

THURSDAY, 17 JULY 2014

ESTIMATES—EDUCATION AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE—SCIENCE, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND THE ARTS

Estimates Committee Members

Mrs RN Menkens (Chair)
Mr MA Boothman
Mrs YM D'Ath
Mr PJ Dowling
Mr RG Hopper
Mr MR Latter
Mr NA Symes
Ms J Trad

In Attendance

Hon. IB Walker, Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts
Ms D Balke, Chief of Staff

Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts

Ms S Rickerby, Director-General
Mr E Hill, Chief Change and Operations Officer
Ms L Roach, Chief Strategic Policy and Innovation Officer
Dr C Williams, Assistant Director-General, Science
Mr A Spina, Assistant Director-General, Digital Productivity and Services
Mr D Stower, Assistant Director-General, Strategic ICT
Mr A Mills, Queensland Government Chief Information Officer
Mr M Tierney, Director of Infrastructure of Arts Queensland
Ms D Jeans, Assistant Director-General, Shared Corporate Services

Arts Queensland

Ms K Herring, Deputy Director-General

Queensland Performing Arts Centre

Mr J Kotzas, Chief Executive Officer

Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art

Mr C Saines, Director

Screen Queensland

Ms T Vieira, Chief Executive Officer

Committee met at 9.00 am



CHAIR: Good morning. Before we start, I ask that all mobile phones be set to silent. Today's hearing is being webcast live, with archived video footage available on the committee's webpage progressively throughout the day. Welcome to those people tuning in today.

The estimates process is an important part of the parliamentary scrutiny of the executive government. The purpose is to support the scrutiny of the proposed budget and the budget related activity of government agencies. I now declare this estimates hearing of the Education and Innovation Committee open.

I am Rosemary Menkens, the member for Burdekin and chair of the committee. The other committee members here today are: Mr Peter Dowling, the member for Redlands; Mrs Yvette D'Ath, the member for Redcliffe; Mr Mark Boothman, the member for Albert; Mr Michael Latter, the member for Waterford; and Mr Neil Symes, the member for Lytton. During the afternoon Mrs D'Ath will be replaced as a member by the member for South Brisbane, Ms Jackie Trad, from 1 pm until 2.45 pm.

We will now examine the budget estimates for the portfolio of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts, in the order outlined in our published program. Committee members may put questions to the minister, director-general and specified chief executive officers. Today's proceedings will be suspended for the following breaks: from 10.15 am to 10.45 am, from 12 pm to 1 pm, and from 2.45 pm to 3.15 pm.

On behalf of the committee, I particularly welcome Minister Walker, Director-General Sue Rickerby, all of our departmental officers and members of the public to the hearing this morning. The minister, director-general or chief executive officer may refer questions to advisers. Guidelines for departmental officials who engage with parliamentary committees are laid out in schedule 8 at the back of the standing orders. We expect all witnesses who are appearing today to provide full and honest answers to our questions. Anyone who is unable or unwilling to provide an answer should be prepared to state the reason. I also remind witnesses and members that, while the director-general and CEOs may be directly questioned, only the minister can agree to take a question on notice.

We will examine science and innovation this morning until the lunch break. After lunch, we will examine the arts, and then in the final session this afternoon we will examine information technology and shared services. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask any witnesses who speak to identify themselves before answering a question.

I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, if you wish, you may make an opening statement in respect of your portfolio. I remind you that there is a time limit of five minutes for such a statement. Thank you, Minister.

Mr WALKER: Thank you very much, Chair, and I will take that opportunity to make an opening statement. I have often been asked what it is about science, IT, innovation and the arts that actually pulls it all together, and it is in fact the creative forward-looking part of what Queensland is all about. At first blush it sometimes looks as though it does not fit together, but in fact it does have that commonality. I am privileged and very much enjoy being the minister on behalf of the people of Queensland to deliver these important areas of government service delivery.

My department is working as one to enable a clever, creative and connected Queensland. When our government took office, Labor's legacy posed such critical problems that what happened within this portfolio in fact had the ability, the potential, to brand the government. For example, how do you grapple with a Health payroll system that had cost Queenslanders \$1.2 billion and still was not paying people properly? How do we keep up the science and innovation momentum, fuelled by Labor's big spending, in an economic climate that was quite different and that necessitated fiscal prudence? Within the arts, how do we bring regional Queensland back in from the cold in an arts policy that clearly had a Brisbane focus in its development to that point? Now they were not the only issues but they were a cross-section of the sorts of things that we had to deal with.

Across all of those challenges we were united by a common determination not to resile from the difficult decisions and an equal determination to find solutions. In July 2013 the government approved its information and communication technology strategy 2013 to 2017. Amongst other things, that strategy outlines the need for information to be easily accessible, visible and available for re-use by the public in a timely and efficient manner. The ICT dashboards which we have created provide public access to pertinent information that government uses to oversee the performance of its investments. It means that people can go online and see what is happening in all of those big ICT investments.

One of the most important functions of the dashboards is that they allow us to identify underperforming projects and ICT systems and that helps us focus attention on the initiatives that

need attention most. The ICT action plan has already delivered more than half of the actions outlined. That is helping us to modernise government services and achieve milestones such as being the first Australian government jurisdiction to go cloud first, saving the taxpayer millions of dollars.

The success of our ICT renewal is helping us revitalise front-line services for families. Under the one-stop shop plan, we promised to deliver 100 new services online by the end of this year. We have actually greatly exceeded that target, with 132 new services now online. In this coming financial year we will invest \$8.1 million in the one-stop shop initiative to ensure Queenslanders get simpler, clearer and faster access to information and services. With our regional pilots trialling ways to improve counter service, increasing online access and expanding the reach of the 13 QGOV call centre, we are delivering the service transformation that we promised.

In the science sector, we have invested \$8.7 million in the Accelerate Queensland Science and Innovation Program to support partnerships, fellowships and ideas. We put \$2.5 million towards critical research by the Queensland Brain Institute into ageing dementia, and that is the first instalment of a \$9 million commitment for that project. We will also invest \$14.3 million towards the establishment of the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine in Townsville, Cairns and Thursday Island, and construction is going to start in Townsville next month. The Australian government has matched our total investment of \$42.12 million, and that total of \$84 million will make Queensland an international leader in tropical health research. Under the government's Strong Choices Investment Program, there will be \$500 million set aside for the Entrepreneurial and Innovation Fund to keep our innovation and research momentum powering ahead.

In the arts, small towns and regional cities will benefit from a \$223 million arts budget in 2014 that includes more than \$6.5 million to develop regional arts and culture. The \$10.6 million Playing Queensland Fund has trebled the number of regional touring productions—trebled—from 180 in 2011 to 617 in 2013 and trebled audience numbers in the bush and in regional cities to 103,000 people. That has been a big and important commitment of this government to ensure that rural and regional Queensland gets the best of arts as well as those who live in the south-east corner. That rural and regional number is more than three times the number of regional Queenslanders being served by this government's commitment to provide arts for all Queenslanders.

Some of the major arts companies are posting their best attended seasons ever. Queensland Ballet has broken its 54-year box office history by taking more than \$1.1 million during *Romeo and Juliet*, with more than 15,500 people attending. Queensland Theatre Company's *Macbeth* was its best selling show in 21 years, with more than 17,000 people attending. Interestingly, more than 14 per cent of those people, nearly 2,400 people, were visitors to Brisbane. So it shows the link between these events and tourism. GoMA's hugely successful exhibition from Cai Guo-Qiang *Falling Back to Earth* saw five State of Origin crowds attend an exhibition of thirsty animals and leaping wolves. That is more than 220,000 people. But we are not resting on our laurels. We have a strong plan for a better future for all Queenslanders, with the Strong Choices Investment Program also setting aside \$100 million for arts and cultural infrastructure.

So the list of achievements by this department is longer than the time I have to discuss them at this point, but I am sure there will be an opportunity as questions are asked to delve further into those achievements and for us to confirm that we are finding the best innovations within science, IT and the arts to better serve the people of Queensland. So thank you for that opportunity to open and I now look forward to the committee's questions.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for that, Minister. I will start the questions. Minister, I refer to page 5 of the SDS. Can the minister update the committee on the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine and outline the benefits of this investment for Queenslanders?

Mr WALKER: Thank you, Madam Chair, and not an unsurprising question coming from your part of the world.

CHAIR: Absolutely.

Mr WALKER: The government, as I mentioned in my opening statement, has committed \$42.12 million to establish the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine. That has been done in conjunction with James Cook University. It is an interesting attribute of that university that the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Harding, has a very large focus on things tropical. So they were the natural partners for an institute of tropical health and medicine.

We are going to establish campuses in three locations in Townsville, in Cairns and on Thursday Island. We have only just settled on the Thursday island site. It was always identified as

being in the Torres Strait, but I was fortunate to attend the community cabinet on Thursday Island to actually go and visit the site that has turned out to be the site that we will develop which is near the hospital and in that sense it makes a lot of sense. The amount of \$34.32 million will be used to construct infrastructure across the three locations. So \$21.49 million is dedicated for Townsville, \$6.5 million for Cairns, \$6.33 million for Thursday Island, and \$7.8 million will be used to support operational and research activities. The good news is that the Australian government has also committed a similar amount. So it has committed \$42 million over four years towards the institute. I think that really cements the importance that this area has, and it is an example of our zeroing in on those areas that really Queensland excels in and where we believe an investment of taxpayers' dollars is going to give a return.

The total investment from our government and the federal government means an \$84 million-plus investment in Far North and North Queensland for tropical disease research to improve the health of people living in the tropics. That is going to create important jobs in the construction phase. It is going to create important jobs in the long-term operation of those facilities. The construction project itself is valued at about \$31 million—that is in Townsville—to establish the AITHM building and translational research facility and that planning for the Townsville infrastructure is well advanced, with completion expected in 2016. I look forward to attend the sod turning ceremony in Townsville on 1 August to mark the commencement of the official construction work.

In Cairns the emphasis is going to be a little bit different. The funding there will support the construction of a tropical health research and training facility to support research activity and the training of public health and disease control workers for regional Australia. On Thursday Island, again, the emphasis is slightly different. The funding there will support the construction of a research and training facility to train local workers to collect data and samples from tropical disease patients, and that is a very focused area on Thursday Island itself. Planning for Cairns and Thursday Island infrastructure has commenced, and the site on Thursday Island, as I said, is now confirmed and being finally investigated with the local community.

I might just see if Dr Williams has anything to add. I might just introduce Dr Christine Williams, who is the Assistant Director-General, Science, who will assist in this session, as will Ms Leigh Roach, who is the Chief Strategic Policy and Innovation Officer, the Director-General of course, and Mr Evan Hill, who is the Chief Change and Operations Officer. Dr Williams, do you want to add anything on the technical side to that explanation?

Dr Williams: I guess it would be interesting to talk about the initial research activity that will be taking place in these three centres. The focus is going to be on the current threats, including Q fever, melioidosis, streptococcal infections and severe bacterial sepsis, dengue fever, malaria and tuberculosis. But we will be focusing also on Queensland's tropical health defences increasing the ability to combat biosecurity risks; training health workers, as the minister has mentioned, particularly in relation to disease surveillance control and risk identification; and building an integrated health security network focused on significant biosecurity threats.

So the research and training is very much going to be delivering improved health and welfare for Queenslanders through developing improved practices for monitoring and treatment of tropical disease, protecting Queenslanders and visitors from the transmission of impact of endemic infectious diseases, attracting and retaining quality researchers in the field of tropical health and medicine to Queensland, and also attracting investment to Queensland through the innovative research projects that will be undertaken there.

Mr WALKER: If I could just add a general comment, if we get to discussion later of our Science and Innovation Action Plan, one of the things the government is concerned to do is to ensure that the investment that we do make of taxpayers' dollars is well focused and some of the things that guide that are is it something that Queensland is already well recognised for, in which it will be a pretty safe investment, and is it something which will give real results for Queenslanders? I think the AITHM satisfies both of those boxes.

Mr LATTER: Good morning. I refer to the Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research on page 4 of the SDS and ask you, Minister, to please outline the latest developments with the government's support for research into ageing dementia.

Mr WALKER: Dementia is a big problem for our community. As the community gets older and the proportion of elderly people increases, this is going to become a greater and greater issue for us. At the moment ageing dementia is something which is pretty much unable to be predicted and it is unable to be cured, so there is a significant amount of work that needs to be done if we are to

address the problem, and it is a problem. I am sure that the people in this room are either affected by it in their families or through friends and we know the emotional cost to individuals and to families and we know the cost to the community of caring for people with dementia and in the issues that flow from, often, their inability to be able to cope with day-to-day tasks because of dementia. So the government does place dealing with this issue on a very high platform.

Alzheimer's Australia showed that in the absence of a big medical breakthrough some 215,000 Queenslanders may well be suffering from dementia by 2050, and that is a major health challenge for our state. One of the key deliverables under our Science and Innovation Action Plan, SIAP, is the commitment of \$9 million over five years to the Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research. That is a centre that is located within the Queensland Brain Institute at the University of Queensland and I have had the pleasure of going out there a number of times to see the sorts of things that they are doing and you really do feel that they are on the edge of significant advances. One thing that particularly took my attention when I went to see what was being done there in conjunction with other parts of what is happening at the University of Queensland is the ability through genetic research now to look at some, I think, spectacular developments in this area.

One area of interest to which I hope some of this research money is put is that it is clear that people with Down syndrome suffer from Alzheimer's almost inevitably in their 40s or 50s and what can now be done with the advanced genetic research that is being done at the University of Queensland is that skin cells can be taken from the back of a hand of a person with Down syndrome, stripped back to the core stem cell and then, in the lovely words that the geneticists use, the cell can be encouraged to become that person's brain cell. While you cannot obviously investigate the brain cells of people living with dementia, what you can do is create these living brain cells from people who may well get dementia early and you can study what is happening from that living cluster of cells. That is the sort of tremendous work that is happening there. So the government was very pleased to commit \$9 million towards the research that is being done there.

The key areas of research for the centre include developing a novel method of using ultrasound to allow drugs to cross the blood/brain barrier, and that is hoped to be a key to the success of new dementia drugs as they emerge; and developing methods to assist in the clearance of a toxic aggregate which is called amyloid beta from the brain, and amyloid beta is a key feature of dementia pathology, and discovering molecules that will block or interfere with the process of brain cell death in dementia problems is an important part of the process as well. The foundation itself also has investments of approximately \$4.3 million joined with the \$9 million from this government. Again, I am pleased to report that the federal government has matched the \$9 million commitment with another \$9 million towards that research.

I was also pleased to launch two associated fellowships last year in October. The Freemasons society have a senior research fellowship in learning and memory, and that is jointly funded by the charitable arm of Freemasons Queensland and the University of Queensland Endowment Fund, and that is a fund of \$1.4 million over five years, and the Peter Hilton Research Fellowship in Ageing Dementia. Peter was a friend of mine actually—a lawyer who became a Family Court judge. He suffered from dementia quite early in life and his widow and family and supporters have also added to the research funds available. So all of these are aimed at attracting the best and brightest dementia research talent to Queensland. For the Peter Hilton fellow, Dr Liviu Bodea from Germany commenced work on 2 June this year and Professor Stephen Williams of the Queensland Brain Institute has been awarded the Freemasons fellowship. So we are determined to achieve better health outcomes for Queenslanders. To make this happen, we have made sure that the Queensland Health Statewide Dementia Clinical Network also has strong connections into this research at QBI, ensuring that the research discoveries actually can be turned into clinical practice as soon as possible. So it is an exciting area of investment and an important one and one which I have been following with significant interest.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Minister, I refer to the Science and Innovation Action Plan on page 4 of the SDS. Can the minister please explain what the plan has achieved to date?

Mr WALKER: I did speak a little about SIAP, as we call it, a little earlier, but the government is very committed to using science, research and innovation to promote economic growth and opportunity in Queensland. It is a key part of our future-facing economy and the government has a strong commitment to this. If we are committed to science and innovation, then that gives us the opportunity to build on the strong foundations that we have in world-class scientific infrastructure and the world-class talent that is here to make breakthroughs and deliver outcomes that are going to benefit all Queenslanders. The SIAP, the Science and Innovation Action Plan—and with it is a

separate document, the investment framework—sets out our government's strategy for investing in science and innovation.

The government is going to deliver 54 actions in four key areas of the Science and Innovation Action Plan. I suppose the background to the plan has to be stated, and that is that there has been successive investment by a series of governments, to their credit, in infrastructure in particularly the biomedical area but in broad innovation and scientific research. We believe that the part of the phase that we are at now is an investment in maintaining momentum and in maintaining the good work that has been done, in particular growing, retaining and attracting talented people. At least in the short to medium term the priority is not so much bricks and mortar as it is ensuring that we continue to attract what is now an international community of researchers and that they stay in Queensland or that we, as the ebb and flow of people who come and go to various parts of the world, continue our strong presence here in Queensland.

We then have to collaborate and share knowledge. That is a key part of the program. Meaningful relationships particularly with global leaders in research and with industry and users are important if Queensland is to be part of what is, as I said before, an international industry. We then have to help businesses grow. The plan has provisions to remove barriers and facilitate the growth of small and high-growth businesses to make sure that we concentrate on those. We ourselves have to deliver innovative government. Part of the plan puts the spotlight back on us and asks that we make sure that we do things in an innovative way as well, setting the standard for the rest of the community. The Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning has completed its SIAP action to deliver its state planning policy, which was released on 2 December 2013. The remaining 53 actions are all progressing on schedule and they are all going to provide tangible benefits to Queensland.

An example of a particular program under SIAP is the Accelerate Program, which is in fact three programs. It is a total commitment of \$8.75 million: \$4.25 million of that goes to Accelerate Partnerships, and that is to zero in on the collaboration issue that I mentioned before, to support collaborative science and research projects with an emphasis on that research turning into real outcomes for people; and \$3 million goes to Accelerate Fellowships, and that is to support the development of early and midcareer researchers to undertake practical and applied research. In that post PhD area early and midcareer researchers are at risk if we do not support them and so we have targeted that money to ensure that the investment that we have made in educating those people continues to give a return to the community by their staying here and doing their work. Finally, \$1.5 million goes to the Accelerate Ideas part of the program, and that is really to assist collaborations between researchers and industry that demonstrate the commercial viability of new or existing ideas. Quite often researchers get to a point where they just need that little bit more of an investment to say, 'Is this really something that's going to be commercially attractive or am I going down a useless tributary of the creek?' That is what the Accelerate Ideas part of the program does—that is, it helps them get over that bump into assessing whether or not there is commercial viability of that.

The first round of the Accelerate Partnerships and Accelerate Fellowships programs closed in 2014 and they were strongly supported by the research sector. In total, there were 96 Accelerate Partnerships applications—that is, for the collaboration bit—and 103 Accelerate Fellowships—that is, for the midcareer assistance. The successful applicants have been approved now and they will shortly be notified of their success. The Accelerate Ideas program, which is the one about getting over the hump in the commercialisation, opened on 23 June. The first round of those applications closes on 31 August. The program, I am sure, will help speed up what is a sort of valley of death part of this development—the commercialisation of any innovative ideas into the marketplace.

To assist with all of those decisions, I have established a Science and Innovation Advisory Council which provides independent advice and guidance and to review progress against the priorities set out in SIAP. The Queensland Chief Scientist, Dr Geoff Garrett, chairs that council and it includes a range of experienced researchers, innovators and executives—not only researchers but people who are into the real business of turning ideas into commercial outcomes: Professor Ian Frazer, of course the well-known Chief Executive Officer of the TRI is on it; Mr Stephen Tait, who is Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and Mr Nigel Spork, who is the Managing Director of Centor, which is a manufacturing business with innovative ideas in architectural building products. The council has met twice, most recently on 16 June to review the outcome of the selection processes for those Accelerate programs. So we will have a look at a review of SIAP after 12 months to see how it is going and that the goals and actions remain relevant. I think it is an important and major commitment from the government as to its direction in this area.

We are also driving innovation and commercialisation in Queensland more broadly. Since the launch of SIAP, we have contracted out to QMI Solutions, which is an independent organisation, which has delivered 33 workshops, events and webinars and provided over 100 hours of information to Queensland investors. The Innovation Toolbox website, which helps people with innovative ideas, has had over 20,000 visits. We have a pilot program in place at the moment to provide public sector work experience for 13 PhD students, so we want to make sure, again, that PhD students are encouraged and that the government gets the benefit of the best and brightest of our students coming through. So they are the sorts of things I am talking about. There are further things that I can speak about, but we can perhaps talk about those as more detailed questions come later.

Ms D'ATH: Good morning, Minister.

Mr WALKER: Good morning, Ms D'Ath.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, you mentioned in your opening statement obviously the importance of investing in research, science and innovation in Queensland and how that strengthens our economy, and in the SDS at page 4 you talk about delivering a sustainable economic future.

The question I would like to ask you, Minister, goes to biotechnology and particularly with the cuts in the Commonwealth budget to CSIRO, to R&D tax incentives and also the complete abolition of the Innovation Investment Fund and Commercialisation Australia—and you just talked about the valley of death and the importance of that commercialisation stage. What impact has that had on the Queensland budget? Has the Queensland government taken any action in the 2014-15 budget beyond what it was proposing to do anyway to offset those cuts in research and innovation?

Mr WALKER: I thank the honourable member for raising the question. It is a very important one. It certainly was of concern to us—the decisions made by the federal government in this area. A number of the federal government's budget initiatives impact on a whole series of our policies and services. As you might expect, the cessation of federal innovation programs has the potential to increase demand for our services. We are concerned that the budget cuts may also have an impact on long-term productivity, particularly with the removal of programs to aid transition to a more innovative and internationally competitive economy.

But I suppose we should not move away from the positive things that happened in the federal budget as well. There were certainly some important things that, again, are good for Queensland. As I mentioned, Queensland is well positioned of all of the states to attract a significant share of the Medical Research Future Fund. That is the \$20 billion fund that the Commonwealth has set aside in order to look at medical research. As it happens, that is a strength that we have. Perhaps ourselves and Victoria are the two strongest states. I would certainly say that we are up there with the mantle of the strongest state. But Queensland and Victoria are strongest in the area that the honourable member mentioned particularly, which is the biotechnology and the biomedical area. So I think that is a positive for us.

The commitments to the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine—\$42 million from the federal government—and to the Brain Institute of \$9 million matching our own commitments are positive things. That is a good positive for us as well and \$40 million has been committed to support the Reef 2050 Plan and that is going to be developed jointly with the Queensland government to provide a long-term strategic approach to address key threats to the Great Barrier Reef.

So I suppose the best way to sum up the broad position is that we are concerned about some of the cuts. We are yet to see quite what they will mean and there are further announcements coming out from the federal government. My department is very much on watch as to what they will mean to us. There is not a specific provision in the current budget to deal with those issues, because we simply do not know what the impact will be, but we will be very much alive to monitoring that as we go on. I know Dr Williams' section of the department has already had these matters in hand. I might ask her if she has anything to add to that response.

Dr Williams: One of the things that has occurred with the co-location of the Ecosciences Precinct with the CSIRO is the fact that we are able to do very collaborative work together, which means that we are understanding much more about what each party is doing. So that is limiting the duplication that may have existed prior to that point. I think from the point of view of the efficiency with which science is being delivered, there have been some efficiencies, as I say, through the co-location of those two areas, the government science and the CSIRO science.

Working with the federal government in terms of the prioritisation of their funding through the medical fund will be a very key thing and work with the universities to ensure that they are also

working with the federal government to make them aware of the priorities of the Queensland universities is another area where we have been really making sure that Queensland gets its share of the funding that is in the federal funding budget.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you, Minister. Just following on from your answer, the \$20 billion medical research fund, you say that Queensland is going to be a strong beneficiary of that. Can you advise how much of that \$20 billion the Queensland government will be getting in the 2014-15 year?

Mr WALKER: No, it is too early to do that. As you know, there are still political hurdles to be jumped in Canberra before the fund exists. So we are not able to say that, but what we can positively say is that the potential for that fund is strong for us. If there were any area that the federal government was going to concentrate on that would benefit Queensland, it is the medical research area. So as it happens, despite concerns in other areas, that is a real positive for us and we will certainly be looking at what the guidelines are for access to that fund as it becomes clearer as to when it is established and what the rules are around it.

I think the other point to make in respect of this area is that we have been in a financial situation in the last couple of years where we have had to make some strong decisions to do with fiscal repair. That has meant that we have had to be very careful with savings right across-the-board and my portfolio, unsurprisingly, was not spared those to make sure that we spent money carefully.

You will be aware that the Treasurer when he delivered the budget papers put forward the stronger, smarter choices options, which involve a strong plan to pay down debt, to get at least on the first step of getting our AAA credit rating back, but to do that in a way which still leaves funds left over to invest in forward-looking things for Queensland. I was certainly glad to see that the Treasurer has set aside \$500 million as part of that fund for an Entrepreneurial and Innovation Fund which, again, would give us the potential to start looking at forward movement in this area with a significantly greater amount of funds available to this government to be able to invest in this area.

As you know, the content of that plan is open for public consultation until about August, I think, and then in September the Treasurer will be putting the full proposal forward. We have committed to go to an election and to put that in place only if the people of Queensland want it. I hope they will. I am sure they will. I have been encouraging those in the science and innovation area to respond to the website and to ensure that we get plenty of barrackers and supporters for this part of the fund, because I think it is an important part of the fund. There are obviously other parts of expenditure right across government that are in demand, but the Treasurer has in this area for me \$500 million set aside for innovation and entrepreneurialism and \$100 million, which we might talk about later in the day, in the arts infrastructure area.

So this government does have a plan, irrespective of what the federal government does, to have a source of funds available to this area. I think that is very important. I am glad that the Treasurer has committed to that area and I think that it is going to mean a significant amount for the sector.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you, Minister. Just staying on the biotechnology area, I note in the AusBiotech report that they published in 2014 it shows that in the past year life sciences companies in Australia have undertaken a significant shift towards overseas manufacturing. Fifty-four per cent now undertake their manufacturing overseas compared to 36 per cent just last year. Does the minister know what is the trend in life sciences manufacturing in Queensland? Are more companies undertaking manufacturing overseas instead of Queensland now?

