

**41ST PARLIAMENT**



## **Report 93**

# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

*Consideration of the 2024-25 Budget Estimates*

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Presented by  
Hon Peter Collier MLC (Chair)  
November 2024

## **Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations**

### **Members as at the time of this inquiry:**

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Hon Dan Caddy MLC

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC

Hon Samantha Rowe MLC (Deputy Chair)

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**ISBN 978-1-923220-08-9**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- 1 This report concludes the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' (Committee) consideration of the estimates of expenditure contained in the 2024 Appropriation Bills – now Acts – and detailed in the 2024-25 Budget Papers.
- 2 The Committee undertook a thorough examination of 18 agencies during 17 hearings from 24 to 27 June 2024. These and other agencies were also asked 236 questions prior to these hearings and 190 additional questions. Questions asked were wide-ranging and reflected both Committee and participating Members' interests. A number of these were placed on notice during the hearings.
- 3 In the report, the Committee has included, as in past reports, a list of matters raised in each hearing for the benefit of the Legislative Council.
- 4 This report also identifies 18 occasions where a Minister decided not to provide certain information to the Committee for various reasons.
- 5 The Committee considers the process provided an appropriate level of scrutiny of the estimates.

### Findings and recommendations

**Findings and recommendations are grouped as they appear in the text at the page number indicated:**

#### **FINDING 1**

Page 2

The Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action breached the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy for the 2024-25 Budget Estimates Inquiry. The Minister did not provide the Committee with all answers to questions prior to hearings until 22 July 2024. This was nearly one month after the conclusion of the hearings.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

Page 3

The Premier remind all Ministers and representing Ministers that they must adhere to the prescribed times in the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy for the answering of questions and that every request for an extension of time to provide answers must include reasons.

#### **FINDING 2**

Page 3

Answers to some questions referred to a website or otherwise gave an inadequate response in breach of the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 2**

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Ministers ensure that answers to all written questions during the budget estimates process comply with the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy.

**FINDING 3**

Page 4

Some Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries occasionally challenged the role of the Chair in Legislative Council estimates hearings. The Chair determines whether questions fall within the scope of a Budget Estimates Inquiry and has the sole discretion to grant latitude to Members.

**FINDING 4**

Page 7

The integrity of the budget estimates process was adversely affected when the Minister for Corrective Services did not answer two questions on notice asked by Hon Nick Goiran MLC arising from the hearing with the Department of Justice (Corrective Services). The Minister used a different term from the term used in the question, which the Committee regards as engaging in unnecessary semantics.

**RECOMMENDATION 3**

Page 7

Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries provide information requested during a Budget Estimates Inquiry where the use of different terminology does not prevent the provision of that information.

**FINDING 5**

Page 7

The Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action breached the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy for the 2024-25 Budget Estimates Inquiry. The Minister did not provide the Committee with all answers to additional questions until 17 September 2024. This was nearly two months after the 24 July 2024 deadline.

**FINDING 6**

Page 8

The Minister for Police breached the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy for the 2024-25 Budget Estimates Inquiry. The Minister did not provide the Committee with all answers to additional questions until 9 September 2024. This was nearly six weeks after the 24 July 2024 deadline.

**FINDING 7**

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Ministers identified in Table 1 of this Report decided not to provide certain information to the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations during the 2024-25 Budget Estimates Inquiry. They are required, pursuant to section 82 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*, to table a notice in the Parliament. As at 25 September 2024, only two Ministers had tabled notices.

**RECOMMENDATION 4**

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Ministers, other than the Attorney General and the Minister for Agriculture and Food, Forestry and Small Business, identified in Table 1 of this Report who decided not to provide certain information to the Committee, table notices under section 82 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*.

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Legislative Council Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations (Committee) is required to 'consider and report on ... the estimates of expenditure laid before the Council each year'.<sup>1</sup> This report concludes the Committee's consideration of the 2024-25 estimates of expenditure (estimates) laid before the Legislative Council on 9 May 2024.
- 1.2 The 2024-25 Budget (Budget) outlines the Government's priorities for the budget year (2024-25) and the 3 outyears (2025-26 to 2027-28). The Budget was accompanied by:
- 2 Appropriation Bills—the Government's formal request to Parliament to access funds from the Consolidated Account to implement the budget<sup>2</sup>
  - the Budget Papers.<sup>3</sup>
- 1.3 The Committee examined the operations of 18 agencies in detail.
- 1.4 The Committee's examination was in accordance with its Procedure Policy.<sup>4</sup>

## 2 Committee's approach to the 2024-25 Budget Process

- 2.1 As with previous years, the Committee collected evidence for its consideration of the estimates in the following 3 stages:
- questions prior to hearings (preliminary round of evidence gathering)
  - budget estimates hearings in the Legislative Council Chamber (from 24 to 27 June 2024)
  - additional questions.
- 2.2 Overall, the evidence gathering processes ran smoothly. Observations are provided below on some instances where the provision of information breached the Procedure Policy.

### Questions prior to hearings

- 2.3 Members lodged 236 questions to 33 agencies on the Parliament's Electronic Lodgement System. Answers were due by 7 June 2024. Overall, there were timely responses to these questions from agencies that complied with the Procedure Policy and assisted Members prepare for the hearings. However, there were some serious delays which are further discussed below.

### Redirection of questions

- 2.4 In its 90th report, the Committee commented on the redirecting of questions between Ministers:

Ministers are required to redirect questions to another Minister and to indicate in their answer that a question was redirected to them or by them. Redirections are not happening automatically, with the answer provided advising that the question should be redirected. This may increase the time taken before the Committee

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<sup>1</sup> [Legislative Council Standing Orders](#) Schedule 1 cl 3.3(a)(i), accessed 17 September 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Appropriation (Recurrent 2024-25) Bill 2024 and Appropriation (Capital 2024-25) Bill 2024.

<sup>3</sup> Government of Western Australia, [Western Australia State Budget 2024-25](#), accessed 19 September 2024.

<sup>4</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, [2024-25 Budget Estimates—Procedure Policy](#).

receives an answer to the question, as the Minister that receives the question will often need a new due date to provide the answer.<sup>5</sup>

2.5 This is reflected in the Procedure Policy:

Ministers are responsible for redirecting questions to another Minister if they are not the best party to provide the answer. Ministers involved in the redirection of a question should note in their answer whether a question was redirected to them or redirected by them.<sup>6</sup>

2.6 The Committee also advised of its practice regarding questions to agencies with multiple Ministers:

For agencies with multiple Ministers, the Committee will now provide all questions to the coordinating Minister to redirect. This should reduce the time spent trying to determine which Minister it should go to in the first instance, and the likelihood of redirections between the responsible Ministers. The Committee notes that it will not reduce redirections that need to occur because the question was submitted to the wrong agency.<sup>7</sup>

2.7 The Committee notes that, with a few exceptions, redirections of questions to the appropriate Minister occurred automatically. This saved time by ensuring agencies received questions as quickly as possible for preparing answers.

### **Substantial delay in answers to questions**

2.8 Despite the Committee granting some extensions of time to provide answers, delays did not generally impede the Committee's scrutiny process. However, the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action committed a breach of the Procedure Policy. Not all answers to questions prior were provided until 22 July 2024, a delay of over 6 weeks and nearly one month after the hearings concluded.<sup>8</sup> This occurred despite the Committee granting an initial extension until 12 June 2024 and follow-ups by Committee staff. This deprived Members of the opportunity to ask follow-up questions at the hearings.

2.9 Time limits for the provision of answers to questions must be respected to enable Members to fully engage with the budget estimates process. Ministers must keep the Committee informed of any delay in the provision of answers and the reasons for the delay.

### **FINDING 1**

The Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action breached the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy for the 2024-25 Budget Estimates Inquiry. The Minister did not provide the Committee with all answers to questions prior to hearings until 22 July 2024. This was nearly one month after the conclusion of the hearings.

<sup>5</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, report 90, [Consideration of the 2023-24 Budget Estimates](#), Western Australia, Legislative Council, 9 November 2023, p 21-22.

<sup>6</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, [2024-25 Budget Estimates—Procedure Policy](#), p 3.

<sup>7</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, report 90, [Consideration of the 2023-24 Budget Estimates](#), Western Australia, Legislative Council, 9 November 2023, p 22.

<sup>8</sup> Answer to question prior to hearing 2 asked by Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC and answered by Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action 22 July 2024; Answer to question prior to hearing 3 asked by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action 22 July 2024.

## RECOMMENDATION 1

The Premier remind all Ministers and representing Ministers that they must adhere to the prescribed times in the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy for the answering of questions and that every request for an extension of time to provide answers must include reasons.

### Inadequate answers to questions

2.10 The Procedure Policy requires that answers must include the information sought, not merely by referencing a website:

An answer must not simply state that the information sought can be obtained from a website. The information must be extracted from the website and be incorporated into the answer.<sup>9</sup>

2.11 It also states:

Ministers should provide the Committee with all requested information.<sup>10</sup>

2.12 This has been included in the Procedure Policy to reflect practice in the Legislative Council, which has been subject to past rulings.<sup>11</sup>

2.13 Despite this, some answers referred to a website rather than containing the information requested. Others gave an inadequate response by merely referring to the budget papers rather than a specific line item(s).<sup>12</sup>

## FINDING 2

Answers to some questions referred to a website or otherwise gave an inadequate response in breach of the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy.

## RECOMMENDATION 2

Ministers ensure that answers to all written questions during the budget estimates process comply with the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy.

### Budget Estimates hearings

2.14 The Committee's detailed examination of agencies occurred between 24 and 27 June 2024. To assist the Committee in determining which agencies to examine and preparing its hearings timetable<sup>13</sup>, the Committee authorised its Members to consult with their colleagues.

<sup>9</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, [2024-25 Budget Estimates—Procedure Policy](#), p 3.

<sup>10</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, [2024-25 Budget Estimates—Procedure Policy](#), p 3.

<sup>11</sup> Legislative Council, [Debates](#), 19 June 2013, p 1721.

<sup>12</sup> Answer to question prior to hearing 1(a)(i) asked by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action, 7 June 2024, p 1; Answer to Additional Question 2(a) asked by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, Minister for Transport, 24 July 2024.

