

Division 3: Premier and Cabinet — Services 1 to 3, Premier and Cabinet, \$128 687 000 —

Mr S.J. Price, Chair.

Mr M. McGowan, Premier.

Ms R. Brown, Acting Director General.

Ms E. Roper, Deputy Director General, Intergovernmental Relations and COVID-19.

Ms A. Kelly, Acting Deputy Director General, Recovery Implementation and State Services.

Mr G. Meyers, Director, Corporate Services.

Ms S. Black, Deputy Director General, Policy and Coordination.

Mr G. Italiano, Chief Government Information Officer.

Ms M. Inglis, Director, People and Governance Services.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: Members, this estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be available the following day. I will ensure that as many questions as possible are asked and answered, and that both questions and answers are short and to the point. The estimates committee's consideration of the estimates will be restricted to discussion of those items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must be clearly related to a page number, item program or amount in the current division. Members should give these details in preface to their question. If a division or service is the responsibility of more than one minister, a minister shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

The minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next sitting week. I ask the minister to clearly indicate what supplementary information he agrees to provide and I will then allocate a reference number. If supplementary information is to be provided, I seek the minister's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the principal clerk by Friday, 30 October 2020. I caution members that if a minister asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice through the online questions system.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: On page 65, the table refers to total appropriations. Can the Premier please explain why the appropriation will increase from \$146 million last year to \$163 203 000 for the 2020–21 budget? It is a 12 per cent increase, and also a significant increase on the 2018–19 budget in which \$133.45 million was allocated.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I will let the director general assist in answering this in a moment, but I refer the Leader of the Opposition to the bottom of that page, which shows the Aboriginal cultural centre planning project, the COVID-19 campaign phases 1 and 2, the remote communities COVID-19 emergency relief fund, and the Wellington Dam mural and Collie art trail. Perhaps the director general has more to add.

Ms R. Brown: There are a number of increases in appropriation between 2019–20 and 2020–21. The Premier has alluded to spending changes with regard to key recovery projects and additional funding for COVID communications. Further increases relate to the transfer of the Office of Digital Government, which is related to an increase in appropriation both for the ongoing operations of the Office of Digital Government and cybersecurity operations. There is a number of key increases for key initiatives in relation to Aboriginal affairs, including the Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement and aspects related to remote communities in the economic transformation project in Bidyadanga. There are a number of other increases for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and changes in the Telethon donation.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: With respect to the COVID-19 communications program that the Premier mentioned, I notice \$2.63 million for 2019–20 with phases 1 and 2, with increases to \$3.3 million and another \$370 000 for this year's budget. Could the Premier please explain how that breakdown is allocated, how many staff are employed in those programs and how that nearly \$6 million worth of spending is broken down?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Broadly, when COVID hit back in February–March, we brought together people from across the public sector. In the bottom of Dumas House, a command centre was set up in a bunch of those large rooms, and people were brought together from across the public sector to manage a whole range of things in all sorts of areas—logistics, communications, coordination. There was a big group of people working.

When we declared the state of emergency, the State Emergency Coordinator directed that the COVID-19 information coordination centre be established. Those people were located in Dumas House. The team worked around the clock to ensure that the Western Australian community knew exactly what it needed to do to stay safe during a rapidly changing environment. If you remember, about three months back there was huge concern across the community. The team worked with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to access translated information. On 3 July,

the majority of the information coordination centre team became the COVID-19 communications team in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The Western Australia Police Force continues to locate three ICC members with the COVID-19 communications team. The team's responsibility is to continue emergency response communications, as well as inform the public of recovery initiatives. It is prepared, if an outbreak were to occur, and continues to work closely with Western Australia police and the Department of Health.

Funding of \$3 million was allocated in 2019–20, which I think was one of the emergency funding initiatives we took, to provide public messaging on restrictions on television, radio, out-of-home print and social digital channels. If you recall, we had numerous restrictions in place back then. Of the \$3 million, \$2.63 million was spent and \$370 000 was carried over. All staff placed with the information coordination centre had their salaries paid by their home agencies, and at its peak, 52 staff from across government worked in the centre. When I went down there a few times, I met people from all sorts of agencies who had been seconded to do that work.

[2.10 pm]

I think that was a great demonstration of how the public sector works together in a crisis. Funding of \$3.2 million was allocated in 2020–21 to continue to provide emergency response and recovery communications over the course of this year, including \$150 000 for salaries to engage two staff members—a campaign officer and social media coordinator—on short-term contracts. The total amount spent on the two short-term contracts is \$24 857. Once those contracts are concluded, the total will amount to \$95 868. To date, approximately \$2.958 million has been committed to pay for all the newspaper, television, online and radio communication the government does.

A total of 19 staff now work for the COVID-19 communications team—13 staff are on placement from their home agencies, which are continuing to pay for salaries, and six staff are employed by the department. In addition, as I said before, the Western Australia Police Force has located three people to assist the team. An expression of interest—I think this is where the Leader of the Opposition was going with her question—was recently launched and advertised to create a pool of staff should extra resources be required in the future. At this time, no staff have been recruited from the pool of people established should we need them in the future.