Mr WALKER: I thank the honourable member for that question. It is a good question. I have just come back from the international biotech conference, which was in San Diego, and led what I think is the biggest Queensland delegation that has ever attended that conference. So there is no doubt that the industry is healthy, notwithstanding that it has had some difficult areas to go through, particularly during the GFC.

I think the best way to answer the honourable member's question is to use some face-to-face information that I got from Cook Medical. Cook Medical is one of the strongest performing companies here in Queensland in relation to biomedical devices in particular. They have a particular product, which is a heart stent, and that heart stent is actually modelled for your particular heart. So you do not just pick a stent off the shelf; they can make one for your heart—a big heart, for example, for the member for Condamine and a somewhat smaller and meaner heart for someone like me, but the stent can be custom made. What they said to me—and I thought this was an important thing and it will certainly feed into my thinking on this issue—is that there is certainly an ability to competitively do very high-tech, one-off materials like custom made stents for individuals. But there is no doubt that, as

that becomes more customised and you start talking about producing those in large quantities and doing so without having to tailor-make them so precisely—and clearly as they get better at it that will happen—the pressure then to do that in an area where the workforce cost is lower is strong. So it is an issue for us. I think that means what we have to do is we have to be sure that we stay at that high-tech end. I think that we will have to accept that, as they become commodified, there is a potential that Queensland will lose those. But we should still fight to carry those where we can.

The life sciences area is an important one for us and I have been very keen to support it. I think, in fact, a Premier or the relevant minister has been to the international BIO conference every year—the relevant minister or the Premier, again, from both sides of politics. Life Sciences Queensland does a great job in encouraging and supporting the industry. The government helps fund Life Sciences Queensland. It submitted a white paper this year on the bio economy called *The bioeconomy: it's growing in Queensland* and it presented that to the Premier and several ministers for consideration. What I did was I called together the relevant ministers who are working in this area just to discuss and to make sure that we had a government-wide response to that paper. It is largely concentrating on the medical issues that the honourable member raised, but there are broader issues for Queensland as well. Again, going back to the principles of our SIAP, we are wanting to look at things that Queensland is already good at and things that are likely, if there is government investment, to turn into a service or product for Queenslanders pretty quickly.

So it is an interesting paper. It deals with not only things like biomedical but also biofuels, for example. I think that is an area that we need to keep an open mind on as well. The possibility of using sugar for biofuels is a strong one. There is already work being done on algae conversion into fuel at the University of Queensland and at James Cook University to name a few. Some—and the member for Condamine might be interested in this—of the scientists even say that crummy brigsaloo, scrappy stuff, can be used to turn into fuel. Whether that is right is yet to be proven, but I think there are a couple of things driving it. One is our existing strength in the area of biofuels. The development of cleaner and renewable energy is obviously an important thing. The fact that there is a Mackay plant there already that has the technology to do this, the fact that people like the US Navy is looking for a significant part of their fleet to be fuelled by green fuel—those are things that we raised in conjunction with LSQ's paper and with a number of ministers from across government, including the Minister for Agriculture. We have taken these issues on board.

In relation to biofuels in particular, I took a submission to the cabinet agricultural committee. We decided there that we will particularly concentrate on biofuels and make sure that we have a whole-of-government approach to that. It will be driven by Minister McVeigh and the department of agriculture, because they are most impacted by it.

Mr HOPPER: And support my ethanol bill.

Mr WALKER: Ethanol is somewhat of a different question and has different issues associated with it. I think the government's position clearly would be that its concentration would be on the higher level, tertiary level biofuel rather than ethanol, which does have issues in relation to mandating fuel and so on, which brings on a whole lot of other issues, as the honourable member will know.

I think the other point that should be made while we are talking broadly about this is the progress that has been made in a number of areas, particularly with actual production of drugs. The honourable member for Redcliffe raised this implicitly in her question. What we have now done next to the TRI is through BioPharmaceuticals Australia—established initially and operated by a company called DSM but now because of some arrangements there that company is now called Patheon—the Queensland facility for biologics, which actually produces drugs, certainly in clinical trial quantities but potentially in commercial quantities as well. It is attracting some big names from around the world to produce drugs on site. I do not know whether the committee has had an opportunity to see the Translational Research Institute, but it is a fantastic facility located on the Princess Alexandra Hospital campus. This drug-making facility adjoins it and it is a fantastic opportunity for us and one which I was keen to support. They were supporters of the Queensland function at the international bioconference. We were keen to get the word out that we are making drugs here. That was of significant interest to people around the world.

The other issue is the Medical Research Commercialisation Fund. That is a fund to which we have just committed a further amount—I think \$500,000 is the latest commitment—in combination with Queensland Health to ensure that we get investment in those areas of medical commercialisation where there is a need to turn them into a commercial product. Former Premier Beattie is on the board of that fund and, I must say, still has a strong commitment to the fund and to Queensland's part in it. I

was pleased to meet with him in the San Diego at the bioconference. He is a regular attender. He is an ambassador for Life Sciences Queensland. We are both committed—he as a board member and me as the minister—to ensure that we have a strong commitment to that commercialisation fund to ensure that commercialisation remains at the top of our agenda.

CHAIR: I call the member for Condamine.

Mr HOPPER: Good morning Minister and staff. You mentioned the Arts for all Queenslanders strategy. Can you tell us what you are doing for rural Queenslanders?

Mr WALKER: I can. The honourable member might be content to leave the main part of his question until this afternoon when we have a segment on arts.

Mr HOPPER: Okay.

Mr WALKER: If I can just broadly tell you, as I did in my opening statement, that that has been a big commitment for us. I suppose the thing that has driven me in this area, if I can just inform the honourable member, is that prior to the election I was chair of an orchestra—that Camerata of St John's. We did a rural and regional tour funded by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation. This took us from Rockhampton to Roma. My wife and I went out to the final performance with Tim and Gina Fairfax at St Paul's Anglican Church hall in Roma. It was a fantastic performance. The joint was full and the rafters were rocking. Families and children were enjoying the concert.

A gentleman came up to our manager at the end of that concert and said, 'I suppose you think you have bought a classical orchestra to a bush church hall?' She said, 'I think I have done that.' He said, 'You have not. You have fed the starving.' He was a man about my age—mid-50s—who had never seen live classical music performed by an orchestra in front of him in his own town. He has listened to CDs and listened to ABC FM but he had not seen it live there before.

An important part of this government's approach to arts was an investment in the Playing Queensland Touring Fund—a \$3 million fund over the next four years—to increase the number of rural and regional performances. It has been successful. In the last year of the former government, 180 rural and regional performances were supported. In the first year of our government, 310 were supported. Last year we got to 620 performances in rural and regional Queensland. So it is an important thing for us.

I know the honourable member has had the opportunity, together with the committee, to see some of the great things on South Bank. I do not want to denigrate those. They are very important for this state and for the south-east corner. But it is also important that our major companies and indeed our less than major companies get out into the bush and are seen.

I am sure the honourable member would be aware that the ballet and the orchestra have been out and about. Opera Queensland is about to do Project Puccini which will have local choirs in various parts of rural and regional Queensland supporting the organisation when it comes to town. I am very confident the government has put that front and centre and that we are actually achieving results with that.

Mr HOPPER: Over the years we have seen the CSIRO broken and pulled apart. What is happening with that and what is your emphasis on that at the moment?

Mr WALKER: Of course the funding for the CSIRO and the issues surrounding that are federal government decisions. You are quite right. I think the honourable member for Redcliffe raised a similar issue before. We have to look very closely at our expenditure and our priorities, depending upon CSIRO's funding and where it is going.

We are looking at that carefully. We still do not know—I do not think CSIRO itself knows—yet what the impact will be. So we have to be very alert to that. I can give you my undertaking that we certainly will be.

What you might find interesting to hear, member for Condamine, is what we are already doing with CSIRO. The Ecosciences Precinct out at Boggo Road is the area where we are colocated with CSIRO and where we do a lot of work together with them. I think Dr Williams might be able to speak a little more about the collaboration we have with CSIRO and what we are already doing there.

Dr Williams: The Ecosciences Precinct is the area in Dutton Park next to Boggo Road jail which is operated jointly by CSIRO and Queensland government science. From the point of view of Queensland government science, DSITIA has about 400 staff there. There are currently 920 staff there in total. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and CSIRO are the other two main groups, although there are some from the university there.

From the point of view of the joint work that is undertaken, there is a lot of complementarity in the skill sets. The setting up of the Ecosciences Precinct is quite unique in so far as it is layered by theme. So on level 1 it is water. Rather than having CSIRO scientists on one level and other government scientists on other levels, all the water scientists are on level 1 of Boggo Road. You have CSIRO scientists sitting next to fisheries scientists who are next to water quality scientists from DSITIA. This means that there is a lot of very fruitful collaboration that goes on.

Some of the collaboration is in water quality monitoring. CSIRO is very much ahead of the game in terms of real time monitoring and developing monitoring tools which you can actually put in the water and collect data on a continuous basis. We are working with them to see how we can use them in our monitoring processes in South-East Queensland in particular.

Other areas are water quality modelling. In the reef area there is a lot of complementarity. We do modelling work alongside CSIRO. It is a very rich collaborative arrangement. We get different people with different approaches to come up with the best models for the Queensland catchments. They are two areas where we have been working collaboratively.

Mr WALKER: I might just add, for the honourable member's benefit, if the committee has not been out to see the Ecosciences Precinct can I suggest that you do so. Have you seen it?

Mr HOPPER: No, I am saying it would be a great idea.

Mr WALKER: It is worth seeing. I would vote it as the best digs of anyone in the state Public Service. It is a fantastic spot to work. My department not only has its science areas based there but when we are meeting as a senior team we go out there because it is such an inspiring place to work. It is about 92 per cent occupied. So it is quite full. Both DSITIA and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry are looking for opportunities to centralise groups at the Ecosciences Precinct. It can accommodate about a thousand staff. It is a big facility. We have been talking to CSIRO about further expansion of joint efforts there. That may be impacted upon by decisions involving CSIRO. They are also impacted on our side because that site is going to be one of the stations for the Cross River Rail or the BaT Tunnel, as it is now called. So we have to work that out. It is a great precinct for the state and well worth a visit by the committee if you find the opportunity to do so. I am sure Dr Williams would be pleased to show you round. Do not get caught up in the coffee shop, which is one of the better ones around the place too.

Mr HOPPER: We will not talk about coffee today.

Mr WALKER: That was a Freudian slip, Ray, sorry.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. We do look forward to that visit. I call the member for Redlands.

Mr DOWLING: I refer to page 9 of the Service Delivery Statement. Can the minister outline the government's commitment to the reef plan?

Mr WALKER: This is an important part of my department's work. Just to put this into broader context first, my science division delivers a significant amount of scientific work to other government departments. My department is not responsible for the policy areas involved in those different areas but is charged with providing independent and proper scientific input to allow other departments to make their appropriate policy decisions.

The Reef Water Quality Protection Plan, which is generally called the reef plan, is a collaborative program of coordinated projects and partnerships which is designed to improve the quality of water in the Great Barrier Reef through improved land management in the reef catchments. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet coordinates the reef plan initiatives, with the key activities undertaken by my department in the areas that I spoke about, in conjunction with the departments of Natural Resources and Mines, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Environment and Heritage Protection.

The forecast expenditure for 2014-15 is \$37.38 million across these portfolios. My department is providing technical expertise, modelling and monitoring which continues to reaffirm the government's commitment to the Great Barrier Reef. My department delivers critical scientific support for the reef plan through its innovative Paddock to Reef Program and the Reef Water Quality Science Program.

It is important obviously in this area, which is an emotional area, that assessments and decisions are made on the basis of science rather than misinformation. My department certainly has a critical role in making sure that basic scientific information is properly given to allow those decisions to be properly made. We are starting to move into the technical end of that. Again, I might ask

Dr Williams who supervises this part of the program to explain what the department is doing in the various areas in which we work.

Dr Williams: Under the Paddock to Reef Program scientists monitor the quality of water that drains into the Great Barrier Reef in order to calculate the amounts referred to as loads of nutrients, sediment and pesticides carried by streams and rivers. It is important to do that because we are modelling improvements in land management practices at the paddock and catchment scales. By doing the monitoring we can look and see whether improvements are being shown in terms of water quality.

The importance of the modelling is because, as you know, the reef catchments are subject to very wild fluctuations in terms of rainfall. In periods of very heavy rain that is when a lot of the nutrients and the pesticides get washed off and water quality looks as though it is going down. In periods of drought water quality improves because the pesticides are staying. By modelling you cut through that seasonal effect. That is why monitoring and modelling are both very important.

The loads data is calculated with input from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines who provide the validated flow data. So they do that through their hydrological monitoring. Once the flow data is validated it is used to calculate accurate loads. A report is produced, peer reviewed and then released in conjunction with the reef report card.

The work we largely do is then working with the departments of Environment and Heritage Protection, Natural Resources and Mines, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Premier and Cabinet to make sure we have all the information required to fulfil the requirements of that reef report card. It is important that we get the information which can then be used by the policy departments to assess whether or not the management actions have to be changed in terms of best management practice for grazing and sugar, in particular.

Mr WALKER: Thank you, Dr Williams. I have just been handed the actual figures which might be of help to the honourable member. The DSITIA appropriated funding contribution to reef activities in 2012-13 was \$1.241 million and \$1.188 million in 2013-14. Those figures are largely related to machinery of government changes that occurred during that time with DNRM taking on a project that we had previously done. The amount of funding expected to be expended by DSITIA in 2014-15 on the reef project is \$1.214 million.

CHAIR: I call the member for the Lytton.

Mr SYMES: Minister, I refer to page 4 of the SDS where reference is made to driving a sustainable economic future through the application of science. Can the minister provide an update on the proposed \$500 million Entrepreneurial and Innovation Fund and explain how important this will be in the future for Queensland?

Mr WALKER: I thank the honourable member for that question. I did touch on it earlier. It is a key part of the government's future program that we find a way of overcoming the financial difficulties in which the state has got itself and that we reduce debt and we also have moneys available to move forward in a number of important areas.

The Treasurer has set this out in his Strong Choices and smarter choices investment program. I remind honourable members and those listening that what the program suggests is a program of sale and lease of assets. That program is expected to raise sufficient funds to reduce our indebtedness from about \$85 billion, or a bit lower than that at the moment, to \$55 billion. That will be sufficient to start the process of recovery of our AAA credit rating. It will not do it in itself. We have to both reduce debt and manage the government's books better to ensure balanced budgets for a period before we are likely to regain that AAA credit rating, which was an important and catastrophic loss to the state in previous years. We have to do that. Bringing the debt down to that level will do it. It leaves a fund then of about \$8.6 billion on expected results from the sales and lease of assets to do a number of important things.

One of those would be to establish the fund you referred to, a \$500 million entrepreneurial and innovation fund, which would allow us then to have some real money to ensure that we did whatever we needed to do in the area of innovation and science in Queensland. Members of the public have until 15 August to respond to the proposal that has been put. That includes responding as to whether or not the \$500 million for this fund is a good expenditure. I am hoping that people will write in in droves and say, 'Yes, it is', because I think it is an important part of the economy that needs to be looked at. It is a commitment this government has to the innovative and forward-looking part of Queensland's economy, knowing that we need to be up with others in the world in this very important

area. It is the only plan that is in front of people that will give that sort of funding to projects such as these. This is a very important project. It will tap into the existing strengths we have in innovation and science, but it will also tap into the strong and proud history of entrepreneurship that Queenslanders have. There are few people around the world as willing to take risks and to stick their necks out as Queenslanders, but they do need support in that from time to time and this fund is there to do that. Also, it will create and maintain the highly skilled jobs that we are going to need for future generations of Queenslanders. Parents out there thinking of careers for their kids will be able to know the government has a plan and a fund that can be drawn on for this important part of our economy.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Minister, I refer to page 4 of the SDS. What exciting scientific breakthroughs have occurred in the past 12 months? What are the likely benefits?

Mr WALKER: Thank you for that question, Madam Chair. It has been one of the joys of my job, and there are many of them, to actually go out and meet with the scientists and those who are making these important breakthroughs. I have learnt, with my basic training in media now, that whenever I do this I need a white coat and protective goggles and I need to be looking down a microscope to actually look like a science minister. Apart from that part of it, the real joy and education I get from talking to the scientists who are working on these things is great. The impact I think of our Queensland research is a reminder really to the rest of the scientific community that we are open for business in this area and that we have world-class facilities that attract some of our best and brightest researchers.

I might interpose there. The member for Condamine raised earlier an arts question that I know is not quite relevant to this discussion, but I think it is an interesting point to make that in our discussions on the Queensland Plan, which very much centred on ensuring we attracted the best and brightest right across the world to come and work here in Queensland, particularly in this innovative scientific area, one of the issues that was raised was how you do that and how you make sure that you have the sort of city and the sort of state that those people want to come to. One of the interesting examples of that is Professor Ian Frazer himself. Professor Frazer is happy for me to say this: he came to Queensland because of the great facilities in scientific research, but he said he might not have come to Queensland if we did not have a good opera company because he is also interested, as is his wife, Caroline, in the broader artistic and cultural life of the city. That is another example, just in passing, of how the areas in my portfolio all join together, I think, to show that it is an area that can make Queensland an attractive place for people to come to in a forward-looking way.

Going back to the specific success stories that I have been privileged to be involved in, up at James Cook Uni the scientists there have successfully introduced a dengue-inhibiting bacteria into wild populations of mosquito to eliminate the spread of dengue fever. Dengue fever is not thought to be terribly common, but in fact it is one of those tropical diseases that keeps coming back and back and back. In fact, I think, just off the top of my head, there were about 120 people in the Cairns area alone affected by dengue in the last year. What the scientists there have done is identified a bacteria called Wolbachia. If that is injected into the mosquitos, mosquitos tend to be romantic and will pass the bacteria round the mosquito population. If they have that bacteria, they do not transmit dengue to people. The early trials of that are very strong. There have been some trials in specific areas of Cairns. I think I am right in saying that, in fact, they have resulted in those areas not suffering one instance of dengue fever. Dengue fever is a pretty nasty thing to catch. It knocks you around pretty badly, particularly if you catch it twice. It is an important thing that the scientists in that part of the world are doing.

There have been some tremendous advances in chemotherapy. Each year, about 25,000 Queenslanders are diagnosed with cancer and many of those have to undergo chemotherapy. For those who have to undergo the toughest sort of level of chemotherapy, and I am thinking particularly of leukaemia patients where the doses have to be pretty high, unfortunately the treatment can be almost as dangerous as the disease itself. What has to happen in chemotherapy is that your immune system basically has to be turned off so that these drugs can come in and do their work, but during that period that your immune system is turned off if you catch something you are at huge risk of significant illness or death during that period. Researchers at the Translational Research Institute and Mater Research have discovered a way to flick a biological switch that will allow the immune system to be better protected during the onslaught of chemotherapy so that you will be able to have chemotherapy with less risk to yourself. That has the potential to dramatically increase patients' recovery.

The other one that particularly comes into my mind is some work done by Dr Manuel Ferreira at the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute. He is about to begin human trials on some work they

have done there with mice on an arthritis drug called tocilizumab. Tocilizumab is a drug that assists in arthritis, but Dr Ferreira has found that it is also a potential asthma preventive and asthma is a serious issue for many Queenslanders. What Dr Ferreira is looking at doing is delivering this not in an injected way but in a nasal way, much the same as you do with your puffer or your huffer or whatever it is for your asthma treatment. It is thought that a needle-free alternative using the nebuliser is a breakthrough in this particular area. There are tremendous things happening out there and Queensland can be very proud of its scientific community in this area.

CHAIR: It is exciting. Thank you, Minister. I call the member for Waterford.

Mr LATTER: Thank you, again, Madam Chair. I refer to page 4 of the SDS. What is the government doing to assist startup businesses in general, including incubator services? Can you describe what successes have been achieved?

Mr WALKER: I thank the member for the question. We are committed, as a government, to creating the right environment and policy settings to foster innovation and entrepreneurship. As part of this process, I initiated the Queensland Startup Summit to bring the stakeholders together and to look at ways of increasing the number and the success rate of Queensland startup businesses. A key outcome of that summit was to establish a startup working group with membership representative of the startup community. That working group met for the first time on 23 June 2014. It consists of private sector reps from across Queensland startup business. It includes the important venturers themselves, the entrepreneurs, venture capitalists which are an important part of the ecosystem, incubator operators and business owners. Another key outcome from the Startup Summit was the South-East Queensland startup ecosystem mapping exercise, so that we could get some idea of where our strengths were in this area. We have had great cooperation in this area from Brisbane Marketing, which is also very interested in the area, from the Gold Coast City Council and the Sunshine Coast Council to map the South-East Queensland startup ecosystem to identify key measures such as the number and the locale of startups in the region and how funding is coming through to those. That report will soon be released. It will help us understand a bit better how this startup ecosystem can be made more robust. I mentioned before that the department is also liaising with QMI Solutions Ltd to provide a range of innovation, commercialisation and collaboration services.

Shortly, I might get Ms Roach to speak more particularly about the incubator programs and the work that we are doing in that area. I did also want to mention on the way through that we also have a significant angel investor group within Brisbane. I had an angel investors in parliament event, which a number of members of the committee attended, including, I was glad to see, the member for Redcliffe to show some bipartisan support for this startup area. At that event we spread the word as to what startups need and what angel investors can do. I might briefly mention that angel investors have a particular role in that they can provide money to those who are looking at startups, but they will generally do it in a particular way that will often involve their having an input into the management or development of the product. They are not people who will lend you money and go away; they are the sort of people who say, 'Look, I am prepared to put some of my own money in, but I want to sit with you and I want to help you and I want to develop your proposal with you'. For some entrepreneurs that suits and they can do that. Other entrepreneurs are not really so inclined to have someone sitting next to them doing that. But it is a source of funding that I want to highlight as being available to our startup people. They are an active group. They are looking for targets and opportunities for investment. I wanted to highlight to the committee that it is a sector out there that is useful within this area and I want to encourage it. I will ask Ms Leigh Roach, our chief strategic policy and innovation officer, to talk a little more about that startup environment.

Ms Roach: In connection with the incubator programs in particular, which are there to support the startup community, there are two incubators that are supported by the Queensland government, that is, the ilab incubator based at the University of Queensland and the Innovation Centre Sunshine Coast which is based at the University of the Sunshine Coast Sippy Downs campus. Funding has been provided to both those organisations. The agreement between the Queensland government and the University of Queensland goes through until 2019 for the provision of services to support the startup community. Similarly, the Innovation Centre Sunshine Coast at the University of the Sunshine Coast, the funding is available to support that operation through until 2016. Just to give you some indication of the sort of achievements and outcomes for both those organisations, and this is done on a calendar year so I currently have figures through until December 2013, ilab reported that they provided services to 35 new clients and assisted their clients to create 27 new jobs and raise some \$362,000 in investment in the 12 months to December 2013. The Innovation Centre Sunshine Coast

provided services to some 21 new clients and they assisted their clients to create 41 new jobs and they actually raised \$5.49 million in investment in the 12 months to December 2013.

Mr WALKER: Thanks, Ms Roach. I should add, Madam Chair, I have had the privilege of going to both of those areas, on the Sunshine Coast and at UQ. They are tremendously impressive facilities with great things happening. There is some particularly good news coming out of ilab at UQ at the moment, that is, they have just signed a heads of agreement with Artesian Capital, which wants to support projects going through ilab. They are looking to raise \$10 million to assist in investing in the projects that ilab is qualifying and assisting with. I think that is a great example for the Queensland taxpayer of a leveraging of that investment with external private money coming in to say, 'Look, this is working, this is really getting some winners here', and looking to raise that money on the open market to assist those investments coming through. It is a great example of taxpayers' seed money turning into something that is more sustainable, I suppose, economically over time.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. We will now adjourn for 30 minutes until 10.45. When the hearing resumes, we will continue to examine the estimates for this particular portfolio, which is the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts in respect of science and innovation.

Proceedings suspended from 10.15 am to 10.44 am



CHAIR: The hearing of the Education and Innovation Committee is now resumed. We will continue with science and innovation and I call the member for Redcliffe.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you, Chair. Minister, I would like to go to the budgets in relation to expenditure on consultants. Is it possible for you to identify how much has been expended on engaging consultants in the 2013-14 year? Are you able to provide a list of the expenditure for each of the consultants? I might stop there so you can answer that before I go on.

Mr WALKER: Thank you for that question. It is somewhat of a detailed question. I think the director-general has at least some of that information so I might ask her to speak to that.

Ms Rickerby: Thank you, Minister. Thank you for the question. DSITIA engages consultants as necessary where specialist advice is required and often in the ICT and science field where highly specialised expert advice is occasionally required. For 2014-15, I anticipate there will be additional departmental expenditure on consultants as the department engages independent advice to assist with its considerable reform agenda. In terms of your question, I have a list of our consultancies over the year 2013-14 by division and part of our department.

Mr WALKER: Should that be tabled, Madam Chair? Is that the appropriate path?

Ms Rickerby: I can either go through them or I can talk to you about the totals of those.

Ms D'ATH: It certainly would be beneficial to have the document in front of us as you take us through it, so if it is possible to table it.

CHAIR: That is up to you, Minister, if you wish to table it.

Mr WALKER: Yes, I am just thinking that maybe the better thing, if the member for Redcliffe is happy, is that we probably do have some other copies of it here which would be sufficient for each member to share or at least have a look at. If the honourable member is happy to put the question later in her series, we will get that. If we move to other questions and then come back to it, you could have it in front of you as the director-general goes through it.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you, Minister. I might stick on the issue of consultants while that document is being copied. Minister, can you explain what the selection process is for engaging consultants with the department?