<sup>13</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, [Timetable, 2024-25 Budget Estimates Hearings](#).



## Chair's power to determine scope of questions

2.15 Standing Order 172(1) states:

### 172. Duties of Chair and Deputy Chair

(1) The Chair presides at meetings and has the powers necessary to conduct the Committee's proceedings in an orderly and expeditious manner.

2.16 The Procedure Policy states:

The Inquiry will focus on the 2024-25 Budget estimates. However, Members may, within reason, ask general questions about the operations and finances of an agency that are outside the years in question or the budget papers.<sup>14</sup>

2.17 During the hearing with Synergy, the Parliamentary Secretary stated he did not think a question from Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC fell within the scope of the Committee's inquiry. This is evidenced by the following exchange:

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** It does seem a bit unusual to me that you are committed to a project that we have just heard is going to be finished in 2026, but it does not appear in our budget papers. It just seems to be a weird anomaly. A question on King Rocks: when was the King Rocks project first initiated? The question I am asking is what is the timeline on delivery of a wind project from when it is first initiated to when it is actually generating power into the SWIS?

**Hon DARREN WEST:** Look, these are not really budget questions. We are happy to answer them the best that we can, but you are veering into policy here and the government's policy is quite clear, albeit that there are steps and processes that need to make pace before they appear in a budget so we can discuss them in a forum like this. But I am happy to hand over to Mr Fyfe and Mr Thomas to sort of walk you through, but I think you are sort of straying from questions about this budget.

**The CHAIR:** No, I do not think so. I think it is an appropriate question, but let us go to Mr Fyfe first and Mr Thomas.<sup>15</sup>

2.18 The Committee reminds all Members that in budget estimates hearings, the Chair's presiding power includes determining whether questions fall within the scope of the Committee's inquiry. This is at the Chair's sole discretion, which includes the power to grant latitude to Members. If a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary disagrees with the scope of a question, they can ask the Chair to rule on the matter.

### FINDING 3

Some Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries occasionally challenged the role of the Chair in Legislative Council estimates hearings. The Chair determines whether questions fall within the scope of a Budget Estimates Inquiry and has the sole discretion to grant latitude to Members.

<sup>14</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, [2024-25 Budget Estimates—Procedure Policy](#), p 1.

<sup>15</sup> Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, Hon Darren West MLC, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Energy and Hon Peter Collier MLC, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 24 June 2024, p 6-7.

## Questions and answers through the Chair

2.19 The Procedure Policy states:

Questions should be directed through, and acknowledged by, the Chair.<sup>16</sup>

2.20 This enables hearings to proceed in an orderly, efficient and timely manner. This is considering the limited period which all Committee and participating Members have to ask questions. It also enables witnesses to answer questions before any follow up questions are asked.

2.21 The orderly conduct of proceedings can be compromised when Members attempt to bypass the Chair by asking questions or making comments out of turn. This behaviour occurred during the hearings. It reduced the time allocated to other Members on some occasions. The Committee reminds Members to respect the directing and answering of questions through the Chair.

## Seeking an opinion on government policy

2.22 Standing Order 182 states:

An officer of a government agency –

(a) shall not be asked to give an opinion on a matter of policy; and

(b) shall be given reasonable opportunity to refer questions asked of the officer to superior officers or to a Minister.

2.23 Ministers are therefore responsible in answering to the Parliament on Government policy.

2.24 When Parliamentary Secretaries and representing Ministers appear at committee hearings, they do so in a representational capacity and on behalf of the responsible Minister. Accordingly, they have the authority to answer questions on policy.

2.25 Hon Darren West MLC appeared as the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Environment at a hearing with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation. He therefore had authority to answer any questions on policy. During the hearing, he appropriately alerted a departmental officer of the possible policy content of a Member's question. This is evidenced by the following exchange:

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** One last quick one, and this is a policy question, so you may not be able to answer it. With regard to the comment about waste to energy, when do we expect that to come onstream? Has there been a determination around whether there will be some kind of levy for waste that goes through waste to energy? It would not be as high as it would be for landfill, noting that it is also the second last preferred option when it comes to dealing with our waste.

**DARREN WEST:** Member, you are straying into policy, but I will give the question to Mr Wiley to provide some response.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, [2024-25 Budget Estimates—Procedure Policy](#), p 2.

<sup>17</sup> Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and Hon Darren West MLC, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Environment, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 24 June 2024, p 6.

## Answers to questions on notice

### Unsatisfactory answers to questions

2.26 During the hearing with the Department of Justice, regarding Corrective Services, Hon Nick Goiran MLC asked about the number of offenders managed through community supervision who have absconded:

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** There are 6 367 managed through community supervision. Have any of them absconded this financial year?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN:** Just by way of clarity, that was males, was it not?

**Mr ROYCE:** No, that was all.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** How many have absconded this financial year?

**Mr ROYCE:** I think I will have to take that one on notice to get you the right number.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** There have been some.

**Mr ROYCE:** Yes, there would be some. I just do not have the exact number.  
[*Supplementary Information No C7.*]<sup>18</sup>

2.27 It is clear from the above exchange that the term 'absconded' was well understood and that the Department anticipated providing some information. However, the Minister's answer to the question on notice stated:

The Department of Justice, Corrective Services does not have a specific indicator for absconding for adult offenders managed in the community. It is also noted that the Report on Government Services, (RoGS), that provides information on the equity, effectiveness, and efficiency of government services in Australia, does not use abscond as an indicator in their reporting framework for community corrections across Australia.<sup>19</sup>

2.28 The same response was given for question on notice C8, regarding the number of young people who have absconded.<sup>20</sup>

2.29 The Minister's answers are at odds with the evidence given by Mr Royce at the hearing. Despite the Department not having 'a specific indicator for absconding', it is unsatisfactory that the Minister did not provide data on offenders who have escaped while being managed through community supervision. The use of a different term by an agency than that used in a question should not be a reason for not providing information sought. This adversely impacts on the integrity of the budget estimates process and could be regarded as engaging in unnecessary semantics.

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<sup>18</sup> Hon Nick Goiran MLC, Hon Matthew Swinbourn MLC, Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Corrections and Mr Brad Royce APM, Commissioner of Corrective Services, [[transcript of evidence](#)], Legislative Council, 25 June 2024, p 12-13.

<sup>19</sup> Answer to question on notice C7 asked by Hon Nick Goiran MLC and answered by Hon Paul Papalia CSC, MLA, Minister for Corrective Services, p 5.

<sup>20</sup> Answer to question on notice C7 asked by Hon Nick Goiran MLC and answered by Hon Paul Papalia CSC, MLA, Minister for Corrective Services, p 5.

#### **FINDING 4**

The integrity of the budget estimates process was adversely affected when the Minister for Corrective Services did not answer two questions on notice asked by Hon Nick Goiran MLC arising from the hearing with the Department of Justice (Corrective Services). The Minister used a different term from the term used in the question, which the Committee regards as engaging in unnecessary semantics.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 3**

Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries provide information requested during a Budget Estimates Inquiry where the use of different terminology does not prevent the provision of that information.

### **Additional questions**

2.30 Members lodged 190 questions to 25 agencies on the Parliament’s Electronic Lodgement System. Overall, there were timely responses to these questions from agencies that complied with the Procedure Policy and assisted Members prepare for the hearings. However, there were some serious delays which are further discussed below.

#### **Substantial delay in answers to questions**

2.31 All answers to additional questions were due by 24 July 2024.<sup>21</sup>

##### *Ministerial leave*

2.32 The Committee normally conducts its Budget Estimates Inquiry in the last week of June and just prior to the winter recess. Some Ministers take leave during the winter recess and are therefore unable to authorise their portfolios’ answers to additional questions. The Committee identified a problem in this Inquiry when two extensions of time to answer additional questions were granted due to Ministerial leave. The Committee may consider requiring the co-ordinating Minister to authorise answers to additional questions.

##### *Substantial delay in answers to questions*

2.33 Breaches of the Procedure Policy were committed:

- again, by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action by not providing all answers to additional questions until 17 September 2024
- by the Minister for Police by not providing all answers to additional questions until 9 September 2024.

2.34 Ministers should ensure they are able to provide answers to additional questions within the required timeframe.

#### **FINDING 5**

The Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action breached the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations’ Procedure Policy for the 2024-25 Budget Estimates Inquiry. The Minister did not provide the Committee with all answers to additional questions until 17 September 2024. This was nearly two months after the 24 July 2024 deadline.

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<sup>21</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, [2024-25 Budget Estimates—Procedure Policy](#), p 2.

## FINDING 6

The Minister for Police breached the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations' Procedure Policy for the 2024-25 Budget Estimates Inquiry. The Minister did not provide the Committee with all answers to additional questions until 9 September 2024. This was nearly six weeks after the 24 July 2024 deadline.

2.35 The Committee repeats recommendation 1.

## 3 Subject matters raised during the hearings

3.1 As seen in Appendix 1, there were a large number and range of subject matters raised in questions during the hearings. The Committee has selected the following 4 matters for specific commentary.

### Cost of living relief measures

3.2 The cost of living has become a significant issue in recent years, affecting the livelihood of many Western Australians. This was acknowledged during the Inquiry, including during the Committee's hearing with Synergy:

**Hon DARREN WEST:** Thank you, member. I think this is obviously a very important issue at the moment. Cost of living is something that is affecting a lot of people in our community.

...

**Mrs WALKER:** Yes, at the moment, obviously, it is a difficult time for our customers in the community, with a range of customers experiencing hardship.<sup>22</sup>

3.3 The Budget contains \$762 million in cost-of-living measures. In her budget speech, the Treasurer highlighted the following:

- the WA Student Assistance Payment of \$250 per high school student and \$150 per primary and kindergarten student<sup>23</sup>
- free public transport for school students
- doubling the transport allowance in regional WA for students unable to access a free orange school bus
- investing \$65 million to extend the Regional Airfare Zone Cap
- increasing the Regional Pensioner Travel Card by \$100 to \$675
- continuing the \$400 household electricity credit to more than 1.1 million households<sup>24</sup> and extending it to more than 90,000 small businesses
- a \$334 Energy Assistance Payment for households with eligible concessions.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Hon Darren West MLC, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Energy and Mrs Lesley Walker, Executive Manager, Customer, Synergy, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 24 June 2024, p 2.

