICLES, LOGBOOKS

108. **Mr SNELLING:** Is the current logbook system applied to the licensing of new drivers to be reviewed and, if so, when?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Minister for Transport and Urban Planning has advised that the logbook system (or Competency Based Training program) for the licensing of novice drivers has operated in South Australia since April 1993. Currently, some 75 per cent of all novice drivers obtain their class car licence through the logbook system.

In the last three years, several studies have been commissioned to examine the effectiveness of the logbook system in preparing more competent drivers—by Transport SA, the National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA) and Austroads (due to be completed in July 1999). Generally the SA logbook is considered Australian best practice for driver licensing—and similar schemes now operate in NSW and the ACT.

Currently, the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Transport Safety is investigating a range of driver training and testing policies and procedures. As part of this reference, the Committee is evaluating a proposed new logbook for novice drivers designed to provide more detailed information on the performance for each logbook task. It is considered this initiative may also help to provide greater assistance to parents and other supervising drivers.

Furthermore, Transport SA is preparing a study to examine the relationship between the type of training and testing undertaken (that is logbook or practical testing) and the subsequent offence and accident history of the licensee.

SCHOOL TEACHERS, RELIEF

112. **Ms WHITE:**

1. Is the Minister continuing with plans to move to a flat rate of pay for temporary relief teachers (TRT) and, if so, why?

2. What effect does the Minister anticipate that a flat rate of pay (rather than pay relativity based on skill level) will have on TRT's willingness to upgrade their skills?

3. What is the total of those days work per year lost by all TRTs resulting from the shortening of the school year by one week?

4. How much of the education budget was spent on TRTs in 1997-98 and what are the projections for the TRT budget during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001?

5. Under what circumstances will a school be denied a TRT in place of a teacher who is on leave or absent?

The Hon M.R. BUCKBY:

1. The matter of a flat rate for TRT work is currently a part of the Enterprise Agreement package. At this time the department has not negotiated a position in relation to this issue. However, it is important to understand that any move to a flat rate would be implemented in a way that no current TRTs would be financially disadvantaged.

2. I do not anticipate that a flat pay rate for TRTs will have any impact on their willingness to upgrade their skills.

3. It is not possible, at this stage, to quantify the impact of the shortened school year in relation to the days lost to teachers who undertake TRT work.

4. The TRT expenditure for 1997-98 was as follows:

Formula Allocation	Conversions from normal teacher allocations to TRT	Other Projects (Commonwealth and State funded)
\$11 121 000	\$19 080 000	\$4 717 000

In future years it is predicted that the formula allocation will be reduced by the impact of the shortened school year and that the project allocation will vary each year according to departmental and Commonwealth priorities.

5. TRT allocation to a school is managed at the school level.

SCHOOL CARD

115. **Mr HILL:** How many and what percentage of students at each of the following schools received School Cards during 1998 and 1999:

Aldinga Junior Primary and Primary, Christies Beach High, Christies Beach Primary, Christies Downs Primary, Moana Primary, Noarlunga Downs Primary, O'Sullivan's Beach Primary, Seaford Primary, Seaford Rise Primary, Seaford Years 6-12 and Willunga High?

The Hon M.R. BUCKBY: The following is the number and percentage of school card approvals for the specific schools requested for the 1998 school year.

School Name	School Card 1998	Percentage for 1998
Aldinga Junior Primary	168	74.34
Aldinga Primary	259	59.54
Christie Downs Primary	102	64.56
Christie Downs Special	26	66.67
Christies Beach High	509	47.61
Christies Beach Primary	169	65.50
Moana Primary	220	60.11
Noarlunga Primary	63	54.31
Noarlunga Downs Primary	219	72.28
O'Sullivan Beach Primary	158	76.70
Port Noarlunga Primary	156	44.57
Seaford 6-12	275	43.39
Seaford Primary	191	55.36
Seaford Rise Primary	224	52.58
Willunga High	275	34.06

It is not possible to provide School Card figures for the 1999 school year until after the cut-off for term 4 enrolments, which is 5 November 1999.