Mr WALKER: I think the broad point made by the director-general is that we are a department, firstly, that came from four different areas of government prior to our being created a department in our own right. We have had a pretty significant process of moving towards what we call ONE DSITIA. One of the issues for me was to ensure that everybody felt integrated into a departmental whole, so there was obviously a risk of arts people thinking they were still arts and science people thinking they were still science and innovation people thinking they were still innovation. So there has been a fair bit of internal reorganisation led by the director-general with respect to our own departmental organisation. There has been a significant amount of renewal activity, as the director-general mentioned, and in many areas it has required an expertise beyond what is already found within the department's resources. As to the actual process, I might hand over to the director-general to talk about that.

Ms Rickerby: The Queensland government has a range of procurement guidelines that we work within. They range from putting tenders to sole sourcing, depending on the type of operation. I will hand over to Evan Hill, who is our chief change and operations officer, to explain.

Mr Hill: Thanks, Director-General. In relation to process, the delegation for consultancies rests with the director-general so any approval for a consultancy needs to go through that process. Essentially, as the D-G referred to, the sourcing strategies really depend on what the need is, what the market supply is—so there is an analysis of that—the urgency and the timing of when the actual work needs to be delivered. So there are a range of factors considered before the actual market process is determined. As the D-G outlined, it ranges from self-supply to select tender to an open tender—again, depending on what all of those criteria come to.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you. Minister, I know the director-general touched broadly on the purpose of the consultants. We might wait until we get the individual list to go through them specifically, but are you able to identify what has been achieved as a result of the expenditure on consultants across the department?

Mr WALKER: There has been a significant amount achieved in various areas, largely to do with the department's renewal program. There have been a number of areas within the IT renewal program where we have needed external assistance as to the appropriate steps to take through IT. It would be helpful I think if you did have the list in front of you so we could go through those, and I do not think that is too far away. In fact it might be coming through the door now.

Mr DOWLING: Madam Chair, I have a point of order. Having not seen this list yet, I just question whether there are any issues of confidentiality around some of these names and amounts that we are talking about. I understand the overarching premise of the question from the member for Redcliffe and it is quite valid, through you, Madam Chair, but I am a little concerned about divulging amounts, company names and things of that nature, having not seen the list yet. I would just urge some caution on that front.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Redlands. We will take that in mind in relation to the decision to publish. That will be taken into consideration.

Mr WALKER: Thank you. I think the point the honourable member raises is a good one. I do not want to inhibit the honourable member for Redcliffe's line of questioning, but if we can keep away from the specific company and specific amounts for the moment that may assist in meeting the honourable member's concern. I might hand back to the D-G to go through that list to the extent that the member for Redcliffe seeks to do so.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you.

Ms Rickerby: As you will from the list, the consultancies really are spread right across the various divisions within DSITIA on specific bodies of work, supporting our reform agenda and some of our key projects. Do you want me to work from the top?

Ms D'ATH: Thank you, yes.

Ms Rickerby: You will see that the first three consultancies are to do with Arts Queensland and they relate to the cultural precinct statutory arts bodies. Then we have a review of the cultural precinct. This is part of the work for the Cultural Precinct Strategy. Then we have got the range of items again for Arts Queensland; that is an assorted range of things basically related to communications and various industry engagements that they need to do.

Then we move into a body of work by a number of organisations and advisers taken on to assist us with the CITEC divestment, so that is the next category. Then there are a number of DSITIA departmental consultancies related to a variety of things—from probity advice, to development of business cases. Again, these are things that we cannot have internal to the department, that we do not have the expertise on and we require externals.

Mercer consulting is a standard practice in Queensland government with executive roles to have an evaluation at the correct level. The OneDSITIA mentioned there is our program of reform; our overall renewal program is called OneDSITIA. It is a departmental reform of how we pull the department together so you see a number of those things there. Again, probity audits are a key part of what we must do because those are Corporate Administration Agency's which are transactional services.

Moving on to the digital economy and productivity, this relates to how we develop the digital economy strategy. Bang the Table are a community engagement firm so they were providing the

platform to enable us to do some consultation. We have got our Flexible Work Centre trial. This is where we have staff working in various parts of the city; they are not working from home but we are trialling it from a number of locations. Then you will see a range of projects for the Government Wireless Network—again, with highly specialised advice. Then the Chief Scientist is responsible for commissioning a number of audits right across the sector so one of those is for water science. Then there is the digital continuity business case development, where, again, you see some specialist expertise required for when we develop our business cases.

Moving on to the next page, you will see that the second page is primarily related to all our ICT renewal and action plan activities. Rather than go over them in detail, I will say that they relate to all of that reform—the sort of stuff that the minister has already spoken about that we are trying to do—so developing the plan, implementing the plan, getting legal advice on aspects of that, moving into the cloud email, the risk assessments and so on. Finally, at the end there is some work around some of the stuff we are doing for Smart Service Queensland, which is of course our customer service. That is the online and customer service side of the Queensland government, the shopfront.

Mr WALKER: That was helpful of the Director-General to take us through those. There is a significant amount, as you can probably see, grouped around the Government Wireless Network and I might just explain that particular project. The Government Wireless Network is a significant project based over 15 years for the provision of new digital communications between fire, ambulance, police and emergency services. It is particularly imperative that we have it in place for the G20, so my department is charged with the administration of that contract and, as you will see there, a significant amount of the consultancies there are in specialist areas to do with making that network work. The good news is that all is on track for delivery of that network for the G20, and that will be both in Cairns and in Brisbane. At the completion of the finance ministers meeting in Cairns, material will be brought back to Brisbane, and then after the G20 itself the program will expand towards South-East Queensland to cover the Gold Coast, Brisbane and up to the Sunshine Coast.

So there is a significant amount of consultancy, as you can see, lumped into that, and it results in about 700 of our police, fire and ambulance vehicles having new and spectacular radio equipment installed by August this year. I think it is one of great success stories of the department this year in delivering this very complicated project. One of the important things about it is that it does deliver the ability for police and fire to communicate with each other in very noisy circumstances. In an emergency situation in a fire or in a building in which machinery is operating, it is important for these systems to work well. So a lot of technical detail has gone into that, and it certainly accounts for a significant amount of the consultancy.

Ms Rickerby: If I could make the point, our consultancies are published on our website. In terms of how we do that, obviously we must align with the state procurement policy. For every consultancy contract valid at \$10,000 and over, within 60 days of the awarding of the contract all of the information is disclosed on the Queensland government CPO's tendering website. This is also the website we use to put out our contracts for tender to the market. That includes our name and address, the description of the consultancy, the date of the award or the contract date, the value of that contract, the name and address of the supplier and the procurement methods used.

Ms D'ATH: Just to clarify for the secretariat as well, the information provided in the document that the government has tabled is all publicly available on your website. There is nothing of commercial-in-confidence?

Ms Rickerby: They are over \$10,000.

Ms D'ATH: So anything less than that would not appear?

Ms Rickerby: No.

CHAIR: Just on that comment, there may be some that are not over \$10,000 so those names can be redacted.

Mr WALKER: Thank you.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, based on that information, are you able to advise whether you are measuring and, if you are, how you are measuring the return on the investment in these consultancies?

Mr WALKER: Yes, we are measuring those. In fact, we measure each of the renewal program changes within the department. So there is a program to ensure that we are getting value and that we stand back and look at the program we have put into effect to make sure that it is in fact achieving

what it is meant to achieve. We have particularly done that within the ICT package of renewals, but I think Mr Hill is probably the best person to speak about the processes we have in place to do that.

Mr Hill: Certainly, in relation to performance, in relation to our renewal programs they are governed by a portfolio board and then above that sits an agency renewal committee, which the minister chairs. That monitors on a monthly basis our progress towards our renewal program, which include ICT renewal and also the one-stop-shop program et cetera. So there is a range of those.

Specifically to consultancy contracts with us, there is obviously within those contracts outcomes per consultancy that are required. So there is an individual management of those by each owner of those contracts. But certainly at a high-level program end, we report monthly on the tracking of those renewal programs where some of what you had before you would be feeding into the delivery of that.

Mr WALKER: As Mr Hill pointed out, I chair the agency renewal board, which I think is a monthly meeting, which looks at all of these programs almost on a traffic light—red, orange, green—basis and that gives us an assessment as to whether or not we are tracking to plan. This probably gives me an opportunity to talk also about the ICT dashboard, or maybe—

Ms D'ATH: I was going to say if you could leave that one until this afternoon.

Mr WALKER: Yes.

Ms D'ATH: Otherwise we might need to start swapping around.

Mr WALKER: I understand.

Ms D'ATH: You have mentioned a lot of plans and action plans. On looking very quickly through the consultancies, a lot of that deals with the development of action plans. Minister, are you able to identify what strategic objects or outcomes your department has achieved over science, IT and innovation apart from the development and publication of plans and action plans?

Mr WALKER: That is a fair question. I think the first point to make is that, in the life cycle of a new government, it is hardly surprising that the first part of our term is involved in preparing such plans. As I mentioned before, IT was in a mess when we took it over. We had to do an audit. In fact, we did the largest audit of IT ever done in the government's history. So there was a need for an ICT strategy. There was a need for plans in the science and innovation area and, in fact, in the other areas—arts as well. There was the Arts for All Queenslanders plan. So I do not resile from the fact that it was necessary for us to move into that planning process.

I can share with you, however, that we met as a leadership team at the beginning of this year. I think I was saying that we frequently meet over at the Ecosciences Precinct for team meetings. One thing that I said to the department there was that the time for preparing plans had finished and the time for putting them into effect had come. So while we need to review the considerable planning work that we have done, as those plans roll out I think that we have passed the need for plans of any significance in the areas that we have already covered. The important thing for the department now is to put those plans into effect and I am satisfied that they are doing that. It will mean that we need to revisit the plan, particularly in a rapidly changing area like innovation, science and IT. What may have been a good plan a year ago needs to be tweaked at the very least in 12 months time, because new products and new approaches come into effect. So those programs, I think, are in place but we do not need to reinvent the wheel.

I can just give you an example of some of the plans and how they are working out. I will take the ICT renewal one as an example. The plan, which we did release in August 2013, outlines 80 actions to transform ICT. We are working our way through those. Fifty-one of those items have been delivered as of June 2014. The plan will be reviewed—it is in the process of being reviewed now, as I said—and we will reset that plan for the period going ahead. But I think that it is important to have the plans. I think that has been an investment well made on behalf of the taxpayers of Queensland to get ourselves back on track in all of the areas covered by my portfolio. I think as we examine each one of the sections, within the financial constraints that we have, we have been delivering on those plans.

Ms D'ATH: And those 51 outcomes that have been delivered, are they listed anywhere?

Mr WALKER: I will ask the director-general.

Ms Rickerby: Yes, we keep an up-to-date list of what is going on in the ICT renewal action plan and that is published on our website.

Ms D'ATH: Are there any other areas outside of the ICT, science and innovation areas that you can identify what the outcomes have been from those action plans?

Mr WALKER: Certainly, Arts for All Queenslanders—if we want to switch to other areas—has been an area where we developed a plan in consultation with the people of Queensland. We went to a number of rural and regional areas. We got broad input. We had an online session. That has resulted in a new set of investment programs for arts, a streamlined, less red tape way of dealing with things. It has resulted in things like the Playing Queensland Fund and the Super Star Fund.

Ms D'ATH: I was probably focusing on science and innovation than the arts section at this stage, Minister.

Mr WALKER: I thought you said apart from those.

Ms D'ATH: I did say 'apart from ICT', but sorry, I was specifically talking about science and innovation.

Mr WALKER: Right.

Ms Rickerby: In terms of innovation and some of the things Ms Roach touched on earlier on, the PhD employment program, that is underway in my department. We have those people working there. A program of works has been developed by QTT to remove red tape. So we have been working closely with Queensland Treasury on looking at how we do that and working with CCIQ—Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland—on case studies to assist and identify opportunities. We have touched on the ilab already and the work that is going on with ilab and the start-up summit. The start-up working group has met as recently as last month. We have the Visiting Entrepreneur Program, which we have been continuing with Brisbane Marketing. We have had two international entrepreneurs and I met one of them when he was here in Brisbane recently. He had been to other parts of Australia—he is a former Brisbane person; he is now based in Silicon Valley—and saying that the innovation work that was going on in Queensland was definitely equal, if not superior to, the other states in Australia. He was very impressed with what was going on here. The Angel Investor and the things that the minister has touched on, we have had the event in parliament. We are also very active with the Business Angels, working with the start-ups and trying to connect businesses.

We publish our progress report on our website and that is available. We have had leading for innovation workshops. We have what is called BiiG conference about to happen. We have a cooperative leadership group established. That is a cross-government group looking at what all the departments are doing in the space of innovation and how can we drive innovation across government. We also have the Science Delivery Board, which I chair, which looks at all the various plans, particularly the SIAP—Science and Innovation Action Plan—and what is it doing? Does it need recalibrating? Is it achieving its goals? So we are looking all the time at what outcomes are coming out.

We have the fellowships that the minister has already touched on. I am just trying not to repeat what the minister has said. We have the innovation hubs. In fact, the innovation hubs are about to occur this weekend, which is a pilot where we have some big problems, as it were, that we have looked across government and we have put that out to market to say, 'How do we fix this?' We have a large group of people who will come into various rooms and really brainstorm some ways forward. Do you want me to keep going?

Mr WALKER: I might just sum up, director-general, in this way. If the honourable member is looking for a plan and what has happened, SIAP is really I think the perfect example. SIAP called for the establishment of an advisory board. That has happened and they have met. It called for the establishment of the three Accelerate programs. That has happened. Two of those have been out and the awardees have been notified, or are about to be notified. The third is open now. The things like the PhD year students and the innovation hub all flow out of that action plan. So I think that is a good example of the plan leading to action.

I take the honourable member's point. Certainly, it is uppermost in my mind that there is a time from planning and there is a time for doing and you have to draw the line. We have drawn the line and certainly the director-general, I am sure, can confirm that the single thing that I said to the team at the beginning of the year was, 'The time for planning has finished. We have done all the planning and now is the time for doing.' I do not know if you want to expand on that or what flows from that, director-general.

Ms Rickerby: Certainly, our mantra is that it is the year of delivery. Our planning is important to make sure that we are doing the right things at the right time. Part of that is always a review process. The year of delivery is around, 'Exactly what are we achieving?' Bear in mind, we provide support

right across government. So we are enabling other government departments with their ICT renewal. So for us it is setting up the frameworks and the templates and the tools that they need, setting up the panel arrangements as a service so that agencies can go out and procure—so trying to look at our centralised role to drive things right across government. But certainly, the year of delivery is very key to us.

Evan touched on the portfolio approach that we have. This is best practice for managing programs of work. So it really looks at a prioritisation as a whole view of when you have a lot of programs of work, which we have, and programs of work mean that there are multiple projects within those programs of work. So how do they get prioritised for outcomes, for results, for funding? That plays an important role. It is a very active board and we have external people on that board. Our projects all have project boards and we often draw people from across government or external to government to sit on those to make sure that we are getting a great spread of expertise.

CHAIR: Thank you. I will now call on the member for Albert.

Mr WALKER: Madam Chair, I just need to clarify an answer that I made before the break that had some incorrect information. Is it appropriate to do that now?

CHAIR: Yes, please do.

Mr WALKER: I did speak about the Medical Research Commercialisation Fund. I mentioned that I thought that our commitment to that was \$500,000—the government's commitment. In fact, the government's commitment is \$900,000 in instalments of \$300,000 per year. Of that commitment, one half is my department's—DSITIA's—and one half is the department of health. In fact, the total commitment is \$450,000 rather than \$500,000 over three years. So I just apologise for that error.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Thank you. Minister, I refer to page 9 of the SDS. What is the government doing to provide expert advice to help start-up businesses learn from successful entrepreneurs and reinvigorate Queensland's entrepreneurial activities?

Mr WALKER: I thank the honourable member for that question and the opportunity to highlight the significant work that we are doing to help start-up businesses learn from successful entrepreneurs and to reinvigorate entrepreneurial activities. Queensland government funded business incubators—and they have been spoken about already today—provide start-up businesses with access to pro bono guidance, advice and support through their mentor panels and entrepreneur-in-residence programs. So they are particularly the two located at the University of Queensland and the Sunshine Coast university, as was stated before.

In addition, the Visiting Entrepreneur Program is a joint initiative between my department and Brisbane Marketing. The purpose of that initiative is to provide the opportunity for start-up businesses to learn from successful entrepreneurs. The focus of the program is to share the entrepreneurial knowledge and experience of the visiting entrepreneur and to encourage entrepreneurship in Queensland.

In March this year Mr Adrian Turner, who I think was referred to by the -general and who is now resident in Silicon Valley—one of the most respected experts there on mobile internet security and entrepreneurship—visited Brisbane as part of this program. He undertook a program of engagements to encourage entrepreneurship in Queensland. I was pleased to meet with him and I know that he met with the director-general. He also attended our Angels in Parliament session here to add his thoughts to the consideration of that group.

While he was here he undertook a number of interesting programs. He had a start-up coaching session with businesses in Creative Enterprise Australia and ilab incubators; he presented to computer science students at UQ; he presented to a start-up master class at Silicon Lakes; he met with leaders of the Brisbane start-up community to discuss ways to accelerate the growth of the local ecosystem and to build better links with Silicon Valley; and he met with local industry leaders to identify ways to engage corporations in the start-up ecosystem. He was the second of two visitors to Queensland. Mr Tyler Crowley attended last year. He was a Silicon Valley pitch strategist and a global start-up community consultant. He was the first visiting entrepreneur in 2013. So it does provide us with access to those internationally renowned people for Queensland start-ups to talk to. We continue to talk to Brisbane Marketing about a continuation of that program.

There are some other interesting things happening. I might ask Ms Roach if she is happy to talk a bit further about the areas of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activities which her part of the department is supervising.

Ms Roach: Apart from the issues that the minister has already spoken about, there is some other work being done to encourage this entrepreneurial activity. In particular, we are currently in the process of developing a case study library of success based entrepreneurs and start-up businesses. We are in the process of developing 28 case studies in various formats, including video, which will be delivered, we anticipate, in the second quarter of 2014-15. We have contracted a couple of the universities to undertake this work for us. Some of the students are actually involved in that case study work, which is a fantastic opportunity.

This library will actually showcase innovation and commercialisation successes, particularly across the four pillars. It is an opportunity to really invigorate entrepreneurial activities by learning from others and what they have actually done here in Queensland.

In particular, the plan is, as those case studies have been developed, to actually make those case studies available throughout the state. So that from a regional perspective there is an opportunity for regional businesses to also see some of the great stories that are happening in terms of innovation and commercialisation across the state.

CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Roach. I call the member for Redlands.

Mr DOWLING: In your opening statement you touched on innovation research and providing opportunities in that space. With that in mind, I draw your attention to page 9 of the Service Delivery Statement. How is the government recognising the great science and innovation that is happening at a grassroots level in Queensland's regions?

Mr WALKER: I thank the honourable member for that question. I suppose, to some degree, it echoes the question the honourable member for Condamine had previously in relation to the arts. It is again an important commitment for this government to ensure that we do not just concentrate on the south-east. While a lot of innovative and start-up activity is happening in the south-east corner, there is indeed a lot happening in the rest of the state as well.

One of our key objectives is to increase the collaboration and the sharing of knowledge between research and industry and end users right throughout the state. One interesting way in which we are doing that is through our Queensland Science and Innovation Champions program. It is an important part of my role, in a lot of the areas across my portfolio, to be a champion for, a barracker for and an enthusiast for people, be they scientists, be they researchers, be they in the arts area—to know that they are valued and to know that their work is important to the community.

We have launched a program recognising science and innovation champions in May 2014. It is particularly to recognise those leaders in this area right across the state. It is important to see that the initial awardees were, in fact, spread across the state. It does give an example of the point that the honourable member was making. It is important to recognise and to encourage what is done across the state.

The Science and Innovation Champions program supports the DSITIA goals of a community that is engaged and values science and strengthens our communication of science action. It is important to note that the STEM subjects—science, technology, engineering and maths—have fallen from recognition right across the state, in fact right across the country. Queensland struggles to get good engagement with STEM subjects within the state. In fact, Australia struggles as against the rest of the world. We are being beaten in many other countries in terms of the level of engagement in this area. That is probably another point. It does reinforce the need to champion our scientists and also to interest students particularly in careers in these areas.

The Science and Innovation Champions program is a little bit different from our arts champions program. It is a little bit more formal. The champions must be primarily based in Queensland. They must have had made a real impact with their science or innovation activity. They must have a story to tell about the promotion of science or innovation in their local community. Importantly, they are not to be self-nominated. They have to one friend who will nominate them rather than put themselves forward.

We launched the program in May. I will run through a couple of people who have been honoured in this way. It shows the varied application of the program both in areas of interest and in regions across the state. I was pleased to make two announcements—one in Brisbane and one in Townsville—about this. They really do champion some of our stars in this area.

Sarah Chapman was awarded a science and innovation championship for her contributions to teaching science and inspiring students in Townsville. That again goes back to the need to have champions in this area, and, I must say, particularly female champions. We struggle with STEM

subjects generally, and particularly with getting female involvement—you would not know it looking at those at the table here. We have difficulty getting females involved in the science and innovation area. It was great to champion Sarah for her role modelling in that regard.

Luke Anear is another Townsville developer. Luke has a company called SafetyCulture which features a mobile safety management system. It is a system that can be used for workplace safety checking—for swimming pool checking and all of those sorts of things. It is making safety accessible and affordable for every worker. I went to Luke's company headquarters in Townsville. He has a team of people there working on international projects which are quite stunning.

Shainiel Deo is another champion. Shainiel is a well-known name in innovation based in Brisbane. His company Halfbrick is an IT company, particularly specialising in games. Its Fruit Ninja game is a well-known product right throughout the world. Shainiel and his team have done a great job in profiling Queensland's and particularly Brisbane's expertise in gaming, which is quite important.

Professor Mark Kendall was recognised in science. Professor Kendall has invented the Nanopatch, which is a needle free device for delivering vaccines. One thing I have found from doing the job that I have done over the last year and a half or so is that if people need to have a series of vaccinations they are in fact highly likely to drop out of the program because of the simple fear of having a needle. The Nanopatch can deliver the vaccine by putting a patch on your skin which has microintrusions into your skin. The patch is put on and then torn off. It delivers the vaccine in that way. It is a quite remarkable way of doing it, in particular in Third World countries or countries where it is a difficult to get hygienic needles or where there is fear of needles. To be able to deliver vaccine in this way is spectacular. Professor Kendall was acknowledged.

Jean Madden was awarded in another area of innovation. Jean is the creator of Street Swags which is a community minded group which provides very important portable and practical beds for homeless people. She has made a significant impact in that area. She is another great Queensland innovator.

Professor Mandayam Srinivasan has an extraordinary reputation within the area of, of all things, robotic aircraft which are based on the flight behaviour of bees and birds. He has studied the flight patterns of bees and birds and has adapted this to aircraft that can hover and do all sorts of spectacular things based on that research.

Taking the honourable member's question into account, in terms of the breadth of what is happening in the innovation and science industry throughout Queensland, those science and innovation champions are a simple but I think very effective way of trumpeting the great things that are being done and encouraging our existing scientists to keep up the good work but more to the point our kids to look at science and innovation as a career, and an interesting one at that.

CHAIR: I call the member for Lytton.

Mr SYMES: I refer to page 5 of the Service Delivery Statements. Can the minister please outline what has been achieved in furthering Queensland's scientific relationship with China?

Mr WALKER: I appreciate that question. The relationship with China is a very important one to Queensland. It starts off from a pretty good basis. Queensland is the only subgovernment in the world, by that I mean not a national government, which has an agreement in place with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, which is the Chinese government's chief and most prestigious area.

We have two other agreements. We have agreements with the Chinese Satellite Surveying and Mapping Application Centre. I might just give Dr Williams notice that I might ask her to speak a little bit about that in a minute. We have recently signed one with the Shanghai Municipal Science and Technology Commission.

Why is the relationship with China particularly important? It is important for these reasons. China itself, I think I am correct in saying this, allocates in its budget more money for scientific and innovative research than it allocates for its defence purposes. That is saying a fair bit. It has a big emphasis on science and innovation and it is keen to partner with us in a number of these areas.

I have been fortunate to work closely with Dr Zhao. Dr Zhao is the Consul General for the People's Republic of China here in Brisbane. He has the consul for science also located in Brisbane, Mr Feng. Both Dr Zhao and Mr Feng have been very proactive in dealing with my office in ensuring that we are getting as much out of the Chinese relationship as possible.

I was particularly pleased to go with them to Townsville. They are interested in things marine and in things tropical because those things have an important relationship with China. Again, they are

things in which Queensland has expertise. I have been happy to talk to them about further cooperation in those areas.

I might ask Dr Williams if she would like to speak, particularly if she is happy to do so, about the surveying and mapping application because that is one that has been of particular use to Queenslanders and has resulted in great outcomes.

Dr Williams: The relationship with the Chinese satellite group has been very exciting because it is quite unusual as we are actually being asked by them to help them understand how to interpret their satellite imagery. The Chinese are very advanced in terms of their technology and have the ZY-3 satellite series that they are launching which is very high definition satellite imagery. We have the American landsat imagery. The Europeans have imagery that they produce. The Chinese are coming up with different types of imagery. It is being developed all over the world.

They have come to us because we have huge expertise in filtering imagery to get rid of clouds, shadows from the sun in different positions. We are world recognised as being experts in that area. They have come to us to get advice as to how to do that and also how to develop practical applications in terms of how to use that imagery.

In Queensland we have been using satellite imagery to understand the natural resources of the state for many years because it is such a big country. We have come up with a lot of new applications. This year we came up with the fire scar mapping application to see where bushfires have been. That has attracted quite a lot of interest around the world. The Chinese relationship is that they are giving us access to their very high definition imagery for parts of Queensland in return for our assistance in helping them understand how best to utilise that information.