<sup>23</sup> See answer to question on notice asked by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA on 25 July 2024, p 4.

<sup>24</sup> Government of Western Australia, [Household electricity credit](#), 31 July 2024, accessed 22 August 2024. See also Mrs Lesley Walker, Executive Manager, Customer, Synergy, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 24 June 2024, p 2-3.

<sup>25</sup> Government of Western Australia, [Western Australia State Budget 2024-25, Budget Paper No. 1 Treasurer's Speech](#), p 5-6, accessed 13 September 2024.

- 3.4 Further initiatives include:
- the Smart Energy for Social Housing pilot, on which \$3.249 million has been spent<sup>26</sup>
  - providing one off rent relief payments to assist help eligible tenants at risk of eviction to extend their tenancy<sup>27</sup>
  - free Sunday travel for SmartRider card users.<sup>28</sup>
- 3.5 The provision of cost-of-living relief by Government is a current focus of public discourse.

## Measuring 'Closing the Gap'

- 3.6 The National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement) enables:
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians.<sup>29</sup>
- 3.7 The Committee explored how Closing the Gap is measured, noting the recent Productivity Commission's 4th Annual Data Compilation Report (ADCR).<sup>30</sup> Published in July 2024, it reports progress under the National Agreement.
- 3.8 The ADCR explains how the parties to the National Agreement established specific outcomes to measure progress against.<sup>31</sup> There are Priority Reforms<sup>32</sup> and 17 socio-economic outcomes.<sup>33</sup> Across both Priority Reforms and socio-economic outcomes there are 23 targets and 164 indicators. However,
- the ADCR (and the dashboard) do not currently report on progress towards achieving the Priority Reforms. The reason for this is that the parties to the Agreement have not yet settled on how progress should be measured or the data that should be drawn upon.<sup>34</sup>
- 3.9 During a hearing with the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC questioned the Department's co-ordination with the National Agreement. In particular, Outcome 9 (living in appropriately sized housing) as well as Outcomes 10 and 11 (reducing the representation of First Nations people in the criminal justice system). The representing Minister said:
- I am just advised that the raw data, if you like, for measuring the metrics in Closing the Gap is provided by the Productivity Commission. They provide that data to the

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<sup>26</sup> Government of Western Australia, [Western Australia State Budget 2024-25, Budget Paper No. 2, Volume 2](#), p 781, accessed 13 September 2024. See also Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 24 June 2024, p 7-8.

<sup>27</sup> Government of Western Australia, [WA Rent Relief Program](#), accessed 13 September 2024.

<sup>28</sup> Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister representing the Minister for Transport, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 27 June 2024, p 26-27.

<sup>29</sup> [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#), accessed 27 August 2024.

<sup>30</sup> Productivity Commission, [Closing the Gap Annual Data Compilation Report July 2024 \(pc.gov.au\)](#), 2024, accessed 18 June 2024.

<sup>31</sup> The parties are the Australian governments and the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations.

<sup>32</sup> These focus on changing how governments work to accelerate improvements in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

<sup>33</sup> These 17 focus on the rights, wellbeing and quality of life of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

<sup>34</sup> Productivity Commission, [Closing the Gap Annual Data Compilation Report July 2024 \(pc.gov.au\)](#), 2024, accessed 18 June 2024, p 7.

states. I guess the idea behind that is that it is one single source of data and the states cannot manipulate one bit here and a different way in another state, if that is of any assistance to you.<sup>35</sup>

3.10 In a supplementary information answer, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs provided Western Australian data for National targets 9a, 10 and 11:

a) National target 9a is: 'By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to 88 per cent'.

The proportion of Aboriginal people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing has been increasing in WA over the past 25 years. In 2021 (the most recent data available), 78.8 per cent of Aboriginal people in WA were living in appropriately sized dwellings, an increase from 75.2 per cent in 2016, the baseline year.

The Productivity Commission Data Dashboard does not currently reflect data on target 9B, work is underway nationally to determine data sources.<sup>36</sup>

b) National target 10 is: 'By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 per cent'.

There has been no significant change in the age-standardised rate of incarceration of Aboriginal adults in WA in 2023 (3,605.1 per 100,000 adults), from the 2019 baseline (3,581.8 per 100,000 adults).

c) National target 11 is: 'By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17 years) in detention by at least 30 per cent.'

WA's rate of Aboriginal young people in detention decreased from 55.1 per 10,000 young people in the 2018-19 baseline, to 34.6 per 10,000 young people in 2022-23.<sup>37</sup>

## Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations

3.11 During a Corrective Services hearing, the Committee heard evidence about the Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy's initiatives delivered by or in partnership with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations or corporations (ACCOs).<sup>38</sup> The Committee has an interest in the ACCO sector and its funding.

3.12 ACCOs are an outcome of the July 2020 National Agreement which states that such organisations deliver services, build strength and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Priority Reform 2 of the National Agreement defines an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation as an organisation that is:

- a. incorporated under relevant legislation and not-for-profit
- b. controlled and operated by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people

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<sup>35</sup> Hon Sue Ellery MLC, Leader of the House representing the Premier, Department of Premier and Cabinet, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 25 June 2024, p 6.

<sup>36</sup> Target 9B is about receipt of essential services.

<sup>37</sup> Answer to question on notice B3 asked in the Legislative Council by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, 25 July 2024, p 1.

<sup>38</sup> Such as the Night Space pilot project. Implemented by Aboriginal service provider Kullarri Regional Communities Indigenous Corporation. It is located in Broome.

- c. connected to the community, or communities, in which they deliver the services
- d. governed by a majority Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander governing body.<sup>39</sup>

3.13 Government recently launched a strategy to support the ACCO sector in Western Australia stating:

Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) are critical to the delivery of community services, particularly to Aboriginal people across a wide range of sectors including, health, mental health, housing, family support, disability support, justice, youth engagement, education, training and child protection.

When ACCOs are involved in planning, designing and delivering services, Aboriginal people are more likely to engage with those services and likely to experience better outcomes. This is because ACCOs are accountable and connected to their local communities.

The ACCO Strategy sets the policy direction to support ACCOs to take on delivery of services for Aboriginal people and empower Aboriginal people in Western Australia to be able to access place-based, community-led and culturally secure services that are planned, designed and delivered by strong and sustainable ACCOs.<sup>40</sup>

- 3.14 As part of this support, the Government launched a new grants program, in partnership with Lotterywest calling for ideas from ACCOs to improve community services.<sup>41</sup>
- 3.15 The strategy requires Government agencies to know about ACCOs currently active in the sectors relevant to their Ministers' portfolios as well as the regions and towns to which they are connected.<sup>42</sup> However, the strategy also recognises that ACCOs often provide a range of service types that do not fit neatly into a single Government portfolio.<sup>43</sup>

### Statistics

3.16 The precise number of Western Australian ACCOs is unknown. The Department of Communities advised that:

As part of the implementation of the Strategy, we developed a list of ACCOs throughout WA in 2023 as sourced from the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) at that time. However, our list is no longer current or reliable.<sup>44</sup>

3.17 The Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations provides information and key documents for corporations that are registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres*

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<sup>39</sup> *Closing the Gap*, [https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-09/ctg-national-agreement\\_apr-21-comm-infra-targets-updated-24-august-2022\\_0.pdf](https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-09/ctg-national-agreement_apr-21-comm-infra-targets-updated-24-august-2022_0.pdf), accessed 27 August 2024, p 8.

<sup>40</sup> Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities, [Supporting the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation \(ACCO\) Sector](#), accessed 30 August 2024.

<sup>41</sup> Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities, [Supporting the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation \(ACCO\) Sector](#), accessed 30 August 2024.

<sup>42</sup> Government of Western Australia, [Whole-of-government Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation \(ACCO\) Strategy](#), 2022-32, accessed 16 September 2024, p 15.

<sup>43</sup> Government of Western Australia, [Whole-of-government Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation \(ACCO\) Strategy](#), 2022-32, accessed 16 September 2024, p 27. The Department of Communities subsequently produced a 10 year strategy, [Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation \(ACCO\) Strategy 2022 to 2032](#).

<sup>44</sup> Mr Denzil Burke, Manager, Aboriginal Economic Reform, Aboriginal Outcomes Division, Department of Communities, Email exchange with the Parliamentary Library Service, 6 September 2024.



*Strait Islander) Act 2006*. It reveals that in Western Australia, there are currently 1,262 corporations but 424 have been deregistered for various reasons.<sup>45</sup>

## Funding

3.18 Western Australia's first Aboriginal Expenditure Review published on 22 August 2023 identified spending on Aboriginal programs and services to Aboriginal organisations using data from 23 Government agencies across 362 discrete programs. The review, led by the Department of Treasury and collated manually, revealed an Actual of \$583 million on all Aboriginal-specific and Aboriginal-predominant programs over 2021-22.<sup>46</sup> The review noted how '20% of programs were delivered wholly by Aboriginal organisations.'<sup>47</sup> The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs said:

Government has committed to embed the Aboriginal Expenditure Review as an annual process, aligned with progress reporting on Closing the Gap, to create a transparent and comparable tool for the tracking of expenditure and outcomes.<sup>48</sup>

3.19 The review forecasted a spend of \$770 million on programs in 2022-23.<sup>49</sup>

## Equity contributions to the Forest Products Commission

3.20 Governments make equity contributions to achieve various outcomes. This includes funding specific capital projects and supporting an agency impacted by the implementation of a Government policy. An example of the latter is the Government's investment in the Forest Products Commission (FPC) in recent years to offset reduced native forest revenue.<sup>50</sup> Under the Government's Forest Management Plan 2024-2033 (FMP), all commercial logging of native forest ended on 1 January 2024. Under the FMP, native timbers will only be available by what is termed 'ecological thinning'.