In other words, at the start of the COVID pandemic, a bunch of people came together in Dumas House to run communications across government and the community. The coms were a big deal and lots of effort went into it. Staff came from the Departments of Health, Education, and Premier and Cabinet, the Western Australia Police Force, and maybe the Public Sector Commission—all over the place. A number of staff had skills in other languages and the like so that communications could be across the board. Some were experts in TV and print advertising and some were social media experts. A whole bunch of people were placed downstairs in Dumas House. We did not, as far as I am aware, pay millions of dollars to some advertising agency to run it all for us; we brought people together from across the public sector. However, that does not mean that we did not have to buy or create advertising outside government. In other words, we kept the costs way down by using existing staff. The measures worked. It is hard to place now. It has been a tiring eight months, but the measures worked. People worked around the clock to make sure the messages were out there and that they were appropriate.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Premier, would it be possible to get a breakdown of the advertising spend for the newspaper, TV and online communications and any other contract agencies' spend?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, I will provide that to the Leader of the Opposition now. The Easter stay-at-home safety message, a one-week radio and social media campaign, was \$29 454. The Anzac Day stay-at-home safety message—remember that everyone had to stay at home and could not go to Anzac Day events—a four-day audio streaming service and social media campaign, was \$23 534. We provided \$86 791 to support the federal government for a two-week press and radio hygiene campaign. We provided \$75 210 to support the commonwealth on the COVIDSafe app promotion on radio and in print. The easing of intrastate borders—that was when we were bringing them down—was \$149 454 for a three-week radio and regional television promotion. The COVID-19 safety plan for culturally and linguistically diverse communities was \$12 457. The continuous paid boosting of social media activity—that was emergency response messages—was \$8 330. Behaviour change campaigns, including the WA road map and telling people what they could and could not do on radio, television, press, digital out-of-home, social media and digital audio, was \$1 154 631. The “We are all in this together” brand and development guide used by all agencies to promote community cohesion was \$10 315. The “Thank you” campaign for essential workers and people across the community who continue to work during difficult times was \$285 271. The “Small business needs your business” campaign, which was designed to get people back into our retail outlets, on television, press, radio and social, was \$694 142. The associated costs, research and evaluation of all these campaigns to see whether they were working was \$100 600.

This year, the WA recovery plan phase 1 was \$576 395—sorry; that is the total amount for radio, press and digital, and \$420 880 has been paid to date. Responsive digital messaging to get messages to the community in a timely manner was \$69 000. The stakeholder engagement translation for culturally and linguistically diverse communities was \$5 574. The “Work and Wander Out Yonder” phase 1 campaign was \$220 618. That is part of a bigger campaign

expected to cost \$1.66 million. Community sentiment research and monitoring was \$5 100. The total amount spent thus far on the two short-term contracts secured outside government was \$24 857. We expect the total cost of salaries to amount to \$95 868.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: For the culturally and linguistically diverse community safety messages, can the Premier outline which languages and communities were targeted?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I do not have that detail. I am happy to provide it to the Leader of the Opposition by way of supplementary information.

The CHAIR: To clarify, the Premier will provide —

Mr M. McGOWAN: What was the question?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: For the COVID phase 1 and 2 communications, can I have a breakdown of which CALD communities were targeted and which languages messages were translated into?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Which CALD communities were targeted and which languages campaigns were translated into? It may well be that the support for the famous Fiona and Diana, who assist me with sign language, came out of that as well. I am not too sure, but we will find out.

[Supplementary Information No A3.]

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Which of the radio advertisements that the Premier outlined to the house just now did he feature in and what was the cost of the advertisements he featured in?

Mr M. McGOWAN: The advice I have is that none—did the member say radio?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: It was the radio ads, Premier.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I did some radio grabs in the earlier days of COVID but I do not have those details to hand. I am trying to recall what it was about. It was about encouraging people to stay safe and things of that nature. It would be covered by the amounts I mentioned.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I refer to page 74 of budget paper No 2, the heading “Expenses”, and the line item “employee benefits”. I note that in the chamber today we have three deputy directors general and the director general. The annual report provided to the house only weeks ago lists only two deputy directors general and the director general. I am keen to understand the roles of all the deputy directors general and the director general in relation to the COVID-19 response, particularly given that I believe at least two deputy directors general, plus the director general, plus Public Sector Commissioner O’Neill, are responding to the COVID-19 recovery. It seems that a lot of people are responding to that as part of the executive. Does the Premier have a breakdown of their roles and responsibilities, and perhaps provide the highest, considering that other individuals are in the chamber, and what their ongoing salaries and expenses might be?

[2.20 pm]

Mr M. McGOWAN: Whose salaries and expenses is the member asking for?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: The deputy directors general, the director general, and those who have responsibility for the COVID-19 response.

The CHAIR: Member, which particular line item on page 74 are you referring to?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I appreciate that, Chair. It is employee benefits under the heading “Expenses”. Clearly, they are paid staff as part of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Over the COVID period, the Public Sector Commissioner has assisted in a role that we have broadly termed COVID coordinator. The acting director general of the DPC has had a significant role in coordinating with the COVID coordinator, and Emily Roper has assisted in managing particular federal–state relations, which have been a big deal over this period. Obviously, we put as much resource as possible into dealing with it at a public sector level. As we have learnt and as we know, multiple crises and problems have emerged that we have had to deal with at a public sector level every single day as this has gone on. That is what the entire public sector has reoriented towards. In terms of what specific people such as the directors general have done over this period and what their exact roles have been, I will let the acting director general explain. If the member wants to know what people are paid, he can have a look at the report of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal. I do not think it is traditional in these environments to embarrass people by saying in front of everyone what their pay is, but it is all publicly available information. I will let the acting director general comment.

Ms R. Brown: Thank you. As the Premier has touched on, dealing with the impacts of COVID and working collaboratively across the public sector with the key statutory roles, engaging with the commonwealth, and going into recovery has been a significant effort for not only DPC and the State Recovery Controller, but also all parts of the

public sector. As the Premier has outlined, the Public Sector Commissioner is also operating as the State Recovery Controller, which is a strong recognition of the role of the public sector in leading, coordinating and, most importantly, implementing the state government's recovery plan of \$5.5 billion with more than 500 initiatives, so it is a fairly significant effort. The role of DPC and my role in particular are to provide support obviously to the Premier and a number of ministers involved in both COVID and recovery initiatives, and obviously in the broader roles, in supporting the operations of executive government, including operating executive government through COVID, which required an intense effort, particularly around the increased volume of national cabinet meetings and the supporting subcommittee State Disaster Council. It is a critical role in enabling those operations to continue through to the fairly critical role in supporting the Premier and others in a range of commonwealth–state matters and, significantly, national cabinet at its peak of three meetings per week.