Mr WALKER: Thank you, Dr Williams. There were some important developments this year and there will continue to be. I was fortunate to sign a memorandum of understanding with the chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Science and Technology Commission back in June when a high level delegation visited Queensland. We were able to announce successful recipients of some of the Chinese-Queensland joint ventures.

There are two that are of particular interest. One is working on some new biomaterials to improve bone grafts. That is an area where the Chinese are interested and where we have skills and the development of high value sugar from sweet sorghum. Again it is an area that they are interested in and in which we have skills. Shanghai is in fact the main research hub in China. The memorandum sets out a framework for joint work with China over the next three years. That involves both research and commercialisation opportunities. In August 2014 the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology, which is known as MOST, the central agency, is visiting Queensland, again with assistance of Dr Zhao, and is likely to want to renew a memorandum of understanding.

I should just point out, Madam Chair, for the interests of the committee, that I was fortunate to lead a trade mission to China last year, and as part of that I did have the opportunity in Beijing of visiting both the Chinese Academy of Science and the Ministry of Science and Technology. I should say not only was the meeting of great use to me to understand the work that was being done between our joint research facilities, but it also introduced me to a most convivial group of scientists. The Chinese scientists are very impressive. The thing that will sit in my memory is that at the Chinese Academy of Science we had one of those wonderful lunches with a lazy Susan in the middle with the rotating food and the millions of toasts based on Chinese wine. But at one stage one of the scientists who was sitting next to me sort of nudged me and said, 'Look, enough of talking about science. Can we talk about Australian red wines? I particularly love the shiraz.' For me it was a bit of an opening just to understand how close the relationship is, and I think that is a very important thing for Queensland.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I call the member for Albert.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, the discussion of red-tape reduction on page 11 of the SDS refers to a review of the Gene Technology Act 2001. Will the Minister please explain to the committee what this review found and the government's response to the review.

Mr WALKER: I thank the honourable member for that question. This is an area that has a regular review period because the gene technology suite of legislation is one where the states have legislated cooperatively with the federal government, and a federal government review of their act triggers a review of ours. Gene technology activities within Queensland are governed by the Gene Technology Act 2001 and the Gene Technology Regulation 2002, and together these components make up the regulatory scheme for gene technology within Australia reflected in the various states

and federally. The object of our act is to protect the health and safety of people and to protect the environment from any risks posed by, or resulted through, gene technology by identifying the risks and managing them through the regulation of certain dealings with genetically modified organisms. Currently Queensland's legislative framework mirrors the Commonwealth legislation, ensuring that all gene technology activities are regulated consistently in Queensland and applies to our state government agencies and higher education institutions.

It is pretty important for us to have, as far as possible, the Queensland legislation and the federal legislation parallel with each other. The reason I say that is if you go to a lab where gene work is being done, in one lab you may have university researchers, state government researchers, federal government researchers and commercial researchers, all of whom may not know from day to day whether they are working under the Queensland legislation or the federal legislation because of the different projects they might be working on. So the amendment of the Commonwealth legislation has required us to review our legislation, and that review took place in 2013. What we plan to do is that we believe there are efficiencies to be gained from not being in total lockstep with the federal government, but to automatically have a provision that our legislation will be reflected in changes to the federal legislation unless we resolve otherwise, by which I mean the Queensland parliament resolves otherwise. So the changes that we will propose to have to the legislation mean that as the federal legislation changes, the Queensland legislation will change to meet it. That will be the default position, and I think that is appropriate in meaning that we give certainty to the industry as to what the rules are that apply to them, but we also cut red tape and time in parliament by unnecessarily having to amend our legislation if it is pretty obvious that we should be following the feds in any case. But there will be a provision that says if within a certain period of time we believe the amendment is not in Queensland's interest, then we can pull out of that particular federal change and leave our legislation unchanged. It is what is called a lockstep opt-out approach. We will be in lockstep with the federal government, but we will opt out of that legislation if we think it is in the interests of Queensland to do so. My department is presently working on that legislation, and that will be brought to the parliament I think later this year.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I now call the member for Redcliffe.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you very much, Chair. Minister, I wish to take you to page 4 of the SDS and the science and research priorities of the government and your department, particularly in relation to the Queensland science and research priorities of the Office of the Queensland Chief Scientist in relation to clean energy and renewable energy investments. Minister, the Clean Energy Council's 'Clean Energy Australia Report 2013', which has been recently published, listed all of the large-scale renewable energy projects that were completed in 2013. Of the 18 projects only one was built in Queensland, that being the Mackay Racecourse Sugar Mill, which has been very successful. I had the pleasure of being there at the opening and they are using by-products, bagasse, to create energy which is putting enough electricity back in the grid to now power a third of the Mackay CBD. Is the government concerned that only one of those 18 projects has been built in Queensland and that we are falling behind the other states?

Mr WALKER: If I take you to the science and research priorities, I think the fourth on the list of 10 or so is where we have a natural advantage to promote cleaner and renewable energy technologies, be it gas, solar or biofuels. So it is a priority for us and certainly, as I think I mentioned in an answer to a previous question, particularly the conversion of sugar and algae potentially to cleaner, greener fuel is an important priority for us.

I would just make the point again that I did take a proposal to the agriculture subcommittee of cabinet that we have a whole-of-government position on this, because I think it is again an area where—as you rightly pointed out—Mackay has a significant investment already in the conversion of sugar. But there are other areas as well, be it algae or other bagasse products that can be used for this purpose, so I think it is always one on which we will keep our eye. But I can certainly assure you that it is within our research priorities as set out in SIAP, and I think there are at the moment certainly external forces which will indicate that it is an area of good investment for us. Those external forces are things like the investment in jet fuel research that some of the airline companies have within Queensland already, the commitment that Mackay Sugar has and the requirement that the US Navy has for green fuel for its fleet. Clearly it will need access to green fuel somewhere in this part of the world, and Queensland seems to be well positioned to be part of that. So I think all of those things put it according to our key issues.

As to how far up the chain it is for us to support, biofuels are significantly up the chain. When I was at the bioconference in San Diego I was then on holidays, but I did take the opportunity to go with

Professor Peter Gray from the University of Queensland to one of the leading institutions in San Francisco which is converting sugar to fuel. Unfortunately, they are concentrating on Brazil as their source at the moment, but there is no reason that Queensland could not take advantage of that technology and be part of that as well, particularly with the incentive of the 'green fleet' proposal being in the wind. So certainly I can reassure the honourable member that biofuels are an important investment area for us, and they are formally recognised on our list of priorities.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, I have taken you to the completed projects in the 'Clean Energy Australia' report, but it also outlines the large-scale renewable energy projects under construction. Again, of the 19 projects that are listed there is only one project in Queensland, being the Kogan Creek solar thermal project which was commenced under the previous government, yet at the same time we are seeing New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia with multiple projects under construction. So despite it being a priority for the government, why have we fallen behind in the construction of large-scale renewable projects?

Mr WALKER: I think the response to that is the same as the response to our ability to invest in a number of the areas in which we would like to, and that is that I would clearly like to be science minister in a climate in which we had an AAA credit rating, in which we had no debt and in which the financial state of the government's finances was in good nick. It is not, and therefore we have to cut our cloth accordingly. What I can point out to the honourable member is that this government has a proposal which will go to the people at an election to create a \$500 million fund for entrepreneurial and innovative activity, and obviously that would start to give us resources which would help move along the way that the honourable member would like to in this area. There are obviously competing claims for that money if that project is endorsed by the people of Queensland, but certainly we would want to make sure that that investment fund is established as part of the Strongest Smartest Choices to give us exactly the wherewithal to do the sort of things which you are suggesting.

I should also add that my department has some involvement in this, being the department involved in science and innovation, but clearly the Minister for Energy and Water Supply also has areas which cut across this, and some of those questions that you have raised are also worth putting to him.

Mr HOPPER: Minister, just following that very same question, David Hamood from Kilcoy has Chinese investors. They want to build a solar farm on his property. He has all the plans in place. Everything has been done. All he has hit are brick walls. It is not going to cost the government a cent. Do you know about that project at all?

Mr DOWLING: Madam Chair, I rise to a point of order. I would question relevance. It is not something that is contained within the SDS

CHAIR: That is true. It is up to you, Minister, whether you wish to take that question.

Mr HOPPER: I would like to answer that point of order simply because page 4 of the SDS, 'Science and Research Priorities', talks about climate change, research projects currently being funded and some of the results are known. I think we could certainly put that in this schedule.

Mr WALKER: Madam Chair, whether it is in order or not, I am happy to take the question. I do not know about the project. I would be interested to hear of the project. It may be within my area or it may be within the Deputy Premier's infrastructure area. But it would be of interest to know about it.

Mr HOPPER: Thank you very much.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, when we talk about investment and innovation, I take your point about this crossing over into other portfolios. But innovation, investment and renewables are extremely important to strengthen our economy and provide renewable energy into the future. Minister, do you agree that the Renewable Energy Target is an important mechanism to create incentive and some business confidence to invest and innovate in the renewable energy sector in Queensland?

Mr WALKER: Madam Chair, I think that is going a bit beyond the SDS and the Renewable Energy Target. I suppose I can just reconfirm that it is an important priority for the government; however, I do want to, I suppose, temper that a little bit with the fact that we do have to have commercially viable renewable energy operations. So it is something which always has to be looked at through the lens of an appropriate commercial investment and an appropriate return for the investment made. It is not always an easy area, but as I pointed out to the honourable member in my answer to her last question, it is one of our priorities. The ability to fund it is limited at the moment. I am sure that if the Strongest Smartest Choices program goes ahead and the fund that we propose of

some \$500 million is established, it will give us greater resources to look at these and a range of other programs that fit within our priority areas.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, you are saying that irrespective of the views of the Premier and the minister for energy, who have indicated they do not want a renewable energy target, and the Treasurer, who has criticised people who have solar in their households, that it should be scrapped and that the government is more than willing to commit—

Mr DOWLING: I rise to a point of order. Relevance.

Ms D'ATH: The Minister has continually referred to strong choices and funding programs that are not identified in the budget as yet and has said that these are the types of areas that we will see financial commitment into the future under the government under their strong choices. But that does not seem to reconcile—

Mr DOWLING: And that will be under a future budget, Madam Chair. I rise to a point of order. Relevance.

Ms D'ATH: The minister has chosen to refer to the—

CHAIR: Member for Redcliffe, I do take that point of order because I have been listening carefully to your question and it is deviating greatly from the SDS.

Ms D'ATH: It goes to the government's priorities and what they are budgeting. For the first two sessions today the minister himself has referred to the Strong Choices proposals and funding programs that are not outlined in this budget. If the minister has the discretion to do that, I would hope that there is some discretion for the committee members to also ask questions along those lines. My question is making sure an area that I believe is a very important priority for our economy, for Queensland—how what the minister is saying reconciles with the positions being put by the Premier, the Minister for Energy and the Treasurer in relation to their comments about renewable energy.

Mr WALKER: In relation to that I can say that I have clearly said, No. 1, it is one of our listed priorities; No. 2, the ability to fund these priorities—not necessarily this one, but the broad range of priorities—is dependent upon the Stronger, Smarter Choices endorsement of a fund of \$500 million, which will significantly progress these various areas of priority. I would suggest that issues such as a renewable energy target are outside the scope of the committee's remit. The honourable member can be reassured that it is a priority; it is there in black in white in our Science and Innovation Action Plan. It, therefore, remains open to funding if the broader source of funding referred to in the Stronger, Smarter Choices program is endorsed by the Queensland people.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, can I now move on? Page 4 of the SDS talks about enabling a creative, connected and clever Queensland. Last year you informed the committee that there was going to be an audit of intellectual property undertaken by your department. Can you advise the committee of the progress of that audit?

Mr WALKER: Yes, I can. The audit was conducted and a series of actions following that have been decided upon. We thought that the intellectual property audit was an important part of the innovation program for the government because the government does create a certain amount of intellectual property which may or may not be able to be used for the benefit more broadly of the Queensland people and, indeed, for the generation of funds.

So the whole-of-government IP audit has been completed. It has assisted the Queensland government to assess our opportunity to release Crown IP and to look at the IP management arrangements that are in place within agencies. One of the key things we found as a result of the audit was that there was a need to establish a panel of commercialisation experts. It became pretty clear to us that the internal capability to understand the commercialisation prospects of IP that the government held needed some assistance. That recommendation has been made to provide advice and assistance to agencies to help them commercialise Crown IP where it is appropriate. I might ask Ms Roach if she will speak in more detail as to the outcomes of that audit and what we have put in place.

Ms Roach: In terms of the recommendations that were actually made, apart from the commercialisation panel, which has now been established—and three organisations have been appointed to that panel. Those three organisations are QMI Solutions, Cullens Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys and Innovative Business Concepts. As part of that agreement of being appointed to that panel, they will also provide some training to state government agencies on the identification and commercialisation of their intellectual property. That is probably one of the key recommendations that has been implemented. A number of other recommendations have been completed. One of those is

in connection with revisions to the rewards directive which exists and that is in the process of being finalised at present. The Public Service Commission has responsibility for that. There is also a whole-of-government network of IP experts from across government who regularly now share information, identify issues and work together to solve those issues.

I understand there are about another seven recommendations that are in progress. One of those is around the establishment of IP registers for each Queensland government agency. So DSITIA is continuing to support and guide agencies that do not have an intellectual property register or effective IP management processes in place to help them to do that. There are also regular training sessions held by the department to assist agencies in terms of upskilling staff and reducing knowledge and capability gaps in this area. There is also a process whereby we are developing procedures to actually assist agencies with releasing unused intellectual property.

A couple of the recommendations that are still being worked on and still being finalised include working with Crown law to get some additional advice through to agencies in terms of the identification of intellectual property and how best to identify it and go about the release for commercialisation purposes. There is also a recommendation that relates to a follow-up review that would occur in 2015 to see the progress that has been made by agencies in terms of implementing the appropriate policies and procedures to support commercialisation activity.

Mr WALKER: I might add for the benefit of the honourable member that the audit did disclose that, in fact, commercialisation is happening. Ms Roach was concentrating on the mechanics of where we went from there. The Police Service, for example, has generated income from its firearms safety Queensland course. That is some intellectual property that it has been able to commercialise. The Department of Communities and Child Safety has seen its program materials used by the Sunshine Coast TAFE to deliver a certificate IV and diploma to the public in areas covered by that department. Some of that is going to be income producing. Some of it is simply going to be using the information the government has for the broader benefit of the community. It is a small start. Your question brings us to the point of saying, 'We do need to progress it.' I think the audit gives us the basis to do that but we do need a bit more oomph in the area to get it moving.

CHAIR: I now call the member for Waterford.

Mr LATTER: I refer to page 5 of the SDS and ask: what is the government doing to be more innovative in how it operates, procures and supports businesses including Queensland small to medium enterprises?

Mr WALKER: I thank the honourable member for that question. It is a pretty important one for us. As I think I pointed out when I was talking about the Science and Innovation Action Plan, one of the sections of that plan is not only about our enabling Queensland business to become more innovative, but actually becoming more innovative ourselves.

One particular project which we have started is the Innovation Hub Pilot Project. That aims to have us look at our own procedures and see if we can deliver more innovative solutions across government. The innovation hub pilot delivers innovation in government procurement by taking a problem or challenge to the market and one that we found difficult to solve and to say, 'What are your ideas for doing it and can you help us solve the problem?' That also stimulates innovation in our small to medium enterprises by fostering an innovative approach to identifying these solutions. It builds collaborations between government and those organisations and it increases commercial opportunities for small to medium sized enterprises. I think the innovation hub particularly is worthy of a little bit of concentration on it. I might ask Ms Roach to speak about that. It is fairly new in its conception. It has only come to fruition in the last month or so. Ms Roach might explain to the committee what we are doing in that area.

Ms Roach: The innovation hub project is a new approach to looking at solving government problems and also a new approach in terms of procuring solutions for government. The first four challenges were actually released to the marketplace on 17 June through the QTenders website. There are four challenges that have been identified. One is around beefing up engagement, which is with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, which seeks to enable 18,000 beef producers to increase their productivity. The second one is around Indigenous health. It is about recognising the cardiovascular risks and identifying accessible and relevant options to improve their health. The third one is around graffiti from the Department of Transport and Main Roads. It is about systematically identifying, categorising and remediating graffiti across the department's assets. This is a fairly costly exercise at present. The idea is to look externally to see where the opportunities are for the private sector to come in and provide us with some alternative and more innovative solutions and

to do this in a more cost-effective manner. Finally, we are also looking at asset maintenance from the Department of Housing and Public Works and looking to get timely and accurate data as far as public housing maintenance issues are concerned and, once again, looking at being able to do this in a more efficient way than we currently do.

We have gone out to the marketplace. If I remember correctly, 54 organisations had registered that they were interested in participating in this process, which is actually occurring on Saturday and Sunday this weekend. I believe approximately 40 teams have been selected for that process. So we are looking very much at an open innovation approach so that we can identify the best available solutions possible at the lowest cost to be able to deliver some excellent outcomes for the government and for the people of Queensland.

CHAIR: Our time is limited, Minister, but I must ask you this question. I refer to page 9 of the SDS. Would the minister please outline how scientists monitor seasonal conditions and provide advice to assist Queensland's graziers to interpret current climate risks associated with El Nino?

Mr WALKER: It is an important question for the people of Burdekin as well as many other parts of Queensland. It is very relevant for rural Queensland at present with so much of the state still drought declared. We all know that Queensland oscillates between periods of drought and periods of flooding rain. It is the fact that Queensland has the highest rainfall variability of any region in the world, which came as a bit of a surprise to me. I thought we might be close to it, but I think we actually take the gold medal. As you know, those fluctuations have a lot to do with the opposite extremes of the El Nino and La Nina effects of the weather.

Much of rural Queensland has faced extremely dry conditions over the last 12 months to two years, leading to drought declarations across what was unfortunately a record 80 per cent of the state in March this year. It is of great concern to the government that the Bureau of Meteorology has currently issued an El Nino alert, which means the possibility of drought conditions in Queensland continuing over the coming spring and summer. So my department scientists play a strong role in the whole-of-government response to drought and interpreting what an El Nino alert may mean for Queensland rural industries. Since as early as April this year, my department's monthly climate statement has indicated a high probability of dry conditions over the coming Queensland summer. I did write to both the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Energy and Water Supply to let them know and reinforce what the department was seeing in that regard.

The monthly climate statement is issued on the department's very popular Long Paddock website. That is an important source of climate information, which I know is monitored by many primary producers across Queensland. My scientists also provide regular climate briefings to the Drought Interdepartmental Coordination Group, and that is chaired by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. It includes representatives from a number of Queensland government departments and rural industry bodies like AgForce and QFF. Those are highly valued briefings and they coordinate the drought response at a government and industry level, which is very important. As most honourable members will know, on 6 July, Minister McVeigh put out a press relief urging producers affected by drought to begin sourcing molasses and putting other measures in place now to deal with what is the expected El Nino weather pattern in the coming months.

My department's scientists are also developing decision support tools which can translate the latest climate information into more meaningful terms for graziers because it is not always easy to look at the scientific information and understand what that means on the ground. Those decision support tools draw on a detailed pasture growth model, which has been developed by the department's scientists and tested over a number of years. The pasture model, when linked with the department's latest climate outlook information, helps graziers know in advance the likely pasture growth on their property over the coming summer. Armed with that information, Queensland's graziers are better prepared for what might be a difficult season ahead and the inevitable climate extremes which are so much the challenge of living on the land in Queensland.

Madam Chair, can I just take the opportunity before you break to make a correction to a statement that was made from somewhere along the table, and none of us are prepared to confess who actually made it. I think it was said that the progress of our ICT action plan was available on our website and that, in fact, is not correct. The progress of the action plan is actively managed through the ICT renewal program board by the department's renewal portfolio board and then I am obliged to report to cabinet on it on a six-monthly basis. So there is active reporting on it. Of the 80 actions, 51 have been delivered, and we may be able to talk about those in the specific IT section this afternoon. I just wanted to make that correction.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister, for that. Thank you to all of you. I particularly thank the members of staff who have participated, the departmental heads and our scientists. We will now adjourn for one hour until 1 pm. On our return we will consider the proposed expenditure in respect of the Arts.

Proceedings suspended from 12.01 pm to 1.00 pm

 **CHAIR:** The hearing of the Education and Innovation Committee is now resumed. Minister, I just have a technical query. With regard to the document that was tabled, we did not actually officially table it.

Mr WALKER: I seek leave to table that, Madam Chair, if I could, to formalise the record.

CHAIR: Thank you, and you are happy for that then also to be published?

Mr WALKER: Correct.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Mr WALKER: I think with those redactions that you spoke about so that it equates with what is already publicly available.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister; that is fine. We will now examine the portfolio area of the Arts and I welcome to this session the member for South Brisbane, Ms Jackie Trad, who is replacing Mrs Yvette D'Ath for this session. I also welcome the CEOs of six Arts statutory bodies: Mr Chris Saines, Director of the Queensland Art Gallery; Professor Suzanne Miller, Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Museum; Mr John Kotzas, Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Performing Arts Centre; Ms Sue Donnelly, Executive Director of the Queensland Theatre Company; Ms Tracey Vieira, Chief Executive Officer of Screen Queensland; and Ms Janette Wright, Chief Executive Officer and State Librarian of the State Library of Queensland. Under schedule 7 of standing orders, these chief executive officers may be asked questions directly by the committee. I now call the member for South Brisbane to begin the questions this afternoon.

Ms TRAD: Good afternoon, Minister.

Mr WALKER: Good afternoon, Ms Trad.

Ms TRAD: Minister, I want to start with an issue that has been quite contentious and it is at pages 4 and 20 of your SDS. This is in relation to grant funding for arts organisations. In this year's SDS on page 20 there is a reduction of \$14 million in grants funding across the department and another \$5 million projected in the coming budget. Can you outline the total grant funding provided to the arts sector for the past four financial years broken down by financial years please?

Mr WALKER: I will ask the Deputy Director-General, Ms Herring, to address that in one moment, but before I do I just want to also introduce Ms Herring, who is here to assist, as well as Mr Mark Tierney from the department who is our Director of Infrastructure Planning and Strategy. I may call upon them to assist from time to time. I think the point to make in broad terms before I ask Ms Herring to speak to your direct issues is that, I think as we mentioned in last year's estimates, the savings across government have had to be passed through to my department in a number of areas, including arts grants. Because it is a little bit difficult to match like with like, in broad terms the grant funding over the forward four years has been reduced by \$12 million but that has been balanced by two new funds of \$3 million each—one being the Super Star Fund and one being the Playing Queensland fund—so that is a net backwards saving of \$6 million. That is the broad picture. As to how they fit into the categories that you have just asked for, I will see whether Ms Herring is able to deal with that straightaway or whether we need to put that on notice.

Ms Herring: Can I just ask for a clarification of the question in terms of the years that you are talking about?

Ms TRAD: It is in relation to the past four financial years, so that includes the year that we are currently investigating.

Ms Herring: I could certainly answer the question on behalf of this year, but the previous years I would have to take on notice.

Ms TRAD: Okay; thank you.

Ms Herring: That is all right. This year Arts Queensland is continuing to deliver the grants savings that were announced in the original 2012-13 budget and those grant savings are \$12.4 million in grant savings across up to 2015-16, so there are different effects year on year. In 2013-14 there were \$3.2 million in grant savings. There were new commitments of \$1.5 million which covers the

government's policy in its Boost to Touring fund and its Super Star Fund, so when you look at a net effect there that is \$1.7 million negative for 2013-14.

Mr WALKER: If I can just add that of course it is part of the government's program and part of our desire to ensure that money is spent more efficiently and that the outcome that we look at is still one of which we can be proud, and I am sure that it is. The member was not present this morning because I know she was in another committee, but we have had I think extraordinary success in the area both in the south-east corner and beyond. In the south-east corner I think we reported that, partly due to Super Star Funding but also partly due to the tremendous achievements of the organisations themselves, the Queensland Ballet's *Romeo and Juliet*, which attracted Super Star Funding for Sir Kenneth MacMillan's production to come over and be presented here, resulted in the Queensland Ballet having their best box office for 56 years. That is not a bad investment of money and shows, I think, that that has been a well targeted investment. It is similar with the Queensland Theatre Company's *Macbeth*, in which Michael Attenborough came across—one of the famous Attenborough family from the UK. Again, that is an example of that investment leading to QTC's best result for, I think it was, 21 years. I think they show targeted results. At GoMA—and this is without Super Star Funding—Cai Guo-Qiang's exhibition *Falling Back to Earth* attracted five State of Origin crowds there and that is thought to be the best result for a ticketed event by a living artist in Australia's history. It is, I think, doubly impressive that Cai is not a famous name. People often come to famous names if it is Monet or if it is Van Gogh or whatever, but they came to see Cai's stuff because they liked the stuff, not simply because he was a drawcard.

Ms TRAD: So how did it compare to Valentino, because Valentino was also quite popular?

Mr WALKER: Valentino was popular. In fact, I think Valentino might have been a bit better. Mr Saines might like to address that.

Mr Saines: It was 202,000 to Valentino.

Mr WALKER: So 202,000 as against what—226,000 or 227,000?

Mr Saines: For Cai Guo-Qiang 229,323.

Ms TRAD: So certainly the appetite is there, but that did not rely on any Super Star Funding or any initial funding?

Mr WALKER: That did not rely on Super Star Funding, but it does rely on great work by those sitting behind me in presenting great events.

Ms TRAD: Absolutely.

CHAIR: Excuse me, Minister, but I think there was a question there on notice earlier; is that right? Are you happy to take that?

Mr WALKER: Yes, and we just might get that clearer, if I can, from the member for South Brisbane. That is the funding break-up for the three years prior to this current year?

Ms TRAD: Not this current year but the current year that we are investigating today. We are doing 2013-14, so I want the three years prior to that.

