Division 3: Premier and Cabinet — Service 5, Innovation and ICT, $10 276 000 —

Mr R.S. Love, Chair.

Mr D.J. Kelly, Minister for Innovation and ICT.

Mr D. Foster, Director General.

Mr M. Bradshaw, Deputy Director General, Infrastructure and Major Projects.

Mr G. Meyers, Director, Corporate Services.

Mr G.J. Italiano, Government Chief Information Officer.

Ms N. Arrowsmith, Chief of Staff, Minister for Innovation and ICT.

Mrs T. Bensley, Senior Policy Adviser.

Mr T. Grey-Smith, Senior Policy Adviser.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: This estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be available the following day. It is the intention of the Chair to 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, 31 May 2019. 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.

I give the call to the member for Nedlands.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I refer to service 5, "Government Policy Management—ICT" on page 68 of the *Budget Statements*. On that page there is a table that lists the number of full-time equivalent employees, and there is a large jump from one year to the next of 30 to 55. Can the minister please explain the increase?

Mr D.J. KELLY: That is largely attributable to the additional resources committed by this government to the Office of Digital Government. The member will be aware that previously there was the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, which was only temporarily funded. We gave that office a reboot, if you like. We gave it a new mandate and it became the Office of Digital Government in this budget and we gave it another 12 months' funding. In this budget we have committed $37.4 million over four years, so that is ongoing funding for the Office of Digital Government. It now has a mandate, for example, to have a sector-wide purview of cybersecurity. From an operational sense, individual departments will still be responsible for their own cybersecurity, but the Office of Digital Government will be there to provide them with advice and encouragement on a whole range of areas. For example, we have asked it to do a project on password hardening. One of the weaknesses in the public sector that the Auditor General has identified is poor passwords. That is one of the projects we have embarked upon through that new office. We have signed a memorandum with Edith Cowan University Joondalup, which I am sure members are aware is a world leader in cybersecurity. We are really taking that issue much more seriously than it has, in my view, previously been taken. For the first time, the Office of Digital Government has a unit in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet with a responsibility or remit to range across the public sector on that issue. That is just one example. I do not know whether the director general wants to add any more about those additional FTEs.

Mr D. Foster: That really sums up what the increase is attributable to. It is also partly an artefact of running the numbers down while the office was being restructured and redesigned, and there were a number of people in all sorts of interesting contractual arrangements who are now no longer there. These will be permanent FTEs attached to that office.

Mr D.J. KELLY: That was one of the issues with having only temporary funding for that office. We had some really good people there who needed to know what their futures were. Some of them moved on because of the temporary nature of the office. Now the office has ongoing funding, we can really build a team of professionals around digital transformation.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I thank the minister for that. That is the area I wanted to home in on. The minister has answered a lot of my next question and I appreciate that. Can the minister tell me how many of the 55 are specialised in cybersecurity? Are there additional people who have expertise in that area? I would like to know the number of people that have had to be put on. Also, these people are highly skilled and can command large salaries in the private sector; I know some of them and they get paid a lot.

Mr D.J. KELLY: Do not tell everyone!

Mr W.R. MARMION: Has the department had to put in special arrangements to secure these important people to the security of the Western Australian government?

Mr D.J. KELLY: I am advised the full complement will be up to 15 FTEs. It is challenging to attract people in this area, because they are so widely sought after, but we have not put in place any special arrangements. They were employed under the public service agreements like anyone else, so there is nothing special about that. A lot of people actually want to work for the state government; it is prestigious in its own right for someone to say they are doing some groundbreaking work on cybersecurity. I went to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation the other day. It is one of the agencies that is taking advantage of the increased emphasis on cybersecurity; it is doing some impressive work there. At this point, it may be difficult at times to attract people, but we are certainly going to give it our best shot.

[7.40 pm]

Mr W.R. MARMION: Regarding cybersecurity, I think last year the minister mentioned in Parliament that there were 1.85 million cyberattacks on the internal network. Is there an update? Has that figure gone up, and how are the main methods that we are putting in place to address the cyberattacking going? Also, have there been any successful cyberattacks?

Mr D.J. KELLY: I think we answered a question on notice not that long ago. I think it was a public sector–wide question and we gave the opposition a breakdown quite recently —

Mr W.R. MARMION: I am sorry, I did not ask that question, so I do not know the answer.

Mr D.J. KELLY: It certainly came from the member's party. I cannot give the member an agency-by-agency breakdown of the number of cybersecurity attacks. As the member knows, a lot of them are automated and random; they are not specifically attacking the Western Australian government, they are just viruses looking for a home, if you like.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Surely you would have a number off the top of your head if you are in fact the minister.