Deputy director general Emily Roper focuses heavily on commonwealth–state relations in all matters relating to COVID. That involves working regularly with the commonwealth on a number of issues that impact the nation, but also some of the aspects that enable us to work collaboratively with other jurisdictions on areas of interest—for example, shipping—and also working closely with state colleagues, particularly the State Emergency Coordinator, Commissioner of Police Chris Dawson, and working closely with the Chief Health Officer. Western Australia's approach to the management of COVID has obviously been enabled by those statutory roles, but Emily plays a critical role in enabling that strategic forward-looking and coordination role in supporting the Premier and other ministers in that process. Deputy director general Stephanie Black continues to play a critical role in supporting other functions across the public sector in her role leading the policy and coordination division, which has responsibility for not only, most notably, infrastructure oversight and governance in a number of projects, but also supporting the state government's asset investment program and delivery of it. There are more than 300 infrastructure projects within the recovery plan, and that involves a critical coordination role across the public sector to deliver against that.

Most recently, Angela Kelly joined the department on 29 September, after the sign-off of the annual report for 2019–20. Angela Kelly plays two key roles. The first is oversight of the recovery support implementation area in DPC, where we provide critical support to the State Recovery Controller, Sharyn O'Neill, and also our public sector colleagues in coordination and delivery of that large program. The second is oversight of the state services functions, including executive government and other aspects that enable the operation of cabinet and other features. That position replaces an executive position that will finish next month.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Thank you very much, director general and Premier. Premier, there will obviously be quite a lot of deputy directors general.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Which page?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: We are on the same page, Premier; it is a supplementary question.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I have moved pages. Which page is this?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: This is still page 74, employee benefits, under the heading "Expenses". Further to the director general's explanation, which I appreciate, in relation to the division of services across the executive, obviously deputy directors Roper and Kelly provide an important service in relation to COVID-19 recovery and policy, together with the director general, and together with the Public Sector Commissioner. I am keen to understand this. Clearly, there seems to be quite a lot of overlap, particularly with the recovery projects. The Public Sector Commission is now handling 500 projects, I think it was, that have to be delivered, together with 300 infrastructure programs that are being delivered through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. It seems to me that a number of very highly paid people clearly have the responsibility to implement what is the recovery program, and that there is an expansive public service now answering directly to the Premier to achieve that. I am keen to understand where that division of labour starts and ends. When does COVID recovery go from being the responsibility of the deputy directors general to becoming the responsibility of the Public Sector Commissioner? Why has such an expansive role now been undertaken? The Premier has brought another deputy director general online to achieve this as well, so a large number of people report into the Premier. Given the annual report, I expect that they are particularly well paid. Why are such a large number of people doing that, and where is the division between the PSC and the DPC and the delivery of those programs?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I will comment up-front and then I will ask the director general to provide more advice. Just so the member knows, we froze all the salaries of people at senior levels in the public sector.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: You are paying \$4 million a year for salaries!

Mr M. McGOWAN: I did not interrupt you. We froze all the salaries across the senior levels of the public sector, and for politicians and judges, which set an example for the rest of the public sector, to get our finances back on track. Thankfully we did that; otherwise, the state would now be in a very difficult position to undertake COVID recovery, because our financial position would be nowhere near as good as it currently is.

In terms of how it works, we are in a state of emergency. There is a worldwide pandemic. The member may laugh at that, but there is a worldwide pandemic. Countries all over the world are locking down. Mass numbers of deaths are occurring in countries all over the world. We have coordinated as a state, and, indeed, as a nation, better than most places around the world—certainly at the state level. Basically, for months and months, every morning there was a meeting of the emergency management committee. These days, the emergency management committee meets probably four or five times a week for one or two hours, and the people predominantly referred to by the member are there. That allows the coordination and discussion of who is going to have what responsibility. We obviously have to have people at a senior level in the public sector undertaking roles every single day, making sure that things happen and messages are coordinated. At this point, the evidence is that the people the member is referring to have done a great job. Clearly, we have not had some of the problems that other parts of the country or the world have had. I suspect other states and other countries have put far more resources in. We have better used our existing resources in a coordinated way.

[2.30 pm]

The Leader of the Opposition's first question was about communications. Basically, in terms of that massive communications strategy, we brought together communications staff from across the public sector and co-located them, and ensured that we used existing resources to provide that huge amount of information in a coordinated and successful way to the community. That was an enormous effort that showed what the public sector can do if we use internal resources. Then, of course, we had to buy advertising and what have you; obviously, we had to pay for that. But had we outsourced all that work—as the last government used to do when it would pay money to get Robert Taylor to do its budget communications—it would have been a far more expensive proposition. We have successfully used the resources of government in a coordinated way far more effectively than past governments have and, I suspect, other governments around Australia. But I will get the director general to advise, and I think she already has, what the different roles were for people involved in these tasks.

Ms R. Brown: I will add to the Premier's comments. I probably have a couple of key points of distinction. The state recovery controller chairs the public sector leadership council—so a reflection of the broader public sector effort in the delivery of recovery—which has been critical in supporting government and bringing the recovery plan together. In that regard, the Public Sector Commission provides secretariat support for that council for the state recovery controller role as chair. That is distinctly different from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, which provides overall support for the planning, coordination, monitoring and reporting functions of the recovery plan, which is a large undertaking of over 500 projects. There is a very clear distinction between the role of the state recovery controller and the role of DPC, and the deputy director general with oversight of that.

Probably the final comment that I will make is that the deputy director general, who has oversight for intergovernmental relations and COVID matters, is very much focused on the day-to-day aspects of engagement with the commonwealth, other jurisdictions, statutory officers around the day-to-day—almost 24/7—management of COVID, including supporting, with the statutory officeholders, advice to government earlier in the year around the road map and the management of directions and restrictions associated with it.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Thank you, director general. Premier, I appreciate the extensive explanation. Given the number of people who are now reporting to the Premier as part of the government's response to COVID-19, how does the Premier continue to have the oversights that he admitted to today when information clearly does not make its way to him—for example, people who depart vessels that are at port—and the Premier does not make that public? How is it that there are still these oversights, given that the Premier has such an extensive level now of executive directors and deputy directors who are reporting to him on COVID-19?

