

Division 37: Western Australian Sports Centre Trust, \$123 819 000 —

Mrs L.A. Munday, Chair.

Dr A.D. Buti, Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation.

Mr D. Etherton, Chief Executive Officer.

Mr N. Lucas, Chief Financial Officer.

Mrs J. Carren, Director, Strategy and Partnerships.

Mr G. Hamley, Chief of Staff, Minister for Sport and Recreation.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard and the daily proof will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. The chair will allow as many questions as possible. The questions and answers should be short and to the point. Consideration is restricted to items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must relate to a page number, item or amount related to the current division and members should preface their questions with these details. Some divisions are the responsibility of more than one minister. Ministers shall only be examined in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

A minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee. I will ask the minister to clearly indicate what information they agree to provide and will then allocate a reference number. Supplementary information should be provided to the principal clerk by close of business Friday, 3 June 2022. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system.

Member for Roe, when you are ready.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I refer to page 571 and the Optus Stadium rooftop attraction. How is this progressing? Has it been completed and how is it performing?

Dr A.D. BUTI: No, it is definitely performing. One of the great regrets of not being the sports minister anymore is that I did not get a chance to be at its opening. I am not sure whether Minister Templeman did—I think he might be scared of heights—but it is fully operative. Mr Etherton would like to say something.

Mr D. Etherton: With regard to the launch, we have actually had two events there. The first launch was for able-bodied customers. We have since updated some of the equipment to allow people in wheelchairs to also conduct the rooftop walk and we launched that a couple of weeks ago so that was fantastic.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I am sure an invitation could be made to the member, as the opposition sports spokesperson.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I hope that Mr Etherton was leading by example on Sunday afternoon up there in the rain.

Dr A.D. BUTI: In the winch.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: On that same page, page 571, I refer to “Infrastructure Upgrades”. The sixth paragraph is about public safety and security aspects. VenuesWest is working with the Western Australia Police Force on infrastructure upgrades to mitigate security risks. Can the minister enlighten us on what that entails? We are talking about national threat levels and relevant security agencies. Is this in relation to terrorism or normal security measures?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Unless Mr Etherton wants to add anything, for security reasons it would not be responsible of us to disclose the issues about that. The member can be rest assured that VenuesWest is working to ensure that appropriate security is provided.

Mr D. Etherton: I will just add two quick things. Without going into detail, as the minister said, hostile vehicle mitigation and CCTV are two of the core pieces of infrastructure that we are implementing in that regard.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Page 575 outlines the asset investment program and subparagraph 1.2 reads —

\$4.5 million to upgrade or replace technology infrastructure including ticketing management systems at Optus Stadium;

Can we have some detail on that and also how long will that play out for?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I defer to Mr Etherton.

Mr D. Etherton: In the midyear review we will update that description because it is narrower than what we are actually spending that money on. The \$4.5 million for projects at Optus Stadium are wide and varied. When we opened the venue, a lot of money was spent on kitchen, catering and ticketing equipment et cetera. Over time, all that depreciates and deteriorates and we need to replace. It is quite a broad program of infrastructure. The member will remember from our discussions previously that some equipment was put in by us and also by the design, build, finance and maintain regime. This money is for the equipment that we put into the asset after it was, in essence, built.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I have a question that follows on from this. I refer to page 571, “Strategic Asset Program” and the seventh paragraph —

The findings from a full asset condition assessment audit of the portfolio are being utilised to prioritise VenuesWest’s capital investment planning.

...

The condition of assets is critical to enable compliance with world-class training and competition standards ...

Is the minister able to table or provide by way of supplementary information the strategic asset program and what VenuesWest has asked for from the government to maintain these assets in terms of cost and time frames?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I will not be providing supplementary information, but I can give the member some initial information and Mr Etherton might want to elaborate. Some of that work involves making energy savings and the installation of photovoltaic cells, LED lights and smart metering. Amenities in several facilities are to be upgraded, including shade and toilet facilities and air-conditioning. Improvements will also be made to disability access to HBF Stadium, including installing a lift. These investments will deliver improved accessibility, amenities, safety and athlete training in key venues. Local companies will generally be sourced to complete the works. Does Mr Etherton want to add anything?

Mr D. Etherton: Yes. I will point the member to page 575 where there is an explicit line in response to the building condition audit and the capital works funding that has been provided in response to that application. The member will see about three-quarters of the way down amounts of \$590 000, \$1.04 million, \$739 000 and \$2.915 million. That is the government’s response to the building condition audit.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I understand that. I just want to make sure that what VenuesWest is putting forward is what the government is actually funding. I asked for a list of the works under the strategic asset program and the cost to upkeep VenuesWest’s assets to see whether there is any discrepancy between the two.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Is the member joking with that question? Does he honestly believe that governments provide members with all correspondence between agencies and governments?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I am asking —

Dr A.D. BUTI: This has been agreed to. This is in the budget and I am not —

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I am just asking if it is possible to get a copy.

Dr A.D. BUTI: No. This is —

Mr V.A. CATANIA: If the answer is no, the answer is no; I was just asking.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I am surprised by the question, to tell you the truth.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: If you do not ask, you do not get.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes, that is right.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I refer to page 575, about three or four lines from the bottom, “Funds Included in Department of Treasury—Major State Infrastructure”. An amount of \$22.5 million was attributed to the settlement of the Optus Stadium contract dispute. In last year’s budget papers, it was \$23.5 million. Can the minister explain why there is a discrepancy? Is this now settled and are there any other unsettled disputes to cover?

[3.00 pm]

Dr A.D. BUTI: I will ask Mr Etherton to answer this.

Mr D. Etherton: Over time, negotiations change the amount and, no, it has not settled. A deed has not been signed yet, but I understand it is very close to settling and, no, we do not envisage any other major issues or any issues with that settlement after it has finished. It is a full and final settlement.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I have a new question. I refer to the same page and subparagraph 1.3 —

\$2.6 million to replace the athletics track and other minor works at the athletics stadium;

Given that it is a pretty new venue, can we have some detail on what the \$2.6 million is for?

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is for the planned replacement of the athletics track. It was always expected that this would happen.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Given that it is a relatively new venue, the replacement of the athletics track seems to have come up pretty quickly.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is about 10 years old and it is utilised extensively. This government committed to a high quality facility. We could have let it go, I suppose, and let it run into the ground, but we committed to having a first-class athletics track.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Is it actually wear and tear or has a new surface come to light that would improve the standard of athletics?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I will ask Mr Etherton to explain.

Mr D. Etherton: The member might recall that originally the track was replaced very soon after we opened because there was a failure in the track that was provided. This is a planned replacement of the track. It has lasted the seven years that we expected it to last. It was in a deteriorated state and we are replacing the track. We would have done it a year earlier if not for the COVID-19 pandemic and we could not get the installers to come in. But it was a planned replacement. Each asset has a life. The life of some assets is 40 years and for others it is five years. In the case of an athletics track, it has a life of around seven years. There is nothing abnormal about this.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I reckon that The member would even be able to do 100 metres in 13 seconds on the new track.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I appreciate that response. I will happily move to the Western Australian Institute of Sport, if that is okay.

The appropriation was recommended.