SCHOOL STAFFING FORMULA

116. **Mr HILL:** When will the 6-12 staffing formula policy be announced?

The Hon M.R. BUCKBY: At this stage there is no planned variation to the current staffing formula and consequently no planned announcement of a 6-12 staffing formula.

SAND DREDGING, CHRISTIES BEACH

117. **Mr HILL:** Did sand dredging occur as close as 100 metres to the Christies Beach shore line in 1998 and, if so, why was it not restricted to beyond 400 metres of the shore line, what damage occurred and what action has the Minister taken in relation to any breach?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Dredging for sand offshore of Port Stanvac was initiated under the previous Labor Government and has been undertaken since 1989. Dredging was last carried out in 1997. All work was restricted to an area beyond 600 metres from the shoreline. No further dredging is intended in this area.

SAND DREDGING, MOANA

118. **Mr HILL:** Will the Minister rule out sand dredging at Moana Beach?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:

1. Investigations for offshore sand sources, to provide for the replenishment of Adelaide's beaches, have been conducted by the

Coast Protection Board since 1975, and are an ongoing requirement of its work.

2. Currently, a study is being undertaken four kilometres offshore of Moana, in water of greater depth than 15 metres. The results of this study will be duly reported to the Coast Protection Board.

3. Any decision by the Board to conduct further dredging operations offshore, will take into account the experience gained from the past dredging work, and most importantly after full consultation as required with other interested councils and the public.

SKYSHOW 99

120. Mr ATKINSON:

1. Why did the first train leaving Bowden Station after Skyshow 99 depart at 10.05 pm and not 20 minutes earlier when the event had finished, why did the first city bound train not depart until after 10.30 pm and why were trains not waiting in Bowden Station before the event finished?

2. Were there similar delays at North Adelaide and Mile End Stations?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:

1. The first train leaving Bowden Station after Skyshow 99 departed at 10.11 pm after waiting for eight minutes in order for a large number of passengers to board. There was no train waiting earlier as it was anticipated that trains would not be needed until about 15 to 20 minutes after Skyshow finished allowing time for people to walk to the Bowden Station. In addition, the layout and safe operation of the signalling system meant that a train could not wait at Bowden Station before the event finished because the adjacent and subsequent road level crossing warning bells/lights would be operating while the train sat at Bowden. The first City bound train departed Bowden Station at 10.36 pm as per the public timetable. Due to the high utilisation of resources, this did not allow additional City bound services to be provided at this time.

2. The first trains leaving Mile End Station after Skyshow 99 departed at 10.00 pm and 10.02 pm heading towards Noarlunga Centre and Belair respectively. These trains were waiting at Mile End Station from 9.39 pm. The first City bound train departed Mile End Station at 10.02 pm.

The first trains leaving North Adelaide Station after Skyshow 99 departed at 10.00 pm. This train was waiting at North Adelaide Station from 9.49 pm. The first City bound train departed Mile End Station at 10.02 pm.

EDUCATION DISABILITY EXEMPTIONS

121. Ms WHITE:

1. What level of consultation has the Department of Education and Children's Services had with disability advocacy groups and other interested parties on the Government's request for certain sections of the Education Act 1972 to be proscribed for exemption from the Federal Disability Discrimination Legislation?

2. If granted, how will this proscription affect the education services to children with disabilities?

3. What has been the Government's motivation in applying such exemption?

4. How will such exemption affect the State Government's liability with respect to disabled children's access to education services?

5. Does the Minister intend to use the power to 'direct a child to a particular school' and to force a disabled child who is currently enrolled at one school to attend an alternate school?

6. How does the Minister intend to use the power to 'direct a child to a particular school' if a certain exemption from the Disability Discrimination Act is granted?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:

1. In 1995 the South Australian Attorney General, Mr Griffin sought exemption under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) from the Commonwealth Attorney General for Section 75(3) and 75A of the Education Act.

Prescribing exemption of these sections of the Education Act maintains the status quo. It is not a change of policy.

The Commonwealth Attorney General has only recently advised that he has instructed the Office of Legislative Drafting to draft the necessary regulations to prescribe section 75(3) and 75A of the Education Act.

