

**PUBLIC WORKS AMENDMENT (WA BUILDING
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY ABOLITION) BILL 2019**

Second Reading

Resumed from 26 September.

MR D.C. NALDER (Bateman) [7.01 pm]: I stand to make my contribution to the second reading debate on the Public Works Amendment (WA Building Management Authority Abolition) Bill 2019. By way of background, I acknowledge that the Building Management Authority was established in 1984 to facilitate capital raising for public works. Funds were only ever borrowed on two occasions—approximately \$285 million in 1984 and \$55 million in 1996. Both of these amounts were fully repaid by 2008.

We know that an amendment act has basically made this authority redundant, and that it has been financially dormant since 2009. Annual reports indicate that there are no assets or liabilities, employees, bank accounts or investments. The opposition agrees with the government and supports the carriage of this bill for the abolition of these works.

[Quorum formed.]

Mr D.C. NALDER: Nonetheless, given that there are no liabilities, there is a precautionary measure, which I acknowledge is generally taken in cases like this. The amending legislation includes a provision that any assets, rights, liabilities or obligations of the Western Australian Building Management Authority will be assigned to the Minister for Works on behalf of the state. On that basis, we feel very comfortable that this bill has taken into consideration all the necessary things to make sure that it is enacted correctly.

The only other thing that I picked up in this bill is to do with one unrelated matter, which is the deletion of the definition of “judge” as a term. The word “judge” is defined in section 5 of the Interpretation Act 1984, so we are more than comfortable with that amendment as well.

With that, I do not have anything further to add to this bill. Treasury has made the recommendation during the time of the former government. I think it is the right decision, and we are finally getting to the point at which we can carry out the abolition of these works and save some administrative work within the public service. That is all. Thank you.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Thank you. Member for Nedlands.

MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [7.04 pm]: I will be embarrassed if I go longer now! I anticipated speaking a little bit less than the previous speaker, but I might go a bit further than that. I was around when the Western Australian Building Management Authority was in existence. In fact, I was around before it was in existence!

Mr B.S. Wyatt: And you’ll be around after they’ve gone!

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will be! The precursor to the Building Management Authority was the Public Works Department. A lot of engineers who graduated in my day got jobs in the public sector. Many were cadets and they spent one or two years in government and then went on to lead some very good companies like Clough Engineering and probably earned seven or eight times more than they were earning in the Public Works Department at the time. I will not mention their names, but they were usually the people who got second-class honours. The people who got first-class honours did research; the people who got second-class honours were probably the fairly bright people in engineering. I was not one of those, member for Victoria Park!

I had a few run-ins with the Building Management Authority. During the mid-1980s, the Building Management Authority was run by Chester Burton, an engineer who I think came up through the Public Works Department and then had a brief stint with the Public Sector Commission. He was put in charge of the Building Management Authority, which delivered a lot of architectural projects in Western Australia. Albert Facey House and the “Silver City” projects in East Perth were all designed, or at least project managed in-house, by some of the very good architects working at the Building Management Authority at the time.

I had a phone call from Chester Burton once, when he was CEO. I was working at the time at the Office of the Auditor General.

Mr D.A. Templeman: A phone call or a telegram?

Mr W.R. MARMION: It was a phone call. I might put this on the record because it gives an insight into how the public sector worked, or did not work, at the time. Chester Burton rang me up to encourage me to put in for a promotion. I was a level 7 and there was a level 8 position going in the Building Management Authority. I said, “Oh, isn’t Athol Jamieson acting in that?” I had worked with Athol Jamieson at Main Roads Western Australia.