Mr M. McGOWAN: The opposition leader has already asked me this question earlier today, but I will provide the member with the answer. On Sunday, we had an emergency committee meeting. Obviously, lots of issues are going on and there is lots of work to be done. I was then advised—I think it was on Sunday—that there were two Australians who had been on the ship who were in self-quarantine and that we would be changing the directions, which I agreed with and I was very, very supportive of, to ensure that Australians leaving ships would go into hotel quarantine. Of the two Australians in question, one went to Busselton and one went to Sydney. Both of them were directed into self-quarantine by the authorities in accordance with existing protocols. It was nothing unusual. It was the normal process as it then existed as of Wednesday last week.

In the interim, of course, a case came to light late last week. I was advised on Sunday that there were two Australians who had left the ship in accordance with existing protocols, that they were in self-quarantine and that it was being managed appropriately. I was very keen that, in future, people leaving ships would go into hotel quarantine. That is not an easy thing for many people because if someone spends eight months at sea and then they get home and have to go into a hotel to quarantine for the two weeks, obviously, a lot of people will not want to do that or will not enjoy

doing that, and we do get some pushback from people in hotel quarantine because they are not too happy about having to do that.

Obviously, on Monday, I had to release huge amounts of information about New Zealanders, the changes to phase 4 arrangements, the expansion of the number of people who were coming in through the international cap and the broader issues related to the ships *Key Integrity* and *Al Messilah*, and I did not think to release that information about two people who had followed the existing protocols. As I have said today, it was an oversight on my behalf. I probably should have released the information. My general rule is to release as much information as quickly as possible so that the public is well-informed. But both people have been tested and both people are negative for COVID. The Western Australian is in hotel quarantine now. We are very confident. The advice that I have had from the Minister for Health is that there is no risk involved here. Therefore, the existing protocols, as they were, were followed. They had been tested. There is no positive case of COVID and the advice I have is that there is no risk, as members understand, because there was a negative test result.

In terms of everything else, as I have said, I do not have to deal with the number of issues that Daniel Andrews has to deal with, but there are still enormous issues. We have all sorts of problems, I think to a greater degree than other states, because we are a major trading state and so the ships are a big issue now. It was not such a big issue before, after the cruise ships departed. It was not as big an issue for some months, with perhaps the exception of one ship or maybe two, but it is now growing, basically because the crew changeovers of foreign seafarers going home and new seafarers coming on and we are relying upon the quarantine arrangements in Manila or Dubai or wherever it might be.

That is a big threat vector for Western Australia and we cannot control that. The only way that we can really, absolutely control it is to close all the ports. That way the ships do not come in and we remove the threat vector. But if we do that, obviously, our economy will collapse, so, clearly, it needs better management, but it needs management at an international level. I cannot control the ship crew transfers in Manila or Dubai. Obviously, there are international organisations here that can help and embassies in those locations can help. But we are still looking at and getting as much information as we can on whether we can just turn around ships that turn up with infected seafarers so that we send a message to the shipping companies and to the importers and exporters. The problem with that, of course, is if we launch that policy, they then may not tell us that they have infected seafarers on board. Therefore, every time we have a solution, another problem can arise. This is an ongoing issue that we have to grapple with and we are doing our best in a very, very difficult environment when it comes to the ships coming into Western Australian ports.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I refer to page 67 and paragraph 14 under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”. The Premier has explained part of this in previous answers, but as it is very important, I would like him to elaborate on it, please. Can the Premier outline the measures put in place by DPC to effectively communicate the emergency response measures to the WA community and the extent to which existing public sector resources have played a role in informing the WA community, to keep it safe?

[2.40 pm]

Mr M. McGOWAN: Thank you for that, member for Armadale. I would like to thank the 60 public sector staff from across the whole sector who worked day in, day out and often nights and weekends to ensure that Western Australians knew exactly what they had to do to keep themselves safe. It was a very, very stressful period for three or four months there. People were having sleepless nights, as was I. I would like to thank all the agencies and departments that gave up their staff to help us. We have seen over east and overseas what can happen if governments do not communicate properly, and thank goodness that is not our story here in Western Australia.

Following the declaration of the state of emergency, the COVID-19 information coordination centre was set up at the bottom of Dumas House to deal with all these things. The team had to interpret a hundred directions. Members have to remember that the State Emergency Coordinator was drafting and issuing directions at a rapid rate, and we were approving them every day in large numbers. They all had to be interpreted and publicised to make sure that the public understood the rules. Then we had to bring off restrictions in an orderly way. The policy and communication on both those things involved a massive effort. I think the spend was around \$6 million. In light of what we actually achieved and the amount of work that was undertaken, it was an enormous effort and, I suspect, by comparison with other parts of Australia and the world, significantly cheaper.

The rules and all that sort of thing included where people could and could not travel, which businesses could not stay open and how many people could gather. The list grew every day. I suspect PhDs will be written about all this and how much was issued and how it all worked. Information went everywhere. We had COVID hotlines—we still do—and television, print and digital campaigns. We had to make sure that information was available to everyone from every background—Aboriginal people, the culturally and linguistically diverse and the like. There was massive interest in the information. I have never known a time when news and information has been so hotly sought after

by the general public. There were 3.37 million views per month on our COVID-19 webpage. Since March 2020, there have been 23.6 million views of my department's pages on wa.gov.au. I reckon that would probably be the same as for the previous 10 years, but that is just an assumption. Our frequently asked questions were fantastic. They were drafted by these people in conjunction with lawyers and others across the sector. The call centre has fielded nearly 166 000 calls, or 830 calls a day, for information.

In 2019–20, \$2.63 million was spent. As we said before, there is a budget for this financial year as well. The communications have boosted recovery, kept people safe, boosted consumer confidence, got people back to work more quickly and ensured that the police had the support that they have needed over this time. I would like to thank everyone who made it happen.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I refer to pages 69 to 71 of the budget papers, which refer to various different services, including the administration of executive government services, parliamentary support, whole of government and Aboriginal affairs. Is it possible—I might need to get this by way of supplementary information—to get a breakdown of the number of term-of-government employees for each of those services, with a separate exclusion for the ministerial offices, obviously?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I do not understand the member's question. Is she asking how many term-of-government employees there are in ministerial offices?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: No—the number of term-of-government employees in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, if there are any.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The best of my advice is that there is none in the department. Obviously, in ministerial offices, like in every government, there are term-of-government employees.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Could I get a breakdown of the number of term-of-government employees in each ministerial office, please?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I suggest the member put a question on notice about that.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Okay.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I do not have the information to hand. Obviously, I do not know.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Is there any way the Premier could provide it by way of supplementary information, because I will not get an answer to a question on notice until Parliament reconvenes.

