

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No. 1

Thursday 20 June 2002

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas

PREMIER, ARTS AND CITIZENSHIP

The Committee met at 5.30 p.m.

MEMBERS

Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile (Chair)

The Hon. Janice Burnswoods
The Hon. Ian Macdonald
The Hon. Henry Tsang

The Hon. Charlie Lynn
The Hon. James Samios
The Hon. Dr Peter Wong

PRESENT

The Hon. R. J. Carr, *Premier, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Citizenship*

Premier's Department
Dr C. Gellatly, *Director General*

Cabinet Office
Mr R. Wilkins, *Director General*

Community Relations Commission
Mr S. Kerkyasharian, *Chairperson*

CHAIR: I declare the meeting open and welcome the Premier and his staff to the public hearing of General Purpose Standing Committee No. 1. At this meeting the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of the Premier, Arts and Citizenship. Before questions commence, some procedural matters need to be dealt with. As to broadcasting of proceedings, part four of the resolution referring the budget estimates to the Committee requires evidence to be heard in public. The Committee has previously resolved to authorise the media to broadcast sound and video excerpts of its public proceedings. Copies of the guidelines are available from the attendants.

In accordance with the Legislative Council's guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings, only members of the Committee and witnesses may be filmed or recorded. People in the public gallery should not be the primary focus of any filming or photographs. In reporting the proceedings of this Committee, the media must take responsibility for what they publish or what interpretation they place on anything that is said before the Committee.

There is no provision for members to refer directly to their own staff while at the table. Witnesses, members and their staff are advised that any messages should be delivered through the attendant on duty or the Committee clerks. For the benefit of members of the Committee and Hansard, I ask particularly that departmental officials identify themselves by name, position and department or agency before and during any questions referred to them.

Where a member is seeking information in relation to a particular aspect of a program or subprogram, it would be helpful if the program or subprogram is identified. The Committee has agreed to the following format for this hearing: 20 minutes for questions from the Opposition; 10 minutes for questions from crossbench member the Hon. Dr Peter Wong; 10 minutes for questions from the Chair; with the provision that Government members may ask questions when they wish. I declare the examination for proposed expenditure open for questions.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Premier, does your ministerial office receive media monitoring services? If so, what were the annual costs in the 2001-02? If the media monitoring services are sourced from other cost centres, which budgets are they allocated from and what is the annual cost? How many different suppliers do you have contracts with either directly or indirectly through all the media monitoring services sourced from other cost centres? Would you please list all suppliers?

Mr CARR: Mr Chairman, the Media Monitoring Unit [MMU] has been operating for over 25 years. It provides a range of monitoring services not only to the Premier but to Ministers, the Parliamentary Library and government agencies. These services include phone alerts to ministerial offices, audio and visual dubs to ministerial offices and agencies, video compilation tapes, and daily news summaries to ministerial officers, the Parliamentary Library and government agencies.

The equivalent of seven full-time staff work with this unit. The net cost of running this unit is \$567,918.82 per annum. During 2001-02 the ministerial offices were charged an annual fee of \$3,000 and agencies were charged an annual fee of \$1,000. For the six month period from 1 July to 31 December 2002 the MMU will charge agencies the following fees for audio and video dubs: low user, \$450 for six months; medium user, \$700 for six months; and high user, \$1,000 for six months. Ministers' offices will be charged an annual fee of \$4,000.

Experienced journalists and media monitors who have developed considerable expertise in government and current affairs affecting government policy staff the unit. The State Contracts Control Board awarded a sector-wide broadcast radio and television monitoring contract to Rehame Australia Monitoring Services. The contract will commence on 1 July 2002. That probably answers the question, Mr Chairman. I am not aware of any increase in staff in the period I have been Premier. I think it is the same staff level and the same service that applied during the Fahey and Greiner governments.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Premier, separate to the Media Monitoring Unit, do you use any other media monitoring services?

Mr CARR: I am advised, Mr Chairman, that the references I have made cover media monitoring services drawn on by the Government.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: As at 1 July 2002 what would be the value of the contracts?

Mr CARR: Mr Chairman, I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: How much has been set aside for media monitoring services to your ministerial office in 2002-03? For media monitoring services sourced from different cost centres, how much has been allocated in these cost centres for media monitoring services in 2002-03?

Mr CARR: I am advised that my office will pay fees on the same basis that individual Minister's offices pay. I refer to the figures in the previous answer. We will pay fees on that same basis.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Does your ministerial office receive transcription services and, if so, what was the annual cost? If the transcription services are sourced from other cost centres, which budgets are they allocated from and what was the cost for 2001-02? How many different suppliers do you have contracts with either directly or indirectly through transcription services sourced from other cost centres? Would you list all suppliers of such services?

Mr CARR: I am advised that there is no additional transcription service; transcripts come from the Media Monitoring Unit that I have described in detail.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: So the costs are included?

Mr CARR: Yes.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: What is the annual budget of the Premier's Department Media Monitoring Unit for 2001-02 and the estimate of costs for 2002-03 and 2003-04?

Mr CARR: The net cost of running this unit is \$567,918.82 per annum. As I said in the previous answer, ministerial offices are charged an annual fee of \$3,000 and agencies an annual fee of \$1,000.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: What is the gross cost?

Mr CARR: I quoted the net cost. We are happy to get the gross cost.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: How many staff are employed in the Media Monitoring Unit?

Mr CARR: Seven full-time staff, as I mentioned in the previous answer. Again, it is the equivalent of seven full-time staff working within this unit, a number of them being part-time. It is the equivalent of seven full-time staff. Again, as far as I am aware that is the same staff that have been there under previous governments.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Premier, what is the total amount of fees charged by the MMU?

Mr CARR: I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Premier, what grades are the staff employed at in the Media Monitoring Unit?

Mr CARR: Again, I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: What is the total salary expense for the Media Monitoring Unit?

Mr CARR: Again, I will have to get the breakdown. It is, of course, included in the net cost. I will have to get the breakdown into wages and other expenses.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Premier, what was the total amount spent by the Premier's Department Media Monitoring Unit in 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-02?

Mr CARR: Mr Chairman, I would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Premier, how many staff are employed in your ministerial office as at 30 May 2002? What is the annual salary cost of those staff?

Mr CARR: The answer to that is 29 and the total annual salary as at 1 July 2001 is \$2,639,000.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: How many of those staff are media officers?

Mr CARR: The answer is four.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: How many staff are seconded from departments to your office?

Mr CARR: Three.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: On which budgets are these salaries paid?

Mr CARR: The budget of my office.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: That is the budget from the Premier's Office?

Mr CARR: Could we return later this evening and give you that?

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Certainly. Could you advise the estimate of staff costs for 2002-03?

Mr CARR: Yes. The estimate for staff costs to 30 June 2002—

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: For 2002-03?

Mr CARR: The estimate for 2002-03 is \$3,033,000.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Will the number of staff remain at 29, with three seconded, or are you budgeting for an increase in numbers in 2002-03?

Mr CARR: That is the same number.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Going back to the Media Monitoring Unit, would you tell us how much the following documents cost to produce annually—the newspaper summary and the breakfast radio summary?