Some people might know Athol; he ended up working in the Department of Justice as an executive director. Sadly, Athol has passed away. I said openly to Chester, the CEO, “Isn’t that Athol’s job?” The response on the phone was that the authority did not operate like that and that it was an open system. I was encouraged to put in an application because the CEO asked me to. When I got the application form, there was a requirement to write a 2 000 word essay on the benefits that the Building Management Authority delivered for Western Australia.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Have you still got the essay?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will get to that! Having worked as the manager of corporate services at Main Roads—by then, I had moved to the Office of the Auditor General—I enlisted some help from the then manager of corporate services at Main Roads, who was an economist. He gave me a few tips and I toiled over a 2 000-word essay. I had to front-up to the interview with my essay—going through an enormous exercise to explain what Building Management Works did for the economic benefits of Western Australia. I struggled, but I did come up with something. When I rocked up for the interview, they gave me a list of six questions that they were going to ask me, and I had 10 minutes to read and get a bit of an idea of the questions. This is an unusual technique in the public service. The chairman of the selection committee was Ian Baxter, who was then head of the Heritage Council of Western Australia and had worked at the Building Management Authority. I had better not mention the other people on the panel. I handed in the essay. I remember one question I got from a person who ended up running Justice—I will not mention his name! I was asked to give an example of a negotiation that did not work out, so I gave an example. I probably cannot use the word he used, but he basically suggested that I was not successful. He used an expletive that we cannot use in this room. That incensed me a little, because it was quite a difficult situation. I then had to explain to the person who the people were who were involved. To cut the story short, I did not get the job—Athol Jamieson got the job. I ran into Athol a couple of months later and said, “How’d you go with your essay?” He said, “Stuff that; I didn’t do an essay!” He got the job and did not even do the essay. This is the public service! He deserved the job.

The Public Works Amendment (WA Building Management Authority Abolition) Bill 2019 will abolish the Building Management Authority. When I got the briefing on this bill from the people who are now at the back of the chamber, I thought that the bill was abolishing the whole department, but it does not exist anymore. The purpose of this bill is to abolish the authority, because it still has to do an annual report. The authority borrowed funds on two occasions—in 1984 and 1996. When the minister delivers his reply, I would be interested in him giving us the reason that the borrowings were undertaken. Were there any specific projects in 1984? Was it for capital works? Was recurrent funding involved? I would be interested to know how the money was procured. Who organised the transaction? Did it go through Treasury Corporation? I imagine it would have done, but were the officers in the Building Management Authority able to negotiate the actual borrowings? Where did the borrowings come from? Was it a reasonable interest rate? One could argue about why an entity that we are now abolishing did that when Treasury could have got the money. I am a bit perplexed as to why it had to do this, so the minister might explain that.

Any obligations of the authority are very well covered by part 2 of the bill. Any liabilities et cetera will revert to the state. However, in the briefing we were told that there were two legacy commercial arrangements—for the Peel Health Campus and the Fremantle justice complex. I know those commercial arrangements will transfer back to the state anyway, but I would be interested to know what they are. I think that is all I need to say. I support the bill.

MR S.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley) [7.13 pm]: I rise to also make a short contribution to this excellent piece of legislation. I commend the Treasurer for bringing the Public Works Amendment (WA Building Management Authority Abolition) Bill 2019 before the house. A couple of the points I was going to make were covered by the member for Bateman in his contribution, for which I thank him. The member for Bateman and I, together with the members for Armadale, Bickton and North West Central, had the privilege of sitting on the Joint Standing Committee on Audit, which is a committee of both houses of Parliament that considered the review of the Financial Management Act. Later in my contribution this evening I will talk about the work that the Joint Standing Committee on Audit has done on this legislation in terms of some of the recommendations we made and how this bill will give effect to those recommendations. It is all very well to say that we should reduce red tape and make our laws more efficient and productive, but it is an entirely different thing to get on with the job. Through this bill, the McGowan government once again demonstrates not just its commitment to cut red tape but also its ability to get on with the job.

Before I come to the specific provisions of the amending bill, I want to recite some of the relevant history. Members will be well aware of the emphasis I place on the important role that government plays in delivering public infrastructure. We need look only at the original Public Works Act from 1902. One of the first acts of the new Parliament, once Western Australia gained self-government, was to make sure we had the provisions necessary to engage in investment in infrastructure. What a great tradition of public investment in worthwhile public infrastructure! We hear today that the McGowan government continues to get on with the job of making the necessary investments in public infrastructure, whether it be the Yanchep railway line extension as part of Metronet

or the Minister for Transport's congestion-busting, job-creating road maintenance works. This applies to both sides of Parliament, but throughout the history of Western Australia, an integral role of government has been to invest in public works and infrastructure. That is unquestionably a vital endeavour of any government, and one that this McGowan government takes particularly seriously.

As the member for Bateman has already touched on, in order to fund the significant investments in public infrastructure necessary to provide the level of services to which Western Australians are entitled, the Public Works Act was amended in 1984 to create a capital-raising entity that could go to the capital markets and get the money necessary to invest in this infrastructure. That entity was known as the Western Australian Building Authority. The name was amended in 1994 to the Western Australian Building Management Authority. The capital-raising ability of this entity was used on only two occasions—in 1984 and 1996. Since that capital raising in 1996, the requirement for the Building Management Authority to be a capital-raising entity has become obsolete. That is something the Treasurer referred to in his second reading speech, when he said —

... the authority was no longer required because, since 1996, the state has had the ability to meet its capital works borrowing requirements through other means.