3.21 The FMP defines ecological thinning as:

an active forest management tool that involves the selective removal of individual trees to improve or maintain ecological values and reduce the current and future moisture stress of a given area. Ecological thinning aims to reduce competition between trees and facilitate persistence of the remaining vegetation, thereby maintaining greater structural diversity of habitat types. This may also enhance forest resilience to high-intensity bushfires, help maintain carbon stores, and support the development of tree hollows for a variety of species.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> [Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations \(oric.gov.au\)](http://oric.gov.au), accessed 16 September 2024. Deregistration occurs for many reasons. For example, non-functionality, failure to lodge mandatory reports, not holding annual general meetings and poor record keeping of members' records.

<sup>46</sup> Department of Treasury, [Western Australian Aboriginal Expenditure Review 2022-23 \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au), 2023, accessed 17 September 2024, p 10.

<sup>47</sup> The Review defines 'Aboriginal organisation' as 'providers that are either Aboriginal businesses and /or ACCOs'. See: Department of Treasury, [Western Australian Aboriginal Expenditure Review 2022-23 \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au), 2023, accessed 17 September 2024, p 46.

<sup>48</sup> Department of Treasury, [Western Australian Aboriginal Expenditure Review 2022-23 \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au), 2023, accessed 17 September 2024, p 5.

<sup>49</sup> Department of Treasury, [Western Australian Aboriginal Expenditure Review 2022-23 \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au), 2023, accessed 17 September 2024, p 5.

<sup>50</sup> Government of Western Australia, [Western Australia State Budget 2024-25](http://www.wa.gov.au), Budget Statements, budget paper no. 2, Volume 1, 9 May 2024, p 290.

<sup>51</sup> Government of Western Australia, [Forest Management Plan 2024-2033](http://www.wa.gov.au), December 2023, accessed 30 August 2024.

3.22 Equity contributions from Government to fund the FPC undertaking ecological thinning in 2023-24 is estimated to be \$33,883,000. There is a budget allocation for 2024-25 of \$33,654,000.<sup>52</sup>

3.23 During the hearing with the FPC, the Chief Executive confirmed that any future equity contributions from Government would continue to fund ecological thinning activities:

The pine business certainly is profitable, and that is the main part of our business. Where we would receive any future equity injections would relate to the non-commercial activities where we have a cost to do ecological thinning activities and we do not receive the revenue. If the government chooses to pay us to do activities and it chooses to give us an equity injection, then we would receive it for ecological thinning activities. Because we do not get the revenue, we could not actually undertake the work without an equity injection because we have no source of paying for the work.<sup>53</sup>

## 4 Provision of information

4.1 The Committee’s ability to scrutinise Government and its agencies is affected by the quality and quantity of information made available for that purpose. This section focuses on Ministers’ decisions not to provide certain information to the Committee during the Inquiry and the quality of certain answers.

4.2 Ministers declined to provide information to the Committee on 18 occasions. These are shown in Table 1. This is significantly lower than the 59 occasions during the 2023-24 budget estimates process.

4.3 Some of the reasons provided for non-provision was the information was Cabinet-in-confidence, commercial-in-confidence or too resource-intensive to collate.

Table 1. Occasions of non-provision of information (as at 25 September 2024)

No.	Minister	Agency	Issue	Basis for non-provision
1.	Premier	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Total payments to date for advice on Griffin Coal to Ashurst. <sup>54</sup>	Confidential
2.	Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Synergy	Purchase price of 103,000 tonnes of coal transported from Newcastle to the Collie mining centre. <sup>55</sup>	Commercial-in-confidence

<sup>52</sup> Government of Western Australia, [Western Australia State Budget 2024-25](#), Budget Statements, budget paper no. 2, Volume 1, 9 May 2024, p 291. See also Hon Jackie Jarvis MLC, Minister for Forestry, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 26 June 2024, p 2-3.

<sup>53</sup> Mr Stuart West, Chief Executive, Forest Products Commission, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 26 June 2024, p 9.

<sup>54</sup> Answer to question prior to hearing 1(b)(v) asked by Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC and answered by Hon Roger Cook MLA, Premier, 7 June 2024, p 1.

<sup>55</sup> Answer to question prior to hearing 3(a) asked by Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC and answered by Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action, 12 June 2024, p 35. See also Hon Darren West MLC, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 24 June 2024, p 4.

No.	Minister	Agency	Issue	Basis for non-provision
3.	Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Synergy	Transport cost of 103,000 tonnes of coal transported from Newcastle to the Collie mining centre. <sup>56</sup>	Commercial-in-confidence
4.	Attorney General	Department of Justice	Specific legislative reform priorities PCO is working towards. <sup>57</sup>	Cabinet-in-Confidence
5.	Communities	Department of Communities	Provide a list of the builders that have been contracted to undertake refurbishments. <sup>58</sup>	Too resource-intensive
6.	Police	Western Australia Police	The number of police officers on leave due to serious assault. <sup>59</sup>	Too resource-intensive
7.	Tourism	Department of Tourism	The value of event partnerships funded through the major events fund. <sup>60</sup>	Commercial-in-confidence
8.	Tourism	Department of Tourism	Cost analysis on return of past investment by the Department on events in 2023-24. <sup>61</sup>	Commercial-in-confidence
9.	Forestry	Forest Products Commission	Contractors undertaking ecological thinning for the Department. <sup>62</sup>	Commercial-in-confidence
10.	Education	Department of Education	Schools impacted by construction delays. <sup>63</sup>	Too resource intensive
11.	Water	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	Data provided by Coca Cola to the Department on groundwater use in the Perth Hills. <sup>64</sup>	Commercial-in-Confidence

<sup>56</sup> Answer to question prior to hearing 3(b) asked by Hon Steve Thomas MLC and answered by Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action, 12 June 2024, p 35.

<sup>57</sup> Answer to question prior to hearing 4(e) asked by Hon Tjorn Sibma MLC and answered by Hon John Quigley MLA, Attorney General, 9 June 2024, p 8. The Notice was deemed tabled on 3 July 2024.

<sup>58</sup> Answer to question prior to hearing 11(b) asked by Hon Steve Martin MLC and answered by Hon John Carey MLA, Minister for Communities, 19 June 2024, p 1.

<sup>59</sup> Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister representing the Minister for Police, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 26 June 2024, p 18.

<sup>60</sup> Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister representing the Minister for Tourism, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 26 June 2024, p 8-9.

<sup>61</sup> Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister representing the Minister for Tourism, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 26 June 2024, p 13.

<sup>62</sup> Hon Jackie Jarvis MLC, Minister for Forestry, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#), Legislative Council, 26 June 2024, p 3. The Minister tabled a section 82 Notice in both Houses of Parliament on 10 September 2024 ([Tabled Paper 3411](#)).

<sup>63</sup> Hon Sue Ellery MLC, Minister representing the Minister for Education, [\[transcript of evidence\]](#) Legislative Council, 25 June 2024, p 15-16.

<sup>64</sup> Answer to additional question 11 asked by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Simone McGurk MLA, Minister for Water, 19 July 2024, p 6.

No.	Minister	Agency	Issue	Basis for non-provision
12.	Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Synergy	Bluewaters Power Station and tendering for a replacement contract. <sup>65</sup>	Commercial-in-Confidence
13.	Attorney General	Department of Justice	Whether the State Solicitor's Office has been asked to provide advice on the Peacock matter. <sup>66</sup>	Confidential and subject to legal professional privilege
14.	Premier	Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation	Whether cities or countries other than those in which there are existing Western Australian trade offices considered for another trade office. <sup>67</sup>	Cabinet-in-Confidence
15.	Premier	Department of Premier and Cabinet	The most recent briefing note any officer in the Department has prepared on the Bullsbrook facility and can it be tabled. <sup>68</sup>	Briefing contains sensitive information relating to ongoing Federal-State relations
16.	Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	Specific advice or objectives given to reviewers of environmental assessment & approval processes. <sup>69</sup>	Cabinet- in-confidence
17.	Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	Copy of monitoring data Coca Cola provided to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation about the taking of groundwater in the Perth Hills. <sup>70</sup>	Commercial-in-confidence

<sup>65</sup> Answer to question prior to hearing 2(a-e) asked by Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC and answered by Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action, 23 July 2024, p 1.

<sup>66</sup> Answer to additional question D5 asked by Hon Nick Goiran MLC and answered by Hon John Quigley MLA, Attorney General, 24 July 2024, p 2.

<sup>67</sup> Answer to additional question 1(d) asked by Hon Peter Collier MLC and answered by Hon Roger Cook MLA, Premier, Minister for Jobs and Trade, 5 August 2024, p 1.

<sup>68</sup> Answer to additional question 11 asked by Hon Nick Goiran MLC and answered by Hon Roger Cook MLA, Premier, 5 August 2024.

<sup>69</sup> Answer to additional question 8(b) asked by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action, 16 September 2024, p 8.

<sup>70</sup> Answer to additional question 11(a) asked by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action, 16 September 2024, p 10.

No.	Minister	Agency	Issue	Basis for non-provision
18.	Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	Chairay Sustainable Plastic Company Pty Ltd quarterly reports on its plastics reprocessing plant. <sup>71</sup>	Commercial-in-confidence

[Source: Various answers to questions prior to hearings; at hearings; questions on notice and additional questions]

#### 4.4 The Procedure Policy states:

If a Minister decides not to provide certain information, the Minister should advise each House of Parliament and the Auditor General, as required by section 82 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*.<sup>72</sup>

#### 4.5 As at 25 September 2024, only the following Ministers had tabled notices pursuant to section 82 of the *Financial Management Act 2007* regarding the occasions of the non-provision of information in Table 1:

- the Attorney General<sup>73</sup>
- the Minister for Agriculture and Food, Forestry and Small Business.<sup>74</sup>

### FINDING 7

Ministers identified in Table 1 of this Report decided not to provide certain information to the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations during the 2024-25 Budget Estimates Inquiry. They are required, pursuant to section 82 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*, to table a notice in the Parliament. As at 25 September 2024, only two Ministers had tabled notices.

### RECOMMENDATION 4

Ministers, other than the Attorney General and the Minister for Agriculture and Food, Forestry and Small Business, identified in Table 1 of this Report who decided not to provide certain information to the Committee, table notices under section 82 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*.

## 5 Conclusion

#### 5.1 The Committee is satisfied that its consideration of the 2024-25 budget estimates positively contributed to the scrutiny of Government and its operations. The Committee thanks all Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, witnesses and public officials, and participating Members for their contributions to the Inquiry.