Mr CARR: I would have to get back to you on that.

CHAIR: You will take that question on notice?

Mr CARR: I do not think there would be an estimate of the cost of those. They are just part of these services provided by the unit throughout the day.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: In 2001-02 for each of your portfolio agencies how many media and public relations officers were employed?

Mr CARR: There is none in the Premier's Office, none in the Cabinet Office, none in Arts and part of one position provides such a service in the Community Relations Commission [CRC].

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: In 2001-02 for each of your portfolio agencies what was the total cost of media monitoring services?

Mr CARR: I think we would need to get back to you on that.

The Hon. Dr PETER WONG: Given that the Community Relations Commission has halved its number of staff that monitor and advise on the ethnic affairs priority statements of government agencies, how is the commission meeting its obligations to assist and assess the effectiveness of public authorities in observing the principles of multiculturalism in the delivery of government services?

Mr CARR: There is no rule that says that the effectiveness of an agency like the Community Relations Commission is measured by the number of staff. Indeed, I would put forward that we can measure our effectiveness over the years by our capacity to wind back staff because we are educating government to be more sensitive to the goals of managing the demands and needs of a multicultural society. I would emphasise before this Committee that a reduction in staff numbers does not mean we are less successful at shaping government policy to reflect the reality of a multicultural New South Wales.

I think there ought to be an expectation that over time, as we get better at it, we can do better with fewer staff. The fact is that government departments and government agencies are far more sensitive to this agenda now than they would have been in the late 1970s when the Ethnic Affairs Commission was established. Initiatives like the Youth Partnership with Arabic Speaking Communities or the community relations forums that we held in April and initiatives like the gathering in Government House where last year we had the leaders of the major religious faiths in New South Wales making a statement in favour of tolerance, these are successful. They help us underline and enhance the harmony, which is a feature of our diverse society.

I would really deprecate any attempt to focus on staff numbers as a measure of how we do things. We have got 18 people involved in our youth liaison teams for Arabic youth. They are people who have been trained to go out there, with support from us, to work on the streets in areas where they are able to diffuse tensions. All the feedback is that this program is working. These are the considerations that weigh on my mind when I look at the effectiveness or otherwise of the Community Relations Commission and they would be better measures than raw staff numbers.

The Hon. Dr PETER WONG: What is the performance benchmark of your Government's youth participation initiatives, including the Arabic program, how does the benchmark measure and how successful is it?

Mr CARR: The fundamental benchmark for me is whether our society, which is culturally diverse, multicultural, is working harmoniously and I think overwhelmingly that it is. One of the great advertisements we Australians can make is that we have drawn our people from diverse sources and that we all get on pretty well. The harmony of multicultural New South Wales is one of its defining characteristics and where there are pressure points and problems, we have been able to mobilise resources to bear down on them so that when the events of September 11 and some very specific gang-related behaviour in Sydney began to produce signs of unease, we were able to bring together the religious leaders in Government House and make a statement of tolerance and diversity. I think that sent a powerful message. It is our capacity to come together and express an abhorrence of intolerance that reflects well on this small but effective agency, there to monitor and advise on the policy challenges of multiculturalism.

The Hon. Dr PETER WONG: You spoke earlier about community relations forums. Can you explain how much was spent on the 2002 community relations forums, including the cost of Community Relations Commission staff time?

Mr CARR: Yes. The budget for the two-day forum was \$90,000; \$50,000 was transferred from the Community Partnership Scheme to "Other operating expenses" line in the 2001-02 budget. That is where you would find it. Outcomes from the workshop discussions will inform the Community Relations Commission and other government agencies of the delegates' responses to the workshop topics. The green paper "Cultural Harmony—The Next Decade 2002-2012" was presented

and discussed in a series of workshops. Approximately 280 people were there. They represented over 200 community organisations from throughout rural, regional, remote and metropolitan New South Wales.

The CRC has received letters of appreciation and praise regarding the forum. Mr Tom Keneally presented the annual oration at the dinner and his presentation will be published. I am advised that this first community relations forum was an outstanding success. It is in keeping with the first function of the commission, which is to hold systematic consultations with communities from throughout New South Wales. This is the largest and most representative community relations forum undertaken to discuss issues of common interest in multicultural New South Wales and the only consultation of its size and nature in the State. We are particularly proud of the participation of over 70 people from rural and regional New South Wales.

The Hon. Dr PETER WONG: As the Council on the Cost and Quality of Government found in 2000 that it was not possible to tell whether the Community Relations Commission's objectives, targets and quality standards had been met over the previous three to five years, what performance benchmarks and indicators does the Community Relations Commission have in place to demonstrate that it is meeting objectives, targets and quality standards, and what are some examples of where the commission has achieved its required performance standards?

Mr CARR: I would continue to advise the Committee that the best test of the effectiveness of the Community Relations Commission is whether New South Wales, the most culturally diverse State in Australia, continues to reflect an essential harmony. Moreover, is there a feeling within the community groups, diversely sourced as they are, that people in this society get a fair go, get access and equity regardless of background? What always strikes visitors and what struck them during the Olympic year 2000, was that we all, as Australians, get on pretty well with one another and the leadership of these communities has had access to government through community relations. They have had an opportunity, through our forum, to express their views about government policies. We are rendering government administration more and more sensitive year on year to the needs of reflecting the desire of multicultural communities to have a fair go and have their interests reflected in government.

I think the harmony of our society reflects well on the way in which the Community Relations Commission does its job. It does its job with a minimum of fuss and with no resort to proscriptive statutes. That is the way I see it. That report was delivered 18 months or two years ago. The Community Relations Commission is now up and running. It is governed by the legislative amendments that we proceeded with, which changed it from the Ethnic Affairs Commission into the Community Relations Commission. I believe its work reflects the advice and recommendations of the committee's report.

CHAIR: Page 2-6 of Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 1, lists a number of expenses for the Premier's Department that total \$101.1 million. Part of that expenditure is for the Olympic wind-up. How is it planned to develop the Olympic site at Homebush Bay and what is the timetable? Some \$2.8 million is allocated for the Olympic wind-up.

Mr CARR: That allocation is to cover any outstanding claims on the Olympic Co-ordination Authority [OCA]. The Premier's Department is taking responsibility for the finalisation of Olympic matters upon the wind-up of the OCA on 30 June—the end of this month. Some \$2.8 million has been classified as Olympic wind-up funding and it will have to fund both the Olympic wind-up and administrative costs incurred in the early stages of organising our support for the 2003 Rugby World Cup. That \$2.8 million will be allocated in the following way. Some \$850,000 is allocated for records management and archiving. A key part of the Games wind-up process is the collation of Olympic-related documents and their archiving. Given the scale of the Sydney 2000 Games and the number of documents involved, this represents a large, ongoing project. Those documents can be drawn on for future reports and major events.

Secondly, \$1,150,000 will be allocated for commercial contract negotiations. This is funding to provide for legal and associated costs in respect of the finalisation of a small number of remaining commercial projects and the ongoing Peter Zhu litigation. Some \$674,000 is allocated to salaries and wages and is associated only in part with the Olympic wind-up. The four remaining OCA staff will

transfer to the Premier's Department on 1 July, and their expertise will be utilised for both the Olympic wind-up and the new projects, such as the development of a major New South Wales Government venue strategy proposal and the 2003 Rugby World Cup. Some \$150,000 has been allocated for publications, printing and stationery.

