

**Division 63: National Trust Of Australia (WA), \$2 956 000 —**

Mr M.W. Sutherland, Chairman.

Mr G.M. Castrilli, Minister for Heritage.

Mr T.E. Perrigo, Chief Executive Officer.

Mr P. Cirillo, Manager, Finance and Audit.

Mrs S. Siekierka, Principal Policy Adviser, Office of the Minister for Heritage.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I give the call to the member for Perth.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I refer to page 777 of the *Budget Statements*. Note 1 under “Explanation of Significant Movements” states that the figure was not known due to the increase in commonwealth government grant funding, which was unknown at the time this budget was formulated. Is the commonwealth funding increase now known?

**Mr T.E. Perrigo:** Yes. It primarily was the job stimulus fund. We have close to \$2 million in three different grants for Woodbridge, John Curtin’s house now known as the Curtin family home, and the police duplex at Beverley. Approximately \$2 million was secured through the job stimulus package for heritage, which was allocated to the National Trust in Western Australia.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I refer to the third dot point on page 777 of the *Budget Statements*, which states that the trust will focus on major heritage projects that will create significant benefits to the Western Australian community. This includes the Old Farm Strawberry Hill. Where is that up to? Has any private funding been obtained to carry on the great work the National Trust is doing there?

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** The National Trust is doing some work in terms of the substructures of the building; that is, the walls of the building. It is also redoing the heritage rose garden. A lot of work is being done around that. The National Trust is funding that work through its normal budget processes. That is a quick way of saying that. Maybe Mr Perrigo can add to that, but that is the general gist.

**Mr T.E. Perrigo:** Certainly. To date we have secured approximately \$150 000 outside of government funding. Indications are that we need approximately another \$2.5 million. We have a strategy in place for gaining about half that amount. I was pleased to read the member’s article about supporting potential royalties for regions applications. I believe we are well on track to securing the necessary money to have a major impact. It is a very significant place; in fact, we believe it to be of national significance.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** There is one thing that I am very disappointed about; that is, the shop has been closed. We cannot get strawberries and cream at Old Farm Strawberry Hill anymore. It was a great little shop. I know it was a private enterprise, but I cannot see any value in taking it away. A lot of people went there for a cup of tea and some scones, and to go through the gardens. Why was it taken away?

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** Maybe Mr Perrigo can add to what I can say. I understand that it was leased to a private business. The lease came to an end. I think the building itself was not up to standard.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** It used to make good scones.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** Yes, but I do not think the kitchen was up to the proper standards. The National Trust is still deciding what is going to happen to the building and what to do with it.

[9.50 pm]

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** It is an incentive for people to go there.

**Mr T.E. Perrigo:** First of all, we did not close it. The lease ended and the lessee chose not to renew it. Certainly, the plans will definitely include a shop that serves good coffee and scones. The shop will not be in that building, because it is very fragile. It is not safe for occupational health and safety reasons. There are no grease traps and there is no sewerage. It will probably be more of a visitor facility where the public will be able to come in, relax and learn more about the interpretation of the old farm.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I want to pursue the National Trust’s pursing of royalties for regions funding. I have been scathing and critical of the government and the manner in which it has employed royalties for regions funding in many core government activities across the state. As opposed to those that I have criticised, the National Trust’s activities and significant projects will be of benefit to the state, particularly those major projects in regional areas which would not normally necessarily attract core government funding. They appear to be an appropriate use of

royalties for regions funding. Is the trust putting together a robust application for additional funds from the man with all the money?

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I think Mr Perrigo mentioned something to the member for Albany about royalties for regions. He will provide an update about where the trust is at with that. I would definitely support applications for projects such as that. As the member for Albany mentioned —

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** The minister should be chasing it for us.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I support what I can. I think Old Farm Strawberry Hill was the first farm in the member's region. It is very significant. I dare say that the member will be the first person to keep an eye on it given that he is in close proximity to it. I am sure he will let us know what is going on.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I cannot wait to have some scones and strawberries!