Mr WALKER: The three years prior to that; yes, we will take that on notice thanks, Madam Chair. If I can just continue with the result of the targeted funding that we have done, again the Playing Queensland funding has resulted in an extraordinary increase in the performances that rural and regional Queenslanders see. We have effectively tripled those. The last year of the Labor government saw 180 funded performances whilst in our first year 310 performances and our second year over 620 performances in rural and regional Queensland. While I take the honourable member's point in that I would love to be a minister, as I think I said this morning, sitting in a AAA credit rated government budget with no debt to have to deal with and things being different, we do have to cut our cloth accordingly. I believe that we have targeted and carefully spent the money to ensure that Queenslanders and the arts sector are still thriving, and I believe they are thriving. I think it is hard to find a year when the arts sector has performed better than the year we have just been through. That is not necessarily, as you say, down to the government, but it is down to the government enabling the sector to perform well in that regard and they have lived up to that in spades.

Ms TRAD: Minister, just picking up on a couple of those points, firstly there was a commitment given by your government in opposition to maintain funding and that commitment has not been kept through government. Secondly, there has been the analysis that these cuts have disproportionately affected the smaller to medium organisations, and that certainly looks to be the case in the information that you provided to the question on notice leading into the estimates committee in

relation to the funding. So do you actually have a percentage figure around the organisations that have not been successful in arts grants funding—organisational funding particularly, the triennial organisational funding—and the percentage of those that are small to medium community based?

Mr WALKER: I cannot say that I have that to hand immediately, and I will check with Ms Herring to see whether she has it or whether we can provide that particular analysis. It is also difficult because of course the categories were changed a little when we came to government, so there is not an immediately comparable set of figures. The most comparable figure which was the small to medium program as existed under the previous government from 2011 to 2013 funded 31 organisations with a three-year allocation of \$21.3 million. The organisations fund, which is our 2014 to 2016 fund, for much the same sector funded 35 organisations as against 31 for a total of \$21.2 million as against \$21.3 million. There were people who missed out of course. It is a competitive funding round. We had an extraordinarily large number of applicants. We had 59 applicants for our organisations fund which does point to the health of the sector. There were some organisations that had previously been funded that missed out, but to balance that there were new entrants, and one of those was the Anywhere Theatre Festival. That is a smaller organisation certainly supporting smaller artists. I know that myself because I went to one of their performances which was in a suburban garage—two blokes performing their new play to a combined audience of about 12 of us I think.

Ms TRAD: I hope you did not scare anyone, Minister, by your presence.

Mr WALKER: I did not. I sat demurely in the audience, Ms Trad; you would have been very proud of me.

Ms TRAD: Yes, I have seen you at performances before.

Mr WALKER: Sorry, you have.

Ms TRAD: You do keep your manners.

Mr WALKER: You are quite right. I restrained myself that evening. But Anywhere Theatre is a great new entrant and it, as you know, performs theatre in non-traditional spaces and it received funding for the first time. Hope Empowered received funding for the first time which is an organisation which gives access to disadvantaged people towards performances. I believe that the advice I was given by the Arts Investment Advisory Board, which guided my decisions in this regard, meant that, notwithstanding that savings had to be made, we have still contributed very well to that sector as well as the other levels of the arts sector.

Ms TRAD: Minister, I understand the role of the arts advisory board in relation to grants funding and the outcry around the defunding of the University of Queensland Press did receive, I guess, a turnaround in the government's decision around the withdrawal of funds. However, when it came to Youth Arts Queensland, their withdrawal of funding actually meant that that organisation after a quarter of a century collapsed after doing quite good work. I am just trying to understand how those decisions are made given that I think both organisations are worthy and the outcome of defunding Youth Arts Queensland was actually fatal.

Mr WALKER: The broad position with the Arts Investment Advisory Board is that at the end of individual assessments of the applications that have been put forward, the Arts Investment Advisory Board prepares an advice to me as to those organisations which should or should not be funded and then I have a discretion in relation to whether I accept that advice or not. The University of Queensland was a separate thing so I will go to that in a moment, but in broad terms the role of the Arts Investment Advisory Board is to provide the government with expert advice on arts and cultural policy and investment, particularly the grants programs that you are speaking about. It met nine times in 2013. Its members are Mr Mark Fenton, who chairs it, Mr Philip Bacon AM, Mr Scott Hutchinson, Professor Sue Street, Dr Jane Wilson and Ms Christine Pulvirenti from Townsville who gives a regional emphasis to the areas. As I said, I retain the discretion as to whether or not I accept their advice because I think there is a need at the end of the day just to make sure in particular that all regions are being looked after and that all sectors are being looked after. I accepted the advice of the board in this regard in relation to the grants that were given.

With respect to University of Queensland Press, what occurred there was that we, I think, made the announcement that they had failed in their application in the first round and I then left on holidays pretty soon thereafter. When I came back there had been a change in the position of UQ Press in respect of assistance given to it by the university itself which I thought put its position up for reconsideration and I was prepared to reconsider it because of a change in position since their

application had gone in from the university's position of support. It had changed its position. I did make a change of view on that but I thought for good reasons.

Ms TRAD: Just to clarify, are you saying that the university stepped in and provided additional funding?

Mr WALKER: No, I am saying that the university's position went the other way and I thought therefore there was a need to re-look at UQ Press's application because of its deteriorating position in support from the university.

Ms TRAD: But isn't one of the principles of your investment framework private funding or non-government funding?

Mr WALKER: It is.

Ms TRAD: If the University of Queensland was not supporting UQ Press and that led you to step in, despite the fact that your investment framework seeks to provide or incentivise more private sector investment or non-government investment, isn't it working counteractive to your investment framework?

Mr WALKER: No, not necessarily. The principle you state is correct. Certainly we want to see organisations like UQP transition to a full commercial position as a publisher. That would be ideal. But in the circumstances in which UQ Press found itself between its original application and then post decision when the university changed its position, I thought it was in the public interest for us to support the continuation of UQ Press in that circumstance. Insofar as the others that you have mentioned who missed out, these decisions are always ones as to where a limited amount of money is best spent. Funds are competitive and in order for new entrants to come in at times others have to miss out. That is the judgement call made. But in the case of those others, it was based on the advice from the Arts Investment Advisory Board which helped guide me in making those decisions.

Ms TRAD: Have you used your discretion in another instance apart from UQ Press?

Mr WALKER: Yes, I have, in respect of some Super Star Fund recommendations.

Ms TRAD: What were the details of that, Minister?

Mr WALKER: I don't know that I have those immediately to hand, but I will undertake to take that on notice, if I can, and let you know which of the decisions.

CHAIR: Minister, we are probably deviating somewhat from the SDS. I think we are getting into somewhat subjective areas here, member for South Brisbane.

Ms TRAD: I am asking about the grant funding process which is in the SDS, Chair. But I would be happy if you would like to take that on notice. I would really appreciate that, Minister.

Mr WALKER: I will take that on notice.

Ms TRAD: Minister, in last year's SDS a new measure was introduced at page 63 and that was the percentage of attendance for ticketed exhibitions to total attendance at Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art. The footnote in relation to this new measure was that it was a new measure and will come into effect from 2013-14.

Mr WALKER: You are referring to this year's SDS or last year's?

Ms TRAD: Last year's SDS, but last year's SDS said that it was a new measure and it would start in the financial year that we are currently investigating. Minister, it is not in this year's SDS. Can you explain that anomaly?

Mr WALKER: I might ask Ms Herring if she can take that question because I think she has that answer.

Ms Herring: Thank you. There have been some changes in the SDS measures after a whole-of-government review of SDS processes. Reporting on that measure was discontinued in the 2013-14 SDS as the government identified it was not considered to be a measure of efficiency or effectiveness. There are now new measures in the SDS accordingly.

Ms TRAD: It was never really measured?

Ms Herring: We still have the data.

Ms TRAD: Can I have the data?

Ms Herring: Yes, of course. Arts Queensland continues to collect this data. The estimated actuals for 2013-14 were 4.2 million people.

Ms TRAD: That was for ticketed exhibitions?

Ms Herring: No, that is total. That is attendance and participation.

Ms TRAD: Okay. What I am asking for is the number, the participation or attendance, at ticketed events as a percentage or an actual figure against the total.

Ms Herring: Okay.

Mr WALKER: We might take that on notice, Ms Trad.

Ms Herring: I might just mention though that does fluctuate based on financial years of when ticketed exhibitions occur. Sometimes you will get two ticketed exhibitions in one financial year but they might start in June and then carry over into the next financial year. So it is probably good that we list those so you can actually see when they actually start and how long they run.

Ms TRAD: That is entirely sensible, thank you. Minister, can you advise does the Brisbane Festival receive funding from your department?

Mr WALKER: Yes, it does.

Ms TRAD: Also Events Queensland, Minister Stuckey's department; is that correct?

Mr WALKER: It has received assistance from Minister Stuckey's department previously but there has been a change to that. I might again ask Ms Herring to explain the change in that.

Ms Herring: Previously Brisbane Festival received funding through Events Queensland and then Tourism and Events Queensland for the Santos *City of Lights* show. I don't have the exact numbers of that, but they certainly did receive that. Brisbane Festival submitted an application for funding for that again this year. Due to a change in the direction of Tourism and Events Queensland I understand they elected not to fund that but they are providing marketing support in terms of a cash grant to support *The Perfect American* production that Opera Queensland is doing in conjunction with Brisbane Festival and QPAC.

Ms TRAD: Tourism and Events Queensland is providing funding for that?

Ms Herring: The new organisation, yes.

Ms TRAD: But not for the *City of Lights*?

Ms Herring: But not for *City of Lights*.

CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Herring and member for South Brisbane. I now call the member for Waterford?

Mr LATTER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, I refer to page 4 of the SDS, in particular the administered funding for the major performing arts companies of \$37.7 million. Can the minister update the committee on how the major performing arts companies are delivering across Queensland?

Mr WALKER: Thank you for that question. I am pleased and proud to be able to talk about our major performing arts companies. The \$37.7 million in controlled funding, which excludes administered funding approved in 2013-14 under the arts and cultural framework, represents funding to the major performing arts organisations totalling \$8.45 million, to triennially funded organisations totalling \$21.2 million and funding to government owned companies totalling \$7.3 million. In addition, there was Super Star funding totalling \$750,000, which is an annual allocation, of which \$559,435 delivered performances in 2013-14. Insofar as Queensland Ballet is concerned, it delivered four main stage and two studio seasons. It appeared in 104 live stage performances across five venues in regional Queensland attracting some 63,000 people. I was pleased to go to Toowoomba for the opening night of *Giselle*, which was a tremendous night there in the Empire Theatre. The Queensland Ballet is performing extraordinarily well. Li Cunxin is obviously an outstanding artistic director and the season ticket holders for Queensland Ballet increased by 153 per cent on the previous year to a record-breaking 4,316 people, which is pretty spectacular. Just to give some idea of Li's marketing prowess, if you rang qtx to get your ballet tickets, then at the end of giving all your information and your credit card details and your secret code on the back of the card and all that sort of stuff you would then be told that Li would now like to speak to you and thank you for signing up for the season. He is very well switched on to all that is necessary to make the ballet such an important part of Queensland's scene.

The 2014 season commenced with *Coppelia*, which sold 97 per cent of its tickets, exceeded box office targets and attracted an audience of over 10,800 people. Then, of course, there was, with the additional investment of \$300,000 from the Super Star Fund, Sir Kenneth McMillan's production,

which the ballet performed, of *Romeo and Juliet* just in the weeks gone past in July. As I mentioned previously, that production broke a 54-year box office record. It was seen by over 15,500 people across eight performances in the Lyric Theatre which was quite spectacular.

The Queensland Theatre Company also performed very well in 2013. Over 81,000 people saw a QTC production. It undertook 280 performances in 12 venues, including a tour of its highly successful children's production *The Lost Property Rules* to Blackwater and Emerald. QTC also conducted 78 workshops in regional areas which were attended by over 1,300 participants. Queensland Theatre Company's production of *Kelly* won a Matilda award for best main stage play. That will also tour regional Queensland in 2015. It has secured \$41,506 from the Playing Queensland Fund to do that. In March/April 2014, again with support from the Super Star Fund, a total of just under \$140,000, the company's production of *Macbeth* was directed by internationally renowned director Michael Attenborough. That attracted the company's largest audience in 21 years—over 17,000 attendees. An analysis, interestingly, of that attendance shows that 14 per cent of those were visitors to Brisbane. It is an important cultural tourism drawcard, events such as these, to bring people in who will spend money. The analysis of cultural tourists shows that, firstly, they stay longer and, secondly, they spend more money than your normal tourists so they are a valuable tourism catch.

The Queensland Symphony Orchestra engaged with over 706,000 people, presenting 152 performances in 2013. Its touring and education initiatives occurred in Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay, Toowoomba and the Gold Coast. We have a Super Star investment there yet to play its course but there is an investment of \$300,000 through the Super Star Fund which will present *Journey Through The Cosmos* in November this year. That will feature the global superstar Professor Brian Cox, who is an astrophysicist. He is a well-known TV personality mainly seen on the ABC. He will be giving a scientific explanation and background while the orchestra plays Holst's *The Planets* suite. I think I am correct in saying that the first concert has now sold out and a second concert has been scheduled.

Opera Queensland presented seasons of *Otello* in 2013 and *Rigoletto* in 2014 to critical acclaim. The exciting thing that I think that Opera Queensland is doing at the moment is Project Puccini and that will take *La Boheme* to eight regional communities. Locals will perform in community choirs as the chorus for *La Boheme* in those places between August and September 2014. There has been tremendous take-up of local singers wanting to sing with our opera company in those places. I congratulate Opera Queensland. A total of 780 budding performers auditioned and 384 were successful, the youngest being seven years old, the oldest being 86 years old. It is a great community involvement with that tremendous art form.

The member for South Brisbane asked about the Brisbane Festival before. In 2013 the Brisbane Festival engaged 1.1 million people and delivered over 85 productions and 467 performances of which 11 were Australian and six were world premieres. The festival generated a total income of \$10.1 million as a result of a record box office and partnership and sponsorship support. That is the highest in the festival's history. The 2014 festival will be held from 6 to 27 September. It features over 380 events—264 ticketed shows and more than 122 free shows—including six world premieres, one Australian premiere and eight Queensland premieres. The highlights of the 2014 program include an Australian exclusive of Philip Glass's *The Perfect American*, which is an opera about the life of Walt Disney—that will be in collaboration with Opera Queensland—and Queensland Theatre Company's almost famous already *Black Diggers* show, which tells the stories of exceptional Indigenous Australian soldiers in World War 1.

The American Ballet Theatre will perform part of its season here at QPAC, bringing four of its most highly regarded works including *Swan Lake*. One of the world's greatest contemporary choreographers and dancers Akram Khan, who performed at the opening of the 2012 Olympics in London, will bring his award-winning masterpiece *DESH* to the festival from 6 to 13 September. That is also with the assistance of the Super Star Fund.

Finally, the Queensland Music Festival staged the largest number of events in its history—148 performances and 600 workshops in Brisbane and 44 regional centres. The regional attendance reached 70,000 people. The QMF program was delivered to several new regions including Airlie Beach, Biloela, Birdsville, Charleville, Coen, Cunnamulla, Dalby, Gayndah, Goondiwindi, Mareeba, Montville, Normanton, Quilpie, Redcliffe and Tambo. That was supported by over 100 partnerships including 22 regional councils, 89 Queensland arts organisations, 540 great Queensland artists and over 490 Queensland arts workers. Work is now well underway for the 2015 program.

If I can return for one moment to the Brisbane Festival, I want to make the point that I am fortunate as arts minister to see a lot of good performances, but one that stuck in my mind was in the Brisbane Festival this year, and that was the Expressions Dance Co. performance *When Time Stops*, which it did, with Camerata of St John's. It was an outstanding performance. I am proud to say that Natalie Weir has been nominated for the Helpmann Awards for modern dance choreography with respect to *When Time Stops*. I have rung to congratulate her on that nomination. The announcement of that will come in August in Sydney. She is up against the Australian Ballet and the Sydney Dance Co. So she has some tough competition, but it is great to see a great production like that recognised in that way.

CHAIR: Absolutely. I call the member for Albert.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Minister, I refer to page 5 of the SDS, in particular the implementation of the Cultural Precinct Master Plan, and ask the minister to explain the government's vision for the development of Queensland's Cultural Precinct.

Mr WALKER: I thank the member for the question. I have concentrated a bit today on our achievements in rural and regional Queensland, which I think are very important, but there is no doubt that the cultural precinct is an extraordinarily important part of the state's cultural infrastructure. It dates back to 1985 to the Bjelke-Petersen government starting work on that site, and it has been supported by a series of governments, and this government is no exception in wanting to make sure that it is the best that it possibly can be. We are very fortunate that people did have the foresight to have all of our significant major arts organisations co-located on the 99.4 hectare riverfront location. Not only is co-location like that rare around the globe; the precinct's central location within the city makes it a key connector site between South Brisbane, the South Bank Parklands, the CBD and, importantly, the proposed new Queen's Wharf development, which will be the government precinct on George Street.

The government recognises the role of the precinct within the city and its role in the arts and cultural landscape of Queensland. The potential to transform the precinct into a major cultural tourism drawcard that complements and enhances our city's offering is very significant. At the same time we need to ensure the original architect of the precinct is conserved for future generations. It has an important status, but at the same time we do not want the buildings to enter a state of atrophy that will ultimately disengage audiences, visitors and tourists. There is a nice balance between preserving the past and making sure we have a very useable site for the future.

Our vision encompasses tourism, entertainment, education, innovation and culture, and it transcends the traditional arts boundaries to strengthen the precinct for contemporary uses. We would like to see an environment which fosters arts and cultural issues that suits the needs of generations to come. In practical terms, the important things that the plan needs to address is connectivity across Melbourne Street, which is obviously affected by the busway going through there; incorporating a new 1,500 seat theatre which we think is going to be necessary within the 20-year time span of the plan; and establishing a framework for the expansion of the Queensland Museum. The studies we have seen show that the museum is probably half the size that it should be for a city of our numbers so it needs some attention.

It means planning for a visual arts learning centre, a new science centre and aspiring to greater digital engagement with our customers. It also means considering whether some high-rise tower developments are appropriate in the precinct. The ones proposed would look at providing a five-star hotel on the precinct, which would certainly be a great boost to the precinct and to the convention centre, and a tower which could take, for example, some office workers out of the exhibition spaces of the galleries and give better use for the dollar that we have already invested in those spaces so that offices could be turned into more gallery and viewing areas.

We really need also to look at introducing new restaurants, cafes and boutique retail opportunities to enliven the ground level and in between buildings as part of the precinct. There is certainly a view that, while our organisations do a great job within their own buildings, between the buildings it can be a bit dead at times and there is a change to re-enliven that. All of those are just concepts being explored at the moment. We have been out to public consultation. That public consultation closed at the end of June. We do need to plan properly. We expect that we can increase visits to the site from an estimated \$4.7 million at the moment to \$7.5 million per annum within the 20-year time frame of the plan. It is not just about hard buildings; it is also about theatre productions, exhibitions, festivals and the way they could all work together on the site including open areas for outdoor concerts and so on.

We hope that the use of the precinct can be expanded in this way, we can maximise the riverside location and we can maximise green spaces with more activations and special events right across the site. I might ask Mr Tierney, who is our director of infrastructure, strategy and planning and has been looking after the feedback, if he would like to speak briefly about where we are in the process. He might want to talk about issues that have already arisen as part of the public consultation.

Mr Tierney: To date with respect to the results of the consultation we have had 466 survey responses and we have another 76 written submissions that have been received in relation to the draft Cultural Precinct Master Plan. In total, that is well over 900 with respect to the number of people that we have consulted and engaged with through the life of this planning process. There are a number of challenges moving forward. There has been a lot of mixed responses, both positive and negative. It will take us another couple of months in order to analyse all of those consultation results and work out how we move from a draft plan to a final plan.

CHAIR: I call the member for Redlands.

Mr DOWLING: Redlands has a very vibrant community. I know that you have outlined some of the advantages and merits of the Super Star Fund, but with that in mind could I refer you to page 4 of the Service Delivery Statement where it mentions the arts and cultural investment framework? Minister, can you outline how the Super Star Fund is offering world-class cultural experiences for Queenslanders?

Mr WALKER: Thank you, member for Redlands. I am very happy to do that. Perhaps I can start by explaining what it is that the Super Star Fund is meant to do in broad terms. What we are looking for is getting artists of international quality to be seen by Queenslanders, to have their performances seen firsthand, but also and equally importantly to have our own performers perform with those performers. It is important to me that not only do Queenslanders see the best but also that our performers get the chance to perform with the best. The approvals that we have given for the Super Star Fund certainly qualify for those outcomes. The other thing I should say is that in order to qualify for funding from the Super Star Fund the particular production has to be exclusive to Queensland. That is an important part of the event as well.

I have already mentioned the successes we have had, but I will go back through them. There is *Romeo & Juliet* with the Queensland Ballet. It was Sir Kenneth MacMillan's production. Lady MacMillan fairly zealously guards that production. It has never been to Australia before. I think it has only been outside England once or twice to other parts of the world. We may have been helped a little by the fact that Lady MacMillan was born in Boonah so she does have a soft spot for Queensland. Li Cunxin's charming ways and Lady MacMillan's soft spot for Queensland got the production here. As I said, it was Queensland Ballet's best result for 56 years and many Queenslanders saw and enjoyed that wonderful performance. As well as that, our ballet dancers got to dance with Carlos Acosta and Tamara Rojo, the best Romeo and the best Juliet in the world. So it was a great outcome for Queensland.

I was pleased to meet Michael Attenborough, the director of *Macbeth*, who came out to direct *Macbeth*. All reports from all involved with him, be they in music or lighting or the actors themselves, were that he was a delightful person to work with and he lifted that company to yet another high level. It is already at a very high level, but this was another level again. He got them their best-selling show in 21 years. Lots of Queenslanders wanted to see it and had the opportunity to see it. I do not know if any of the committee members saw it, but it finished with one of the best throat-cutting examples in modern theatre, I think. You would not want to sit—

Ms TRAD: That is a very dangerous analogy for politics.

Mr WALKER: That is true. I think the blood spilt was even more than Sir Les Patterson could project into the first couple of rows. It was a tremendous performance. I think I mentioned before that we have Akram Khan coming with some contemporary dance and Brian Cox OBE who will do the *Journey through the Cosmos*. I think they will be big-hitting shows as well.

I want to mention another one which slips under the radar a bit, and that is Bernard Fanning, who is a star of international acclaim even though he is an Australian in the contemporary music sphere. It was one of the most heart-warming ones for me. I went with him to meet some of the young Indigenous performers whom he worked with in Clancestry. It was interesting because when we met he said, 'My job is to sort of panel beat these performances into shape,' and after we heard the kids play he said to me, quite rightly, I do not think they need much panel beating. They were in pretty

good shape, I must say, as it was. In excess of 17,000, an increasing crowd, attended Clancestry. One of the artists involved is now performing at a major festival in Byron Bay.

What it gave those kids was a week with Bernard in getting their acts together. One of the local FM radio stations joined in to give production assistance and advice on how to get their demo tapes together. They then ended up with a demo of themselves singing with Bernard Fanning and a video of the final performance on stage with Bernard. He was a very generous performer. He not only assisted the kids in putting their own material forward but also made a video with each of them singing with Bernard one of his hits. It is a pretty good demo tape to take out to the world. It lifted the profile of Clancestry. It allowed Queenslanders to see Bernard Fanning again, and it gave 12 young Indigenous acts the opportunity to work with a superstar. They are the sorts of things that the fund can do. There was a bit of cynicism about it at the beginning. I think and I hope that cynicism has disappeared because I think it has proved itself well and truly.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. That is great. I call the member for Condamine.

Mr HOPPER: Page 28 talks about the Revolving Film Finance Fund including new loans. What is that all about? Can you explain that to me?

Mr WALKER: I might call upon the expert, member for Condamine, if I can. Ms Vieira is the CEO of Screen Queensland. Tracey, if you are able to assist with that, please. While Ms Vieira is coming to the table, I do want to point out that the member for South Brisbane rightly raised at estimates last year some slow times that there were in the screen industry, but things have changed.

Ms TRAD: It was not just slow times, Minister.

Mr WALKER: Well, things have changed pretty significantly as a result. Maybe Ms Vieira can deal with that at the end of her comments as well as to the pipeline that we have had in the last year through our studios. If you could answer the member for Condamine's question, Tracey, on the Revolving Film Finance Fund?

Ms Vieira: The Revolving Film Finance Fund provides secured loans to cash flow screen production and for infrastructure projects that will benefit the Queensland screen industry. Screen Queensland administers the \$20 million revolving loan fund and all funds are drawn from the Queensland Treasury Corporation by DSITIA. The loan facility provided by the Queensland government allows productions to meet their cash flow needs until they are able to gain access to the federal government's tax rebate, which is the producer offset, at which time they have completed their production and they pay back that loan.

Mr WALKER: Ms Vieira, while you are at the microphone are you able to speak about the production line that you have had particularly since you have become CEO of Screen Queensland?

Ms Vieira: Thanks, Minister.

Ms TRAD: The minister is asking departmental staff questions at estimates. I am not sure whether that—

Mr WALKER: I thought it followed on from the member for Condamine's question.

CHAIR: No. I am happy with that, Minister.

Ms Vieira: I joined Screen Queensland in February this year. Our job is to revitalise the screen industry. Over 21 productions occurred in Queensland over the last financial year which is double the numbers from the previous years. We have an estimated \$94 million in Queensland production expenditure which was an increase of \$61 million over the previous year. The total economic activity for these productions is projected to have an estimated worth of \$165 million to the Queensland economy—a \$107 million increase on the previous year. We supported 21 productions last financial year—18 of those were domestic productions and three of those were international productions.

CHAIR: I call the member for South Brisbane.

Mr WALKER: Madam Chair, I do have a couple of catch-ups on the questions on notice that the member for South Brisbane had earlier raised. I am just wanting to check if this is the figure she was after. I do have a percentage of attendance to ticketed exhibitions as against the total for the Queensland Art Gallery and the Gallery of Modern Art.