Quite separate from these commitments in the legal and administrative winding up of Games organisation and its transfer to the Rugby World Cup organisation is the plan that I announced with the Deputy Premier yesterday for the future development of the Homebush Bay site. That is in the Treasurer's portfolio under the Sydney Olympic Park Authority item. It, of course, involves commercial and residential development on the Homebush Bay site. The weight of advice we received was that the way to guarantee maximum use of the facilities at Homebush Bay, including transport facilities, was to anchor within its precincts a permanent population. It is estimated that 3,000 people will live there in three to four residential apartment blocks and that 10,000 people will work there in commercial developments on the site. This means a permanent, day-to-day population at Homebush Bay. It will boost the use of the station and the aquatic centre. It will take up to 10 years for all the commercial developments to come on stream, but we anticipate that the residential developments—construction of which will start in the first quarter of next year—will be completed within two years.

CHAIR: You said that the financial aspects are in the Treasury's accounts; does your department do the planning for the development?

Mr CARR: No. The Sydney Olympic Park Authority is a statutory authority that comes under the Treasurer's portfolio, and the planning for that site will come from there.

CHAIR: You mentioned litigation in your answer. The amount allocated for that purpose seems rather small. I understand that there is one major case outstanding. Is it estimated that that sum is sufficient to cover any possible damages payment?

Mr CARR: Yes, I am advised that the legal advisers to the Government say that that allocation is adequate for that single big piece of outstanding litigation.

CHAIR: Page 2-3 of Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 1, states that \$0.3 million is allocated to the Office of Drug Policy. You recently announced that the Government is funding the establishment of a \$7.5 million X-ray machine to stop the importation of drugs and guns. Where is that cost allocated and where will that X-ray machine be located?

Mr CARR: It might be useful if I briskly sketched in the commitment across all government agencies to initiatives arising out of the Drug Summit. We are spending \$176 million over four years to implement the Drug Summit initiatives. On top of that an extra \$18 million was allocated to the Cabramatta anti-drug strategy. These expenditures include the funding of a new 16-bed treatment centre in Lismore; 15 beds at Nepean and Wyong hospitals; and 62 more rehabilitation beds for treating an extra 523 people per year. Seventy more rehabilitation treatment beds will be available by June 2003, with places for an extra 280 people. That is part of the Commonwealth-State diversion agreement that I announced with the Prime Minister. However, very significantly, more than 2,800 extra places are funded for methadone and buprenorphine treatment. An extra 2,000 people are receiving detoxification treatments at home or as outpatients. An extra 200 people a month are receiving drug and alcohol counselling in rural areas.

Another category of expenditure is moving drug offenders from the criminal justice system into treatment. That is the Magistrates Early Referral Into Treatment Program and the adult Drug Court trial. New therapeutic units have opened at Cessnock, Emu Plains and Parramatta correctional centres to help inmates reverse their addiction. There are programs directed at intervention with young people and at developing the work force to better cope with drug dependency. We are funding 70 community drug action teams, with hundreds of people mobilised in them, operating around the State. I recently welcomed the Commonwealth Customs commitment to an X-ray machine and announced that we had given it development approval on a former State Government site at Bunnerong power station. We facilitated it by finding the site, for example.

CHAIR: Is that Commonwealth funding?

Mr CARR: Yes, our role was to give it development approval and to assist in finding the site.

CHAIR: I note that on page 2-6 of the Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 1, there is an allocation in the budget of the Premier's Department of \$2.9 million for the Redfern/Waterloo package of initiatives. That is obviously designed to seek and provide assistance for disadvantaged Aboriginal communities in that area. Is that correct?

Mr CARR: Yes. I think that will repay analysis by everyone as a strong crime prevention intervention. It was approved by Cabinet on 18 December and is a package of initiatives designed to address a complex range of serious, long-term and entrenched problems being faced by the Redfern and Waterloo communities. We want to ensure that services and programs are targeted at those most in need in order to maintain a focus on long-term outcomes and to build the capacity of the community to respond to future needs as they arise. The project is designed to reduce crime, enhance services for young people, provide additional support for families, reduce drug and alcohol abuse, enhance educational opportunities, increase employment opportunities and enterprise development, and improve urban amenity and public space.

As part of this project there will be a big enhancement of existing non-government youth services. We are looking at additional programs to target gaps in services. The lead agency here is the Department of Community Services. We will fund three-person street teams to work two shifts per day for seven days—that includes nights—and will be staffed by personnel from both government and non-government agencies. It will include drug and alcohol workers and child protection workers. It will begin in July and the lead agency is the Department of Community Services. The Department of Housing is providing premises for the teams. The Youth Intervention and Development Program provides programs and activities built around the specific requirements of individuals and groups of young people. That will start in July, and my department is the lead agency.

Something called Kidspeak will fund programs that provide weekly get-togethers, arts and crafts activities, and support for young people and families in public housing. There is something called the Intensive Family Support Service, which is an innovative new model of service targeted at high-risk families. We are spending more on existing non-government family support services. We have an Alexandria Park Community School Sport Development Program designed to improve school attendance by breaking down children's and young people's negative views by linking education with new and existing sport and recreation facilities. There is funding for a community bus to be used by various agencies to get young people to activities.

A crime prevention plan is being developed by South Sydney City Council and Redfern local area command. There is also something called the RED strategy, which is a master plan for Redfern, Eveleigh and Darlington. There is the public domain plan involving Planning NSW to cover Redfern and Waterloo, and a number of other things including an employment and enterprise development task force. This is a detailed package. This is where that allocation is going. It has been put together as a result of extensive consultation with the community. It is all designed to bear down on the much publicised problems of crime by sinking money wisely into this diverse range of crime prevention programs.

CHAIR: We all agree they are excellent programs. Did your department make any assessment of the impact—negative or positive—of the closure of the Redfern Primary School?

Mr CARR: I am not aware that there would be any impact. I am happy to come back to you with advice from the Department of School Education.

CHAIR: But there was no assessment by your department in view of the projects you have been outlining?

Mr CARR: No.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Premier, again with regard to the Media Monitoring Unit would you provide the following information: the net cost of the Media Monitoring Unit; the gross cost of the unit and the number of staff employed in it for the years 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04 and

also for 1994-95; and the cost of all contracts between the Media Monitoring Unit and any third party media monitoring transcription service?

Mr CARR: I just want to emphasise that the Media Monitoring Unit has been around for 25 years. In that time it has served Premiers Askin, Lewis, Willis, Wran, Unsworth, Greiner, Fahey and now Premier Carr. So there is nothing new about this. The Media Monitoring Unit was not created by this Government, it has been there for 25 years. It has provided its service to Coalition Premiers Askin, Lewis, Willis, Greiner and Fahey, as it provides its service to me. I believe its staff and its function has been stable over those years. I have not added to its responsibilities or its staff. It does the same thing now as it did for previous governments. That has been its function over 25 years.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: It is a lot more sophisticated though. It was almost all radio in those days. It is a lot more sophisticated now.