By that the Treasurer meant, for example, the ability to raise capital through Treasury Corp. In 1996, the requirement for the Building Management Authority to be a capital-raising entity became obsolete. In 2008, the two loans that had been borrowed by this entity were repaid in full. So in 2008, the entity that had been created in 1984 was now obsolete—the authority was largely redundant. It was no longer necessary. It has no known assets or liabilities and it has no known rights or obligations. Even though the authority ceased to function as of 2009, the statutory retention of the authority in the Public Works Act imposed a reporting obligation that has to be discharged by the Department of Finance. I again refer members to the second reading speech of the Treasurer, in which he said —

Abolishing the Western Australian Building Management Authority will reduce red tape ... by removing the need for an annual report to be prepared for a body that is no longer required.

Frankly, given the state of the Western Australian economy and the Western Australian budget, and the challenges we currently face, the people in the Department of Finance have much more important things to be doing than filing annual reports for an obsolete organisation that has been redundant since at least 2009. It is all very well to say that it is important that we reduce red tape, but we cannot just talk the talk—we have to walk the walk as well. We have to pay attention to detail. We have to make sure that we do all the business of government. We do not just let the entity drift away and not do anything to update the statute book. We have to take all of the steps. This is a responsible government that is demonstrating that it is capable of discharging every aspect of its obligations. Let me ask this: have there been any reports, inquiries or suggestions by anybody that perhaps this is precisely what the Parliament should do? As a matter of fact, there have been reports. Members will recall that the Joint Standing Committee on Audit that I referred to earlier tabled its statutorily required review into the Financial Management Act on 16 May 2019. That established that the legislation that is currently up for debate in this chamber is the product of advice from the public service and the recommendation of not one but two parliamentary committees. The Financial Management Act was established on 1 February 2007. The first review of the operation and effectiveness of the act was supposed to take place in February 2012 but, unfortunately, the joint audit committee's report into that review was not tabled until August 2016—not to criticise the joint audit committee and the delay in tabling that report. It is of no moment to go into that history at the moment. Suffice to say, at that point it was recommended that the Building Management Authority of Western Australia, which had been inactive since 2009, be abolished. Unfortunately, that recommendation was not acted upon.

In February 2017, the 10-year anniversary of the Financial Management Act would have arrived, which would have been the second time that a review of the Financial Management Act should have taken place, but, unfortunately, because the last review had only finished in 2016, it was deemed to be surplus to requirements. Therefore, the Treasury review was completed in 2017 and provided to the joint audit committee in 2018. By 2019, the committee had finished its work and concluded its review of the operation and effectiveness of the Financial Management Act. I refer members to the report and to the section titled "Inactive agencies", in particular. Paragraph 5.25 states —

... the Committee is aware that three inactive agencies continue to exist. The Auditor General identified the Landcare Trust, the State Supply Commission, and the Western Australian Building Management Authority ... as inactive agencies in the 2017–18 Audit Results Report.

Paragraph 5.26 states —

The first review of the FMA ... The First Treasury report recommended ... be abolished because:

The original rationale for creating the WABMA is no longer relevant and as the State's borrowing requirements can be adequately accommodated through other legislative means such as the Loan Acts, the continuation of the WABMA's existence is not warranted.

Then we said —

The Auditor General disagreed ... and suggested that ‘legislation creating inactive agencies should repealed as soon as possible’.

The footnote is 146, which is the letter from the Auditor General dated 21 November 2018. Recommendation 18 states —

The Treasurer progress legislation to abolish inactive agencies.

We have the expert advice from the public sector; we have the expert advice from the Auditor General; and we have the parliamentary oversight committee all saying that the legislation governing that agency—an agency that had been inactive for 10 years and, in one view, had been redundant for two and a half decades—be repealed.

The final piece of the puzzle is this: we have a government that responds appropriately to the proper recommendations that are made by the public servants, the Auditor General and the parliamentary oversight committee.

I would like to conclude by thanking my fellow members of the committee—I think the member for Armadale is about to make a contribution on this bill as well; I thank him for all the work that he did. This was a unanimous committee report in which members on both sides of the parliamentary divide agreed with the recommendation that this legislation be progressed.