Mr M. McGOWAN: No; we answer questions. Put the question on notice and I will do my best to get the member an answer as quickly as possible.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Premier, the deadline for questions on notice was last Wednesday. They will not be answered because we have only three sitting weeks left. I was hoping I might be able to get the information by way of supplementary information.

Mr M. McGOWAN: How many term-of-government employees?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: In each ministerial office.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I am sure questions about term-of-government employees have been asked before. I do not know; does the opposition ask these questions regularly? I am not going to provide supplementary information, but I give the member an undertaking that I will get her the last information that was provided in answer to these things.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I refer to paragraph 12 on page 67 of the budget papers and the WA recovery plan. It states —

The Department will coordinate and support delivery of the initiatives in the WA Recovery Plan ... This will be achieved through tracking progress and the early identification of potential issues ...

Specifically referring to the early identification of potential issues, I presume that this has been in place for some time. The worker shortage that we are experiencing now would have been one of those issues that were identified early on in the piece. When was that first raised as a matter of potential concern to government?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I cannot tell the member what date that issue first came to my attention, but I can tell her that during the first few months of the COVID pandemic, the main fear, in an economic sense, was mass unemployment—Great Depression—style unemployment. That was the advice we were getting at a national level and across the board—mass unemployment with basically the same situation that existed during the Great Depression. Our problem—it is a good problem to have—is that that has not happened, but we have the problem with the harvest in regional WA. The actual date that these things started becoming apparent was probably a couple of months ago. When we launched our recovery plan, it was about getting more people back to work and making sure that we fixed long-term problems with shovel-ready projects that had fallen through the cracks. It was about giving payroll tax cuts and that sort of

thing. The issue of not having enough people in seasonal agriculture or regional tourism is a more recent development. Obviously, once that became apparent, we started working on projects to deal with it. I can tell the member that on at least two occasions—maybe even three—I raised the issue of employment in regional agriculture for the harvest with the Prime Minister and had conversations in person and at other forums. I said that we needed a national approach to this and that we needed national assistance in allowing people on any sort of welfare to keep their welfare benefit and work in regional agriculture. I think there is a reluctance at a national level about this. I think there is a belief that it would not work if we were to do that at a national level. I think it is worth trying to a greater degree than we have done. In any event, we know there is a problem. We are doing everything we can at a state level. I cannot magic up people from Sweden. We are doing everything we can at a state level to get Western Australians and Australians from interstate out into these fields of employment.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: How was information collected by the department in the early identification of potential issues? Information must have been coming from industry groups, individuals and members of Parliament. How was that collected, collated and brought to the Premier's attention? My understanding is that this issue was raised far earlier than just a couple of months ago, Premier.

[2.50 pm]

Mr M. McGOWAN: About?

Ms M.J. DAVIES: It is about the prospect of worker shortages and the fact that we are dealing with it now, and that it was raised very early on in the piece.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I will get Emily Roper to comment for the record in a moment. It is part of the recovery plan, which was probably in July. We were the first state to launch a recovery plan, I think in August. We held 21 round tables. I went to a couple, and ministers held them with all sorts of industry groups, not-for-profit groups and the like. Someone at one of those round tables may well have raised this issue. Obviously, we spent some time trying to work out our recovery plan, which we then launched in July.

Ms E. Roper: Further to the round tables, impact statements were prepared on the impact of COVID-19 in a range of areas, which included regional communities. The information gathered through those round tables and other consultations, and other data that was available, identified that a problem seemed to be emerging.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: When were those round tables held?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Through me, when were they held?

Ms E. Roper: In June.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I think those round tables were held sometime in June or July. I chaired one with industry groups at Fraser's Restaurant. In fact, I did two with industry groups at which multiple issues were raised. Literally 50 representatives of industry were in the room and multiple issues were raised. That matter may well have been raised in one of those forums, but I repeat: the main or the overwhelming issue that was raised was unemployment; there were too many people without jobs. I understand that there is concern out there and I know that some people are criticising us over this, but short of opening the international border, I do not know what else those groups want us to do. I guarantee them that I do not support opening the international border at this point in time.

The CHAIR: Member for Dawesville.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Mr Chair, I have a follow-up question on this.

The CHAIR: Okay, follow-up question to the member for Armadale.

Dr A.D. BUTI: My question relates to page 67, paragraph 12. The Leader of the Nationals WA was talking about the WA recovery plan. That paragraph states —

The Department will coordinate and support delivery of the initiatives in the WA Recovery Plan across the public sector.

Can the Premier outline how the WA recovery plan was developed and what has been done to implement it?

Mr M. McGOWAN: It turns out that the date of the release of the Western Australian recovery plan was 26 July. There are 500 different projects in the plan, including 340 infrastructure projects and 200 non-infrastructure projects. The implementation of individual projects will be the responsibility of relevant ministers and agencies. A specialised infrastructure delivery unit to bring forward these projects has been created within the Department of Finance. Agencies will be required to report monthly on the status of their projects, including any issues, anticipated risks or achieved outcomes. To date, more than 25 projects have been completed and are being evaluated to confirm their outcomes and benefits. That reporting will inform the public sector leadership council, which is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the plan. Establishing a centralised oversight mechanism will allow the government

to track the delivery of all recovery projects across government, ensure that there is ongoing focus to support those most affected by the pandemic and prepare contingency planning so that the implementation of specific projects can be adjusted to meet the changing circumstances of the pandemic.