Mr CARR: Radio was very much a factor in 1975, so was television; it had arrived some years earlier.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Indeed, but you would agree that it is a far more sophisticated service now than it was in 1975, and the use of the Media Monitoring Unit I would suggest to you is a lot more extensive and sophisticated than it was in 1975.

Mr CARR: I sat in Parliament as Opposition leader for seven years and I had transcripts quoted at me every question time. They came from Media Monitoring because that service was there, the identical service for previous governments. We did not invent the Media Monitoring Unit, we inherited the Media Monitoring Unit. We inherited it from John Fahey's administration and it continued to work as it had worked for John Fahey.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: The provision of the net cost, the gross cost and the number of staff for 1994-95 and for the following years would give us a good comparison.

Mr CARR: We have already taken that on notice. It has got the equivalent of seven full-time staff and a number of staff are part-time. But we are happy to go back through time.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I appreciate that. Could you also provide all revenues received by the Media Monitoring Unit from any agency in the New South Wales State sector for each year since 1994?

Mr CARR: I think so, yes

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: What productivity savings across agencies have been identified by the Christie task force to date, and how close to the 6 per cent productivity savings target over the period January 2000 to June 2004 was the Government as at April 2002? That is, do currently identified savings amount to 2 per cent, 3 per cent or whatever?

Mr CARR: The Christie report has not been received by Cabinet yet. That is the answer to one part of the question. On 10 December 2001 the Government reaffirmed its commitment to achieving the 6 per cent productivity savings from all agencies, and the task force was established to review agency savings plans. It has been working with agencies to assist them identify and implement savings initiatives. The task force is identifying and communicating key issues for agencies to address in their savings strategies. The onus will remain on agencies to develop their savings initiatives. Efficiencies from workplace reform initiatives include the three whole-of-government programs of shared services, procurement and information, and communication technologies. Strengthened reporting arrangements have been implemented which require Ministers to provide thorough progress reports on their portfolio agencies through Cabinet. The task force will prepare further progress reports to the Cabinet standing committee on the budget.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Page 5-17 of Budget Paper No. 2 states that the first report to Cabinet from the Christie task force was submitted in April 2002.

Mr CARR: I think the best way of answering the question is to say that there was an initial report to Cabinet submitted in March 2002. It reported that Treasury estimates of required ongoing savings from 2004-05 is \$827.9 million. On 10 December 2001 the Government reaffirmed its commitment to achieving the 6 per cent productivity savings from all agencies. The role of the Christie task force is not to produce a single report but to work with agencies to assist them identify and implement savings strategies. That is probably the best way of putting it. So it is identifying and communicating key issues for agencies to address in their savings strategies.

I am advised that it would be wrong to focus on a single report. The role of the group, headed by Mr Christie, is to help agencies identify where they can deliver those savings. Their focus will be on workplace reform initiatives—I mentioned earlier those three big areas of shared services: procurement and information and communication technologies—but with the assistance of the task force the agencies will be expected to develop savings initiatives. Strengthened reporting arrangements have been implemented which require Ministers to provide thorough progress reports on their portfolio agencies through Cabinet. The task force will report on progress to the Cabinet standing committee on the budget. All of that is consistent with what is reported on page 5-17 of Budget Paper No. 2.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: How much of the 6 per cent target do you anticipate will be achieved by 30 June 2002—and I am referring not to identified savings but actual realised savings?

Mr CARR: The best way of answering that is to say that the budget papers reflect continuing progress by the Government in achieving productivity savings—that is threaded throughout the budget papers. But that remains our goal, it remains a reasonable goal, and the Christie task force is there to work it through and, I might say, to provide specialist advice direct to agencies on how to achieve it.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Have the savings options been discussed with the public sector unions?

Mr CARR: That is done at the level of an individual agency. So that question is best addressed in each of the portfolio areas. I understand broadly at least the answer is yes. I should add that the memorandum of understanding that was part of that 6 per cent wages settlement contained a number of areas that the unions have agreed to work on. The whole concept was spelt out in that memorandum of understanding. It was part of that agreement in late 1999 or early 2000 between the Government and the public sector unions.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Do you anticipate any union opposition along the track to productivity savings?

Mr CARR: I think there will always be discussions on better ways of achieving our outcomes as a public sector. That is just part of the process of government. We want to achieve more for the taxpayer. The focus of the unions is to see that the interests of their members are protected throughout. This is no different from the challenge that has faced every New South Wales government I can recall.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Which areas have unions agreed to address? Have they agreed to the lot, in toto, or have they picked certain areas?

Mr CARR: This would be a question better addressed to individual Ministers in the context of their particular estimates committee hearings. Certainly unions have agreed with that broad agenda—for example, the focus on procurement, savings in procurement, information technology and shared services.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: You have made reference to agencies in the discussion, but how many agencies will require a longer timeframe to develop an agreed implementation plan with the task force, as per page 5-16 of Budget Paper No. 2?

Mr CARR: It is too difficult to give a general, all-encompassing answer to that question. It is going to vary from agency to agency. But that is a direction that has been endorsed by the public sector unions. It was part of a wages and salaries settlement. The details are best extracted from the individual Ministers.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: So, presumably, you are saying that at this stage you cannot inform us as to what provision has been made for budget support to these agencies, that it will require a longer timeframe to develop an agreed implementation time—2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06?

Mr CARR: I just draw your attention to the assumptions evident on every page of the budget. Beyond the timeframe canvassed in the budget, it is a matter for the budget committee of Cabinet in the financial circumstances we face.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Premier, what is the current arrangement provided to Paul Whelan in terms of a driver?

Mr CARR: As a transitional arrangement only Mr Whelan was provided with a car and driver. That service ceased on 31 January 2002. On 21 November he was appointed Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Premier and Leader of the House. So his present positions are Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Premier and Leader of the House.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: From the answer I assume that he is permanently allocated a driver. If so, how does this differ from the arrangements for other parliamentary secretaries? Is it on the same basis?

Mr CARR: No. Access to a car ceased on 31 January 2002. It had been allocated only as a transitional arrangement.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: So he has no access to a car or driver now?

Mr CARR: Only for official purposes, which is consistent with the conditions that apply to parliamentary secretaries, in his responsibilities as a parliamentary secretary.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: The previous New South Wales Government policy on the use of frequent flyer points, which is in circular 99-60, provided that points accumulated in the course of official travel may be used only for official purposes. How many such flights for official purposes were procured through the use of frequent flyer points in 2000-01?

Mr CARR: Procured from frequent flyer points?

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Yes, from official travel.

Mr CARR: For the whole sector or from the Premier's Department?

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: From the Premier's Department.

Mr CARR: We would need to research that. I say by way of background that the public sector policy since the early 1990s and the introduction of frequent flyer points has excluded the use of public sector travel accrued points for private travel. That was the policy from the early 1990s under both Coalition and Labor governments. It has always been expected that frequent flyer points would be accumulated for corporate use. This policy has been promulgated throughout the service on a number of occasions by both the former Coalition Government and the Carr Government. It has been a policy aimed at making it explicit to avoid problems. The Premier's Department is not aware of any misuse of the frequent flyer points system.