The process for applying for exemptions is provided for in Section 47(2) of the DDA which states, 'This part does not render

unlawful anything done by a person in direct compliance with a prescribed law'.

2. The exemption of Sections 75(3) and 75A of the Education Act will not change current departmental practice. The department has over 10 000 students with a disability enrolled in its schools. Only about 800 of those attend special schools. The overwhelming majority of students with disabilities attend their local school. It is not the intention of the government to move away from its general policy of inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream settings.

The direction of a student with disabilities or learning difficulties under Section 75A to a particular school has only occurred in extremely rare circumstances.

3. The Government is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities in relation to providing education services to all students in South Australia.

There have been rare times where the level of expertise, assessment and facilities in a school elected by the parents have not met the educational needs and interests of a particular student with a disability. It is in these infrequent circumstances that the Director-General (Chief Executive) may need to direct the placement of a child to a particular school. The effect of exempting Section 75B and Section 75A is that such a direction would not be unlawful under the DDA.

Section 75 has been in operation since 1991 without any restriction from that time until 1996 when the sunset clause in Section 47(3) of the DDA came into effect.

South Australia is a leader in the field of anti discrimination, being the only State or Territory developing training packages for all leaders to assist schools in complying with the DDA.

4. This exemption will not affect the Government's commitment to provide educational services to all students in South Australia in a non discriminatory way. It was never intended that the operation of Sections 75(3) and 75A would be exercised in a discriminatory way.

The State Government has recently shown its commitment to students with disabilities and learning difficulties by releasing additional special needs funding and taking this issue out of any industrial relations context.

5. Under the Education Act 1972, the Minister has no powers to direct a placement of a student in South Australian schools. The power rests with the Chief Executive. The power is only exercised when consideration of a student's individual learning and social needs, his/her access to appropriate curriculum, and his/her health and safety require placement in a school which is not the preferred school of the parents. In this circumstance consultation occurs with the family.

The Education Act also provides an appeal process relating to the power to direct a child to a particular school.

6. The Minister has no power under the current Act to direct the enrolment of a particular student. The power of the Chief Executive to direct the enrolment of a particular student in a particular school is an extremely rare event. It only happens after extensive consultation and only when it is in the best interests of the child.

The Education Act also provides an appeal process relating to the power to direct a child to a particular school.

BOAT REGISTRATION

127. Mr ATKINSON: How is the 1998-99 boat registration revenue being used?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The use of revenue collected from recreational boat registration is defined in the Harbors and Navigation Act 1993, Section 90 (2) as being:

'applied to defray the costs of administering this Act insofar as it relates to recreational vessels and may only be applied for that purpose.'

As a consequence, the 1998-99 recreational boat registration revenue is used to cover the administration costs involved in the collection of the revenue, but more importantly for the engagement and operation of Marine Safety Officers and safety programs related to recreational boating activities.

MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE

128. Mr HILL:

1. What percentage of motor vehicles have neither comprehensive nor third party insurance?

2. What percentage of accidents involve at least one uninsured motor vehicle?

3. What is the average cost of damage per vehicle involved in accidents?

4. Will the Government implement compulsory third party property insurance?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:

1. The Insurance Council of Australia estimates that 6-8 per cent of SA registered vehicles have neither comprehensive nor third party property insurance.

2. The percentage of crashes involving vehicles without property insurance can not be determined from Police accident reports as the parties involved are not required to disclose such information.

3. The average cost of damage per vehicle involved in crashes also can not be determined from Police accident reports.

Motorists are only currently required to report property damage crashes when the damage estimate exceeds \$600. Accordingly, less costly crashes are unlikely to have been reported.

4. The introduction of compulsory third party property insurance was the subject of an inquiry by the Parliamentary Economic and Finance Committee in 1995. After considering the evidence for and against compulsory third party property insurance, the Committee did not favour the introduction of a compulsory scheme.