Hon Peter Collier MLC  
Chair

<sup>71</sup> Answer to additional question 12(c) asked by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Reece Whiby MLA, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Action, 16 September 2024, p 11.

<sup>72</sup> Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, [2024-25 Budget Estimates—Procedure Policy](#), p 3.

<sup>73</sup> [Tabled Paper 2915](#), Legislative Assembly, 6 August 2024.

<sup>74</sup> [Tabled Paper 3044](#), Legislative Council, 10 September 2024.

# APPENDIX 1

## SUMMARY OF AGENCY HEARINGS

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p data-bbox="199 459 422 526"><b>Monday, 24 June 2024</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 548 295 582">Synergy</p>	<ul data-bbox="510 459 1375 1720" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rooftop solar displacing traditional coal generation.</li><li>• \$68 million of total expenditure from the Climate Action Fund.</li><li>• Kings Rocks wind farm timeline for delivering 140 megawatts: Two-year construction from mid-2026.</li><li>• Final costings for KBESS2 battery: provisionally \$650 million.</li><li>• \$1.65 billion for CBESS at the edge of the Coolangatta industrial estate on schedule for the end of 2025.</li><li>• Workings of the <i>Reserve Capacity Mechanism</i>. How AEMO sets a capacity target each year for the entire system based on the peak demand it forecasts in the outlook period and on meeting generation for 365 days of the year.</li><li>• Synergy’s market share during a period of peak demand.</li><li>• Neoen and Alinta building batteries.</li><li>• Office of the Auditor General rating Synergy as a best practice agency each financial year since 2017–18.</li><li>• Improvement in the <i>Recordable Injury Frequency Rate</i> from 4.94 to 2.</li><li>• Forecasted revenue of \$3.48 billion from the sale of goods and services with 64 per cent tariff-based revenue the residential customer base.</li><li>• Electricity network reliability: around 99.99 per cent for all customers.</li><li>• Application of the <i>Australian Consumer Law</i> to Synergy and its customers.</li><li>• Project Symphony: A virtual power plant project recognising how household consumer devices have a role in the power system. The successful pilot found \$1.2 billion of benefits.</li><li>• The <i>Virtual power plants for schools</i> project.</li><li>• Costs of (1) Kwinana stage 2: \$650 million for 800 megawatt hours; and (2) Collie, \$1.65 million for 2 000 megawatt hours.</li><li>• Lithium prices and future battery projects.</li><li>• The contestable market in 2030 and Synergy’s forecast on what customers’ energy use may reveal.</li><li>• Synergy’s engagement with residential solar instalment.</li><li>• The national accreditation of rooftop solar installers through the Clean Energy Regulator and Clean Energy Council.</li><li>• Maintenance expenditure on gas turbines around Pinjar and Kwinana and their life expectancy.</li></ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p data-bbox="201 250 421 318"><b>Monday, 24 June 2024</b></p> <p data-bbox="201 340 443 546">Department of Communities (Child Protection, Homelessness, Community Services and Housing)</p>	<p data-bbox="507 250 705 286"><b>Child Protection</b></p> <ul data-bbox="507 295 1372 1742" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of high-quality childcare and early learning services including new child supervision transportation regulations for centre-based services.</li> <li>• New <i>Working with children check</i> legislation: Since 1 July 2023, 169 000 people have undergone more rigorous screening with the Unit running metropolitan and regional community engagement campaigns.</li> <li>• The \$43 million <i>Target 120</i> diversion program for young people aged 10 to 14 at risk of becoming repeat offenders and their nexus with alternative, <i>Curriculum and Reengagement in Education Schools</i> (CARE schools).</li> <li>• Evaluation of <i>Target 120</i> program completed and is being considered by Government. Future funding allocated pending the evaluation.</li> <li>• The number of contracted child protection caseworkers with zero cases over 18.</li> <li>• Average vacancy for case-carrying child protection workers in the metropolitan region is 7.6, and in regional Western Australia, 13.5.</li> <li>• 606 children in care without an allocated caseworker but are on the monitoring list.</li> <li>• 5 315 children in the care of the CEO with eight unaccounted for, in contact; unaccounted for, not in contact; and missing. They may or may not be homeless. No direct correlation between the number of case managers and the circumstance of a child who might be unaccounted for or missing in a certain place. Caseloads on average are within industrial limits.</li> <li>• Effectiveness of the <i>Home Stretch WA</i> program.</li> <li>• Reform of the <i>Out-of-home care</i> system: \$200 million annually from 2024–25 for more Aboriginal controlled–community organisations and more Aboriginal people involved in care arrangements.</li> <li>• The <i>Early Years Partnership—Child Wellbeing and School Readiness</i>: Funding for 24 priority projects and Telethon Kids Institute engaged to manage an evaluation.</li> <li>• Regional childcare and supports for early learning centres in regional WA with \$4.1 million over four years.</li> <li>• Attracting and retaining early childhood and care workers in the regions: Review (but no report) in the lead-up to the third round of grants.</li> <li>• A <i>Child safety investigation</i> for substantiated harm or unsubstantiated harm. All significant parties may seek a review undertaken within 30 days. A further review process is the Ombudsman.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="507 1751 683 1787"><b>Homelessness</b></p> <ul data-bbox="507 1796 1372 2000" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work progressing on a needs-based application system for the social housing waitlist.</li> <li>• The 2024–25 midyear budget review announcement of \$47.6 million new funding for 15 critical homelessness services across the State. \$5.4 million for the <i>Perth Safe City</i> initiative and \$900 000 for <i>Passages Youth Centre</i> in the Peel region</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donations to food relief charities: with \$500 000 each to SecondBite, Foodbank WA, and OzHarvest.</li> <li>• The Federal Government’s <i>National rental affordability scheme</i> and \$56.2 million going forward for spot purchasing expiring NRAS properties but not on the public sale market.</li> <li>• The <i>Empowering Communities</i> program and service agreements expiry with neighbourhood centres. Identifying options for those transitional centres receiving only a one-year contract are now part of the cabinet process.</li> <li>• The Non-Government Human Services Sector Indexation using the latest wage price and consumer price indices.</li> <li>• \$500 000 allocated for existing financial counselling services previously spread across budget line items in DLGSC and DPIRD but now channelled through Communities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public housing waitlists: priority and general waiting list wait time averaged 147 weeks and the priority waiting list average waiting time was 80 weeks.</li> <li>• Waiting list priority applications at 31 May 2024 was 5 634. General applications 14 650.</li> <li>• Wait lists’ double counting issue apparent in the last four months: People on multiple applications so inaccurate figures. Communities no longer provides the number of individuals.</li> <li>• The <i>METRONET Social and Affordable Housing and Jobs Package</i>. \$128 million to deliver a mixture of 750 social and affordable dwellings (504 social housing dwellings is the target).</li> <li>• Supporting regional housing through its \$43.8 million over four years investment in the GROH program.</li> <li>• The GROH capital budget is \$163 million over the forward estimates for delivering 150 new dwellings and about 180 refurbishments.</li> <li>• 5 200 homes in the GROH portfolio. More than 50 per cent owned and the rest privately leased.</li> <li>• The <i>Housing First</i> approach and \$20.7 million for the <i>Supportive landlord model</i>: Djuripiny Mia service supporting 136 individuals, including families with children, and 69 active tenancies across south metropolitan Perth, Peel and Bunbury.</li> <li>• The <i>Social Housing Economic Recovery Package—Refurbishments</i> (SHERP) at 31 March 2024: 1 040 dwellings contracted for refurbishment work of which 952 have been completed. The remaining 88 dwellings are currently under contract, with completion anticipated by the end of 2024.</li> <li>• A Federal/State regional program only for 4 300 social homes energy savings upgrades is 50/50 (\$30 million each).</li> <li>• From 1 July 2021 to 30 April 2024, 73 builders contracted for new dwellings and refurbishment works and whether insured.</li> <li>• Evaluation of the \$900 000 spend on the LGBTQI+ inclusion strategy. \$600 000 provided to three non-government organisations over two years with funding agreements a work in progress.</li> </ul>



Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p><b>Monday, 24 June 2024</b></p> <p>Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (Water)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Estuaries WA initiative.</li> <li>• The allocation and use by Coca Cola of ground water for water bottling in an unproclaimed groundwater area in Karragullen.</li> <li>• The lack of a legal basis for charging for the taking of water from an unproclaimed groundwater area.</li> <li>• The government releasing an annual water report summarising water-bottling company operations' groundwater use in Western Australia in approximately 12 months.</li> <li>• The falling average cost per hour of policy advice due to the deferral of various costs, such as the Clean Energy Future Fund.</li> <li>• Three sites where groundwater is being extracted for bottled water in unproclaimed groundwater areas.</li> <li>• Assistance to rural communities in managing climate change impacts on water resources, including through investment in strategic rural water projects.</li> <li>• The water climate science initiative.</li> <li>• The water licensing backlog action plan.</li> <li>• Water supply planning strategies for priority growth areas.</li> <li>• Whether Sabre Energy will be required to take over the groundwater extraction licence for the Ungani oil production facility.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Monday, 24 June 2024</b></p> <p>Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (Environment)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The e-waste to landfill ban, applying to industry, coming into effect on 1 July 2024.</li> <li>• Update on the implementation of the Vogel-McFerran review of Western Australia's environmental approvals system.</li> <li>• Update on the native vegetation policy.</li> <li>• Diversion from landfill and the landfill levy of \$95m.</li> <li>• Waste-to-energy facilities coming online, including Kwinana and East Rockingham.</li> <li>• The 2030 waste strategy target to reduce material to landfill down to 15 per cent of 2014-15 levels.</li> <li>• Services currently offered through Environment Online.</li> <li>• The Green Energy Approvals Team.</li> <li>• The spend on establishing and maintaining vegetation offsets account.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p><b>Tuesday, 25 June 2024</b></p> <p>Department of Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$3.3m in the 2024-25 budget for the delivery of the Improving Access to Swimming and Water Safety Programs.</li> <li>• Update on significant projects in the East Metropolitan Region, including \$15m for a new high school in Brabham.</li> <li>• Update on school upgrades in the North Metropolitan region, including completion of the \$15m redevelopment of Westminster Primary School.</li> <li>• Partnerships between public schools and large companies such as BHP and Woodside.</li> <li>• School-by-school breakdown of unclaimed student assistance payments.</li> <li>• Schools that have applied for the schools clean energy technology fund.</li> <li>• Eligible students for the Western Australian student assistance payment and advertising for the campaign.</li> <li>• The number of registered teachers in Western Australia.</li> <li>• Spend on the international recruitment campaign for teachers.</li> <li>• Schools provided funding for preventative maintenance.</li> <li>• Continuation of Challis Parent and Early Learning Centre Services.</li> <li>• Facilities of WAAPA that may be suitable for use by Mount Lawley Senior High School.</li> <li>• Establishing new community kindergarten.</li> <li>• Factors that have impacted the timeline and costs for certain projects.</li> <li>• Update on the \$72m redevelopment of Roebourne District High School.</li> <li>• Enrolments of non-binary students in Western Australia.</li> <li>• The number of demountables compared to 2021.</li> <li>• Public primary schools participating in ATCO's Blue Flame kitchen facility in Jandakot.</li> <li>• The total number of teacher vacancies at the start of the school year.</li> <li>• The ratio of appointed school psychologists to students for primary and secondary schools.</li> <li>• The trial of 16 FTE of complex behaviour support coordinators.</li> <li>• Dedicated email and phone support line to assist principals respond to violence and manage the escalation process.</li> <li>• Child enrolments for language development centres.</li> <li>• The lease extensions for camp schools.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p data-bbox="199 255 421 320"><b>Tuesday, 25 June 2024</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 342 477 407">Department of Premier and Cabinet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="507 248 1375 313">• Cybersecurity and how the additional \$13.7 million to expand the WA Security Operations Centre counters the growing risk of cyberthreats.</li> <li data-bbox="507 320 1375 425">• <i>PeopleWA</i> an asset for Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, community services sector organisations and government agencies to quickly, easily and securely apply to access linked government data.</li> <li data-bbox="507 432 1209 461">• The time-limited family and domestic violence taskforce.</li> <li data-bbox="507 468 1375 533">• Energy decarbonisation and government support for the transition of Collie’s economy, workforce and community.</li> <li data-bbox="507 539 1375 645">• \$4.7 million across the forward estimates for agency positions to oversee the whole-of-government coordination of energy decarbonisation.</li> <li data-bbox="507 651 1375 716">• \$1.324 million spent on the climate action campaign terminated 30 June 2024.</li> <li data-bbox="507 723 1375 788">• \$36 million to implement 39 recommendations of the Vogel–McFerran review.</li> <li data-bbox="507 795 1375 860">• The Environmental Protection Act approvals reform and the removal of Part 4 approvals.</li> <li data-bbox="507 866 1375 972">• The Department’s coordination of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap for housing and representation in the criminal justice system. The Productivity Commission measures the metrics.</li> <li data-bbox="507 978 1018 1008">• Unclaimed student assistance payments.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1014 1375 1120">• Breakdown of the \$662 million for transitioning the Collie economy with \$300 million dedicated to decommissioning coal-fired power stations.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1126 1375 1191">• The full-scale Magnium Australia refinery and Green Steel of WA project with the potential to create over 400 long-term jobs in Collie.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1198 1375 1263">• The Griffin Coal Financial Assistance Agreement becoming a process agreement.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1270 1375 1375">• Additional \$6.5 million for the <i>ServiceWA</i> app. Links to EmergencyWA, FuelWatch, SharkSmart, weather stations, unclaimed money, FishCatchWA and other credentials for 1,171 692 users.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1382 1375 1447">• Finalising Commonwealth funding agreements collectively worth about \$6.5 billion to WA.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1453 1375 1518">• The Commonwealth’s <i>Nature positive plan: Better for the environment, better for business</i> reforms.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1525 1375 1590">• 142 native title determinations recognising native title. Negotiated and litigated settlements expected to continue to grow significantly.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1597 1375 1702">• Various campaign projects: The <i>Stay Well This Winter</i> vaccine. <i>Build a Life in WA</i> to recruit skilled building and construction worker. <i>Discover the Other Side</i> to recruit hospitality and tourism workers.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1709 1142 1738">• The Department’s role in emergency management.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1744 1375 1809">• The Centre for National Resilience at Bullsbrook as emergency accommodation for those affected by natural disasters.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1816 1375 1881">• Extension of the Police Commissioner’s emergency powers after November 2024.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1888 1375 1953">• Four new General Counsel positions providing in-house legal expertise taking pressure off SSO.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1960 959 1989">• Size of the Government air fleet (2).</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p><b>Tuesday, 25 June 2024</b></p> <p>Department of Justice Corrective Services)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocated and actual FTE staff for prisons and staff shortages.</li> <li>• Adaptive routines to create a safe environment for the operation of prisons.</li> <li>• Prisoners sleeping on rollout beds on the floor due to a lack of beds.</li> <li>• Prisoner escort service provided by Ventia.</li> <li>• Business case for the facility that will replace Unit 18 at Banksia Hill Detention Centre.</li> <li>• The number of young people admitted to Unit 18.</li> <li>• Improvements for detainees at Banksia Hill Detention Centre.</li> <li>• The development of a crisis care unit at Banksia Hill Detention Centre.</li> <li>• Immediate response Night Space pilot in Broome (part of the Kimberley juvenile justice strategy).</li> <li>• The installation of air conditioning in units 1 and 2 at Roebourne Prison.</li> <li>• The \$77.925m allocated to the new model of care under Youth Justice Services.</li> <li>• Biological males detained with biological females in prisons.</li> <li>• Offenders escaping custody.</li> <li>• The number of adult and young offenders being managed through community supervision.</li> <li>• The number of children currently detained compared to last financial year.</li> <li>• The increase in the total cost of managing young persons in detention.</li> <li>• The growth in the adult prisoner population.</li> <li>• The design capacity of adult prisons.</li> <li>• Community-based orders.</li> <li>• Update on the new Broome Regional Prison and remedial works for the current prison.</li> <li>• The implementation of body-worn cameras.</li> <li>• Training and employment programs for prisoners.</li> <li>• The number of resignations of custodial staff.</li> <li>• The increase in self-harm and suicide attempts at Banksia Hill Detention Centre.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p><b>Tuesday, 25 June 2024</b></p> <p>Department of Justice (Commissioner for Victims of Crime; Director of Public Prosecutions and State Solicitors Office)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The justice facility dog program and its evaluation.</li> <li>• Increase in funding to address the heavy case load of the Director of Public Prosecutions.</li> <li>• Family violence system reform plan.</li> <li>• Legislative response to coercive control.</li> <li>• Increase in the number of criminal injuries compensation applications.</li> <li>• The eligibility of siblings of victims of crime and proposed amendments to the <i>Victims of Crime Act 1994</i> and the <i>Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 2003</i>.</li> <li>• Magistrate Crawford’s Federal Court challenge.</li> <li>• The ex-gratia application sought by former trade commissioner Craig Peacock.</li> <li>• The feasibility study into increasing the number of criminal trial courtrooms.</li> <li>• The time to trial for criminal matters in the Supreme Court.</li> <li>• Increased staffing of the Parliamentary Counsel’s Office.</li> <li>• The increase in RiskCover premiums.</li> <li>• The backlog of claims managed by the Office of Criminal Injuries Compensation.</li> <li>• Criminal injuries victims being notified of court processes and the opt-in victim notification registry.</li> <li>• The homicide funeral assistance scheme.</li> <li>• New case management systems for the State Solicitor’s Office and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.</li> <li>• Funding for the Children’s Court Juveniles in Custody Initiative.</li> <li>• The meaning of ‘finalisation’ for Children’s Court criminal matters.</li> <li>• Finalisations where there has been an acquittal due to a failure to establish criminal intent.</li> <li>• Whether a decision has been made to release Douglas Crabbe.</li> <li>• Limiting terms for those on indefinite custody orders and the criminal law mental impairment reforms.</li> <li>• The level of funding for legal aid and community legal centres.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p data-bbox="199 253 464 320"><b>Wednesday, 26 June 2024</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 342 475 477">Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Fisheries)</p>	<ul data-bbox="507 248 1364 1258" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding to support the growth and development of WA’s aquaculture industry through the Aquaculture Development Plan.</li> <li>• Building a new patrol vessel to replace the <i>Walcott</i> as part of the large vessel replacement program.</li> <li>• The conversion of Chevron oil platforms into artificial reefs.</li> <li>• Other planned artificial reefs in Broome, Carnarvon, Kalbarri, Albany and Exmouth.</li> <li>• Fisheries officers using covert powers and assumed identities under the <i>Criminal Investigation (Covert Powers) Act 2012</i></li> <li>• Review of the Department’s practice and procedure for conducting covert operations.</li> <li>• Analysis to quantify the value of commercial, recreational and charter fishing on regional economies.</li> <li>• Why the <i>Aquatic Resources Management Act 2016</i> will be repealed.</li> <li>• Compensation for commercial fishers arising from the creation and extension of marine parks.</li> <li>• Declared aquatic incident in 2023-24 – incursion of the carpet sea squirt into Western Australia.</li> <li>• Proportion of fish stocks deemed sustainable and not at risk of overfishing.</li> <li>• The impact of offshore wind farms on fish stocks.</li> <li>• The number of fisheries officers who have retired in the 2023-24 financial year.</li> <li>• Whether Brennan and Associates (private investigators) have been engaged by the Department.</li> <li>• Funding for shark hazard mitigation.</li> <li>• Whether the Department has undertaken consultation with the fishing industry regarding reforms to the <i>Fishing and Related Industries Compensation (Marine Reserves) Act 1997</i>.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p><b>Wednesday, 26 June 2024</b></p> <p>Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Agriculture)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Polyphagous shot-hole borer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Funding for the eradication response program</li> <li>○ Composition of the scientific advisory panel</li> <li>○ Expansion of quarantine areas</li> <li>○ Number of infested premises and trees removed.</li> <li>○ Types of trees infected (exotic non-native and native)</li> <li>○ When legislative powers have been used to direct urgent works</li> <li>○ Successful location eradications.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Preparedness for a potential outbreak of avian influenza.</li> <li>• Interest-free loans for drought affected farmers.</li> <li>• Assistance for sheep farmers arising out of the end of the live sheep trade.</li> <li>• The Agrifood Activation Fund and its facility in Peel where emerging food businesses can develop alternative proteins.</li> <li>• The Wild Dog Action Plan.</li> <li>• Negotiation of Indigenous land use agreements and extension of the state barrier fence.</li> <li>• The review of the <i>Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007</i>.</li> <li>• The increase in biosecurity threats, including weed and pests.</li> <li>• Asbestos contamination at the diagnostics and laboratory service site at Kensington, South Perth and impact on services.</li> <li>• The future drought fund.</li> <li>• Preparedness for food and mouth disease.</li> <li>• Number of FTEs in the Department for 2025-26 to 2027-28 outyears.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p data-bbox="199 250 464 318"><b>Wednesday, 26 June 2024</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 340 414 407">Metropolitan Cemeteries Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="507 250 1375 318">• Two calendar year data breaches and accessibility of corporate documents.</li> <li data-bbox="507 327 1375 430">• Board working with the Office of Digital Government to transition the hosting of its website to the WA government digital platform for secure content management.</li> <li data-bbox="507 439 1375 506">• The website transferring to a Government platform resolved data breaches on 1 July 2024.</li> <li data-bbox="507 515 1375 548">• Procurement practices identified through internal audits.</li> <li data-bbox="507 557 1375 591">• Review of the procurement policy framework.</li> <li data-bbox="507 600 1375 667">• Funding for general maintenance, gardening general clean-up of cemetery sites.</li> <li data-bbox="507 676 1375 710">• Staffing at Pinnaroo Valley Memorial Park, Midland and Guildford sites.</li> <li data-bbox="507 719 1375 752">• Official Board members' visits to cemetery sites.</li> <li data-bbox="507 761 1375 828">• The Asset Investment Program and \$10.7 million on infrastructure upgrades.</li> <li data-bbox="507 837 1375 871">• Long-term expansion plans, especially within existing sites.</li> <li data-bbox="507 880 1375 913">• Community anxiety around cemetery renewals.</li> <li data-bbox="507 922 1375 990">• The renewal process: Previously unutilised portions of a cemetery are released for future burials with no human remains disturbed.</li> <li data-bbox="507 999 1375 1066">• Reconfiguring some historic graves headstones to allow access to new plots of land.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1075 1375 1142">• Memorandum of Understanding between the Board and the Office of Australian War Graves. It retains all official commemorations during the cemetery renewal process.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1151 1375 1254">• Official war grave commemorations: Between the 1970s and 2006 commemorations relocated from Karrakatta to the Perth War Cemetery's Garden of Remembrance. The remains are still interred at the site of burial in Karrakatta.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1263 1375 1296">• Forecasted life (at capacity) of the seven cemeteries.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1305 1375 1373">• The Asset Investment Program and an increase in the allocation to burials, entombments and memorials: \$660 000 in 2023–24 then \$1.18 million in 2024–25.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1382 1375 1415">• Ongoing programs to update ICT.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1424 1375 1491">• 3.6 per cent increases in annual fees and charges for services set at cost recovery.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1500 1375 1568">• The works program around crematoria with 80 per cent of West Australians selecting cremation over burial.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1576 1375 1644">• The Board as a Government trading entity, self-funding, not in receipt of a dividend and decides how funds are spent.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1653 1375 1686">• Board Member remuneration: Approximately \$14 000 per annum.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1695 1375 1762">• Funeral company with the most burials and the number of burials per company.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1771 1375 1805">• The volume of burials at Midland and Guildford.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1814 1375 1917">• \$89.5 million held in investments pursuant to section 50 of the <i>Cemeteries Act 1986</i>, the returns of which fund very large future capital works projects.</li> </ul>



Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p><b>Wednesday, 26 June 2024</b></p> <p>Forest Products Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecological thinning:<sup>75</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Restricted to areas of state forest</li> <li>○ The increase in employee benefits resulting from employees' transition from commercial logging to ecological thinning and other work.</li> <li>○ The \$33m cost to the FPC for ecological thinning and the sale of the timber.</li> <li>○ Equity contributions from Government to the FPC for the funding of ecological thinning.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mechanisms to ensure the Forest Products Commission (FPC) is paying a fair market value for land.</li> <li>• Expenditure on the softwood plantation investment program from the Treasurer's special purpose account.</li> <li>• FPC publishing production statistics.</li> <li>• 170 FTEs at the FPC.</li> <li>• Purchasing methods for land sought to be acquired by the FPCs \$350m plantation fund.</li> <li>• Fire management plans for plantations.</li> <li>• The payment by the FPC of local government rates.</li> <li>• The timing for the FPCs return to profitability.</li> <li>• The future harvesting of sandalwood.</li> <li>• The purposes for which Australian Carbon Credit units can be used.</li> <li>• The rollout of the \$80m transition package for small businesses impacted by the cessation of commercial logging.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Wednesday, 26 June 2024</b></p> <p>Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (Tourism)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing tourism-driving major events in Western Australia.</li> <li>• The aviation recovery fund as part of the Reconnect WA strategy.</li> <li>• Shutting down Horizontal Falls boat tours that traverse the falls.</li> <li>• Growing tourism in regional Western Australia through the regional events program and regional events scheme and investment in tourism infrastructure.</li> <li>• The Supercars Perth street circuit planned for 2026.</li> <li>• Income streams for Tourism WA, including \$3m of Commonwealth funding to support Aboriginal tourism initiatives.</li> <li>• Tourism WA's funding of regional tourism organisations.</li> <li>• The increase in Tourism WA's events budget by around \$26.8m.</li> <li>• The ratio of direct economic return to Tourism WA's investment for major sponsored events.</li> <li>• Policy on invitations to local members of Parliament to attend tourism events.</li> </ul>

<sup>75</sup> Ecological thinning is an active forest management tool undertaken to support forest health and resilience as the landscape continues to become drier and warmer. It involves the selective removal of individual trees to reduce water stress and improve the biodiversity of a given area. See Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, *Forest Management Plan frequently asked questions*, <https://www.dbca.wa.gov.au/management/forests/forest-management-plan/forest-management-plan-frequently-asked-questions>. Accessed 1 July 2024.