The Director-General of the Premier's Department has for some time wanted to exchange frequent flyer points for a higher discount for New South Wales government air travel. That is what this is about: a higher discount for New South Wales government air travel. The option was explored with Qantas and the new government contract for air travel and related services was being negotiated between the Department of Public Works and Services and Qantas. That new contract comes into force on 1 July 2002. We would see what was reported today as a standard administrative action to bring down the cost to taxpayers of air travel.

The Hon. Dr PETER WONG: Mr Premier, I believe the Government acknowledges the importance of having ethnic community members join the Police Service. What role do you see the Community Relations Commission playing in this respect? Will any funding be provided to the commission for that purpose?

Mr CARR: I am advised that the police do consult the Community Relations Commission on recruitment policy. I agree very much with Dr Wong that it is vitally important that the cultural diversity of New South Wales be reflected in the background of members of the New South Wales Police Service. That is reflected in the current recruitment drive being conducted by police. None of this is reflected in our budget though, because implementation of this policy is out of the budget of the Police Service.

The Hon. Dr PETER WONG: Will the Community Relations Commission be producing an edition of *People and Places* based on the 2001 census? How will the statistical data on ethnic communities in New South Wales be available to the general public?

Mr CARR: Mr Chairman, if it were acceptable to the Committee I would ask Dr Kerkyasharian to answer this directly.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for your attendance, Dr Kerkyasharian.

Dr KERKYASHARIAN: The Community Relations Commission will produce the publication *The People of New South Wales* based on the 2001 census as it has done on the last two occasions when censuses were taken. The publication will be available free of charge. It will also be available on our web site. Dr Wong and the Committee may be interested to know that there is intense interest in the publication and its format by other States and by the Commonwealth. We are now having preliminary negotiations with them so that other States can produce a similar publication following the lead of New South Wales.

The Hon. Dr PETER WONG: With your permission, Premier, I ask Dr Kerkyasharian: Previously there was such a thing as the Police and Community Training Program. Does such a program still exist? If so, what are the details of its involvement and what are its outputs?

Dr KERKYASHARIAN: The Police and Community Training Program is run by the police force and I understand that is reflected in its budget. The Community Relations Commission continues to be involved in the program. I represent the commission on a steering committee. In the current financial year we are providing \$30,000 towards that program from our Community Partnership Program.

CHAIR: Mr Premier, I refer to page 211 of Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 1, and the reference to the State Electoral Office preparing for the Federal election. As you know, there has been a major change in the voting procedure for the Legislative Council which requires people now to indicate above the line how they wish their preferences to be allocated, whereas in the past they have been told to number only one box, and they number only one box for the Federal elections. What plans are there for a major education program for the New South Wales voting public? When will that education program commence?

Mr CARR: Do you mean an educational campaign designed to highlight the different practice applying in a State election from a Federal election?

CHAIR: Yes, for the next State election.

Mr CARR: I do not have advice on that. I am happy to speak to the State Electoral Office to ask what it would propose by way of community education in the context of the normal explanatory advertising before the next State election. I have to say that I am heartened by the high formal vote in recent State elections in New South Wales for the upper House, notwithstanding the huge size of the legendary tablecloth ballot paper. I am happy to take this question on notice and relay to you, Mr Chairman, what, if any, plans will be developed for a public education campaign during an election campaign, carried out by the State Electoral Office.

CHAIR: But you would agree that it needs to be more intensive than at previous elections because of the change?

Mr CARR: I think it is potentially bewildering for voters to have a method of voting for the State upper House different from that for the Senate.

CHAIR: I refer to page 2-17 of Budget Paper 3, Volume 1, and the reference to the Ministry of Arts. There was controversy about the French film *Baise Moi*, the screening of which was prohibited by the Commonwealth review committee, which overturned the original decision to award a classification to the film. Is it correct that you, as Minister for the Arts, called for the screening of the banned film? If that is correct, what action if any have you taken in regard to the classification system which, by your reported public statements, you seem to be criticising?

Mr CARR: Mr Chairman, you and I are probably locked in honest disagreement about the merits of film censorship for adults. I make no claim for the film, in which I have minimal interest, but I am interested in the danger of a return to the old days of film censorship. I do not want to see our police burdened with the job of having to visit cinemas and even theatres to confiscate films or to close down performances. I remember the late 1960s when closing down a play in Sydney was something a government ordered because of obscenity or sedition. I do not want to see us, because of political pressure at the Commonwealth level, return to those days. It is a burden to ask police to become the police of moral views and to make judgments about these things.

That is my philosophical position. I did seek advice after that controversy and after the Commonwealth action. The best advice was that New South Wales has a theoretical capacity to intervene in this system of censorship, but it would create the possibility that we would have in this State a separate system of film classification. That is not something that could work. We have to accept that while in theory our Attorney General could intervene in a case like that film, any action to do that would unravel the national uniform system of censorship which people, on both sides of this debate, would see as desirable. I am not proposing to take my objection to censorship for adults to the next stage of legally challenging or unravelling the uniform national system of censorship.

CHAIR: You will continue to support the Commonwealth classification system that does not involve police in making a decision about what should or should not be shown?

Mr CARR: My understanding was that under the Commonwealth system enforcement is relegated to the New South Wales Police, that they are drawn into it. That was one reason I made my public comments. I thought the police had more urgent things to attend to than going to see a movie that did not deserve the publicity that the political campaign against it at the national level delivered to the distributors.

CHAIR: Is it correct that the police do not have to see the film? They do not have to make any decision about the content of the bill, they only have to carry out the classification decision?

Mr CARR: If that were the case my objection would still stand because the police have to enforce the classification system and, as they see it, this could well involve going to witness the screening of the film, something I was told had happened in this case.

CHAIR: I understand that is not correct. They only have to enforce the classification—not the Commonwealth Government.

Mr CARR: I would prefer not to have a situation where the State police have to run around enforcing the classification. What I object to, and what happened with this no doubt worthless and overrated movie, was that after an initial decision by the Commonwealth film censorship board a political campaign was able to get the decision reviewed and reconsidered. I would not want to see that happen on a recurring basis, otherwise bit by bit we would be returning to the old days when films made in Hollywood and screened in the United States of America had chunks cut out of them before they could be screened in Australian cinemas. In the bad old days films screened at the Film Festival were censored.

CHAIR: Mr Premier, you would accept that the State police have to enforce the child pornography laws whether they are classified or not classified by the Commonwealth?

Mr CARR: Yes, and that has widespread support. Everything I say about the right of adults to see what they wish is implicitly qualified by saying that I want continuing bans against pornography that involves children. People who have criticised censorship would accept that as a given.

CHAIR: I refer you to Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 1, page 2-31, agency 19 Community Relations Commission. I note that an arson attack in January 2002 extensively damaged the commission's Ashfield premises. As the chairman of the commission is present, are you able to indicate whether there was a motive behind that attack? Did it involve any racial implications related to the commission's work?

Mr CARR: I understand that the case is sub judice, but I think I am entitled to say that the commission is not aware of any evidence that the attack had any sort of motivation in racial prejudice as a political statement against the commission or against the Government or government policy.