There is a lot of stuff in the plan, but we went for things that were shovel-ready and worthwhile but may not have been done for a long time, such as maintenance of police stations, hospitals and schools; roadworks; and the stuff down at Henderson to make it ready for defence work. There are numerous examples of projects that were really quick to get off the ground. As part of the recovery plan, we did not want to announce funding for something that would take three years to design, because that is not part of recovery. It is about starting things that we can get underway and create a pipeline of work for over the next year or two. That is what the plan is. It turns out, Leader of the Nationals WA, that we launched the recovery plan on 26 July. I might add that we were, easily, the first state in Australia to do so.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I refer to page 74, “Expenses” and the line item “Employee benefits”. I will continue from my earlier question. There has been a \$4.1 million increase in employee benefits to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Can the Premier explain what that increase substantially deals with?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Where is that?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Under “Employee benefits”, the 2019–20 budget of \$90 million, and then the 2019–20 actual, which goes to \$94 million in the 2020–21 budget estimate and then \$94.8 million in the budget actual.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That increase relates to staff increases in the Office of Digital Government. We constantly get reports about problems with actors of whatever description that are causing problems in the cyber world within government. There have been staff increases there to try to combat that. There have been increases in the Collie delivery unit for the massive array of projects we are putting in place in Collie. There have been increases after the royal commission into child sexual abuse, and for the remote communities’ economic transformation project. I will get the director general to explain what that will do.

Ms R. Brown: DPC plays a critical coordination role to progress and implement key initiatives of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The remote communities’ economic transformation project refers to work that has been done in Bidyadanga and on land tenure reform.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Does the Premier have a breakdown of how much of the employee benefits in the last financial year included termination benefits?

Mr M. McGOWAN: We do not have those details to hand, I am sorry.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I am sorry, Premier; you do not have termination benefit details?

Mr M. McGOWAN: No. That is the advice that I have.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I appreciate that. Is the former director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Mr Foster, still attached to the department?

The CHAIR: That is not a further question.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: It deals with termination benefits. Mr Foster left the employment of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, I believe; I am trying to understand what that looks like.

The CHAIR: We will hear the answer, then.

Mr M. McGOWAN: There are no termination benefits.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Is Mr Foster still within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet or attached to it, or has he been transferred entirely?

Mr M. McGOWAN: He was transferred to the Public Sector Commission and then redeployed to the Department of Treasury.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Why did Mr Foster leave the department?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I explained that at the time. I explained it in the house and I explained it in the media. Those reasons have not changed.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I refer to the bottom of page 74, “Details of Controlled Grants and Subsidies” and the line item “Community Grants”.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Is the Leader of the Opposition referring to the regional community services fund?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: No. I refer to the bottom box, “Details of Controlled Grants and Subsidies”, and the second line from the bottom, “Community Grants”. There are figures there of \$4.209 million, \$3.149 million, \$7.999 million and \$6.199 million. Is it possible to get a breakdown of the 2019–20 budget of \$7.899 million and which organisations

those grants were awarded to? Could I also get a breakdown of any anticipated allocations from the proposed 2020–21 budget?

[3.00 pm]

Mr M. McGOWAN: Community donations and community grants are the same thing and included grants to the following: Telethon, \$3.5 million; Western Australian Council of Social Service, \$281 000; Wheelchairs for Kids, \$50 000; the Duyfken 1606 Replica Foundation, \$273 000; Celebrate WA, \$500 000; the Kalamunda Community Centre, \$2.4 million; Brockman Community House, \$500 000; inspire Australian of the Year Awards, \$100 000; Activate Perth, \$200 000; and UWA ambassador for life sciences, \$50 000. Basically half the money went to Telethon.

Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE: I refer the Premier to paragraph 14 on page 67. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet obviously has a role in communicating the detail of restrictions under a state of emergency, whether imposing or removing them. Every jurisdiction has its own set of restrictions. How do Western Australia's current phase 4 restrictions compare with the rest of the nation?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I can broadly say that this state is a far freer place than any other part of Australia, perhaps bar the Northern Territory. As I recall, the Northern Territory was the first place to return to having people stand and drink beer—probably a transitory thing for the Northern Territory. From 27 June, we have had no caps or limits on restaurants, cafes or pubs. The limit has been determined by the two-square-metre rule—not a number cap—and there has been no requirement for seated-only service.

New South Wales is currently subject to the four-square-metre rule inside with a cap of 300 people irrespective of the venue's size. Sydney Town Hall is a massive building but it can have only 300 people in it. Outdoor areas are subject to the two-square-metre rule but they must use electronic methods such as QR codes to record and keep contact details if applying this rule. Group bookings are limited to 10 people. Venues must have a dedicated marshal to ensure that social distancing is maintained. It has seated service only with no dance floors, except for a wedding reception at which up to 20 people and the official wedding party can dance. Hygiene marshals must be on duty at all times in a venue that holds more than 250 people. That is the gold standard in New South Wales.

South Australia has imposed the one-person-per-two-square-metres rule but it has only seated service. Shared utensils and communal food places, such as salad bars and buffets, are not allowed. A COVID-19 marshal is required. Nightclubs can operate as a bar or pub and sell alcohol to seated patrons if they have a COVID management plan. That would be a fun nightclub!

In metropolitan Victoria, there is takeaway or delivery service only. People can travel up to five kilometres from home, but I think that has changed. In regional areas, seated service is allowed only for groups of up to 10 people with a cap of 50 people for outdoor areas under the two-square-metre rule. Indoor areas have a cap of 20 people under the four-square-metre rule and only 10 people per space are allowed. Smaller venues that have less than 200 square metres can use the two-square-metre rule with up to 50 persons at a time. People can eat and drink standing but there is no dancing, except for at a wedding reception, where the wedding couple may dance with each other and/or their parents.

Tasmania is subject to the two-square-metre rule and up to 250 are allowed in an undivided indoor space—that would be the biggest function ever in Tasmania—following the two-square-metre rule. Up to 1 000 people are allowed in an outdoor space. Tasmania has all sorts of rules around dancing as well.

Gyms also have all sorts of rules. In New South Wales it is interesting to note that gyms, fitness centres and studios, such as dance studios, are allowed to open for up to 20 people per class. The facility is capped under the four-square-metre rule. We have the two-square-metre rule in gyms and they do not have to be staffed. Contact sport and training has been in place for a long time.