Mr D.J. KELLY: Yes, that is right, the "member for North West Claremont" says I should have —

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Don't be a tool, answer the question.

Mr D.J. KELLY: I beg your pardon?

The CHAIR: Member, you will withdraw that remark.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I withdraw.

Mr D.J. KELLY: It is ridiculous, there are thousands of attacks every month.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Ask your IT person behind you, he is nodding his head. He can answer the question

Mr D.J. KELLY: I am the minister.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: But you do not know the answer to the question.

The CHAIR: Member!

Mr D.J. KELLY: Just sit down and calm yourself. I know this is an area of keen interest to you. I almost forgot the question that the member asked.

Mr W.R. MARMION: There were 1.85 million cyberattacks between March 2017 and September 2018. Can the minister give me an update of the figure?

Mr D.J. KELLY: I cannot. I am not aware that there has been any significant increase.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Are you interested in your portfolio?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Can the minister provide it by supplementary information?

Ms J.J. SHAW: Who is asking the questions around here? Which one of you?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Not you.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Not the minister.

The CHAIR: Member for North West Central, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Can I get that information? I am not asking specifically for the number of cyberattacks on every single department, just a rough idea, within the million, of what has happened over the last 12 months so that we can get a trend line. There is a reason one might ask this question, because it indicates how many staff the department might have to put on to address the problem and what sort of methodologies it might have used to address it. That is where I am coming from.

Mr D.J. KELLY: One of the key issues in cybersecurity is personal behaviour. One of the things that the Auditor General identified across the public sector was weak passwords.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Yes, we all know that; mine is weak, too.

Mr D.J. KELLY: That is right, member. One of the priorities that we have tasked the Office of Digital Government with is password hardening. We have developed a new kit for agencies to deal with excluding weak passwords from the network. A lot of people think cybersecurity issues are all about high-tech stuff. A lot of it comes down to personal behaviour, and passwords is one of them. People also stick USBs into their computers, because they find them or are given them, and they then infect the network. A lot of the vulnerability is from personal behaviour. If we want to make the biggest bang for our buck, we need to deal with those issues first, not spend a lot of money on kit. They are some of the projects that the office is now running as the first priority. It is an easy improvement for a low cost.

Mr W.R. MARMION: While we are addressing cybersecurity, are the 15 ICT staff in the minister's office advising departments—which we want to make sure are secure—that are procuring hardware and software services, particularly by contract?

Mr D.J. KELLY: They are able to provide advice, but individual departments are still responsible for procurement. This office has not taken over the procurement role for everybody else.

Mr W.R. MARMION: The minister has already said that.

Mr D.J. KELLY: I am just saying to the member that the office can provide advice.

Mr W.R. MARMION: The minister has already said that as well. My question is: has it provided advice?

Mr D.J. KELLY: Yes, it does on request by departments.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Has it?

Mr D.J. KELLY: I just said it does.

Mr W.R. MARMION: It does, okay.

Mr D.J. KELLY: Yes, that is right. As I said, it has not taken over the role of departments but it is there to be a source of advice on these issues.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Just to repeat, it does provide advice to departments when it goes to procurement to procure services in the ICT area?

Mr D.J. KELLY: It can do; yes, that is right. It does not universally, because —

Mr W.R. MARMION: It can do or it does?

Mr D.J. KELLY: It can do, and it has done.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I know it can do; obviously it has the ability to.

Mr D.J. KELLY: It is not a universal requirement.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Can the minister tell me the costs associated with cybersecurity and not having a central point, being his department, that controls the procurement of all the other departments? Is there a cost saving by having all departments come under the minister's ICT department to ensure that everyone is on the same pathway and has the right software to limit the number of attacks? I would also imagine that there would be a huge cost saving to government to bring all IT under one area rather than having each department go off separately to procure their own IT. Does the minister have a figure for how much that would save government?

Mr D.J. KELLY: The member would be aware of the history of this issue. Under the previous government, there was no central advice on these issues; it was all done by individual departments and the Department of Finance. During the previous government, it pretended that there were going to be savings from IT procurement.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Is the minister talking about the Office of Shared Services?

Mr D.J. KELLY: No, I am talking about —

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Okay, well how about you answer the question. The question was —

Mr D.J. KELLY: Member, do you want me to answer the question? I do not have to. I will not if you keep interrupting me.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: You're a bully.