The Hon. JAN BURNSWOODS: Mr Premier, I refer to Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 1, page 2-55. Will you give details about the line item "Regional and rural miscellaneous recurrent grants", in particular the type of projects that will receive funding?

Mr CARR: The grants fund helps country towns across the State upgrade community facilities. It is focused on small local initiatives that have an immediate and tangible community benefit. Most requests for assistance are for those projects that local councils and organisations cannot fully fund themselves. The fund helps fill that gap. One classic example is community halls. Funding for repairing those halls is often hard to obtain from local councils or government agencies. In 2001-02 the fund assisted more than 20 halls in diverse locations including Tumut, Rocky Glen, Martins Creek and Bogan Gate.

Two weeks ago I was in Maitland to announce that under this fund we had allocated \$21,000 to help repair the Beresford girl guides hall, a group that has been part of the Maitland community since 1912. Some communities required only a few thousand dollars to install new windows or lights, or upgrade air-conditioning. The fund upgrades not only town halls. At Nimmitabel, a small community of 300 people located on the Monaro Highway, 50 kilometres south of Cooma, the locals had a plan to construct a heritage trail to attract visitors, improve local businesses and enhance community confidence. They needed some help to make it a reality. We came to the party with \$20,000 to assist them.

In March this year the Umina Surf Life Saving Club had its trailer with \$30,000 of equipment stolen following the State nipper championship at Blacksmith's Beach. The club has over 300 junior members and replacement of that gear was essential to keep the youngsters involved in the sport. We stepped in with \$18,000 grant to the Umina club. The president of the surf club, Mr Brian Paull, said, "Like other surf clubs, we are already dependent on donations and community fundraising activities to meet our equipment and operating costs. To have to find this amount of money on our own would have been a huge hurdle."

The Regional and Rural Miscellaneous Grants Fund gives the State Government the chance to respond with timely help where it is needed. It has a very practical quality to it. It is more often than not delivered in some sort of partnership with rural communities, that is with country communities that are doing a lot for themselves but in a setting where this fund can close a gap.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Could you advise why Mr Whelan was allowed a transitional arrangement for the use of a car and a driver? Were there any precedents for that arrangement?

Mr CARR: The justification for his role was that he continued to be Leader of the House. For that reason he had obligations and duties and I thought he should be assisted while he eased himself out of his commitments as police Minister and set himself up to perform as Leader of the House. I am happy to explore what precedents have prevailed when it comes to similar courtesies extended to former Ministers, party leaders in both Houses, in other words former office holders.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Premier, where does Mr Whelan live?

Mr CARR: What line item does that question relate to? I was not aware that we were funding an official residence. I want to seize this opportunity to rule out any suggestion that my Government has plans to establish official residences for Ministers. I do not see that as appropriate. There are precedents I guess with residences for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which I understand is 11 Downing Street, and maybe US Cabinet officers. But in a spirit of fastidious good housekeeping and budgetary constraints, we do not propose to duplicate it here.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: So, it is Ashfield?

Mr CARR: He has no official residence. We are not funding the residence of the former police Minister. You cannot find any reference in the budget, Mr Chairman, that points to an official residence of the former police Minister.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I assume he still lives in his electorate?

Mr CARR: You will have to ask him that. I certainly know he is vigorously working for his electorate, setting a very good pace and servicing his electorate. Again, there is no line item you can refer to here. There is no official residence for the former police Minister.

CHAIR: Members have to ask questions that are relevant to the budget, not to personal matters.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Premier, in deciding on the transitional arrangement from Minister to Leader of the House to Parliamentary Secretary, did you seek any briefing or advice from your department in making that arrangement?

Mr CARR: I would need to check the records. I undertake to do that and I will come back to the Committee.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Would you release the relevant departmental advice on the matter?

Mr CARR: I would be happy to, yes.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Premier, would you be able to list the members of the Major Events Board?

Mr CARR: Yes. I will first ascertain whether we have their names here. If not, we will get back to the Committee with that. I indicate that we are looking at a restructuring of that board, following the demise of Mr Sam Fiszman, its former Chair.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: What events were supported in 2001-02 by the Major Events Board [MEB], and what amount was expended on each of these events?

Mr CARR: The Major Events Board has one full-time staff member and one administrative assistant to support the board and carry out executive functions. The MEB secured the Tennis Masters Cup, which was held at the Sydney SuperDome from 12 to 18 November 2001. It was contested by the world's top eight ranked men. The cup is the season-ending event. It determines the number one male tennis player in the world. It was a very big event. The other event secured in the last year is the Sydney Marathon, which is now run over the Olympic marathon course in October each year. This year's event will finish on the Boulevard at Sydney Olympic Park. The marathon will have a strong interest in key tourism markets such as Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Germany. It will attract 3,000 entrants in its first year, with registration and international interest climbing strongly in the next few years.

The MEB forecasts that the marathon will generate an economic impact of \$20 million within the next three to five years. The MEB has also supported the Australian Safari, which is an off-road

rally event for four-wheel drives and motorcycles. It features some well-known names, such as Peter Brock and Daryl Beattie, as well as major motor industry manufacturers Holden, Honda and KTM with strong expectations for involvement of Ford, Mitsubishi, Toyota, Kia, Jeep and Nissan in 2002. The Australian Safari has been supported by the MEB as it is travelling throughout western New South Wales, and it fits in well with the Government's Year of the Outback strategy. The MEB also recommended support for the ANZ Golf Championship, which was held in Sydney in February 2002. It will be held in the same month for the next two years. In its first year the championship attracted 500 people to Sydney, including 300 from overseas.

The MEB has had a key role in advising the Government on securing major events in the post-Olympic period, including the establishment of an ongoing database of international events appropriate for Sydney and New South Wales, and development of a rolling schedule of targeted major events. It is currently considering event proposals in motor sports, triathlons, track cycling, women's golf, dance and a festival of indigenous culture. It also works in partnership with the Strategic Events Committee, which comprises agency heads—Tourism, State Development, Sport and Recreation, Gaming and Racing, Arts and Premier's. This committee, which is chaired and serviced by Tourism NSW, develops a whole-of-government approach to sporting events. The MEB has also had a major role through the Director-General of Premier's—Dr Gellatly is a member of the Major Events Board—with obtaining Rugby World Cup games, including the final in Sydney planned for October-November 2003.

I will take advice on one matter. I was also asked about the allocation to each event. We regard that as commercial in confidence for the very good reason that if we were to announce what we have allocated to assist any one of these events, that would then become the benchmark for the next negotiation with whatever body we are attempting to bring into Sydney? We provide a mixture for these events of in-kind support, an exemption from charges, support from police, co-ordination and the rest to secure them. We have probably been more hardheaded than the other States in our attempt to get major events, but the strategy has been successful because we have gone after big events.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Would you be able to tell us what amount was expended in globo by the board for the total number of events?

Mr CARR: It is difficult to give that answer now because amounts can be pulled from Sport and Recreation, Tourism, Police, Transport and other agencies designed to provide a package. Then there is the in-kind support as well.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: How would you judge what amount has been budgeted for 2002-03?