In Western Australia, the numbers for outdoor gatherings are determined by only the two-square-metre. In New South Wales 20 people are allowed at an outdoor public gathering, 500 at community sport and 500 people can attend an outdoor seated music performance subject to the two-square-metre rule.

I could go on and on because this list is quite extensive, but as the member can see, the limits on people's activity and behaviour in Western Australia are very, very mild compared with those in other states in Australia. Our rules are largely determined by the two-square-metre rule. In other words, we have the freest society in Australia, certainly the freest state in Australia, by a long, long way compared with other states. It certainly appears that New South Wales is very, very restricted in what its people can do because it has had continual outbreaks and problems. It had the *Ruby Princess* issue and its economy has declining employment figures. All those sorts of things are happening in New South Wales, whereas Western Australia is in a very different situation.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I will stay on page 74. I refer to expenses in the table and the line item "Supplies and services". Has the Department of the Premier and Cabinet engaged the services of any market research or polling organisations in the last financial year or signed any contracts for the provision of those services in the coming financial year?

Mr M. McGOWAN: As I outlined before—I think I read it out to the member—a community sentiment survey was undertaken on the COVID response to make sure that people understood the rules and to work out whether we needed to change the messaging. I think that the department carried out a very small project that cost a small amount, but I will let the director general comment on that.

Ms R. Brown: There was a contract with Metrix for approximately \$25 000, which, as the Premier said, was about community sentiment. It pretty much ran during the peak of COVID and finished in July.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I appreciate that, director general. Premier, the department’s annual report also included market research organisations called The KP Collective and Ipsos.

[3.10 pm]

Mr M. McGOWAN: Maybe we will come back to The KP Collective when someone finds some information about it, if that is all right, Mr Chair. Someone else might want to ask a question.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I assume we will come back to it.

Further to that, on the same page, I refer to accommodation under “Expenses”. I note that the 2019–20 budget was \$6.2 million, and the 2019–20 actual was \$19.6 million. Going forward, there are, circa, \$20 million for each financial year ahead. Can the Premier provide an outline to the chamber of what that expenditure is for as part of the accommodation?

Mr M. McGOWAN: The budget reflects the proposed change in accounting treatment for accommodation leases under Australian Accounting Standards Board standard 16, which was reversed. Right-of-use asset was not recognised for accommodation leases, which would have resulted in costs recognised as depreciation expenses. Maybe I will ask the director general or someone to explain what that means. Gary Meyers can explain what that means.

Mr G. Meyers: Under AASB 16, we were required to recognise the right-of-use asset—and right-of-use liability. As a result, expenses transferred from accommodation down to depreciation expense in the budget year. However, the accounting treatment for departments and agencies was reversed for AASB 16, with the Department of Finance recognising the full impacts of AASB 16 for accommodation leases; hence DPC’s usual accommodation expense in 2018–19 was approximately \$20 million, and that is what has been reflected in 2019–20 and the out years.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Thank you very much. I assume ROUs will be an issue across all the agencies now.

As part of the accommodation expenses, has any money been spent on the refit or refurbishment of any of the floors in Dumas House?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I will get the director general to explain.

Ms R. Brown: There was a small expense to co-locate the COVID communications team, and to set it up with the necessary desks and information technology requirements.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is in the basement of Dumas House. As we come out of the lifts at the bottom of the building, a bunch of rooms towards that major meeting room, the other end to the media room, were set up for the COVID coordination, with, I think, 52 staff or whatever, so there would have been cabling, computers, desks and so forth that needed some work. I do not know what the expense was but it was minimal.

Ms R. Brown: I am not sure that we have what the expense is, but we made the investment on the basis that if we needed surge capacity again, it is now equipped, but it is obviously a much smaller team at the moment.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I have no further questions except on the market research and polling organisations.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The KP Collective sounds like a 1970s band.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I refer to the Wellington Dam mural and Collie art trail under “Spending Changes”. Can the Premier please advise whether that allocation of \$1.5 million was subject to a government tender process, or was this commissioned work?

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is an exciting project and we hope to have it completed later this year or next year. We are putting a lot of effort into trying to diversify in Collie, keeping a strong manufacturing or an industrial base, but diversifying the local economy. We have therefore committed to the mural or the art project, as it was termed, on the Wellington Dam wall. We announced that \$1.5 million would be put towards this project and a bunch of other projects for Collie involving murals and the like. The Wellington Dam mural will be part of other murals throughout the town centre. The mural will be 7 300 square metres in size, the largest mural on a dam wall in the world, and the first mural in Australia to be painted on a dam wall. The project is being managed by the department. A project director is delivering the project. In an expression-of-interest tender process, a bunch of artists competed and a selection process was run by the project director. I have seen the design, which looks fantastic to me, and, hopefully, it will come to fruition later this year. I do not know whether people know that the dam wall has been cleaned. It

is the most pristine looking dam wall we have ever seen. It has reached a conclusion, and painting and all that sort of thing will hopefully start soon. A further 12 murals will be painted throughout the town of Collie, pulling people into town and making sure the Collie economy is more diverse. These are the sorts of things people love these days. We are very excited to be able to create this amazing tourism benefit for the south west and for the Collie region.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I understand the dam wall project was awarded to a Queensland muralist, Guido van Helten. Can the Premier advise whether the other murals commissioned for Collie have been awarded to any of the Western Australian-based muralists, Melski McVee, Mike Shime, Daek Williams, Anya Brock and Paul Deej? They are all pre-eminent muralists, who were no doubt disappointed that they missed out on the main game, being the dam wall.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Twelve Western Australian artists are being engaged as part of the Collie mural trail to deliver a series of murals throughout the town. We are very keen on this. When we do something like this on the Wellington Dam wall, we want to get the best. A competition was held. Local artists competed with interstate artists and I think even international artists might have competed. The selection panel judged that Mr van Helten came out with the best and most deliverable product, so that is the one that was selected. We needed to come up with whatever was selected was the best. However, 12 WA artists will be engaged on the other murals throughout town. I think that is reasonable. If a process throws up an artist that has the best record and is the most successful at delivering an outstanding product, that is the outcome that we accept. If we had rejected what the process threw up as the best artist, I doubt artists would compete for any projects in Western Australia ever again.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I guess I am a bit parochial and disagree that the Western Australian artists are not the best, but that is a statement.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is a pretty low way of putting words into my mouth.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We are prepared to move on to the next division.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The director general has some information on The KP Collective.