Ms TRAD: Yes, that is it.

Mr WALKER: In 2013-14 the estimated actual is 25 per cent, which exceeded the target of 15 per cent. I also have an answer in respect of the Arts Investment Advisory Board's advice to me and the use of my discretion there. In relation to the organisations' fund—Ms Herring might just

indicate if my recollection on this is not correct—I think the Arts Investment Advisory Board gave me a draft recommendation, and I did ask them to reconsider some of the rural and regional commitments there in particular. I thought that some of the North Queensland and Far North Queensland organisations had been underdone and I asked them to review that. But then they gave me their final recommendation which was accepted. Then there was an Arts Investment Advisory Board recommendation with respect to an application under the Super Star Fund. I asked that they review their decision not to fund a certain proposal. They reconsidered and stuck by their original decision and I accepted their decision.

Ms TRAD: What was that in relation to?

Mr WALKER: I do not particularly want to say what particular application it was. But in the end it was not an overturning by me of their recommendation. They made a recommendation not to fund and I said, 'Can you have a look at this again?' And they said, 'Yes, we will have a look at it again,' and they said, 'No, don't fund,' and I accepted that. I think that is the pattern.

Ms Herring: Yes, that is correct, Minister.

Ms TRAD: Ms Herring, in relation to the 25 per cent on that performance measure that was introduced last financial year but not continued this financial year—so ticketed—

Ms Herring: For the Queensland Art Gallery?

Ms TRAD: Yes. What are the raw figures please?

Ms Herring: I would have to refer that to Chris Saines as the Director of the Queensland Art Gallery.

Mr Saines: Apologies while I find the exact reference.

Ms TRAD: While you are doing that, maybe the minister can advise what his favourite Bernard Fanning hit was that was performed.

Mr WALKER: I always hesitate to give a favourite because—

Ms TRAD: Oh, Minister, come on, don't be so bashful.

Mr WALKER:—sales would then rocket of that particular song! I enjoyed Bernard's performance very much. As I say, his generosity to the performers with whom he was performing was pretty exceptional, so he deserves our full commendation.

Mr Saines: Pardon me for not finding the total number, but I have found the individual numbers. There were three ticketed exhibitions. The first of them was the *Quilts* exhibition, which came to us from the Victoria and Albert Museum. In total there were—I apologise. It actually came in different formats. But if I can take them in reverse order: the *Cai Guo-Qiang* exhibition attracted 229,000 visits in total. There were a further—

Ms TRAD: Mr Saines, I am very happy for you to take it on notice and provide it when—

Mr Saines: My apologies that it was not immediately apparent because they have been broken up into the three exhibitions.

Ms TRAD: I understand.

Mr Saines: I can obtain that number and I will advise.

Mr WALKER: Can I ask that that be taken on notice, please, Madam Chairs?

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Ms TRAD: Mr Saines, while you are still there, can you advise the three ticketed exhibitions for both QAG and GoMA in the last financial year? How does that compare to the previous two financial years in terms of number of ticketed events or exhibitions?

Mr Saines: Once again, I would probably have to take that on notice, because I would need to check back on those figures because we will not have the figures for the year prior, for the 2012-13 year.

Ms TRAD: You will not have figures for ticketed events, the total number of ticketed events?

Mr Saines: Not in the information I have to hand. But I can obtain that information.

Ms TRAD: But it is collected.

Mr Saines: Yes, it is. Indeed, it is.

Mr WALKER: Can I just ask the member: were you seeking the number of tickets sold or the number of events held?

Ms TRAD: Number of ticketed events.

Mr WALKER: Is that easier, Chris, just the number of ticketed events or is that still something you would need to check?

Mr Saines: For the numbers for two years ago I would need to obtain those numbers, Minister.

Mr WALKER: It might be better that we take that on notice.

Ms TRAD: Why you are still there, Mr Saines, and through you, Minister, if I could direct your attention to page 72 of the SDS. If you can see under 'Income' and 'User charges and fees', the adjusted budget for last financial year was \$10,200,000. The estimated actual was almost \$1 million more than that. Now it drops quite substantially to \$7,600,000. I notice in the footnotes that the reason for this is a 'decrease due to a forecast reduction in admission revenue'. Can you please explain this decrease?

Mr Saines: That is correct. During the 2013-14 year, in total there were three ticketed exhibitions—*Quilts*, *Cai Guo-Qiang* and *California Design*. As a result of those exhibitions, there was also quite a deal of growth in additional admissions revenue, food and beverage services revenue and also in retail revenue. In the new year, 2014-15 there will be only two ticketed exhibitions—one of them from Japan, from the Kyoto Costume Institute, called *Future Beauty* and another which we are organising directly with the artist from Los Angeles *David Lynch*, a major exhibition and film retrospective of his work that will occur both in the gallery space and in the cinémathèque space. Those two exhibitions combined are not projected to attract the same numbers of the three combined exhibitions held in the year prior. So effectively it is a reduction in overall numbers of projected attendance to the exhibitions in 2014-15 and the relationship with a reduction in overall additional revenues achieved from food and beverage retail and so on.

Ms TRAD: Mr Saines, and through you, Minister—and I am happy if you want to answer this question—why has there been a reduction in the number of exhibitions?

Mr Saines: There has been a reduction in the number of exhibitions for several reasons. The first is that this new year marks the conclusion of the supplementary grant that the gallery formerly received for major exhibition, international production and presentation. We received that grant from government over a five-year period.

Ms TRAD: When was that decision made?

Mr Saines: That ceased in the 2013-14 year.

Ms TRAD: And that was first granted five years previously.

Mr Saines: That is correct—five years previous to that time. So in this new year we are going to be looking very much toward Tourism and Events Queensland to provide—and obviously that is on a bid basis, so we have to be successful in those bids. But we are going to be looking to TEQ to specifically seek additional funds to enable us to present exhibitions of the calibre of, for example, *David Lynch*.

Ms TRAD: So there is no prospect of funding through Arts Queensland for major international exhibitions?

Mr Saines: As I said, that particular fund, which had been made available to the gallery for five years, ceased within the year that has just concluded, and we do not have that fund as part of our base funding or in addition to our base funding in the next year.

Ms TRAD: That is a shame, Mr Saines. Minister, I did go back and have a look at figures of attendance at the Queensland Art Gallery and the Gallery of Modern Art since 2010. There was a peak in the 2010-11 financial year. There were some major international exhibitions—*Valentino*, which I have referred to before, et cetera. That peaked at 1.68 million visitors. From that peak there has been a steady decline in the number of visitors to both of these institutions which does, I think, indicate a level of concern. It is now sitting at 1.25 million visitors, Minister. I am fearful that with a reluctance by your government to make a commitment to obtain international exhibitions of the calibre that we have seen over the past five years that will keep reducing.

Mr WALKER: Can I take issue with you there. I do not have the same despondency. I think the success of recent exhibitions—*Cai Guo-Qiang* amongst them—shows that QAGOMA is still shooting the lights out in relation to those matters. Can I also ask Ms Herring if she can report on some funding

that is available that does not appear in our budget papers because it is available to us but via Tourism and Events Queensland. I will just ask her to explain that funding.

Ms Herring: Thank you, Minister. As a result of this year's budget round, Tourism and Events Queensland was provided with some top-up funding of which \$4 million has been put aside, as noted in their SDS, for the attraction of blockbuster events to the cultural precinct. In saying the 'cultural precinct', that clearly covers the four ASBs that exist on the precinct—so QPAC, QAGOMA, the State Library and the Queensland Museum. So all of those entities are available to submit funding applications to access that \$4 million going forward for this financial year.

Ms TRAD: Ms Herring, at page 75 of the SDS, footnote 9 says—

Decrease due to the 2014-15 grants for blockbuster events being applied for from the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games going forward, for which the quantum to be secured is yet to be identified.

Is that what the footnote is referring to?

Ms Herring: Which number footnote is that on page 75?

Ms TRAD: No. 9.

Ms Herring: Yes.

Ms TRAD: So in the footnote it says the quantum has yet to be identified, but you are telling me the quantum is \$4 million.

Ms Herring: That is the fund available as noted in their SDS accounts.

Mr WALKER: If I can clarify, as I understand it, there is a \$4 million fund set aside for it, but whether it goes to GoMA or QPAC or to other events on the precinct is what is not identified. So that is the reference to the quantum not being clear.

Ms TRAD: Thank you. Moving right along, Minister, in relation to staffing at page 71 of the SDS, there is a decrease of 10 FTE. Can you explain where these positions have been axed from?

Mr WALKER: I might ask the director-general. Sorry, Mr Saines seems to be the best person to answer that.

Ms TRAD: Okay.

Mr Saines: In response to the member for South Brisbane's question, yes, there are 10 positions that have been identified and move from 270 down to 260. But I need to put that in the context of broader FTE numbers that run through the gallery year on year. As we have more major exhibitions, more intense visitation, more requirement for front-of-house staff across our gallery service office and food and beverage service outlets and so on, those numbers do go up and they go down, but there have been no redundancies in relation to the forecast reduction of 10 FTEs at QAGOMA.

Ms TRAD: How have you made up the 10 if there have been no forced redundancies? Is it natural attrition?

Mr Saines: It is natural attrition and it is also a consequence of contracts not being renewed or maternity leave taken that has not been replaced.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Mr Saines. Mr Saines, while you are still there, and through you, Minister, in terms of major international exhibitions that do come to Queensland, and I know it varies, but on average how long would it take to actually get a major exhibition to Queensland?

Mr Saines: It can take between two to five years on average for those exhibitions to be developed.

Ms TRAD: You have said that there are only two for this coming financial year that have been planned.

Mr Saines: That is correct.

Ms TRAD: For the following financial year, is anything in the pipeline?

Mr Saines: The major exhibition in the following financial year is the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art. That is the most visited exhibition that the gallery presents. It is the cornerstone exhibition of that year. There is also an exhibition in early 2016 by the American photographic artist Cindy Sherman. That really makes up the two exhibitions in that further out year.

Ms TRAD: So it is two and two.

Mr Saines: That is right. The average across the state and national galleries is between two or three of these major shows annually.

Mr WALKER: If I can add, member for South Brisbane, in recent years the concentration obviously has been on visiting exhibitions or attracting exhibitions to QAGOMA. Mr Saines also has a philosophy that we should be exporting exhibitions. I think that is an important thing to recognise. Mr Saines might be able to enlighten you on some of the plans he has in that regard.

Ms TRAD: We have spoken about it, yes.

Mr Saines: We have. Briefly, in October I announced a forward vision for the gallery that would be more committed, firstly, to producing and curating our own exhibitions, just as the ballet and theatre companies produce and curate their own projects, rather than effectively buying those in for the gallery. That has proved very successful, particularly with Cai Guo-Qiang, which is really the first of those. *Harvest* and *My Country*, the Indigenous exhibition, are other examples of collection based exhibitions. For the first time ever, we have received a fee for providing an exhibition to an international museum, the Auckland Art Gallery, with the *My Country* exhibition, which has currently achieved just under 40,000 visits with about a month to go in that venue.

Mr WALKER: You must have had some good contacts at the Auckland Art Gallery.

Mr Saines: I did, indeed.

Ms TRAD: Minister, while we are talking about exporting talent, it is a very exciting prospect that Australia can export its own talent, because I know that we have quite a lot of it. In my budget replay speech I noted that Arts Queensland had decided not to continue funding the ACCELERATE program, which is a program that seeks to promote Indigenous Australian artists overseas. Can you please explain to me why Queensland, which has the second biggest Indigenous population in Australia, does not actually get to have its emerging Indigenous artists supported to go overseas and showcase their talent?

Mr WALKER: I will ask Ms Herring to comment on this at the end of my initial comments. In doing so, I want to point out the ways in which we are, of course, supporting Indigenous art, which we do in a significant way. CIAF, which has been set up and will occur next week in Cairns, will be one of the significant investments in Indigenous art in the state and, in fact, in the nation. In the IRADF program, which is the Indigenous RADF program, there is significant on-the-ground assistance to Indigenous communities through those organisations and through that grant program as well. I will ask Ms Herring to speak specifically about ACCELERATE.

Ms Herring: Thank you, Minister. With the refresh of the grant programs into the Arts and Cultural Investment Framework, grant funding for emerging artists, including Indigenous artists, sits in the Individuals Fund. They are actually eligible to apply for grant funding of up to \$10,000 to pursue career development opportunities, both within Australia and overseas. When it comes to funding for Indigenous arts, Arts Queensland has continued its funding of the Backing Indigenous Arts program, which gives a total of \$4.2 million over the course of the year. That goes across a range of areas: Indigenous arts centres receive \$1.3 million annually; there is the Building Skills and Opportunities Training Program of \$400,000 annually; the Indigenous Performance Program of \$300,000 annually; \$100,000 is given to Indigenous festivals, in particular; there is another \$100,000 for Indigenous partnerships; and \$1.4 million to the Cairns Indigenous Arts Fair over a two-year period. In addition to that, the government has continued the funding for the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts based at Kangaroo Point, which receives \$350,000 annually. The Minister, I believe, referred to IRADF, the Indigenous Regional Arts Development Fund, which is a matching fund with councils.

Ms TRAD: Thank you. I have a follow-up question, but I will reserve it.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for South Brisbane. I call on the member for Lytton.

Mr SYMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, page 4 of the SDS refers to the Arts for All Queenslanders strategy to achieve the growth of the arts sector and a strong community of the arts. Can you please outline how the government is supporting regional Queenslanders to participate in the state's arts and cultural life?

Mr WALKER: I thank the member for Lytton for the question. The member for Condamine raised some of these issues this morning when we were speaking about a similar issue. In 2013-14, over \$11.7 million was invested in arts and culture in regional Queensland. Twelve organisations in regional Queensland will receive \$5.42 million over three years from the organisation's fund and that is 25 per cent of the total allocated in 2013-14. Twenty-three arts and cultural organisations or artists in regional Queensland received \$870,000 or 38 per cent of the available funding in the first projects

and programs round in August 2013. A sum of \$40,000 or 38.9 per cent of funding in the July round of the Individuals Fund went to seven artists based in regional Queensland. As I have mentioned before, in addition to this direct investment in regional artists, the \$3 million four-year boost to touring commitment is ensuring that more Queenslanders can access high-quality arts experiences in their own communities. The Playing Queensland Fund is an election commitment to provide access to high-quality arts programs for all Queenslanders. The program provides \$10.6 million over four years to performing arts touring throughout Queensland. In the 2013-14 calendar year, an investment of \$2.3 million resulted in 42 high-quality touring arts productions reaching 113 different Queensland communities, offering 617 arts experiences.

The government, of course, also partners with local governments in acknowledgement of the significant support that local government provides for local arts and cultural infrastructure. The Regional Arts Development Fund is a longstanding partnership between state and local government to deliver arts grants for regional artists and communities. A sum of \$2.037 million was allocated to 55 councils for RADF in 2013-14. Arts Queensland is currently working with councils to identify opportunities to leverage greater returns on investments made and also to align them to the needs and priorities of local communities. Where opportunities arise, Arts Queensland also supports initiatives in regional areas in partnership with the Australian government. These include the Artist in Residence Fund for schools, which was \$0.25 million in 2013-14, including a \$50,000 contribution from Queensland, and the Creative Capricorn pilot project in Rockhampton. Regional outreach programs of our Arts statutory bodies and major Arts performing organisations Screen Queensland and QMF provide important investment for our regional arts. The Queensland Art Gallery toured the kids APT7 on-tour program to a record 76 regional and remote Queensland venues.

The State Library invested \$19 million in public library collections and services in 2013-14. The State Library also continues its support for the 21 Indigenous knowledge centres in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In 2013-14, Screen Queensland provided \$142,000 in funding for more than 20 regional film festivals. The QMF is a brilliant example of regional community engagement in the arts with the 2013 festival staging the largest number of events in its history. The event reached more communities than ever before. Hundreds of performances and workshops were held in 44 regional centres and regional attendances reached 70,000. The 2013 QMF program was delivered to a number of new regions and I mentioned those before. This biennial event will take place again in 2015 and promises to be bigger and better than ever. There will be a revelation of that program later in the year.

Mr HOPPER: It is good to see you are looking after the bush.

Mr WALKER: Indeed, member for Condamine. It is an important part of what we do. In fact, I happen to have in front of me things we have done in Condamine in particular. The Regional Arts Development Fund allocations—

Ms TRAD: Here we go, and then I want South Brisbane.

Mr WALKER:—were made to two local government areas, which include part of your electorate, so \$73,000 to the Western Downs Regional Council and \$51,000 to the Toowoomba Regional Council. Artist in Residence funding of \$19,000 was granted to the Blue Roo Theatre Company, which works with the Clifford Park Special School. In Playing Queensland Fund allocations, those ones that I was talking about that have increased those rural and regional performances so much, \$723,500 supported eight tours to the Toowoomba local government area, which includes part of your electorate. Project Puccini with *La Boheme* is coming up, *Cinderella* with the Queensland Ballet, *French Kiss* with Jane Rutter, *Share House* by Topology, and *Possum Magic* from Garry Ginivan Attractions. Empire Theatre, Toowoomba presented three tours delivered by arTour touring services, including the Lux Radio Theatre's *Gone With the Wind*, *Nadia and the Blue Flamingo* and *Piano Lessons* through the Queensland Music Festival. Full Queensland tour funding for those tours was over \$335,000. There is also significant investment by the State Library of Queensland and a number of our other major organisations.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Minister, you have already explained quite a large amount about the support for Indigenous arts. However, with reference to page 5 of the SDS under the Arts and Cultural Investment Framework, can you outline how the government is supporting Indigenous arts in Queensland, particularly through the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair on 24 to 27 July and through the Arts statutory bodies as well?

Mr WALKER: I am happy to do that. Certainly I have come to be even more impressed than I was before I took on this job as to how important our Indigenous arts scene is. I think it is particularly

important that Queensland is the legitimate host of both of our Indigenous cultures, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Of course, the Aboriginal culture is the longest living, surviving culture in the world, so it is a pretty important thing for us to cherish and the government certainly does that. In 2013-14, \$4.2 million was budgeted for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and that includes the Backing Indigenous Art program and the Indigenous Regional Arts Development Fund, as well as the Aboriginal Centre for Performing Arts.

This investment included funds to assist CIAF transition out of government into a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, CIAF Ltd, which has been successfully completed. The government is directly supporting CIAF through a \$1.568 million investment across the 2014 and 2015 fairs. In 2024, the fifth annual CIAF will be a celebration of Queensland's rich and diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and culture and it will include workshops, performances and symposiums, in addition to the fair. The event will be held at the Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal from 24 July next week to 27 July. The Queensland government also invests in the success of this premier event via support to Queensland Indigenous arts centres and artists. In 2013-14, \$120,000 was allocated to support development and participation activity within the Indigenous arts centre network for CIAF 2014. The funding supports skills development and the creation of new and innovative work and allows artists to travel and participate in the event, where they can meet and work alongside peers, collectors and curators of both local and international profile.

My trip to CIAF last year was a particularly memorable one and I am really looking forward to going again this year. Last year, Ken Thaiday Snr's Torres Strait island dancers were really a high point for me. He has the traditional headdress, but he has improved and built in bits with moveable parts that move during the dance. It is quite an extraordinary exhibition. The other thing that struck me at CIAF last year was the work that is being done in Indigenous fashion and design through a number of the textile outcomes that a number of the communities are achieving and had on show. I really do think that there is a great future within the fashion world for some of our Indigenous art work and design and some of our younger Indigenous artists are zeroing in on that.

The Arts Queensland statutory bodies also support Indigenous arts through a broad range of programming and activity. Some of the highlights include, in 2013-14, QAGOMA presenting its largest ever exhibition of contemporary Indigenous Australian art entitled *My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*. As Mr Saines pointed out, that exhibition has subsequently toured internationally, profiling over 100 works of our Indigenous Australian artists. In 2014-15, QAGOMA will be undertaking a major reconfiguration of its permanent collection display galleries, which will include dedication of prominent gallery spaces to the Indigenous Australian art collection and iconic works from the gallery's collection of Indigenous Australian art from right across the country, from the 1940s to the present. It will provide viewers with a strong overview of our Indigenous art and engage in a continuous dialogue with works by important Australian artists elsewhere in the gallery.

In 2013-14 the Queensland Museum invested more than \$495,000, which includes salaries, in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, programs and projects. The Queensland Museum has engaged a full-time repatriation manager to facilitate the repatriation of ancestral remains and secret or sacred objects. In 2014-15 a similar level of investment is expected to continue, with repatriation of ancestral remains and secret or sacred objects.

In 2013-14 QPAC supported a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs including the Mabo Oration; *Spirit of the Lore*, which was copresented by QPAC and the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts; *Blak*, copresented by QPAC and the Bangarra Dance Theatre; and *Clancestry: A celebration of country*, presented by QPAC. In the coming year QPAC will present *Clancestry* for 2015 and copresent performances from Bangarra Dance Theatre and the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts.

From the State Library's point of view, one of its key strategies is to demonstrate a long-term commitment to engaging with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In 2013-14 funding of \$2.04 million, which is \$2.55 million if you include Commonwealth grants, was used to support access by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to library and literacy services including public libraries and Indigenous knowledge centres, including kuril dhagun in Brisbane, in partnership with local governments and communities.

So the Queensland government is certainly proud to support and partner with the Indigenous arts sector, focusing on increased employment, professional development opportunities, market

development and building a viable, ethical Indigenous arts industry that promotes our talented artists and their cultures.

Mr LATTER: Minister, I refer to page 4 of the SDS where it refers to the Arts for All Queenslanders strategy. Can you please outline how the government is supporting children and young people's participation?

Mr WALKER: Thanks very much, member for Waterford. It is an important part of our support for Queensland's participation in the arts to ensure that children and young people's participation is highlighted and that young artists are able to build their careers. In 2013-14, 17 of the 35 organisations—about 50 per cent—who received funding through the organisation funds delivered programs and support services with a focus on children and young people. The last round of the projects and programs fund invested \$1.2 million in 34 projects and the individual funds supported nine applications, worth \$35,614, that had a focus on children and young people.

Our major performing arts companies engage children and young people in a variety of ways. Opera Queensland and the Queensland Ballet invest in schools touring, education programs and career and skills development for young artists. The Queensland Symphony Orchestra invests in a state-wide program ranging from Kiddies Cushion concerts to open rehearsals for students, teachers and adults involved in music tuition. The Queensland Theatre Co. invests in artists-in-residence programs, school workshops and the company's youth ensemble. And within the performing arts the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts provides industry training and support to develop the next generation of young Indigenous performers from the age of 17.

At South Bank, at the cultural precinct, major institutions make significant investments in activities that are exclusively for children and young people. So the recent Out of the Box festival of early childhood was presented at QPAC. As part of the *Cai Guo-Qiang: Falling Back to Earth* exhibition there was a touring program for kids which attracted 11,000 people at 61 venues across Queensland.

The State Library delivers extensive literacy and young people's services across the state, along with The Edge program supporting young people to engage in creative experimentation across the areas of science, technology and the arts. And the Museum in 2013-14 distributed loan kits throughout Queensland to three-quarters of a million schoolchildren. Additionally, the Queensland government partnered through the Australian Council for the Arts to deliver a \$250,000 artists-in-residence program in Queensland schools. It is an important part of the value that we give to the arts. I might ask Mr Kotzas particularly if he is able to talk about the Out of the Box festival, because I think it had some particular successes this year.

Mr Kotzas: Thank you, Minister. We have just completed 20 years of the Out of the Box festival and we are happy to say that our total attendances were in excess of 100,000 people. It allows for us to showcase the centre when it is at its best. We are focused for a week and a half on children aged eight and under.

This year in particular we had a number of commissions, in particular the Circa commission, which played the Lyric Theatre, which we shared with the Queensland Ballet, which is an effective use of the space. It played to record attendances. Minister, I am happy to put on record that that show, *Carnival of the Animals*, is now being booked internationally as part of the regular performance of Circa. Satisfaction with the festival rates, with the rest of the Queensland Performing Arts Centre, in excess of 90 per cent.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I refer the minister to page 4 of the SDS and the Arts and Cultural Investment Framework. Minister, can you outline how the government is supporting the writing sector in Queensland?

Mr WALKER: Thank you for that question. We as a government certainly value the significant contribution that the writing sector and writers make to Queensland. Writers are of course the people capturing our unique Queensland stories, preserving them and sharing them across Australia and indeed right around the world. In acknowledgement of this, the government in 2013-14 invested just over \$1.1 million in the writing sector through competitive funding programs and awards. This funding supported diverse activities, from individual writers' professional development—such as the digital poet Jason Nelson exhibiting his groundbreaking work in Paris—to support for the always outstanding Brisbane Writers Festival and important service organisations such as the Queensland Writers Centre and the University of Queensland Press.

In addition to the above expenditure, every two years the government invests in the Queensland Premier's Drama Award, which is valued at \$267,750. This award supports the professional development of shortlisted plays, with the winning play professionally produced by Queensland Theatre Co. The last one which was being produced was Maxine Mellor's *Trollop*, which I was privileged to see as part of QTC's 2013 season. It was a pretty exceptional performance. It will certainly stay in my mind for a while. It was, I think, a very worthy winner of the award. In 2014-15 the finalists have been announced. They are Tim Benzie, Daniel Evans and Megan Shorey. They were announced in February this year. We await the outcome of those awards.

In 2014-15 the government will continue to invest in the following: \$15,000 to two annual poetry awards, the Thomas Shapcott Prize, which is open to Queenslanders and awarded for an unpublished manuscript, and the Val Vallis Award, which is open to Australians for an unpublished poem; \$20,000 in the Arts Queensland Poet in Residence program to engage an internationally renowned poet to support the development of Queensland's poetry culture; and \$60,000 to support Queensland writers to create new work through a revitalised Queensland Writers Fellowships program.