Mr CARR: There is no specific amount budgeted for a major event strategy. Each event is assessed individually, and the director-general will provide co-ordination with a range of government agencies. If those government agencies can be persuaded that supporting the event fits their activities, their brief, then they can make a contribution. It is a flexible strategy designed to pull support as needed from different budgets rather than a strategy that takes a huge sum of money in the millions and throws it at a major event strategy. As a postscript to the answer, we announced our support for the Rugby World Cup totalled \$6 million. It was sourced by supplementation from Treasury plus contributions from different agencies. That is a matter of public record.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: I suppose it would be a little more challenging if you were to take on the Grand Prix in New South Wales.

Mr CARR: Yes. In my experience we have to be very careful about a strategy on that sort of scale. It is my recollection that the Victorian Government has not announced the cost of attracting and supporting the Grand Prix. That, of course, is support each and every year. If an organisation were to come to us and say, "We would love this event to be run in Sydney" we would, of course, seriously investigate that possibility. But I am not sure that the benefits to the Sydney economy and Sydney tourism from a massive subsidy totalling, I do not know, \$20 million or \$30 million per annum would justify it. I do not think there would be a cost benefit.

In the wake of the Olympics, the success of our convention strategy and with the Rugby World Cup coming up, and with these sorts of events feeding it Sydney probably has an international profile that would not be dramatically enhanced by our getting something comparable to the Grand Prix. If it were offered after tomorrow we would look at it and judge the benefit it might bring against the cost it might represent. But we would need to be persuaded that the benefit would be a real one, given the promotion that Sydney has revelled in in the wake of the world's most successful Olympics and that will come our way with the Rugby World Cup, a taste of the impact of which we are able to feel as we witness the Soccer World Cup.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I congratulate the Government on its commitment to the Sydney Marathon. Are you able to provide the cost of staging the Sydney Marathon in the next three years, 2002-03 through to 2005? What is the difference between the Government contribution to the marathon and the actual staging cost? Will you advise us on the Government's commitment to ensuring or underwriting any shortfall between sponsor income and the cost?

Mr CARR: The big cost for the Sydney Marathon is the user charges from the Roads and Traffic Authority that come with the closure of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, as I understand it. Perhaps we could assemble some details and give them to the Committee if we take that question on notice.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Recently, I noted that the Library purchased—from a private collector and at a cost of \$350,000—a letter consisting of six foolscap pages, written by Matthew Flinders to George Bass in February 1800. The acquisition was financed from the Library's collection acquisition budget. Are you able to tell us how much is in that acquisition budget after allowing for the purchase of the Matthew Flinders document?

Mr CARR: I think I need to take this on notice. I have statistics about the acquisition fund for the State Library, but I might better serve the Committee if I got advice about whether the specific acquisition drew on money raised by the Library Foundation. I remember this being mentioned to me when I saw the splendid exhibition on Matthew Flinders, but if it is appropriate for the Committee I will give you the precise answer on notice.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: In the last financial year the State Library purchased 15,314 print monographs at an average cost of \$46.20. I am informed that the total cost exceeded the cost for the 1995-96 financial year, when the average price was \$37.30. There has been an increase in the price of books. Does that not indicate the necessity to increase the budget for the acquisition of books for the Library? What are you doing about that issue?

Mr CARR: This is a very useful question for us. In 2001-02 the book vote was \$4.538 million. That is being increased in the 2002-03 budget to \$6.038 million. It remains at that figure in our estimates through 2005-06, but we are talking to the Parliamentary Library and the Treasury about getting a sensible escalator that takes account of the very fact that you drew attention to: expected movement in the price of books. I find I am buying a standard biography of a US President now and it costs me \$75.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: What did *Marcus Aurelius* cost?

Mr CARR: The *Marcus Aurelius Meditations*, which I commend to all members of the House, including the Chairman of this Committee because it does pre-echo much Christian theology.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Serenity.

Mr CARR: It is very important for us all to contemplate serenity and simplicity as people involved in public life. That book is available in paperback, so it is not caught in this quite startling rise in the price of hardback books. I know that members of this Chamber will be rushing to get the third volume of Robert Caro's biography of Lyndon Johnson which is set in the red leather of the US Senate of the 1950s. Every member of this House could read it with great benefit. It is a history of a Senatorial Chamber. It will set you back \$75, unless we make some approach to Gleebooks store to get a discount for all the members of the House to be so equipped. The Hon. James Samios is quite right. The increasing cost of books explained this increase in the allocation. But it also requires that we talk about some well-based escalation through 2006, taking account of the general rise in the cost

of books and the continuing impact of a relatively low Australian dollar when it comes to buying British and American books.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I refer to ministerial expenses. Would you detail your use of helicopters in 2001-02 and 2000-01, at taxpayers expense?

Mr CARR: I have got some figures on my use of helicopters. There has been an average of one trip involving a helicopter per month. The cost is about \$2,000 per flight. I said on 19 September last year that on average my use of helicopter travel would be less, certainly no greater than Premiers Fahey or Greiner. I am using a helicopter tomorrow, as it happens, to keep three or four engagements in the Illawarra and return to Sydney by 1.00 p.m.

The Hon. Dr PETER WONG: Mr Premier, knowing your views on migrants settling in Sydney and metropolitan areas, and bearing in mind the fact that the Federal Government has increased its migration intake this year, what strategy do you have for encouraging migrants to settle in New South Wales regional towns?

Mr CARR: I think settlement in regional Australia will only be driven by economic growth and job growth in those regions. The Tumut pulp and paper mill—which we strongly supported, and which has generated hundreds of jobs in the south of the State—the growth of the poultry industry in Griffith with our infrastructure support, the growth of the Cadia gold and copper mine and the Ridgeway mine outside Orange would be examples of projects that would encourage migrants coming here to contemplate settlement outside metropolitan Sydney. It has to be related to our strategy of jobs growth in the regions. It is interesting to look at the reports of Afghan refugees, asylum seekers, who are working in abattoirs in Young and Parkes. That is a good example for us to think about and to support. I am seeking a meeting with Phillip Ruddock to explore ways that we can work with the Federal Government to relieve some of the pressure of migrant intake on Sydney.

The Hon. Dr PETER WONG: I suppose I am speaking also on behalf of the Hon. Ian Macdonald and Hon. Henry Tsang in relation to the southern economic zone between Young and Cowra. A question often asked of us is: What incentive can the Government offer to investors? We find it difficult to an answer that question.

Mr CARR: It is not a good approach to regional economic development to fling money around as a subsidy. You tend to get footloose industry. A proposition has to be viable to start with, like the Tumut paper mill, the myriad food processing and transport industries around Bathurst and our viable, relatively modern abattoirs round the State. It has to be viable to start with. It has to have some authentic link with a region in terms of value adding. It is mistaken for us to think that a government subsidy alone will attract industry to a region that has not got comparative advantages to offer to start with. In my experience, the best examples are mining and value adding, like the pulp and paper mill, the abattoirs or food processing.

CHAIR: Mr Premier, as Minister for Citizenship and with your reputation for strong support for the Anzac tradition, what action are you taking to ensure that the Anzac Day parades, particularly in regional centres, continue, given the civil liability issue? Have you considered using the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART], which comes under your authority, to ensure that premiums are reduced?