**Mr T.E. Perrigo:** The minister has been extremely supportive, and that is appreciated. I am very appreciative of all government funding. We have secured some money. We asked for very little initially, but we will apply for quite a bit more. One of the problems is that we have to be "shovel ready". In order to properly acquit any moneys, we have to invest a fair degree in planning. I am pleased to say that we have a number of projects ready to go. In the near future we will apply for four projects. They are likely to get funding from what we know. This will continue throughout the next three, four or five years.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** Can the minister advise whether the trust has applied for some royalties for region money to help achieve additional power at the Jarrahdale sawmill?

**Mr T.E. Perrigo:** We certainly have. The best use of a heritage place is to use it as it was originally intended. In the case of the Jarrahdale sawmill, we have been able to secure the services of the sawmill on a continued basis. In order for it to achieve capacity it needs additional power. Certainly, it has been our strong application to get a power upgrade, which would not only increase the longevity of the saw mill, but also provide seven full-time employees to the region which, of course, is a perfect scenario for any heritage place.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I refer to the conservation of natural heritage in the table at the bottom of page 776 of the *Budget Statements*. What seems to be missing from the government's budget is a devotion to natural heritage, particularly to the Burrup rock art. In terms of the contribution of the National Trust, what has the government through the trust been able to achieve?

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** The trust is working on that. I will get Mr Perrigo to expand on that answer. Woodside has commissioned the National Trust.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** Is the government giving it much money?

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I will get Mr Perrigo to explain. Woodside has provided quite a bit of money to do that project.

**Mr T.E. Perrigo:** There are two issues. The national heritage issue is one that is underfunded. The minister and the trust will try to address that issue in further budgets. We have a very significant program in voluntary covenanting. We have a bush bank fund, which allows us to buy and sell land. To date we have been unsuccessful in convincing Treasury to invest in the natural heritage program. Currently, we have almost 20 000 hectares under voluntary conservation covenant in perpetuity and that has been achieved with no investment by the state government. The minister has been very supportive of us. It is urgently needed. We could quadruple our voluntary contribution to the state's heritage. With regard to the Burrup rock art, we have not only been engaged by Woodside; we are forming a memorandum of understanding with the Shire of Roebourne. We have additional funding from a number of resource sectors, including sponsorship from the Dampier Port Authority. I am very pleased to say that we have an extensive program working with five language groups in that area to document oral histories. We also have a partnership with the University of Western Australia. Recently, we have been doing some amazing archaeological investigations on a major trail overlooking Karratha. It is a great program and we are very comfortable securing private sector funding.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** How is the trust positioned in terms of digitalising all the records and archives that are collated and to which the trust has access?

**Mr T.E. Perrigo:** That is built into the funding of modern projects. I am very pleased to say that all the oral history programs that we are engaged in, the documentation is digitised and stored permanently in Canberra. We also provide a copy to the individual landowner. In terms of our own program, we have our own archive. It is on an off-storage site. It is not adequate, but we have begun digitisation of all our records. We have a plan for four years. We have a cost of that plan, but like anything we require input from the state agencies—or, as the member

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said, the government storage facility is “chockers”. Basically we have to do it ourselves. We have made significant progress in that area.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I refer to the total appropriation on page 776, which relates to cups of tea for committees or some sort of expenditure. The Premier also announced that the National Trust was abolishing two committees. I have tried very, very hard to discover what the National Trust’s ethnic youth advisory group did and what the National Trust of Australia parenthesis WA’s community grants assessment committee did. Given that the government abolished those committees, I would like to know what they did, how many millions they gave out and what has happened since they have been abolished.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I do not think the National Trust has abolished any committees, which is why I am looking around at my advisers. They have confirmed that those committees were not National Trust committees.

**Mr T.E. Perrigo:** I am pleased to say that we have no such committees and, therefore, they were not abolished!

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** It is genius to announce that the government has abolished committees that do not exist.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I was thinking that there were no such committees in the National Trust.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** It stood out like the proverbial to me. The correct answer is that they do not exist.

**The appropriation was recommended.**

**The CHAIRMAN:** Members, that concludes consideration of the estimates by this committee.

*Committee adjourned at 10.00 pm*

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