Mr D.J. KELLY: Does the member remember the history of this? The previous government estimated that there would be savings in the procurement of ICT services and it used those savings to fund the former Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. That is what the previous government did. We have given that agency permanent funding, because some of those savings were not real, to be honest. The member will also remember that the previous government started the GovNext-ICT program, which was all about trying to provide some central tools and arrangements for agencies to procure ICT. That program is still in place; it was started under the previous government, and we are refining it.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I am not talking about the previous government, I am talking about the government that has been in for two years. I am asking a question about the cost associated with every government department operating their own ICT. If ICT procurement for every government agency was brought under one agency, being the department that the so-called minister heads up, would it not be a cost saving to government, rather than having every department do their own procurement? How much would the savings be? I know there is a figure.

[7.50 pm]

Mr D.J. KELLY: Do you? How do you know that?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: If the minister does not know that, that is a worry.

Mr D.J. KELLY: If the member is suggesting that a unit within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet does all the procurement for the departments of health and education and takes that role off those agencies, some level of concern would probably be raised by other departments. That is why his government did not go down that path and no other government has. The previous government started the GovNext-ICT program, which brought in some major vendors and encouraged agencies to be part of that when they procure their information and communications technology hardware and software and the like. I would be very interested if anyone thought there was merit in bringing all ICT procurement under DPC. I would be very interested to hear what the argument for that would be.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Can the minister tell me what the cost of government ICT is generally?

Mr D.J. KELLY: Can the member refer to a line item in the budget? I have tolerated the wide-ranging questions, but is the member referring to a line item in order for me to answer that question?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I refer to the asset investment program.

Mr D.J. KELLY: Which item in the asset investment program?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The minister can have a look himself. It is on page 69.

Mr D.J. KELLY: Which page is it on?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Does the minister have an understanding of how much ICT costs the state government?

Mr D.J. KELLY: I am asking what the line item is.

The CHAIR: Can the member point to where that falls in this particular division?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I refer to page 68, "Explanation of Significant Movements" and specifically the first note, which states —

> The increase in the Total Cost of Service for the 2019-20 Budget Target represents the Government's increased commitment towards the digital transformation of the Western Australian public sector.

How much does ICT for government agencies cost the state of Western Australia?

Mr D.J. KELLY: I cannot see how that question is relevant to that line item of the budget.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I take it that the minister does not know the answer.

Mr D.J. KELLY: No, I am saying that it is not a question.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The minister is saying that he does not know the answer.

Mr D.J. KELLY: No, I am not. I am saying —

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Then answer the question!

Mr D.J. KELLY: — that there are rules, member for north west Claremont, about what you can ask and what you cannot ask.

The CHAIR: Order, members! You both need to settle down a little bit. The minister needs to refer to the member by his proper title, thank you.

Mr D.J. KELLY: I will take that on board.

The CHAIR: I am sure it was a slip of the tongue.

Ms A. SANDERSON: My question relates to page 63 and the line item "Service Western Australia (ServiceWA) Pilot". Can the minister outline how ServiceWA will provide access to Western Australian government services?

Mr D.J. KELLY: ServiceWA is a very exciting initiative that the Premier announced on 10 May. It is essentially a one-stop shop for people who want to access services in WA. A pilot program will be run in Bunbury. We want people to be able to access services in the most convenient way possible. Instead of people having to go from department to department to access services, we are going to run the ServiceWA pilot program. People will have face-to-face or online options. Instead of people having to visit multiple departments to obtain, for example, their fishing licence or their driver's licence, they will be able to go to one place to access all those services. More services will be available online through ServiceWA. If people are interested, New South Wales has really embraced that option. The Liberal government in New South Wales has been very helpful in providing us with advice. A number of senior people from the department and I have been over to New South Wales. They were very surprised over there that the previous Liberal government here was very slow on this initiative, but they have been absolutely fantastic. The pilot is being led out of DPC, so I will ask the director general to provide more detail on that very exciting initiative.

Mr D. Foster: The proposal is for a pilot, but if that is successful, there is the opportunity to scale it up and extend it around the state. New South Wales has some 100 outlets. They are very popular and highly regarded by the public. In our pilot, we will be looking at about 85 different services to start off with. Every day we are being approached by government departments that are keen to join and sign up and be part of it. We will obviously evaluate the success, and then the Expenditure Review Committee will make further decisions about the next steps. The important thing to note is that it is in line with the service priority review recommendations about collaboration and delivering better services to the community. Agencies have really embraced that concept and are very keen to make a success of it.

The appropriation was recommended.