It is all very well to say we believe in reducing red tape, but at the end of the day, the proof is in the pudding. We need a decisive, professional, efficient government that recognises the role that it needs to play and then discharges its obligations to the Western Australian community by playing that role, taking the advice, acting appropriately and bringing forward legislation exactly like this to achieve those objectives. For those reasons, I commend the bill to the house, and congratulate the Treasurer.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Heritage) [7.24 pm]: I congratulate the member for Mount Lawley for his contribution. He gave a very clear outline of the historical aspects relating to the Building Management Authority, which, of course, we are dispensing now and expunging from history. I was very interested in the member for Bateman’s comments—brief as they were; I think it was two minutes’ worth. They were poignant utterances from the member for Bateman.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: It must be incredibly accurate!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: It was very accurate. Succinct, accuracy and brevity—all those terms can be lavished on the member for Bateman. I am speaking as the Minister for Heritage given that we are dispensing part of our heritage. I was almost going to heritage list the BMA, but I did not know whether I could! It was interesting to listen to the member for Nedlands’ nostalgic speech. A wave of nostalgia emanated through the chamber when he stood, because we received a very good outline of a failed interview experience and the wasted effort of an essay that did him no good.

It is interesting that through this bill we are, essentially, dispensing from the workings of government an entity that served Western Australia. Indeed, as the member for Nedlands highlighted, a number of important infrastructure projects were overseen by the BMA. As a former schoolteacher, I can always remember that the BMA was the responsible body for a lot of the ongoing school maintenance requirements. If something went wrong, we would ring the BMA. The BMA would arrive, usually on time, to fix up whatever was broken.

On this night of nostalgia, it is important to acknowledge those that have played a role in the BMA and those that have failed to play a role in the BMA, as articulated by the member for Nedlands. We will never know, given the course of history, how the Western Australian public sector could have changed had the member for Nedlands been successful in moving from the level 7 position that he held to that level 8 position, and the late Athol Jamieson had not usurped him in winning that position. The BMA is an important part of the history of the state. But, again, as the member for Mount Lawley so eloquently highlighted, through this legislation, we need to terminate the BMA as is appropriate, given that it is no longer an entity in its own right; indeed, it is now redundant.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [7.28 pm]: A lot of people want to contribute to this debate. We come across bills that we want to speak about that are the highlight of our parliamentary week, but this is not one of them. I can go one better than the member for Nedlands; I actually did work for the Building Management Authority, which I will get to very shortly. The member for Mount Lawley talked about the member for Bateman, myself and him being members of the Joint Standing Committee on Audit. We are talking about abolishing organisations. The committee made recommendations with respect to that. Personally, I query the need for the joint audit committee, but others in government had a different point of view. It has important functions to a degree—two based in the Auditor General Act and one in the Financial Management Act. The member for Mount Lawley articulated a reason that it should remain, but I must say that as a member of it, it is hard to be motivated to attend the meetings of the Joint Standing Committee on Audit. Obviously, when we are there, member for Bateman, we act in a very professional manner and we discharge our duties. Is that not correct?

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Mr D.C. Nalder: Correct.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Very much so. Before I speak about my brief career in the Building Management Authority, I will mention that the member for Mount Lawley talked a bit about its history, and it is a very rich history. Its forerunner, the Public Works Department, commenced in 1901. Therefore, 1 January 1901 was not only the date of the Federation of Australia, but also the date on which the Public Works Department was established. Who was the first chief engineer? We all know, obviously.

Mr R.R. Whitby: Not the member for Nedlands.

Dr A.D. BUTI: No, it was not the member for Nedlands.

Several members interjected.

Ms J. Farrer: O'Connor.

Dr A.D. BUTI: O'Connor—thanks very much to the member for Kimberley. O'Connor was the first chief engineer of the Public Works Department, coming from the previous Department of Works and Buildings. The department had a wide range of responsibilities in agriculture. It was responsible for the rabbit-proof fences. When it disbanded, responsibility for agricultural matters was taken over by the Agricultural Protection Board, the Department of Agriculture and Food and the State Barrier Fence Advisory Committee. Also, it was involved in energy. It began issuing electrical licences in 1925. Bodies such as Western Power and the State Energy Commission of Western Australia later took over many of the responsibilities. It was also involved in harbours and rivers. When the Public Works Department was disbanded, those responsibilities were taken over by the Department of Marines and Harbours, the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, the Swan River Trust and the Department of Conservation and the Environment. The Public Works Department was also involved in mechanical electric services and public buildings. The Building Management Authority, which was commenced on 1 January 1985, was in the public buildings space. The Public Works Department obviously was responsible for some very important iconic buildings in the metropolitan region, such as the Perth GPO, Council House, Government House, Perth Technical College and Sunset Hospital. The Building Management Authority came into place, as I said, on 1 January 1985, and then on 11 September its name was changed to the Western Australian Building Management Authority. People still refer to it as the BMA.