Alongside this direct support for the industry, the government provided \$56 million in 2013-14 for the flagship State Library of Queensland which includes \$22.33 million for public libraries across the state. The State Library delivers a range of important programs such as the black&write! Indigenous Writing and Editing Project, which is an Australian publishing first, and the annual State Library of Queensland Young Writers Award. In 2013 it was cited as a UNESCO exemplar in cultural diversity. In 2014 the library announced another two writing fellowships and published books from previous years' winners, including the very popular *Deadly D and Justice Jones* title by Dave Hartley, a principal at one of our schools, and Scott Prince, the well-known rugby league footballer. In fact Dave and Scott have given me a sneak peak at their next iteration, which is a follow-up on *Deadly D and Justice Jones*. It has been a very successful venture for them and for the library. Of course, the State Library's world-class facility The Edge has recently been recognised internationally with an American presidential citation from the American Library Association. Only four institutions annually receive that recognition.

There are countless examples of how the Queensland writing sector is thriving. The government is certainly proud to play its part in that.

Ms TRAD: Minister, I do want to go through a number of questions in relation to the Cultural Precinct Master Plan, as you probably anticipated. I am not sure if you would like to call up the relevant departmental officer.

Mr WALKER: We will see how we go.

Ms TRAD: It is specifically in relation to the public feedback that has been obtained to date. Your departmental officer advised the committee earlier that it will take a couple of months to actually analyse the responses to the survey. Can you advise why it will take this long to have a look at the public submissions and the responses to the online survey? There were only six questions involved in the online survey, to my recollection.

Mr WALKER: Yes, there were, but there were quite a large number of responses. There were 55 onsite surveys completed. In November 2013 an online survey resulted in 331 people responding to the survey at that point. Public consultation—

Ms TRAD: This was in November 2013?

Mr WALKER: Correct, and that guided what eventually went out. The consultation on the master plan opened on 5 May. We said that we would close initial consultation I think at the end of May.

Ms TRAD: It was 5 May that it opened.

Mr WALKER: That is correct. And I think we were originally going to allow until the end of May for response—

Ms TRAD: To the 25th.

Mr WALKER: That is correct—unless there was a significant amount of public interest. There was a significant amount of public interest and we happily extended the date to 27 June. From the community, business and commercial sectors there were 466 survey responses and 75 separate submissions, so there is quite a bit of material to go through. We are not in a position of rushing it. It is a 20-year plan. It is not something that has to be done tomorrow. We are starting the process—

Ms TRAD: Which did beg the question why the consultation period was so small in the first place and why the department did not conduct any targeted sessions with local residents and other stakeholders—there are a number of residents who do live at South Bank as well—and why the department did not conduct any facilitated consultation sessions with them.

Mr WALKER: The department did conduct the onsite surveys and the online survey to get the guiding themes. The purpose of the consultation period was consultation. You might have said we had consultation before we had the consultation, but the bottom line is that it has been out there for consultation and everybody who wants to have a say has had a say. We do not want—

Ms TRAD: Minister, the onsite surveys leading into this, outside the particular facilities, were done in November, I understand, during business hours and not when people traditionally, I think, would be visiting the precinct—at night for performances or during the weekend to actually visit exhibitions. I really do question the veracity of the onsite collection of data during such a low period of visitation.

Mr WALKER: Nevertheless, the bottom line is that it has been out for consultation for anyone who wants to have a say. Nobody has been denied a say in the plan that has been put out for consultation. I am quite comfortable that we have good public input to the ideas that have been put out there. I am also quite comfortable that we take it at a moderate speed to assess those. There are some significant issues, obviously, that are out there for public debate. I think it is great that there are and that there is interest and debate about the way we want the precinct to develop. So we will take our time over those and look at what the responses are that have come from people and then take the next step as to where we believe that consultation takes us from there.

Ms TRAD: Minister, is one of the areas of contention actually in relation to changing the architectural integrity of the Robin Gibson buildings?

Mr WALKER: Yes. Certainly there has been comment from a number of people publicly about that and it has come back in the survey that that is an issue—the degree to which Mr Gibson’s work needs to be altered or otherwise. From that point of view I have met with Mrs Gibson. I have met with Robin’s business partner in Robin Gibson and Partners who was a key part of the original plan. I have assured them, as I assure the committee and the public, that Mr Gibson’s work is valued and that appropriate respect will be given to it in any work that is done on the precinct. It is really difficult to get your head around that until you know what work you do want to do on the precinct.

Ms TRAD: It is an incredibly subjective position.

Mr WALKER: Of course, but you cannot run away from it; you have to make a decision. My job is to give appropriate respect to Mr Gibson’s design, which I am very happy to do, but also to make sure that it is a useable site for the people of Brisbane and Queensland and that the people of Brisbane and Queensland get the most out of it. It is a nice balance and it is not an easy one. We have now got input from the public. We will see what they have to say. We will certainly give Mr Gibson’s estate and his partner who was involved in the original moral rights on the site appropriate consultation and respect when we decide where it is that we want to go, taking into account what Queenslanders have said about the plan more broadly.

Ms TRAD: I refer you to the private sector input to offset the costs of the different areas of development around the precinct. How much does the department envisage is needed in terms of that private investment?

Mr WALKER: I do not know that we have made a particular determination on that. I might just ask Ms Herring, but I do not think there has been anything other than a sort of conceptual look at that at the moment.

Ms Herring: Until the actual final plan is defined, it would be very hard to actually price up the costings and how the plan would then roll out. It is a 20-year vision for the precinct, not something just to be done in one or two years, so the budget has to be reviewed quite clearly. The government has indicated that there may be some funding if the \$100 million cultural infrastructure investment fund eventuates in the future. We would certainly look to secure some of that funding for the cultural precinct to roll out some elements of the plan at that stage.

Ms TRAD: I completely understand that it is a 20-year strategy. I completely understand that, but I have reviewed the concept design—and thank you very much, Minister, for making your department and the architects available to brief me. I have witnessed that there are covered walkways, there are new covers for the bridge, there is the potential for a new ferry terminal and there is a new theatre—there is a whole range of infrastructure components to this. Are you telling me that

within the department there has been no assessment or even an idea of how much this will cost and how much private sector investment is needed? Are you telling me that work has not been done at all?

Mr WALKER: That work will not be done in any detail until it is clear where we want to go with the plans.

Ms TRAD: I am not asking in detail. Has that work not been done at all?

Ms Herring: I will take the question. We have some ideas of the amount of funding that would be required depending on the scale of what is implemented.

Ms TRAD: Can you share that please, Ms Herring?

Ms Herring: Yes, of course. I may need to defer to Mark Tierney as well. For example, within the master plan the Queensland Museum is quite an ambitious plan to really expand its operation. With increased space and a much larger refreshed Sciencentre, that would be anywhere in the realm of \$100 million to \$300 million if it were fully implemented. The Queensland Museum has its own foundation that obviously works to fundraise to contribute to projects like that. We would be looking to work with the Queensland Museum Foundation in partnership. I think it is realistic to think that you would be looking to seek some private sector investment through a foundation—

Ms TRAD: So you have identified potential options in terms of meeting the cost of it.

Ms Herring: Yes.

Ms TRAD: What I am asking for is: how much does the department, at a very rudimentary level, think that this is going to cost?

Ms Herring: Across-the-board for the whole precinct—

Mr LATTER: I rise to a point of order, Madam Chair. I think there has been a tremendous degree of leeway given here, but what the member is asking for is based on a number of hypotheticals. I think that the department has clearly advised that there a number of things that would have to occur in order to give the sort of answer that the member is looking for.

CHAIR: We are verging on a hypothetical at this point.

Ms TRAD: No, what I have asked is about work that the department has done, and it has been indicated that this has been done in relation to a public infrastructure project and an area that is contained in the SDS. This is not hypothetical; it is incredibly relevant. I really do object to the member for Waterford interjecting on me and chewing up my time.

Mr LATTER: Madam Chair, if I may, I would like to explain—

Ms TRAD: No—

CHAIR: Excuse me—

Mr HOPPER: You will get your chance in a moment.

CHAIR: Just a moment. We will leave it at that. Is there anything further that you wish to ask on this particular question?

Ms TRAD: Madam Chair, Ms Herring is responding to my question.

Ms Herring: The modelling is underway on various scenarios of how it could work. As I indicated, those foundations exist for the Museum, certainly for the Library, for the Gallery and so forth where private sector investment into activities can occur. It is reasonable to assume that there may be some private sector interest in delivery of some elements of infrastructure and certainly there will be some elements of infrastructure where there will be no interest. Where you are creating covered walkways it is very hard to attract private sector investment into areas where it is not paid or revenue could be created. But certainly where revenue can be created on site, you would expect that the private sector may be interested in joining a public-private partnership with government.

Mr WALKER: For the member's benefit, I just say let's go back and remember where we are in the process. We are at the very beginning of the process. We are looking at a very conceptual plan. We are in the process of talking to the people of Queensland about the ideas we have and about what they may or may not want to see happen on that precinct. We are a long way from anything that is worth seriously looking at in terms of costing or staging or anything like that. It is at a much earlier stage in the piece than that. The member has already criticised us for not consulting before we consult. There is—

Ms TRAD: I am glad you listened to my criticism, Minister, and extended the consultation period. Thank you.

Mr WALKER: We had said from day one that we would do that if there was a need for extra time. There was a need for extra time, it was not a big deal and the extra time was given. There has been good feedback from the public. It would be silly to be costing matters in any significant way at the moment until we know what is in or what is out. That I think is the important thing to take away. The other point I want to make is that, of course, this cannot work unless there is a fund from which at least some of the expenditure can come from government, as Ms Herring said, and our Strong and Smart Choices campaign provides that option. There is \$100 million proposed as a cultural infrastructure fund. It is not allocated to this project, but it would no doubt be a source of potential funding for this project.

We are at a very early stage. The government does have a plan that would create a fund which would at least help start the process over a 20-year period. We are a long way from any firm plan yet. We will look at the public feedback, assess it properly and give it due credit before we move to the next stage. I do not think that is a remarkable way of doing things.

Ms TRAD: No, and I do think it is remarkable or out of line for me to ask whether or not there has been any cost model, but I will move on.

CHAIR: I think we have now come to the end of the slot. It is time for the last few minutes of government questioning. I call the member for Redlands.

Mr DOWLING: It is almost a companion question to my previous one. I direct the minister to page 4 of the Service Delivery Statements and the arts and cultural investment framework. Can the minister please outline the new Arts Business Innovation Fund and how it will benefit the arts sector in Queensland?

Mr WALKER: I thank you for that question. One of the things that Arts for All Queenslanders did was raise the issue and it has been accepted, I am sure, by the arts community and the broader community of Queensland that we do have to look forward to what models of arts funding will be available in the future. This came out of that state-wide consultation on the strategy. We are looking to transform the way in which we support the arts. There will always be an involvement of government in arts funding. Clearly, there will also be a need for arts organisations to raise funds of their own and to look to private and philanthropic areas also to move forward in this way.

The Arts Business Innovation Fund is one of the six new investment funds that we have established under the Arts and Cultural Investment Framework. It is a \$300,000 government investment in the fund in the 2013-14 year and in the 2014-15 year it is a \$500,000 commitment, which reduces to \$250,000 in 2016-17. So it is a total of \$1.05 million. I might ask Ms Herring to expand on how the fund will work. It is I think an exciting and different way of looking at funding the arts and of giving arts organisations assistance and an opportunity to transition to those new models.

Ms Herring: The fund is scheduled to open in early to mid-August. It is a public-private partnership way of delivering grant funding to the not-for-profit arts sector. The idea is to try to work with the not-for-profit sector to encourage them to invest in their own business models and to actually take some risk and use some of their own cash reserves to work to adjust their business models to create new revenue streams. It is quite an innovative way. It is nice to use the word 'innovation' in the fund because I think that is what it is. It is certainly targeted at strengthening the commercial and entrepreneurial capacity of those arts businesses. One of the real opportunities is that so many arts businesses are so terrific at delivering fabulous artistic outcomes for the state but very often do not spend a lot of time working on their own arts business model. This is really trying to encourage the arts sector to move in that way.

CHAIR: I call the member for Lytton.

Ms TRAD: Sorry, can I just thank you, Minister, and thank all of your staff and all of the heads of your statutory organisations very much.

Mr HOPPER: She was well behaved.

CHAIR: On that note, I will call the member for Lytton.

Mr SYMES: I refer the minister to page 5 of the SDS where it refers to the Arts and Cultural Investment Framework growing economic returns on government investment. How does the Queensland government get the most value from its investment in the arts through partnerships with the federal and local governments?

Mr WALKER: I thank the member for Lytton for that question, who has also been very well behaved during the course of proceedings. Arts Queensland actively pursues and brokers partnership opportunities right across the public sector, including with the federal government and with local councils, so that we get the best value from our taxpayer investment in the arts. I have mentioned before today the Regional Arts Development Fund. That is a joint fund between the state and local council schemes. It is a strong partnership between state and local. The balance of state funding as against local funding differs depending upon the size of the council and its ability to contribute. It does help deliver arts grants for regional arts and communities very much at the grassroots level where it matters, in particular in the bush.

In 2013-14 the state allocated \$2.037 million to 55 councils for RADF and that investment leveraged a further \$1.487 million from the local government sector. So the \$2.037 million pulled \$1.487 million from the states, and putting that together you can see that is about \$3½ million towards that project throughout the state. Modelled on RADF, Creative Sparks is the equivalent in the Brisbane City Council. That delivers to artists and communities in the capital city. Creative Sparks is a triennial funding agreement, and that sees the Queensland government contribute about a quarter of a million dollars to leverage a further \$0.36 million from BCC for the three years 2013 to 2016.

The Artist in Residence Fund, as I mentioned before, is also an important one. It is a federal government partnership. In 2013-14 the Artist in Residence Fund leveraged a modest state contribution of \$50,000 into a further \$0.2 million from the Australian government through the Australia Council for the Arts. That goes to hire artists to work in local schools and kindergartens very much at that grassroots level. Animating Spaces is a state-wide multi-arts initiative over three years which revitalises and celebrates regional communities through locally driven arts activities and events. So five communities annually host an Animating Spaces event and funding for the initiatives comes from the Australia Council, \$200,000; Arts Queensland, \$100,000; local government, \$50,000; and the federal government's Regional Arts Australia Fund \$50,000. In 2013 the beneficiaries of the program were Toowoomba, Redlands, Hervey Bay, Eudlo and Charters Towers. Communities in 2014 to benefit will be Yeppoon, Roma, Samford, Cooktown and Gladstone. So there is a great spread of areas throughout Queensland.

The Visual Arts and Craft Strategy was established in 2003 to build a strong and sustainable visual arts sector. That is delivered through an equal partnership between the Queensland and Australian governments, with both contributing \$5.223 million over the four years 2011-12 to 2014-15. That represents a total investment over four years of \$10.446 million to support Queensland's visual arts, craft and design sector.

Arts Queensland partnered with the Brisbane City Council and the Australia Council for the Arts to host the Australian Performing Arts Market in Brisbane for the first time. It was held in February this year and attracted 1,016 participants over four days. It was organised and hosted by the Brisbane Powerhouse, but it incorporated QPAC and the Judith Wright Centre as participating venues. The event, which will be held in 2016 and 2018 as well, aims to provide a marketplace effectively for producers and buyers of shows. Management and Production Services is an example of matched investment by the state and federal governments. It is a supportive structure that produces and manages selected Queensland theatre and dance groups, enabling them to create, present and tour their work effectively internationally, nationally and in Queensland. Arts Queensland and the Australia Council for the Arts each provide \$50,000 towards that initiative and it is delivered independently through Metro Arts.

That is an example of the broad cooperation and collaboration partnership. I think it means that the Queensland dollars we invest in this area is multiplied through leveraging that other investment.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. That now draws to a close this section of the estimates period. I particularly thank Ms Kirsten Herring and the CEOs of all the other Arts organisations who have contributed this afternoon. We will now adjourn for 30 minutes until 3.15. When we come back, we will be considering Information, Technology and Shared Services.

Proceedings suspended from 2.46 pm to 3.15 pm



CHAIR: The hearing of the Education and Innovation Committee is now resumed. We will now examine the portfolio areas of information technology and shared services. I now call the member for Redcliffe.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you, chair. Minister, I would like to take you to page 4 of the SDS, dealing with—

Connecting Government business needs with value-for-money, service-based ICT solutions.

Particularly in relation to your IT performance dashboard—and I know that you mentioned the dashboard earlier today—since it was established how many projects have been listed as red or amber on the ICT performance dashboard?

Mr WALKER: Thank you for that question. I will ask the QGCIO to deal with that in a moment. Can I just explain the concept of the dashboard first before we go to the particulars of your question. Since November 2013, all departments have been providing their project related information to the Queensland government ICT dashboard. The purpose of the dashboard was really so that there was transparency in how our IT projects were performing. The question is pretty easily answered by going to the dashboard and you will see either a green or an amber or a red light depending upon how the project is performing against budget, against time, or against outcomes. So there are three measures. While in some ways it is an embarrassing thing for government to have up there how projects are going, because not every project is going to be green—surprise, surprise—it is, I think, a necessary and an important protection against things like the Health payroll disaster. Had we had something like the IT dashboard during the course of that project, then I believe alarm bells would have rung much before they did. Before we had a project which ran off the rails so badly someone would have said, 'What in the heck is going on here?'

One of the jokes within the industry is that the people who look at the dashboard most are those who lost the tender and they look to see how their mates are going in actually performing as against the requirements of the government. So that is the purpose of the dashboard. It really is a transparency measure to, I suppose, keep everybody honest about how these projects are travelling. I will ask Mr Mills to deal with your specific question and perhaps also just to talk about more of the technical issues surrounding the dashboard and the nature of the reporting.

Mr Mills: We do not actually have the detail of how many have reported red since the dashboard started. Currently, there are 119 initiatives reported: 97 overall status were green and another 22 overall status were amber. There are no initiatives currently being recorded as red. We will go back and find out how many have been reported as red since it started.

Mr WALKER: So I might formally take that on notice and we will provide that information. I should add—and I think this is right, Mr Mills, and you might correct me if I am wrong—that the historical data is also via the open data website; is that correct?

Mr Mills: Only the current data, Minister.

Mr WALKER: Sorry.

Ms D'ATH: Can I just clarify the figures that you have just stated, Mr Mills? Are they for all departments?

Mr Mills: Yes. That is the full dashboard, yes.

Ms D'ATH: Is it possible to get an itemised list of those projects by name, cost, time frame and description?

Mr WALKER: Which projects in particular?

Ms D'ATH: The ones that are listed as amber.

Mr WALKER: The ones that are presently listed as amber?

Ms D'ATH: Yes.

Mr WALKER: I will just check with Mr Mills as to whether we have that at the moment.

Mr Mills: I have that information.

Mr WALKER: If you are able to hand that up?

Mr Mills: I can either read it out or hand it up.

Ms D'ATH: Probably if you could hand it up. I am mindful of time and it is not a necessity to read the list directly.

Mr Mills: I will need to get a scanned copy; that is all.

Mr WALKER: We will get that to you before the end of the session, member for Redcliffe.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you.

Mr DOWLING: Madam chair, that will be circulated to all members; is that right?

Mr WALKER: Sorry, I think the member for Redlands had a question.

Mr DOWLING: That will be circulated to all members?

CHAIR: Yes, we would like a copy of that to everybody.

Mr WALKER: We should be able to do that. Is that coming now?

Mr Mills: We just have to get it copied.

Mr WALKER: Right. Thank you.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, I would just like to take you to the three projects currently within your department that are listed as amber. The first is the digital communications and collaboration project, which will migrate your agency's email to the cloud. Can you explain why this project has been listed as exceeding the tolerance level for quality of delivery?

Mr WALKER: Yes. My recollection is that that is a time issue, but again, Mr Hill can go into the detail of that.

Mr Hill: Yes. Thanks very much for the question. As far as with timing goes, we actually have at the moment 95 per cent of the department migrated now on to cloud email. So we have certainly made really good progress in this calendar year. My recollection before taking over this responsibility of the role that I am currently in was that the end date given to this project was December last year. We have actually had a pilot in place at the start of the year for a number of months, which was really to bed down the technology and to test it robustly. To be fair, we took our time with that. We wanted to make sure that the risks were all assessed et cetera.

Since that time, I think it was around May we got into full swing of the migration. Basically, we almost have the project completed. But as we needed to report on the dashboard and to be transparent, we needed to show that from its current perspective in relation to quality as it is now. It was reported as amber. So originally timeliness was the issue for the amber status. Since the migration has occurred, it has been amber for quality, which is more about not necessarily the technology but in relation to business process change that needs to occur with the new technology. We have been working with the business areas to adapt to the technology. That has caused some issues in relation to deploying it. So it is not actually a problem with the technology itself; it is actually how businesses were operating in the past.

Mr WALKER: Am I right in thinking that part of that is that there is some difficulty for people who have multiple mailboxes? Is that the issue?

Mr Hill: Predominantly shared mailboxes—how they were using it in the past; where there were a number of users who had access to one mailbox. That is really how employees within the department have historically used email in certain areas. So it is nothing to do with the actual Office 365 itself; it is really an issue that you face in a migration of any project, hence why it was reported as amber because there were a number of issues that we had to get through. But it certainly has not stopped the project proceeding. As I say, we are currently sitting on 95 per cent fully migrated. So we are certainly getting through it.

Ms D'ATH: You stated that the initial completion date was to be December 2013. What is the projected completion date now?

Mr Hill: I would have to confirm that for you, but off the top of my head we are into our last business area to be completed. I just do not have that information exactly when that will be completed, but yes, I can certainly get that for you.

Mr WALKER: We might take that on notice, if I could.

CHAIR: Yes, thank you, Minister.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, the next one that I would like to take you to is the 75 William Street data centre migration to infrastructure as a service project, which has been listed as amber. If you can explain why that has been listed as amber on the dashboard?

Mr WALKER: There are some technical issues there and I will defer to Mr Hill on that.

Mr Hill: That is right. With the project we have experienced some technical issues in the cutover, which has delayed the timeliness of that project. But, again, we are working through that with our vendor. Amber does not mean that the project has actually stopped or is necessarily not going to occur; what it means is that we have identified an issue and a reporting in a way that allows the department to say, 'Okay, we are experiencing some difficulties that we need to focus on.' So the project is proceeding. It is just with some of the issues that we have hit with the cutover it has just delayed the actual 'go live' for that. But that is the cut and thrust of any project.

CHAIR: Minister, are you happy for this to be tabled?

Mr WALKER: I will table that, if I could. If the member for Redcliffe is happy, I might go back to Mr Mills to take up your question if you wish to do so now. You have that in front of you now, member for Redcliffe?

Ms D'ATH: I do.

CHAIR: And there is a certain area in this and some identifying features that will be redacted before it is actually published. Are you happy for this to be published with the redactions as well?

Mr WALKER: Yes. Does your printed one start with, 'List of initiatives'? There are some minister's notes only at the top.

CHAIR: Those will be redacted.

Mr WALKER: Thank you. And there are some phone numbers, too.

CHAIR: Yes, there are identifying features there that must be redacted as well.

Mr WALKER: So if the member for Redcliffe could perhaps put to Mr Mills any particular question she has about that list.

Ms D'ATH: I might just stay with the William Street matter, if it is that okay, and we might come back to that list once I take a moment to have a look at it. But thank you for providing that list.

Mr WALKER: Sure.

Ms D'ATH: Mr Hill, in relation to the William Street data centre migration, you said that there have been delays. The planned end date, I believe, was 31 August. Is that an amended date or is that the original completion date?

Mr Hill: My understanding is that that is an amended date. So we are due to complete it in August.

Ms D'ATH: When was it originally due for completion?

Mr Hill: I would have to confirm, but I believe that July was the date—or the month—that it was to be completed. So it has been pushed back a month.

Ms D'ATH: I notice that it has a revised estimated expenditure with the original expenditure expected to be \$2.24 million and it has now been revised at \$1.52 million. Could you advise why that project has been revised down?

Mr Hill: Not the exact figure, but if you can bring in savings that is what you do. I can provide that back to you.

Ms D'ATH: If you can take that on notice?

Mr WALKER: We will take that on notice as well.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, the third one that I wanted to take you to is the air quality management system, which has had a budget blow-out of \$65,000—more than 60 per cent of its original budget. Can you explain why this project is over cost and delayed and what is being done to rectify this problem?

Mr WALKER: Yes. We are just finding the best person to answer, because it goes into the Science area as well.

Mr Hill: I can start.

Mr WALKER: I will ask Mr Hill to start and we will see how we go.

Mr Hill: With that one, that project is not actually delivered by the DSITIA CIO. Science receive their ICT from DAFF, essentially. It is probably best that Science do answer that one. So just to clarify, it is part of Science, but the delivery is actually outside of our CIO's office.

Mr WALKER: I might ask Dr Williams to take that question, if you could.

Dr Williams: Could I ask you to clarify that question?

Ms D'ATH: Yes. The question went to the air quality management system and its amber status on the dashboard. I was asking why there has been more than a 60 per cent increase on the original budget and delays and what is being done. So why has that occurred and what is being done to rectify it?

Dr Williams: The computing system that backs up the live air quality data has been in the process of being modernised. It has been provided through an external international party. The reason it went to that group is that they provide the modelling software that goes along with the monitoring data so it was sensible to have a system that was all coherent. The costs have risen because of some additional work that needed to be done to make the system 100 per cent robust. I am sure you understand that we want to get our science information out there in a timely manner and making sure the system was fully functional was very important, so that is why we went for that extra amount of time and money to make sure that system was 100 per cent robust.

Mr WALKER: Madam Chair, if I could just interpose to point out one thing in general. The member of course is well within her rights to ask these questions about the amber systems, but there are two things that I want to point out. One is that, of 119 initiatives across government, 97 are green and 22 are amber. So in the circumstances of an overall program I think that is a relatively modest number. Ideally of course they would all be green, but we know that in any IT rollout that is not going to be the case.