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p data-bbox="199 253 464 320"><b>Wednesday, 26 June 2024</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 342 395 371">WA Police Force</p>	<ul data-bbox="507 248 1361 1830" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility for determining priority of response to incidents.</li> <li>• The frequency of changes of priority of incidents.</li> <li>• Increasing the housing stock for regional police officers.</li> <li>• The criteria for 72-hour temporary protection orders.</li> <li>• Provision of a police escort to remove belongings from a house.</li> <li>• Adoption of new technologies to deliver policing for community safety.</li> <li>• The adoption of the Starlink satellite-based internet service provider to provide police with high-speed broadband coverage in remote areas.</li> <li>• Addressing youth crime in the Kimberley region.</li> <li>• Early intervention and prevention strategies for regional youth.</li> <li>• Operation Regional Shield and Regional Shield teams.</li> <li>• Dedicated school attendance officer in the Kimberley region.</li> <li>• Spending on enforcing protected entertainment precincts.</li> <li>• Update on the construction of the Fremantle District Police Complex.</li> <li>• Texts sent to firearm owners on 25 June 2024 regarding the <i>Firearms Act 2024</i> being in force.</li> <li>• The Commissioner’s discretion regarding firearm licence applications under section 11 of the.</li> <li>• The number of sexual misconduct complaints against police officers.</li> <li>• The number of offences against the person per 100,000 people.</li> <li>• The creation of border search areas around airports and ports under the <i>Misuse of Drugs Act 1981</i>.</li> <li>• Assaults on police.</li> <li>• Update on the Baldivis and Forrestfield police stations.</li> <li>• Update on building improvements at the Cannington District Police Complex.</li> <li>• The number of officers stood down for refusing the COVID-19 vaccination and the cost in employee benefits of doing so.</li> <li>• The expansion of Community Liaison Officers.</li> <li>• Replacement of the forensics register.</li> <li>• The Blueline anonymous reporting facility enabling officers to report workplace issues to internal affairs.</li> <li>• The sexual misconduct reporting line enabling officers to report sexual misconduct in the workplace.</li> <li>• The number of officers that have accessed mental health support services.</li> <li>• The number and costs of chaplains, psychologists and psychiatry services within WA Police.</li> <li>• The number of hours of sick leave taken by police from 2021-22 to 2022-23.</li> <li>• The number of outstanding return to prison warrants.</li> <li>• The Police Facilities Upgrade Program.</li> <li>• The authorised FTE for family and domestic violence response teams.</li> <li>• The reporting and sanction rate for family and domestic violence.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p data-bbox="199 255 432 320"><b>Thursday, 27 June 2024</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 342 459 407">Department of Transport (West Port)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="507 248 1364 313">• Development of the business case for the transition from Fremantle to Westport in Kwinana and Infrastructure Australia assessment.</li> <li data-bbox="507 320 1254 385">• The Westport marine science program to avoid and minimise environmental impacts.</li> <li data-bbox="507 392 1177 423">• Community and stakeholder consultation on Westport.</li> <li data-bbox="507 430 1342 495">• \$529.3m in the past 4 years set out in budgets, with \$174 spent as at 30 April 2024 on the business case and enabling works.</li> <li data-bbox="507 501 1350 566">• Strategic land acquisitions allocated for the Westport special purpose account.</li> <li data-bbox="507 573 1150 604">• \$151,000 spend on bulk trade relocation in Kwinana.</li> <li data-bbox="507 611 1007 642">• Submissions on the Future of Fremantle.</li> <li data-bbox="507 649 1310 714">• Members of the Future of Fremantle Planning Committee who are engaged on the Westport project.</li> <li data-bbox="507 721 943 752">• The Western Trade Coast Initiative.</li> <li data-bbox="507 759 1350 824">• Consideration given to expanding container capacity at ports outside Perth.</li> <li data-bbox="507 831 1289 896">• Modelling and work on the current freight network ahead of the completion of Westport.</li> <li data-bbox="507 902 1278 967">• Modelling on what it required for upgrading Anketell Road and Kwinana Freeway.</li> <li data-bbox="507 974 1342 1039">• Fremantle Container Rail Subsidy to achieve a high level of freight by rail.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1046 1031 1077">• The Metronet and Westport road account.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1084 1364 1149">• Ownership of properties purchased in relation to the Westport project.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1155 1364 1220">• Estimate of trade and population once capacity of 1.2m containers per annum at Fremantle Port is reached.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p data-bbox="199 250 434 318"><b>Thursday, 27 June 2024</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 340 472 479">Department of Transport, Main Roads and Public Transport Authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="507 250 1362 318">• Western Australian bicycle network grants restricted to projects within 2km of new Metronet stations.</li> <li data-bbox="507 322 1321 389">• The number of kilometres of shared path expected to be built each year within the Western Australian bicycle network.</li> <li data-bbox="507 394 1305 461">• Mode share between public transport, cycling, walking and motor vehicle use.</li> <li data-bbox="507 465 1299 533">• 8 week trial for City West, Cannington and Mirrabooka driver and vehicle service centres opening on Saturdays.</li> <li data-bbox="507 537 1088 560">• Wait times at driver and vehicle service centres.</li> <li data-bbox="507 564 1114 586">• Update on the Driver Access and Equity program.</li> <li data-bbox="507 591 1337 658">• The new Fitzroy Crossing bridge and associated works, including the Brooking Channel bridge.</li> <li data-bbox="507 663 1331 730">• Update on the Albany Ring Road and the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, including cost-benefits ratios.</li> <li data-bbox="507 734 1362 801">• Cost-benefit ratios for other Main Roads projects and what factors are considered, such as greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li data-bbox="507 806 874 828">• Land clearing by Main Roads.</li> <li data-bbox="507 833 1299 900">• When the bike path on the northern side of Ranford Road will be open.</li> <li data-bbox="507 904 1267 927">• The economic cost of congestion in the Perth and Peel region.</li> <li data-bbox="507 931 1283 1039">• Congestion points on Perth and Peel roads, including the Leach Highway and North Lake Road point and Mitchell Freeway southbound.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1043 1107 1066">• Carrying capacity of the Fremantle Traffic Bridge.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1070 1347 1178">• The Federal Government's review of its \$120b infrastructure pipeline and the 4 cancelled transport projects in Western Australia, including the Pinjarra heavy vehicle bypass.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1182 1203 1205">• Update on the Great Northern Highway Bindoon bypass.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1209 826 1232">• Street light maintenance.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1236 1299 1258">• The transition of road maintenance staff in-house to Main Roads.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1263 1075 1285">• The number of houses owned by Main Roads.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1290 1362 1357">• Update on expenditure on the Oakajee Strategic Industrial Area Access Road.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1361 1187 1384">• The replacement of 12 timber bridges in the Wheatbelt.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1388 1059 1411">• Update on the regional road safety program.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1415 1011 1438">• The Congdon Street Bridge replacement.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1442 1011 1464">• The rollout of electric buses across Perth.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1469 1362 1536">• Update on the railcar manufacturing program and the rollout of locally made C-series trains.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1541 1043 1563">• The transition to electric from diesel buses.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1568 1362 1635">• Policy on advertising on the Transperth bus fleet and advert regarding 'new laws to stop motor injury scams'.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1639 1171 1662">• The level of local content for the C-series train project.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1666 1075 1688">• Metronet land acquisition and enabling works.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1693 1011 1715">• Patronage estimates on the rail network.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1720 1267 1787">• Metronet projects under development, including high-capacity signalling.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1792 1123 1814">• Cost of living relief through public transport fares.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
<p data-bbox="199 250 434 315"><b>Thursday, 27 June 2024</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 338 475 403">WA Health and Mental Health Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="507 250 906 277">• Rural and remote nursing posts.</li> <li data-bbox="507 282 911 309">• The Junior doctors support Unit.</li> <li data-bbox="507 313 1142 340">• Schemes to attract and retain staff in regional areas.</li> <li data-bbox="507 344 1353 371">• Scope of works for the additional \$173.2 million for Bunbury Hospital.</li> <li data-bbox="507 376 1251 450">• Breakdown of \$39 million for metropolitan and regional child development services.</li> <li data-bbox="507 454 1326 528">• WA Government and Munderoo investment of \$34.6 million to fund projects across WA.</li> <li data-bbox="507 533 1326 607">• Median wait times for primary school aged children to access seven child development services.</li> <li data-bbox="507 611 1278 685">• Trial opening at Joondalup and Rockingham child development services sites on Saturdays.</li> <li data-bbox="507 689 1251 763">• The <i>Short-Stay, Mother-Baby Developmental, Behavioural and Parenting Interventions</i> Pilot: \$490 000 over two years.</li> <li data-bbox="507 768 1347 842">• Dental therapists shortages and \$2.534 million to the early childhood dental program for the first year of a phased rollout contingent on a sufficient workforce.</li> <li data-bbox="507 846 1251 920">• Perinatal mental health support funding for non-government organisations and seven pilots.</li> <li data-bbox="507 925 1310 999">• The Child and Adolescent Health Service community health hub in Murdoch opening in September 2024. Midland August 2024.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1003 1353 1077">• Referrals to the mother–baby units at King Edward Memorial Hospital and Fiona Stanley Hospital.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1081 922 1108">• The WA child ear health strategy.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1113 1299 1187">• Number of WA Country Health Service and Child and Adolescent Health Service child health checks.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1191 1214 1218">• The future health research and innovation sovereign fund.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1223 1347 1323">• Update on implementing an Ombudsman recommendation creating a framework for a trauma-informed approach across agencies into family and domestic violence and suicide.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1328 1315 1402">• Population with increased high or very high levels of psychological distress.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1406 1331 1536">• The <i>Medical respite for the homeless</i> pilot: 327 patients with a 44 per cent reduction in emergency department presentation and a 56 per cent reduction in hospital admissions, saving some \$4.5 million in associated hospital costs.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1541 1206 1568">• Excess mortality from COVID deaths in Western Australia.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1572 1294 1646">• Powers under the <i>Public Health Act 2016</i> to allow a public health officer or police officer to force vaccination.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1650 1286 1724">• The proposed World Health Organization’s pandemic treaty and changes to the International Health Regulations.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1729 1337 1803">• Progress on 25 recommendations the Select Committee on Palliative Care Report made on 19 November 2020.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1807 1342 1881">• Continuing funding for the WA Country Health Service palliative care helpline.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1886 1134 1912">• Protocols for the handling aborted babies’ remains.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1917 1347 1991">• The number of fully immunised children and a 2024–28 immunisation strategy in development.</li> <li data-bbox="507 1995 1326 2069">• Elective waitlist patients: The current median wait time for a child to access ear, nose and throat surgery at 4 public hospitals.</li> <li data-bbox="507 2074 879 2101">• Funding for the <i>My Baby</i> app.</li> </ul>

Date and agency	Topics discussed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacancies in all community dental health services noting WA is not an attractive destination for dentists.</li> <li>• The Women’s and Babies’ Hospital Special Purpose Account. The Business case and Project Definition Plan completed.</li> <li>• The regional graduate incentive onboarded 191 nurses and 17 midwives since July 2023.</li> <li>• \$920 000 to improve renal dialysis outcomes in Halls Creek and the Kimberley.</li> <li>• \$24 million Project Definition Plan to deliver a renal centre, including eight renal dialysis chairs, and a 20-bed renal hostel in Halls Creek.</li> <li>• 19 million warehoused, expired rapid antigen tests and the \$4 million sustainable disposal strategy.</li> <li>• The \$9 million Geraldton oncology service project in limbo due to disagreement with the Commonwealth about their contribution.</li> <li>• \$32.5 million additional funding for the patient assisted travel scheme, excluding fuel and accommodation.</li> <li>• The regional airfare zone cap.</li> <li>• Stalled regional hospital developments in Mullewa, Laverton and Tom Price attributed to serious challenges within the current building and construction environment.</li> <li>• Update on the \$1.8 billion construction cost of the new Women’s and Babies’ Hospital, expanded maternity services at Osborne Park Hospital and neonatology at Perth Children’s Hospital.</li> <li>• Initiatives for improving access to emergency care and reducing pressure on emergency departments.</li> <li>• Getting patients out of hospitals: The <i>Residential Respite</i> pilot to trial aged-care facilities providing respite for patients awaiting aged care.</li> <li>• 10 per cent increase in elective surgeries since COVID suspended activity.</li> <li>• Nurse and midwife-to-patient ratios with Perth Children’s Hospital meeting those ratios.</li> <li>• \$46 million for acute care and response teams in the metropolitan area and Great Southern.</li> <li>• The Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission report regarding unlawful detention in public hospitals.</li> <li>• The current level of ambulance ramping in Western Australia.</li> <li>• Comparison of increased funding for Voluntary Assisted Dying and palliative care.</li> <li>• State Government Social Concessions and ambulances for seniors.</li> <li>• Locations of the additional 700 hospital beds across the system.</li> <li>• Declining immunisation rates explained as vaccination fatigue.</li> </ul>

## GLOSSARY

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<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>ACCO</b>	Aboriginal community-controlled organisations or corporation
<b>ADCR</b>	Annual Data Compilation Report
<b>Committee</b>	Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations
<b>estimates</b>	The 2024-25 estimates of expenditure
<b>FMP</b>	Forest Management Plan 2024-2033
<b>FPC</b>	Forest Products Commission
<b>National Agreement</b>	National Agreement on Closing the Gap

## **Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations**

### **Date first appointed:**

30 June 2005

### **Terms of Reference:**

The following is an extract from Schedule 1 of the Legislative Council Standing Orders:

3. Estimates and Financial Operations Committee
    - 3.1 An Estimates and Financial Operations Committee is established.
    - 3.2 The Committee consists of 5 Members, 3 of whom shall be non-Government Members.
    - 3.3 The functions of the Committee are to -
      - (a) consider and report on -
        - (i) the estimates of expenditure laid before the Council each year;
        - (ii) any matter relating to the financial administration of the State; and
        - (iii) any Bill or other matter relating to the foregoing functions referred by the Council;
- and
- (b) consult regularly with the Auditor General.





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