COONGIE LAKES

130. **Mr HILL:** Has the requirement of the 1988 SANTOS Mining Agreement that any proposed petroleum operation in the Coongie Lakes area be subject to an environmental impact study been set aside and if so, why?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The requirements of the 1988 Coongie Lakes agreement between the Government and the Petroleum explorers have not been put aside. The agreement references the section of the Planning Act 1982 dealing with applications for petroleum production licences (PPL's) and associated environmental assessments. The Planning Act 1982 has been repealed and replaced by the Development Act 1993 which contains very similar provisions regarding such licences. Neither the Agreement nor the Planning Act require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process to be undertaken for PPL applications within the Coongie Lakes Control Zone.

The requirements are for a process to determine whether an EIS is required or not. This process will be undertaken. As I previously advised on 4 March in this place, a public consultation process has been initiated regarding the Coongie Lakes area and related petroleum activities. This process is due to be finalised later this year. The determination on the requirement or otherwise for an EIS to be undertaken will be deferred until this initial consultation process has been completed.

BUILDING TRADE COURSES

131. **Mr HILL:**

1. What building trades courses are conducted by DTAFE and at which campuses?

2. Have any such courses been cancelled over recent years and if so, what are the details?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:

Courses available in Building and Furnishing

Full-time (FT) and Part-time (PT)

Certificate III in Building and Furnishing

Locations:	Elizabeth (PT)	Ph: 8207 9700
	Gilles Plains (PT)	Ph: 8207 1100
	Marleston (PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	Millicent (PT)	Ph: 088 733 4499
	Noarlunga (PT)	Ph: 8207 3900

Certificate IV in Building

Locations:	Elizabeth (PT)	Ph: 8207 9700
	Gilles Plains (FT/PT)	Ph: 8207 1100
	Marleston (FT/PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	Millicent (PT)	Ph: 088 733 4499
	Noarlunga (FT/PT)	Ph: 8207 3900
	Whyalla (PT)	Ph: 088 648 8788

Diploma in Building

Locations:	Gilles Plains (FT/PT)	Ph: 8207 1100
	Marleston (PT)	Ph: 8226 0666

Certificate IV in Building Drafting

Locations:	Gilles Plains (FT/PT)	Ph: 8207 1100
	Marleston (FT/PT)	Ph: 8226 0666

	Noarlunga (PT)	Ph: 8207 3900
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Diploma in Building Design and Drafting

Locations:	Gilles Plains (FT/PT)	Ph: 8207 1100
	Marleston (FT/PT)	Ph: 8226 0666

Diploma in Built Environment

Locations:	Gilles Plains (FT/PT)	Ph: 8207 1100
	Marleston (FT/PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	Noarlunga (FT/PT)	Ph: 8207 3900

Certificate in Floor and Wall Tiling

Locations:	Gilles Plains (FT/PT)	Ph: 8207 1100
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Certificate III Furnishing

Locations:	(Furnishing)	
	Marleston (PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	Noarlunga (PT)	Ph: 8207 3900
	(Wood Machining)	
	Marleston (PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	Mount Gambier (PT)	Ph: 0887 351 555

Certificate III Furnishing (Floor Covering)

Locations:	Marleston (PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
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Certificate III Furnishing (Furniture Upholstery)

Locations:	Marleston (PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
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Advanced Certificate in Furnishing (Cabinet Making, Finishing, Glassworking, Upholstery)

Locations:	(Cabinetmaking)	
	Elizabeth (PT)	Ph: 8207 9700
	Marleston (FT/PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	Millicent (PT)	Ph: 088 733 4499
	Noarlunga (PT)	Ph: 8207 3900
	(Finishing)	
	Marleston (FT/PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	(Glassworking)	
	Gilles Plains (PT)	Ph: 8207 1100
	(Upholstery)	
	Marleston	Ph: 8226 0666

Certificate in Glassworking

Locations:	Gilles Plains (PT)	Ph: 8207 1100
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Certificate in Joinery

Locations:	Marleston (PT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	Noarlunga (PT)	Ph: 8207 3900

Training Programs in Building Trades (Building and Construction)