My career in the BMA was only brief. It was, basically, just a bit of paid work experience—I would not say work experience, actually. I finished teaching, started a Master of Industrial Relations and I was about to head off to law school in Canberra and over the summer months I worked at the Welshpool depot of the BMA, which I think would be in the Treasurer's electorate.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Yes.

Dr A.D. BUTI: What is there now? I do not know. I had a very important job. I was obviously a low-level public servant, and I remember writing some advice on some things. The job I remember having to do was to work out when the employees in the BMA took sick days. We were trying to work out whether more sick days were taken on a Monday and/or Friday. Obviously, we thought they were trying to build in a long weekend. I did not have access to computers; it was all done by paperwork, basically, leave forms and punch cards for hours and so forth. After my extensive three weeks of research on leave in the BMA, I came to the conclusion that most sick days were taken on a Monday. Is that not amazing? That is riveting information. It is surprising. The second most common day was Friday.

Several members interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: You got it. Friday was the second most common day. What was the third most common day?

Mrs A.K. Hayden: Wednesday.

Dr A.D. BUTI: You got it. Unbelievable, riveting research—and I came to the conclusion that members have just come to in about five seconds. It was an interesting experience. It provided motivation for me to do my law degree because I did not want to be stuck in a low-level public service job—I am not saying that low-level public service jobs are not very important because they are all part of the machinery of government and all levels of the public service are very, very important, as we very well know. That was my experience in the BMA. I must say that many of the people who worked there had a loyalty to the organisation. Obviously, I was based at Welshpool, so it was a small organisation. The advantage of being based at Welshpool was that I could go swimming at Somerset swimming pool at lunchtime with one of my colleagues there. I would get on the train at Sherwood near Armadale, get off the train at Welshpool, walk about a kilometre to the BMA depot, and at lunchtime a colleague with a car would drive us to Somerset and we would do about 20 laps.

Mr D.C. Nalder: I used to train at Somerset, about 30 years ago.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Did the member for Bateman go swimming at Somerset? It is a nice pool.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Both of you swam there when it is not as modern as it is now.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I must say, I preferred the old vintage outlook because it had the two pools.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Interestingly, they still have the outdoor pool.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It still has the outdoor 50-metre pool, but it used to have another 50-metre outdoor pool on the other side. It is lovely that it still has the trees and so forth. Of course, that was going to close, I think, until—was he the Premier at the time?

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Geoff Gallop—a campaign started when he was in opposition and commitments were made when they came to government.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Does the member for Victoria Park swim there?

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Yes, but not as often as I should.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is a very nice pool. The BMA has had a long history. If we look at its origins, the Public Works Department was established on 1 January 1901 and the BMA came into existence on 1 January 1985. Other speakers have spoken to the merits of the bill. Obviously, it makes a very important contribution and ensures that we tidy up what needs to be tidied up. As the member for Mount Lawley said, we can talk about reducing red tape, but we have to walk the talk. The Treasurer has walked the talk with this outstanding bill, and the member for Bateman has made one of the greatest contributions in the history of parliamentary speeches. It will be one of the great speeches—right to the point and very short, in probably about seven sentences.

The member for Nedlands's contribution was riveting and as usual the member for Mount Lawley was very articulate and brought into play the value of the Joint Standing Committee on Audit. Maybe I need to rethink the value of the joint audit committee, because I did not probably have the same view of its value. Maybe it does some very important work. It was very apt that the Minister for Heritage made a very important contribution. As a former teacher, he would know the value of the BMA. On that, I will conclude my speech, which I do not think I will remember tomorrow!