[3.20 pm]

Ms R. Brown: The KP Collective is a WA communications company. It was engaged to do some social media work on COVID communications. There was a small amount in 2019–20 of around \$1 000. I can also update that in relation to work by Metrix Consulting, which was about COVID, the figure was around \$78 000 for 2019–20 and then there was a small amount in 2020–21 of \$18 000, at which point it finished.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: With respect to Metrix and the KP Collective, do we have an understanding of what the findings or questions were? Is that able to be provided to the house?

Ms R. Brown: I do not have the detail with me, but it was related to sentiment on the restrictions and the understanding of the implications on day-to-day life and other aspects of community wellbeing at the time.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Were questions asked about restrictions and borders as part of that sentiment analysis?

Mr M. McGOWAN: The amount for the KP Collective was \$800. It was about assessing community sentiment and whether people understood the communications out there about social distancing, the four-square-metre rule, as it then was, places closing, regional borders and all that sort of stuff. Did people understand what they were required to do? I think it is commonplace in advertising to assess whether the message is understood and whether it needs to be recalibrated. That was what it was about.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I appreciate that that is commonplace, but sentiment analysis occurs to understand people's perceptions of decisions that have been taken by government. Did the sentiment analysis about restrictions, which we have just heard from the director general was undertaken, also include things such as the borders? Was the government trying to assess how the Western Australian people, through the taxpayers of Western Australia, responded to the restrictions that the government put in place, including our border arrangements?

Mr M. McGOWAN: There is nothing to my knowledge along the lines the member is expressing. It was just about whether people understood the rules and whether we needed to change the advertising to ensure people understood them. We were worried about people dying, so we needed to make sure that the rules were well understood.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: If there is nothing to see here, would the Premier be willing to table the findings and the questions asked as part of the sentiment analysis provided by Metrix?

Mr M. McGOWAN: No. If the member wants to follow any other processes such as questions on notice or freedom of information, he can be my guest.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Was Ipsos polling also commissioned for the same purpose?

Mr M. McGOWAN: There was a small amount of money. I think it was all about assessing community sentiment. As the member has seen, we were spending \$6 million on various campaigns. We had 52 people collated from across the public sector, so we wanted to make sure that the message we were putting out there was correct. That is my understanding of what the research was about. It is not as though I ask for this research. These are the sorts of things that agencies do to find out whether the messaging is working.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: No other agency I have seen has spent as much on market research as the Premier's agency.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member for Dawesville was a senior spin doctor in a government that was addicted to spin.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I was a policy adviser.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is one interpretation.

The CHAIR: Member for Armadale.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Surely we are going to move on from government members asking dorothis on this.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Excuse me. I refer to the eleventh significant issue impacting the agency, again on page 67 of the *Budget Statements*, and the Perth City Deal with the federal government. I believe that Department of the Premier and Cabinet was the lead agency in negotiating that. Can the Premier outline how the Perth City Deal came about and some of the objectives and criteria determining what projects were in the City Deal?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I signed the City Deal with Malcolm Turnbull in, maybe, 2018. We did an event at the train station and jointly signed. We had maps there. I was showing him which parts of the city would be the beneficiaries of the various projects, and so it was a good process to get into. We concluded the package on 20 September this year. It is a \$1.5 billion partnership between state and federal governments and private industry. The projects in the deal will contribute to creating a hub of activity and offerings in the city. The main part of the deal, perhaps half of the deal, is the investment from the Western Australian government, the Australian government and Edith Cowan University into a world-class inner city campus. That will ensure that all of the artists and students from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts will move into the city over time and have a world-class university campus there. That is a very exciting development. I expect when it is completed in five years' time, we will all be wowed by it, and perhaps some of our children might attend it. All members will have an appreciation that the Fringe Festival brings people in. The ECU development will be in a similar location to Fringe, so it will attract visitors from near and far. The government also listened to Murdoch University and Curtin University, which participated in the process, and we decided to allocate \$50 million to each. Murdoch's project is digital futures academy and eSport hub, and from memory Curtin has some significant business school it is establishing in the city.

There are seven other packages in the city, with some work on pedestrian and cycle infrastructure. There will be a new bridge across the river in East Perth. The cycling bridge will be very exciting, too. It will be well appreciated. As members know, the member for Armadale runs from Armadale to the city regularly, incredibly!

Dr A.D. BUTI: It will cut it down by half a kilometre!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member for Armadale is going soft! The member for Armadale will be able to run across that bridge in due course.

The City Deal will also see significant investment in cultural activities, with \$20 million for the Perth Cultural Centre. As we are doing the Western Australian Museum and the Art Gallery of Western Australia development, which is happening now, the cultural centre in between is not of sufficient standard, so it will be completely revamped. That little amphitheatre will go—all that sort of stuff. It will be a massive revamp of the cultural centre. There will be \$42 million to develop the Perth Concert Hall. I thank Richard Goyder for his regular entreaties to me to undertake some work there and I thank the commonwealth government for its support. There is \$100 million to develop the WACA in conjunction with the commonwealth government and put in place a swimming pool. That will be amazing. There is \$20 million for the East Perth precinct and the East Perth power station redevelopment, which this government has reactivated over a 40-year hiatus. There is also \$4 million for planning for the Aboriginal cultural centre. In five or so years, these arrangements and developments around the city will massively enhance its appeal and attractiveness and unlock enormous amounts of private sector development. I thank everyone who has been engaged in this, particularly people in government such as Stephanie here. I formally thank Senator Cormann, who is shortly to retire from politics, for all of his work on the City Deal, amongst many other things in Western Australia. I thank the commissioners of the City of Perth for their support, and I thank the Minister for Transport. I look forward to the projects proceeding and I thank the member for his question.

The appropriation was recommended.

[3.30 pm]

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A — Tuesday, 20 October 2020]

p34b-47a

Chair; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Zak Kirkup; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Robyn
Clarke