Locations:	Elizabeth (FT)	Ph: 8207 9700
	Gilles Plains (FT)	Ph: 8207 1100
	Marleston (FT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	Millicent (FT)	Ph: 088 733 4499
	Noarlunga (FT)	Ph: 8207 3900
	Port Augusta (FT)	Ph: 088 648 9922
	Port Lincoln (FT)	Ph: 088 688 3600
	Port Pirie (FT)	Ph: 088 632 1633
	Whyalla (FT)	Ph: 088 648 4788

Certificate in Vocational Education Furnishing Trades

Locations:	Marleston (FT)	Ph: 8226 0666
	Millicent (FT)	Ph: 088 733 4499
	Noarlunga (FT)	Ph: 8207 3900
	Port Augusta (FT)	Ph: 088 648 9922
	Port Lincoln (FT)	Ph: 088 688 3600
	Port Pirie (FT)	Ph: 088 632 1633

2. No courses have been discontinued. There are a full range of courses still available, however locations have been rationalised slightly, viz

- no apprentice training in Spencer (Whyalla) since 1997 in Carpentry and Joinery.
- apprentice training at Mount Gambier in Carpentry and Joinery finished about 1996—but has been taken up on a demand basis at Millicent since then.
- training in Bricklaying, Tiling, Plastering, Painting and Decorating, Glassworking and Signwriting has continued to be centred at Gilles Plains due to limited enrolments.

DOLPHINS

137. **Mr HILL:**

1. How many dolphins have been reported dead on or off the coast in each calendar year since 1996, what were the causes of death on a percentage basis and what number of dolphins were found at which locations?

2. How many estimated deaths have occurred in each of these years as a result of fishing industry activities?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:

1. and 2. The Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs does not maintain detailed records of all dolphin carcasses located in South Australia. This task is undertaken by the Curator of Mammals at the South Australian Museum, assisted by the Marine and Coastal Community Network.

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

140. **Ms WHITE:**

	Total Primary and Junior Primary Principals	Junior Primary		Primary	
		No. Principals	Per cent	No. Principals	Per cent
1992	553	69	12	484	88
1993	539	67	12	472	88
1994	528	68	13	460	87
1995	538	60	11	478	89
1996	495	51	10	444	90
1997	485	50	13	435	87
1998	475	55	12	420	88

2. The ratio of principals in each of these sectors has been quite consistent and represent no trend in any direction.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

144. **Ms WHITE:** Has the budget for savings from the closure of schools in 1998-99 changed from the Minister's \$2 million figure given to Parliament on 19 June 1998 and if so, what is the new figure and how will the difference be made up?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The department's budget strategy identified savings of the \$2 million in the 1998-99 financial year associated with school redevelopments. At Estimates Committee on the 19 June 1998, I indicated the Government would not move on any site reviews until an amendment to the Education Act introduced in the Lower House had passed. This was assented to on 24 December 1998. Future school redevelopments will be considered in the light of the amendment.

Current departmental projections indicate that savings in 1998-99 are the order of \$335 000 leaving a shortfall of some \$1.665 million. This shortfall will be temporarily covered by the use of cash reserves in 1998-99. It is not planned to make up the difference by cuts in other areas of the department's budget.

SCHOOLS, EDSAS

145. **Ms WHITE:**

1. How many Government schools do not use EDSAS in the public sector?

2. Is EDSAS Year 2000 compliant?

3. Is BookMark Year 2000 compliant and if not, does the Minister intend to ensure that it will be?

4. How much will it cost to make these systems Year 2000 compliant?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:

1. The EDSAS application is made up of 3 modules [Finance, Curriculum (including profiles) and School/Student/Staff with all Government schools using the School Student Staff module. Approximately 150 schools have implemented the Finance module to date. Implementation is proceeding as planned and due for completion by 31 December 1999, with approximately 500 schools still to implement this module. Implementation of the curriculum module will be occurring over the next three years. This will involve further use of the profiles component to assist schools in monitoring student achievement. Currently the use of the module is optional and for school based purposes only.

2. Matcom, the vendor has advised that EDSAS is Year 2000 compliant and the department has undertaken compliancy testing which has confirmed that the current version of the EDSAS software is Year 2000 compliant.