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park — Minister for Finance) [7.38 pm] — in reply: I thank my colleagues for their contributions tonight on the Public Works Amendment (WA Building Management Authority Abolition) Bill 2019. The member for Nedlands asked a question that I will deal with in a minute. I thank in particular the public servants who prepared for me an extensive file for the debate tonight, as members can see. As most members have highlighted—in particular the member for Armadale, the member for Nedlands and the Minister for Heritage, who have had experience over the years with what will shortly be the former Building Management Authority—it is quite an interesting organisation in terms of how governments have been funded for a time. As most members have pointed out, the member for Armadale's entire experience with the Building Management Authority was to prove that the Boomtown Rats were indeed right—nobody likes Mondays! Well done, member for Armadale. For a while, it was a very important provider of funds for capital works.

I want to deal with one particular question that the member for Nedlands raised. I will read from some notes, which the member might find interesting. In 1984, changes were made to the way in which semi-government authorities across Australia—state governments—could borrow money. The government of the day decided that it needed to introduce new measures to allow it to borrow money to fund capital works projects, and hence the WA Building Management Authority was established to borrow funds for public buildings.

The authority was introduced in 1984 by the Burke Labor government. When it was established in 1984, it was referred to as the WA Building Authority and was not an agent of the Crown. The opposition at the time criticised the arrangements because of a lack of transparency with respect to the authority's fundraising activities. I may well be right with some comments I will make in a minute about that. At the time the authority was established, the ability of the commonwealth and the states to borrow funds was limited by global borrowing limits set by the Australian Loan Council. Interestingly, the Australian Loan Council's borrowing limits were reported in our budget until very recently. It was a hangover from the Loan Council days when we had to get authority to borrow within a certain limit.

The 1984 second reading speech cited changes in Australian Loan Council requirements as the catalyst for the creation of the authority. The authority was intended to allow government to supplement its borrowings in order to fund capital works. This probably deals with the member for Nedlands' question: the authority borrowed funds on two occasions. In 1984, the authority borrowed \$285 million for the purpose of funding the state's public works programs between 1984 and 1987. It was for generic capital works—schools and the sorts of things that I suspect the Minister for Heritage referred to. In 1996, it borrowed \$55 million specifically for the Peel Health Campus. The sum of \$285 million was for generic public works and \$55 million was for the Peel Health Campus. Both of those loans were repaid in July 2008.

This point is quite interesting: there is no information on who originally provided the \$285 million loan and what specific projects it funded. We can assume it was for the sorts of things that governments do, but no information has been found about who provided that \$285 million. It appears that after the authority became an agent of the Crown in 1994—it was not when it was established in 1984—the Treasury Corporation took over the role of borrowing for government. The remaining loan in 1994 became subject to an agreement between the WA Treasury Corporation

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and the authority. The WA Treasury Corporation believes that this is the case but it cannot be confirmed because it cannot find any particular agreement.

Mr W.R. Marmion: I know that Albert Facey House was a component of the Forrest Place development. No-one wanted to put in any capital money to build it. I think the government found money; maybe this helped it to put capital in and build Albert Facey House. “Silver City” might have been another component.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Yes. The authority is reported as having contributed \$46 million to the operation of the Building Management Authority—effectively the Public Works Department of the day—in 1984–85, and \$100 million in 1985–86. That is \$146 million between those three years. The borrowings were \$285 million, but the difference cannot be explained.

Mr W.R. Marmion: That was a lot of money in those days.

Mr B.S. WYATT: It was a huge amount of money in those days.

Mr W.R. Marmion: I think Albert Facey House was about \$50 million. That was for a whole building.

Mr B.S. WYATT: That was a significant amount in those days.

The cost of servicing this loan was covered by an appropriation to what became the Department of Finance. The original maturity date for this loan was October 2017 but it was repaid in July 2008 by the Carpenter Labor government. At the time of course, there was lots of revenue around and debts were paid quicker than expected.

In respect of the Peel Health Campus loan, this loan was provided by the Treasury Corporation. The cost of servicing this loan was met through a revenue payment to Finance by the Department of Health reflecting its use to the Peel Health Campus. Like the other loan, the original maturity date for the Peel Health Campus was in 2018, but it was paid off completely in July 2008. That is an interesting history. It highlights how state governments have emerged from under the kind of borrowing control of the commonwealth over the years to their own standalone entities issuing their own bonds and responsible for financing their own services.

As the member for Mount Lawley highlighted, this has been around a while. Its abolition was identified in a couple of reports. Although it is effectively an organisation with no liabilities and assets et cetera, of course it is an agency that still needs the usual reporting requirements.

I thank all members for their support in allowing the quick passage of this bill, particularly in the last parliamentary week of the year. I think it is something that is well past due being cleaned up.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Minister for Finance)**, and transmitted to the Council.