Mr CARR: Mr Chairman, the short answer to that is that IPART does not have the power to regulate the price of insurance products. That power resides with the Federal government agencies, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC] or Australian Prudential Regulation Authority [APRA]. That point needs to be strongly stated. What I did do is to meet the former State president of the RSL, Mr Rusty Priest, to talk about the position of Anzac commemorations, given that the blow-out in public liability costs. He brought the reassuring news that the State branch of the RSL has got an arrangement with an insurance broker that can cover RSL sub-branches. He and I did a joint press conference sending the message that RSL sub-branches should avail themselves of this offer. That was a reassuring message for local Anzac commemorations. If the position were to change I would revisit it, but I was reassured that the insurance broker working with the State branch of the RSL was in a position to draw coverage.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Premier, I refer to Budget Paper No 3, Volume 1, page 2-98, Ministry for the Arts, the line item "Cultural Grant Program". I am particularly interested in the New South Wales arts annual report on special initiatives. Would you provide some details of the Western Sydney Arts Strategy, which is a relatively new component of the Ministry for the Arts cultural grants program?

Mr CARR: I am very proud of the Western Sydney arts strategy. This is the biggest year in the funding of arts in Sydney's west. The Government has allocated a record \$17.133 million. In February, I went to the Parramatta Riverside Theatre to announce this historic package. I was joined by local government representatives and arts administrators. The core of the package is \$14.9 million to upgrade and expand cultural facilities in western Sydney, the biggest investment ever made in the cultural life of Western Sydney. For example, for the city of Bankstown there will be accommodation for professional arts organisations at the town hall at a cost of \$1.5 million. At Blacktown there will be the development of the new arts centre at a cost of \$500,000. The city of Campbelltown will get much-needed extensions to the Bicentennial Art Gallery with \$3.2 million going there. The city of Hawkesbury will get \$1.15 million to develop the regional museum at Windsor. In the city of Liverpool there will be an expansion of the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre at a cost of \$3.2 million. The city of Parramatta will receive assistance with a major refurbishment program for the Parramatta Riverside Theatre of \$1.8 million.

The city of Penrith will get two projects: expansion of the music facilities and a new drama teacher at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre—that is \$1.9 million on top of the \$4.5 million grant announced in March last year—and an expansion of the Penrith regional gallery and Lewers Bequest at \$1.65 million. In addition, the transfer of Rouse Hill Public School to the New South Wales Historic Houses Trust as a visitors centre for Rouse Hill estate and the preservation of Linnwood Hall at Guildford will flesh out this package. We have got a very good response from local government leaders in the west. Casula Powerhouse announced "Culture Boom for Western Sydney". The general manager of Liverpool council said:

The ... grant for the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre will continue our focus on creating a sustainable cultural industry in the region. Our program will provide specialist employment opportunities and career paths in a very dynamic industry.

There is a range of smaller capital works as well. There is nearly a quarter of a million dollars to Blacktown City Council for stage two of its arts centre, money for an information cultural exchange for the first multimedia arts access centre in Western Sydney, \$150,000 to Liverpool City Council for the police and community youth club at Millar and \$19,000 for urban theatre projects in Bankstown. So generally it is a good reception to re-equipping arts infrastructure and arts activity in the west. I want to acknowledge of the work and enthusiasm of the 14 local governments in Western Sydney for making the strategy successful.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: In relation to the Western Sydney Annual Business Awards, a number of other organisations effectively run business awards in Macarthur. Will you now privatise the running of the business awards in Western Sydney?

Mr CARR: It is run by the Ministry of Western Sydney. I thank you for your comments about it. I think it is a great occasion and the huge number of participants now is very striking. The professionalism and organisation also says a lot about the public servants responsible for this. I understand it works on a definition of Western Sydney that incorporates Macarthur. I suppose it is a Greater Sydney—capital G capital S—definition. I would take advice from the Minister, but I would not think there is a case for handing it over to a non-government organisation to run. I would certainly look at any proposal and give it serious consideration, but I would not think that would be likely. I certainly have not heard of it and I would be hesitant to carve Macarthur out of this very successful annual award. We would be well advised to keep business in the Macarthur area as part of the generic—

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: The Macarthur business awards are successfully run by a private organisation.

Mr CARR: What organisation runs that?

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I am not quite sure of the name of it but I have been asked in the past whether it would be open to tender, for example, by other private organisations which successfully run business award systems.

Mr CARR: I would look at such a proposal.

CHAIR: I ask a question of you in your role as Minister for Citizenship and also community relations. There has been a rise in anti-Semitic activity in New South Wales. I understand that police protection has been provided for Islamic properties, mosques, et cetera, but I have been informed that private security is required for Jewish properties, synagogues, et cetera. What action is the Government taking to address anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic activity in Sydney?

Mr CARR: It is some time since I have been advised of the police response to the incidents, but I was reassured by the police that they were giving the protection of synagogues and Jewish schools a very high priority and had responded quickly to any attacks, vandalism, graffiti or whatever. I want to reassure the Jewish community of New South Wales of my commitment to seeing that they are protected and that they feel secure. I have to say that this goes back some time. From the early 1990s there was a pattern of attacks on synagogues that concerned me. From the early 1990s there was evidence that barely a synagogue in the State had been immune from an attack of vandalism or arson. I have not got recent information but I am relying on the police to provide the assurance to the Jewish community that they provide to any other community that has reason to suspect extremists might want to commit an attack of arson or vandalism on its premises.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Following the tragic firebombing at Ashfield there has been a move to Stocklands House in the city.

Mr CARR: Yes.

The Hon. JAMES SAMIOS: Are you able to give the Committee, perhaps on notice, an idea of the cost of that move?

Mr CARR: I am indebted to the Chair of the Community Relations Commission for highlighting that that allocation can be found in capital grants, that is the State acquisitions program 2002-03 on page 41. The office relocation was \$1 million and that is set out there. I appreciate the interest that the Hon. James Samios has taken in the welfare of the staff who were affected by the appalling fatality that has been the cause of sad reflection for all of us. To go to those premises and see the workplace with translated books and postcards was an appalling reminder of the vulnerability of these public servants in an open office and the impact within seconds of black smoke generated by the burning of plastic furniture.

CHAIR: Thank you, Premier, for attending with your staff and senior staff from the Cabinet Office. For your information the Committee resolved that you be allowed a maximum of 35 days for the return of answers to questions taken on notice during the hearing, of which there were some, and, if other members of the Committee wish to provide written questions on notice that they have not been able to ask tonight, the responses should be within 35 days. Are you willing to agree to that?

Mr CARR: I am happy to accept that and I ask my advisers to make careful note of it.

CHAIR: Thank you for your attendance and co-operation.

Mr CARR: Thank you to the members of the Committee for helping me understand the scope and scale of the responsibilities of my portfolios. It is useful as always.

CHAIR: You may not know that the Media Monitoring Unit also supplies information to other members of Parliament. I make frequent use of it through the library.

Mr CARR: Maybe to achieve the economies demanded quite reasonably by this Committee we should axe that service while maintaining the traditional service that has flowed to Premiers of this State from the time of the late lamented Robert Askin.

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.