3. The Bookmark software version 9.2.6g has been tested by the department both centrally and within a school site and found to be Year 2000 compliant when operating on compliant hardware. All Bookmark school sites were issued with the compliant version in

1. For each of the school years since 1993, what has been the ratio of junior primary principals to primary principals in South Australian schools?

2. If there is a trend over time in these ratios, what is the Government policy responsible for that trend?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:

1. The following information is provided in relation to the ratio of primary to junior primary principals:

1998 and they will be reminded to ensure that this version is installed on compliant hardware.

4. Since both EDSAS and Bookmark are Year 2000 compliant, there will be no cost.

SCHOOL COUNSELLORS

149. **Ms WHITE:**

1. What criteria does a school need to satisfy in order to obtain the services of a school counsellor?

2. How does this criteria adequately reflect the need for a counsellor?

3. Are individual school counsellors working predominantly in a single school or in clusters of schools?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:

1. The purpose of the primary school counsellor position is to address the needs of school communities with high concentrations of disadvantaged students and with a long-term history of disadvantage. With the twenty additional positions allocated in 1999, there are currently ninety positions available to primary schools.

In allocating primary school counsellor positions to schools for 1999, schools were considered for the allocation of a counsellor if the following criteria applied:

- either their current or estimated (1999) number of school card holders was over 100, and
- their weighted average percentage of school card holders over the last three years was over 50 per cent.

Schools that met both criteria were ranked and a list generated. In ranking schools a 75 per cent weighting was given to the weighted average percentage of school card holders, and a 25 per cent weighting to total school card enrolments.

Tenure of the positions ranges from four to two years, with those schools ranked highest being allocated a counsellor position for four years, the next highest ranked schools three years and the remaining schools two years.

2. The emphasis of the Primary School Counsellor Program is upon effecting 'whole school change', to support school communities to become proactive in their planning and to focus on success orientation for students encountering the effects of disadvantage. School card is currently used as the indicator of disadvantage.

A review of the allocation formula is conducted on a regular basis. The review group is chaired by the Assistant Director, Special Services and consists of representatives from Area, Primary and Junior Primary Principals Associations and Primary School Counsellors Association. The review group considers information provided by schools such as the role of the counsellor, school population and demographics and the allocation criteria.

3. School counsellors are allocated to a single school. Individual counsellors are able to provide professional development and advice for other schools. This is negotiated between the relevant school principals.

GROVE WAY INTERSECTIONS

151. **Ms RANKINE:** How many accidents occurred at the Grove Way and Golden Way intersection during each of the years 1995-96 to 1997-98, and how many occurred at the intersection of the Grove Way, Atlantis Drive and Aeolin Drive during the same years?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:

Grove Way and Golden Way Intersection				
	Fatal	Personal Injury	Property Damage	Total
1995-96	0	3	22	25
1996-97	0	7	33	40
1997-98	0	10	27	37
Grove Way, Atlantis Drive and Aeolin Drive intersection				
	Fatal	Personal Injury	Property Damage	Total
1995-96	0	2	3	5
1996-97	0	0	7	7
1997-98	0	2	6	8

MAIN NORTH ROAD

152. **Ms RANKINE:**

1. When will the upgrade of Main North Road to six lanes between the Grove Way and Kings Road commence?

2. Will the upgrade include overpasses at all major intersections, facilities for cyclists, improved landscaping and any other safety measures?

3. What noise reduction measures will be included in this upgrade?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:

1. As Main North Road is a National Highway, the funding for the upgrade will be provided by the Commonwealth Government, through the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services.

South Australia reviews the needs of the State's National Highway network on an annual basis and provides a proposed five year strategy for future works. As part of the strategy, the State has proposed that funding for this section of road commence in the 2000-2001 financial year.

However, the actual timing of the project is dependent on confirmation of funding from the Commonwealth Government.

2. The upgrade of Main North Road, between the Grove Way and Kings Road, will have at-grade signalised intersections. Provision has been made for bicycle lanes and separate pedestrian footpaths. Landscaping will also be implemented, and other safety measures will include the use of open graded asphalt for improved wet weather road performance, skid resistance and noise reduction.

3. When the original planning and design for this section of road was carried out in 1996, no noise reduction measures were included. However, as mentioned previously, landscaping and the use of open graded asphalt will assist in noise reduction. Prior to commencement of construction, Transport SA will review all aspects of the project, including any further noise reduction measures required.

STUDENT VISAS

154. **Ms WHITE:** Have the student visa conditions of the international students studying at the Regency Park School of Hotel Management changed by further restricting the number of hours they can work per week in the paid workforce and, if so, what action can be taken to ensure their ability to study is not affected?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The visa procedures alteration being implemented by the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) now includes an entitlement fee of A\$50. There are no changes to the number of hours that a student can work.

The procedure is:

1. Student obtains a Certificate of Enrolment from an educational institution.

2. Student attends the Australian Embassy-Immigration Department in the respective country.

3. Student applies for visa, attaches the Certificate of Enrolment and pays a new fee of A\$50.

4. Immigration Section of offshore Embassy considers the students application and grant work rights (normally of 20 hours per week).

5. Student arrives and attends class.

6. Regency Institute Hotel School or any other TAFE Institute monitors students ability to manage study load and work necessity.

7. Should there be a problem in managing study and work, a counselling session may involve all parties being student, Institute and DIMA representatives.

SCHOOL CARD

156. **Ms THOMPSON:** What proportion of students received School Cards during 1988 1998 and 1999 at each of the following schools—Antonio, Christies Beach High, Christie Downs Primary, Flaxmill, Hackham West Primary, Lonsdale Heights Primary, Morphett Vale High, Morphett Vale South Primary, Morphett Vale West Primary, Reynella Primary, Reynella South Primary and Stanvac Primary?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The following are the proportion of students who received School Card during 1988 and 1998.

School Name	1988	1998
	Per cent	Per cent
Antonio School	14.42	35.21
Christies Beach High School	26.83	57.32
Christie Downs Primary School	47.81	57.87
Christie Downs Special School	57.14	70.00
Flaxmill Primary School	21.52	53.26
Flaxmill Junior Primary School	20.34	62.09
Hackham West Primary School	43.32	68.66
Hackham West Junior Primary School	38.76	71.21
Lonsdale Heights Primary School	34.42	60.56
Morphett Vale High School	18.12	44.00
Morphett Vale South Primary School	41.74	63.72
Morphett Vale West Primary School	19.94	51.69
Reynella Primary School	9.63	28.68
Reynella South Primary School	22.58	49.59
Stanvac Primary School	19.10	60.25

The cut-off dates for School Card applications for the 1999 school year are as follows:

Term 1	30 April 1999
Term 2	18 June 1999
Term 3	27 August 1999
Term 4	5 November 1999

It is not possible to supply figures relating to the proportion of School Card students in specific schools for the 1999 school year until after November 1999 when all applications have been received and processed.

ST KILDA BOAT RAMP

159. **Ms RANKINE:** What is the nature and cost of improvements to the Saint Kilda boat ramp since the introduction of the boat levy?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: \$3 750 has been spent from the levy on boat channel markers at Saint Kilda. The Minister for Transport and Urban Planning has recently approved levy funding of up to \$275 000 towards the dredging and widening of the Saint Kilda boat channel. The funding is subject to agreement by the City of Salisbury to a number of conditions which have been put to Council.

No levy funds have been spent on improvements to the boat ramp. It is believed that the City of Salisbury intends to redevelop this site in the future. The South Australian Boating Facility Advisory Committee is awaiting advice from Council on its overall strategy for the development of boating facilities at Saint Kilda prior to considering whether to recommend Government funding.

ADELAIDE AIRPORT

164. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** Does the Department of Transport monitor the time and number of flights arriving or departing Adelaide Airport and if so, how many have occurred during the curfew during each year since 1994?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: No, Transport SA does not monitor the time and number of flights arriving or departing Adelaide Airport. It is the responsibility of the Commonwealth, through Airservices Australia.

DRUGS, SCHOOLS

168. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** What are the statistics for drug use in schools situated in the Peake electorate?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) does not gather statistics specifically related to drug usage for Peake or any other electorate. Students can be suspended, excluded or expelled from school on a range of grounds. A snapshot of statistics for suspension, exclusion and expulsion is collected in term 3 each year. The grounds that could apply to drug related behaviours include 'the student has acted in a manner which threatens the good order of the schools' and 'the student has acted illegally'. These grounds describe a range of behaviours and are not indicative of drug usage alone.

All instances of illegal drug possession or use, which are detected in schools, must be reported to police.

The number of police interventions, with students in schools, for illegal drug use and possession are not available to the department. South Australia Police keep data for illegal behaviours that result in students becoming involved in the juvenile justice system.

Senior SAPOL officers who are responsible for managing illegal drugs report that the main illegal drug used by students is cannabis and that heroin in schools is very rare. SAPOL could not recall any cases where students were involved in the use or possession of heroin.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

169. Mr KOUTSANTONIS:

1. What categories of books are kept in the school libraries located in the Peake electorate, which categories are loaned and what is the extent of complaints received from parents with in respect to books being kept from loan?

2. Have any of these school libraries undertaken an audit of the suitability of their books being read by minors and if so, what are the details?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:

1. All of the seven schools in the Peake electorate are very aware of the importance of having suitable reading materials for their students. Most schools contain a wide range of books, with categories including general fiction, non-fiction, and teacher reference (for teachers only). One secondary school has a small selection available only to senior students. The librarian and the English Coordinator decide these books. They are not on display and are only available to students on the English Coordinator's recommendation. The school's principal has received no complaints about any books during his five years at the school.

The other schools all reported no complaints, with the exception of one primary school, which had only two complaints in the last seven years. The teacher librarian at this school reported that she had less than five complaints during her nineteen years in the profession.

2. Teacher librarians generally follow a selection procedure based on the Library Association of Australia's statement on Freedom to Read and the Australian School Libraries Association guidelines. Books are generally selected from approved reviewing

journals, suppliers and recommended reading lists from professional literature supplied to the school. There has not been a need to undertake formal audits as librarians and teachers constantly review the materials in their libraries and 'weed out' anything they believe contains unsuitable or inappropriate information. Principals and librarians are very aware of the need to provide relevant and high quality literature, and as only one or two complaints have been received in seven years the schools are clearly meeting the needs of their students to the satisfaction of each parent community.

BISCAY ROAD, ALDINGA

171. Mr HILL:

1. What was the extent of the work done in Biscay Road at Aldinga in February 1999, who undertook this work and how much did it cost?

2. What was the cost of the remedial work done some six weeks later, why was it necessary and who paid for it?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:

1. The work completed in February 1999 on Biscay Road, Aldinga (approximately 460m from its junction with Main South Road and extending approximately 2.4km) stemmed from severe surface undulations, due to the expansive nature of the pavement subgrade. The work included mixing existing pavement, grading, reshaping and providing a temporary trafficable seal (primer seal) to protect the pavement from water and degradation by traffic.

Transport SA's Field Operations Unit (sub-contracted to Pavement Technology Limited and Boral Asphalt) completed these works on Biscay Road at a cost of \$133 000.

2. Following the completion of works trialed on Biscay Road in February 1999, Transport SA conducted pavement monitoring for a period of six weeks. This monitoring revealed some weak areas, requiring remedial work. This was not unexpected due to the nature of the pavement material encountered.

Earlier, the same treatments had been successful in addressing the same expansive soil subgrades on McLaren Vale Road, Black Road and Black Top Road.

Transport SA's Field Operations Unit (sub-contracted to Pioneer) completed the remedial work at a cost of \$2 400, which included new granular materials and shaping to suit the existing surface with primer seal placed as necessary. The cost was met by Transport SA.

BOAT LEVY

178. Ms RANKINE: How long will the Boat Levy remain in place given the period of application is based on the need for maintenance and development?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Part 14 Division 3 of the Harbours and Navigation Act 1993, provides for the payment of an annual levy on the registration of a recreational vessel. There is no time limit or sunset clause. Currently, the request for funding of improvements, upgrades and new facilities, significantly exceeds the revenue collected from the Boating Levy.