I just want to point out how important this government thinks it is to be transparent about these matters, even if it causes us some mild embarrassment that not everything is green. It is better to be honest about it and to show where programs are out of kilter against time or budget because that is really what keeps things like the Health payroll system from happening again—that is, people do pay attention to the fact that if a program falls amber then these sorts of questions are going to be asked. That of course is the way in which the dashboard operates.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you, Minister. On that note, I would like to take you to a couple of the green dashboard projects. The first is your department's Ministerial and Executive Correspondence Solution, the MECS, implementation. Minister, I note it is listed as green; however, its budget has gone from \$213,431 to \$349,899. I appreciate when we are talking government budgets that \$100,000 is not as much as when we are talking about millions, but it is a \$136,000 increase on the original budget. I am interested to know what the reason for the cost blow-out is and also why, with such a significant increase, that would still be listed as green.

Mr WALKER: I understand the question. I will ask Mr Hill to deal with that.

Mr Hill: Thanks for that question. With that MECS implementation, it is fair to say that it was the first project board that I attended; it was the first time I actually had a chance to look at the numbers. I think from the very initiation stage of that project, there was an underestimation of what the budget was going to be, so certainly part of that process of that project board was to undertake a more fulsome view of that budget. Hence, that is why that budget is now actually showing a higher number than what it was. It is fair to say that the project board process was there to scrutinise the numbers. I would say there was an initiation number that we started with, but my undertaking was to further look at that when I took on the role on that board, so hence the numbers have been re-estimated.

Ms D'ATH: Can I ask the same question in relation to the mainframe upgrade where there has been an increase in the expected expenditure of \$235,000 on that project as well?

Mr Hill: That relates to a project delivered by CITEC so I would not be able to answer that one.

Ms D'ATH: Okay. If I can go back to the previous one, the MECS one, you are saying that when you came on board you have reassessed the estimated cost of the project—

Mr Hill: The project budget, that is correct.

Ms D'ATH: Firstly, have you gone through and done that for a number of projects to ensure that they are being costed properly? Secondly, and this was part of my first question, why is it listed as green?

Mr Hill: That is a good question. I guess specific to myself, any project board that I am on I obviously take the financials seriously, as does the whole department. So anything I am involved in I take the numbers seriously, and that is all I can really say to that one. It is showing green because essentially the project had to be re-baselined, which is part of the project methodology that occurs. So it is being re-baselined as essentially now showing what is a re-evaluated set of deliverables for that project so that is why it is now in green.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you. Minister, I would like to also talk to you about another one which is not within your department and that is the messaging and collaboration for schools project which is with the Department of Education. This particular project has tripled in cost to more than \$10 million since

May last year when the project started. Are you able to identify what monitoring and assistance your department is giving to other departments in relation to delivering on their ICT projects?

Mr WALKER: The first point to make is that the core question in that regard should be directed to the Minister for Education because each department runs its own program. But Mr Mills can indicate to you what role my department plays in this reporting system.

Mr Mills: For the dashboard itself and reporting, we purely coordinate and facilitate agencies providing their reports. We do not go into agencies and assess those because they have their own governance processes in place for that information to be brought through. From the point of view of assessing projects as they are running, there is a new project assurance model in place which requires agencies to undertake gated reviews at set points in their projects. For those gated reviews, any of those projects that are considered to be what are level three and four high-risk projects are then reviewed by my team and put through to the Minister and to the new governance group called the DG Council. So we review those as they go through and make sure that the agencies are managing and undertaking assurance roles and that they have had external assurance on those projects.

CHAIR: I now call the member for Albert.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Minister, I refer to page 5 of the SDS where it mentions you will further implement the One-Stop Shop through an additional 100 new transactions in 2014-15. Can you advise when you plan to achieve this by?

Mr WALKER: Thank you for that question. The One-Stop Shop program is really a program to make sure that Queenslanders can deal with their government through one click of a computer mouse, one phone call or one visit, depending upon the way they wish to achieve services. That is then about making services simpler, clearer and faster and it includes services online at www.qld.gov.au. It has been shown from customer research that 42 per cent of Queenslanders would prefer to access services online and at the moment about 30 per cent of government services are actually online, so it has been a key part of our plan with One-Stop Shop to push as many services online as we can. I am pleased to report that, although our aim was to add 100 new transactions, we have in fact added 130 already this calendar year, so we have already met our target to deliver 100 by the end of 2014 and we are pretty much six months ahead of schedule. We will continue that work by aiming to make a further 100 online services available by the end of 2015.

The sorts of services that are going online are many and varied. Some recent examples are: lodging a noise or a party complaint, registering a safe party with the police, booking and paying for first aid training courses—and just in relation to that one, there have been over 9,500 unique visits to that particular service since February—registering relationships, requesting historical birth certificates and checking vehicle registrations. In relation to that last one, there have been over 66,000 unique visits since January 2014. So there is great use of those services. For many people, they are the most convenient way to interact with government.

By the end of 2014, Queenslanders will be able to find information about all government services by calling 13 QGOV or by going to www.qld.gov.au. They will be able to tell us once if they move house and that information will permeate through government without them having to tell a whole lot of government departments, and they will get answers through click to chat or social media. I have already tried click to chat myself when I was testing it out on a seniors card, which is something you can apply for online. I was not applying for my own online card, I hasten to add, but that is an example of trying to work through the online process and if you have trouble you can click to chat and ask the person who is supervising via email, 'I'm having trouble with question 3 on the form. Does it really mean X or Y?' You then get an email back saying, 'This is what you have to do.' That is a great service.

We do have services now through Facebook and Twitter where if people want to ask those questions of government or get an answer back from government through Facebook or Twitter they can also go through there to our One-Stop Shop service. I think already 6,000 users have liked our askQGOV service on Facebook and Twitter. It is important to see government moving forward in an innovative way to ensure that government is where its customers want it to be. The success of the approach online can be seen through the online statistics. There has been significant growth in the use of qld.gov.au in the last year—an increase from 3.8 million to 7.6 million unique visitors and an increase in pages visited of 34 million. That is double the amount of last year so there is an increased pick-up in this area.

Our feedback from customers tells us they are increasingly benefitting from the new online transactions and they enjoy the convenience of accessing them from their desktop computers, at home or on their smartphones or tablets. I think it is a great area of innovation that this government has pushed forward. We are beating our own milestones at the moment but we will keep pushing ahead to make sure as many services go online as possible.

CHAIR: I call the member for Redlands.

Mr DOWLING: I refer to page 9 of the Service Delivery Statement where it mentions your department's leadership role for ICT procurement. Can you advise how the government is making it easier for small to medium enterprises to access government work? I have a number of small to medium enterprises in my electorate and also in the adjoining electorates of Capalaba and Cleveland, and even in the minister's electorate of Mansfield.

Mr WALKER: Yes, there are a number there as well. Thank you for that question. The revision of the ICT SME Participation Scheme in a formal policy in January 2014 has meant that there are new guidelines for government procurement to support SMEs to participate more effectively in delivering government solutions. This was a flow through from our review of the ICT action plan and strategy. A key incentive under the policy is that government departments can directly engage SMEs in the provision of innovative solutions to a contract price of up to half a million dollars. So if you have got a new, interesting solution for us, you can come and deal directly with us and we can direct tender with you instead of flogging your idea around the marketplace to see what others could do with it. You can get the benefit of it. You still have to go through a competitive process. We will still make sure we are getting value for money, but we are assisting small to mediums in protecting their intellectual property and getting the benefit of becoming innovative. The policy also advocates the use of a short-form contract appropriate for use for low-risk procurements up to a contract value of a million dollars. So it is a helpful short-form legal way of getting things done.

One important step that we have made is—and we actually picked this up from Victoria—that in any ICT offer we will automatically short-list an SME capable of doing the job. So if you are an SME and if you are capable of doing the job, then you will be short-listed—one SME will be short-listed—even if otherwise you would not have made the cut because of pricing issues. The reason for that is really to make sure that SMEs are kept in the face of government and those looking at procurement and that SMEs are not ruled out unnecessarily from the final cut. So it does not mean that they will get there, but it does mean that they will stay as part of the government's consideration in that final phase. We are also unbundling significant contracts where that is appropriate to minimise the risks to government, improve value for money, harness innovative solutions and give SMEs a go at a part of the contract even if they are not able to bid for the whole contract. So my department is working closely with SMEs to ensure that they are aware of the opportunities available to them and with agencies to ensure that they understand the simplified process for SMEs and that they are working properly with them.

Further key elements to assist SMEs are government ICT business workshops, and that is our Partners in Technology briefings where we have government people talking to business, our SME capability directory and the ICT SME Participation Scheme policy. In 2013-14 seven of the Partners in Technology sessions were held and they had an average of over 200 industry representatives attend each session hearing from government reps and also talking to government reps telling them about the needs of the industry and how the industry wishes to engage. The whole-of-government ICT services panel arrangement, which was established by my department, supports SMEs as it favours actual resource capability in the area. SMEs have also been obtaining business under the whole-of-government ICT services panel. Transactional data for the period November 2013 to April 2014 has shown a total of 24 contracts awards were made under the panel totalling \$3.35 million and that 20 of those awards were to SMEs at \$2.7 million and four to non-SMEs at \$643,000. So there does seem to be good SME participation at that level.

Mr SYMES: Minister, parents I speak with in my electorate are passionate about providing a bright future for their children. Considering the references to the digital economy on page 5 of the SDS, what is the government doing to help get children into digital careers?

Mr WALKER: I did mention before that increasing the participation of Queensland school students in the STEM subjects—science, technology, engineering and maths—is certainly a key to our future prosperity and for our digital economy to work at its most efficient. During 2013-14 I launched the Queensland government's Science and Innovation Action Plan and *GoDigitalQld*, which is our Queensland Digital Economy Strategy and Action Plan. These were key strategies that

reinforced the importance of getting more of our school students to undertake STEM related subjects and then go on to pursue ICT related uni courses and rewarding, well-paying jobs in the digital economy. Many of these jobs are yet to be created. We do not even know that they exist at the moment because it is difficult to predict where the next big technology breakthrough will come from.

A key action for our government in this area is supporting the groundbreaking digitalcareers initiative in Queensland. Digitalcareers is a national program. It is being delivered by National ICT Australia, or NICTA, Australia's ICT centre of excellence. Digitalcareers originated in Queensland in 2007 with a consortium of Queensland universities and ICT research institutions, together with ICT industry associations, several ICT employers and Queensland government agencies forming what was then called Group X with a united focus on promoting the importance of digital education and rewarding careers. The effectiveness and success of the Group X initiative in Queensland has been recognised by the Australian government, which has in turn picked it up and committed \$6.5 million over four years commencing 2013-14 to NICTA to deliver a national digitalcareers program.

In April 2014 my department signed an agreement with NICTA to provide a financial contribution of \$35,000, excluding GST, per annum over the two years 2013-14 and 2014-15 to support a number of Queensland activities and a website presence. The website presence has been particularly interesting because it shows some case studies of careers in IT, and that has been particularly attractive again particularly for girls where attracting them to IT is a real issue. In addition, both my department and the Department of Education, Training and Employment will provide an in-kind contribution to the value of \$35,000 per annum over the same period. In 2013-14 Queensland's digitalcareers program participated in 27 careers expos and events and a number of other activities designed to raise school students' and teachers' awareness and interest in digital studies and career options. It established an educators advisory committee made up of primary and secondary school teachers from across the state and it piloted the Bebras computational thinking competition connected to an international network of 35 countries, with 900 students from 12 Queensland schools taking part in that competition.

So throughout all of these activities digitalcareers actually reached over 70,000 students. I have been able to attend some of their events. One of them was the ICT Young Explorers, which was a great example of young kids actually doing hands-on IT projects. Some were unpiloted aerial vehicles, for example, that flew around the room designed and operated by schoolkids. Others were games. Others were practical online learning aids for kids, and it was great to see that. The other was the Big Day In. As arts minister I can go to the Big Day Out and as IT minister I can go to the Big Day In, but the Big Day In was at the University of Queensland where a lot of the kids who are attracted to IT careers go to help them focus on their interest in the IT area. So it was great to be at that event and to see the number of students who were there. Again, I just cannot remember the exact figures, but the proportion of gender balance was particularly pleasing. There were a lot of girls there interested in the area.

Just to interpose there, I have spoken to a number of the leaders in the industry trying to figure out why it is that girls particularly do not go into IT careers. There seems to be a sort of view which I think has got just about everything wrong with it in that it misunderstands IT and it also probably gender stereotypes wrongly that IT is not a creative thing where women can use the creative side of their thinking. I disagree with that. I think it is strongly open to people with creative thoughts. The wonderful things that are done through IT, particularly in the medical area, lead to those sorts of concerns being adequately addressed by a career in IT well and truly. I think that is important. We do have a Women in Technology group as well, and I have been pleased to meet with their executive and last week went along to their breakfast meeting just to encourage those women who are active in the IT area in making sure that it is seen as an appropriate career for girls. Of course, the government's program which enables women to move into traditionally male oriented study areas is one that can help in this area as well. I think through our collaborative approach, particularly with digitalcareers, the government is ensuring that more young Queenslanders are encouraged to study ICT at school and post school and to pursue a rewarding digital career that is going to have a positive impact on our state's and indeed the world's future.

CHAIR: In terms of your department's ICT responsibilities mentioned on page 9 of the SDS, what is the government doing to save money and cut waste in this area?

Mr WALKER: When we did the ICT audit one of the things that it identified pretty quickly was a number of areas for potential short-term savings, and the sorts of figures the audit believed we could save was between \$18 million and \$25 million a year. For 2012-13 agencies were instructed to go out and to do their bit in making savings in areas like getting rid of unused phone lines, getting better

phone plans, changing printing from single sided to double sided, using black and white as default rather than colour and those sorts of practical things. For 2012-13 the agencies initially reported \$17.65 million of savings, but since that announcement an additional \$2.4 million of savings has been confirmed. So the 2012-13 figure brings the amount to just over \$20 million—\$20.05 million—of savings in pretty simple housekeeping in the way departments do things. For the 2013-14 financial year—this is where it starts to get harder after you have made the first cut—agencies are still forecasting about \$16 million further in savings and we are in the process of confirming this for the end of that financial year.

My department has reported the ongoing delivery of annual telecommunications savings of \$297,000 which was in addition to a one-off saving of \$35,000 during March to September 2013 and expects the savings in telecommunications—that is, things like getting rid of phone lines and consolidating plans and so on—over a three-year period to be just under \$1 million, or \$926,000. We have entered into a new agreement with Microsoft in respect of a whole-of-government software agreement that will deliver a minimum saving of \$13.7 million over three years. That amount will increase if departments take advantage of additional savings through negotiated software products, but the new Microsoft deal offers that opportunity. My department is also cutting waste by introducing new policies and processes that will reduce the time taken to engage suppliers and specifically small to medium enterprises who are generally more agile and innovative than some of the bigger suppliers. Those are the sorts of savings that have been made simply by paying attention to your housekeeping and getting those basic things in order. We will continue to drive that from our department and ensure that across government we are getting the best value for taxpayers' money that we can.

Mr LATTER: Your SDS mentions the Government Wireless Network on page 5. Can you please provide an update on this project and what work is scheduled for 2014-15?

Mr WALKER: I will. It is a big project this one, probably the biggest single project that my department is administering. It is a \$457.3 million project over 15 years to deliver the Government Wireless Network to improve communications, safety and security for our public safety agencies and our emergency workers. The Queensland Police Service, the fire and emergency service and the Ambulance Service have really been waiting for a digital radio communications network for more than 10 years. At the moment they are relying on very much ageing analogue technology that is increasingly expensive to maintain, it is not secure—you can listen into it—and it does not allow very easily for cross-agency communications. So while police can talk to police, the fires to talk to emergency services and have the police in the same loop is very difficult. The network will deliver a number of benefits, including improvements in coverage and transmission; interoperability between the public safety agencies; and increased safety for front-line officers, and that is a very important thing. When I have been speaking to the officers who are actually trialling these things the one thing they mention is the duress button that is on the device, so if they are in trouble there is an ability to press that duress button and for people then to zero in on an officer in trouble and, from memory, I think there is a GPS related ability to track where the device is and where the person is if they have pressed that button. It also contains end-to-end encryption, so it provides information privacy and protection across that network.

Our first priority is to meet the communications requirements for the G20 financial officials meeting in Cairns in September and then the G20 leaders summit in Brisbane in November. Following G20, the Government Wireless Network will be implemented in stages in South-East Queensland by June 2016. So the South-East Queensland stage scheduled for completion in 2014-15 includes the southern zone, which is Gold Coast, Logan and Ipswich, and will be completed by mid-2015; the metropolitan zone, which is north and south Brisbane, completed in late 2015; and the northern and west zone, which is Moreton, Sunshine Coast, Gympie and Toowoomba, completed by the end of 2015. As minister I have taken a particular interest in making sure this program is delivered on time. There is obviously concern that we get it done by the G20, and I have been meeting fortnightly with the team to make sure that everything is on track and the reports back are good. While we still have a bit of work to do in making sure that the actual fitting out of vehicles happens and that we can do that without taking vehicles off the road that are being used in operational circumstances, we are confident that we will be able to deliver in time for the G20 and then to meet those other time frames for the broader rollout of the network. It is an important and exciting project and I certainly publicly commend the team that has been working on it in my department. They have done a very good job.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, we might continue on with the Government Wireless Network while you have been addressing it. What is the total amount being expended on the GWN in the 2014-15 year?

Mr WALKER: I might ask Mr Stower if he can take the microphone and talk about those details.

Mr Stower: Thank you, Minister. In answer to the question, the amount being spent on the GWN in 2014-15 is \$61.6 million. That includes the costs for the contract directorate, which is managing the contractual relationship and arrangement with the prime contractor, Telstra, and also includes the service payments which will be due for the first service areas of the network which are due to be switched on for G20 and also to be switched on for the SEQ rollout as well and also includes the cost for the program implementation.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, Can you just identify—because I know in the capital statement it refers to \$1.1 million—where it is reflected in the SDS those figures that you just mentioned, Mr Stower.

Mr Stower: Can you just repeat the question?

Ms D'ATH: I am just wondering if you can direct us to where in the budget papers it spells that out. I have identified that the \$1.1 million appears in the capital statement as far as expenditure for the introduction of the government wireless network. You have just outlined \$61.6 million in relation to the contract directorate, the first service payments and the cost for the project overall. How are they identified in the budget papers?

Mr Stower: I will try and find the exact location in the SDS itself, but you will find it under the heading of 'strategic ICT'. It is actually an operational cost. The project is not—

Mr WALKER: Do you want to have a quick talk to Mr Hill?

Mr Stower: No, it is fine. I will refer you to page 6 of the SDS. You will see there under 'expenses, strategic ICT' it is included in that \$99.031 million.

Ms D'ATH: And based on your explanation of what makes up that expenditure—and particularly that it is the contract itself, but also the first service payments and making sure that it is ready for that initial stage of the G20—can you advise how much has been expended to date?

Mr Stower: Yes. The total expenditure for 2013-14 is \$20.17 million. That is made up of \$4.2 million for the contract directorate; \$5.67 million for the program itself, and it is the program team that the Minister mentioned before that is overseeing implementation; and the first quarterly service payment which is due, which is \$10.3 million.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, are you able to provide the committee with a yearly profile of the \$457 million in operating payments that will be made to Telstra over the 15 years of the GWN?

Mr WALKER: I do not think we have that to hand, but is that something that we could take on notice, Mr Stower?

Mr Stower: That is something we will have to take on notice. There is a payment schedule based upon quarterly service payments over the full 15 years. I do not have that over 15 years to hand here. We will have to provide that later.

Mr WALKER: I am happy to take that on notice, Madam Chair. I will just make the point—and I am sure the member for Redcliffe understands it, but just for the benefit of the whole of the committee—that this is a contract along the lines of the way we are looking to have IT provided in the future, and that is a contract for a service. So Telstra is contracted to provide the service to us under the system; it is not something that we do ourselves. It will be provided by Telstra to us by way of a service contract. But I will undertake to get that information to you on notice.

Madam Chair, can I just clarify there are some of these matters that we are not going to be able to get today that we have undertaken to get on notice. Is it 5 pm tomorrow that is the cut-off time?

CHAIR: Yes, Minister.

Mr WALKER: Thank you, I just wanted to be clear on that.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, I know that you have said on a couple of occasions today that you are confident that the government wireless network will be ready for the G20, but you have mentioned that there still needs to be the fitting out of vehicles and managing the implementation of that without taking vehicles off the road and all of those issues. Can you assure the committee that it will be fully operable and that all aspects will be completed by the G20?

Mr WALKER: I met with the team only yesterday and I asked that question. That is the assurance I have been given by the team, and so I pass that on to the committee.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, if I can go back to your answer to I think the member for Lytton in relation to training and the digital economy and preparing our young people for the future and your comments that this has been identified as a national priority. I note that the 'Annual Skills Priority Report' certainly confirms your comments. Can I ask what work has been done directly with the minister for education and training? You have indicated that the minister is committed to encouraging IT digital training in our schools, but what formal work has been done in collaboration between yourself and the minister for education and training to ensure that?

Mr WALKER: I have met with the minister about the issue specifically, and I know that he is well aware of it. As you know, his department is undertaking a review of curriculum and assessment procedures, and I am sure that as part of that he will take into account the need to give emphasis to this area.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, would you be concerned to know that with the changes to courses with TAFE and the subsidies that there are only six courses, being communications and information technology courses being offered by TAFE, and that is a certificate I, II, III and three diplomas, and none of those courses are offered either VET in schools or a year 12 fee-free course offered to young people.

Mr WALKER: I am not aware of the document from which you are quoting or of that background. I do not think it relates to my area of portfolio or to this SDS. I can just repeat to you that I know the minister for education is well aware of the same issue. We have had discussions, and I know he is taking that up in his review of the curriculum generally.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, if I can take you to the open data that is referred to on SDS page 4. You have listed as an achievement for 2013-14 the target by your department of 70 datasets on the open government website by June 2014. Can you advise, Minister, how many of those targets have been achieved for 2013-14 and how many additional datasets you are expecting to publish in 2014-15?

Mr WALKER: I do know off the top of my head that we are the lead department in getting material up to the open data website, but I might need to call on Mr Spina to assist us with the actual figures.

Mr Spina: The question related to the number of open datasets that this department actually has in place. We are currently in the position where the department has 190 datasets, I think, as of this morning, or it might have been 191. As the Minister indicated, I think we are at the top of the agencies in terms of the number of datasets that we have in place.

Ms D'ATH: So can you advise how many of those datasets were introduced during the 2013-14 year? The SDS talks about a target of 70. You have just talked about 190 or 191.

Mr Spina: The majority of those were actually delivered within the 2013-14 year, so I am very confident that at least the 70 actually were achieved within that period of time.

Ms D'ATH: And have you got a target of how many additional datasets you expect to get onto the website over the 2014-15 year?

Mr Spina: I do not have that figure. We do have a road map which is in place. I can say that a significant number of those datasets were actually uploaded on to the open data website I would say within the last quarter of this financial year. There is a road map. Each agency actually has a road map in relation to their open data with their targets. We would have a road map ourselves, and I think that that is not part of my portfolio.

Mr WALKER: I am just receiving some hand signals that Ms Roach might be able to help with this. I will ask Ms Roach to take Mr Spina's spot.

Just while Ms Roach is coming, the open data program is of course run out of the Department of Premier and Cabinet with Assistant Minister Stevens. My department certainly enables the material to go up and has a role, as all other departments do, in putting out material. But it is essentially not our project in that sense.

Ms Roach: In May 2013 the department's open data strategy at that time identified more than 70 new datasets to be published in addition to the 19 datasets that had already been published and were released. We have exceeded the targets that were planned so that by 30 June we had actually got to 188 datasets.

In terms of the 2014-15 year, we are in the process now of refreshing our current strategy and datasets for 2014-15. We do not have a formalised number at this point in time, but it is very encouraging to see the number of datasets that have been identified just even in the month of June

that actually went onto the website and the work that has actually been taking place in terms of open data within the agency. In particular, in February 2014 more than 100 participants were attracted to the public Science for Solutions open data competition to develop applications from science open datasets which were held at the ecoscience precinct. That was a very constructive process that we went through, and we are now looking at competitions that will be held in the 2014-15 year with the new datasets that have been published.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you. Minister, I am mindful you said that it does not sit within your department, but are there staff assigned in your department to work on the Open Data Initiative; if so, how many? Are there also other departments, and particularly the department of Premier, where there are corresponding staff that look after the datasets?

Mr WALKER: It is a little bit complicated, but I think Mr Spina would be best to speak about this.

Mr Spina: The Department of Science, IT, Innovation and the Arts has a particular role in relation to supporting open data in that we actually provide the portal. There is staff within Smart Service Queensland that administers the open data portal on behalf of government. So that is in addition to the role that the department plays, as does every other department, in providing data onto the portal itself. I am not in a position to provide information on the effort and number of resources associated with that part of it, but it is essentially part of the role of the online services component of Smart Service Queensland that supports qld.gov.au, the government website. They also support the open data portal.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you. Minister, are you able to take on notice the question of how many staff are allocated within your department? I am sorry I was not quite clear whether the answer you gave included whether there was dedicated staff in other departments for the dataset.

Mr Spina: We would not have that information. That would be information that would need to be provided by each agency. DSITIA would not have a role in determining what resources or knowing what resources within agencies are involved in providing open data.

Mr WALKER: But just clearing up, Mr Spina, we can provide our own numbers of staff to the honourable member. Is that easy or is it not a sort of dedicated area of staff that is easy to put a number to?

Mr Spina: I do not think that there are dedicated resources that are providing open data. I think it is part of the normal process of managing data. Science, for example, manages data on a regular basis and essentially they are providing that data to the open data portal, but it is just added on to their current activities. So it is really providing data which is already available in a different format.

Ms D'ATH: Before I run out of time, I wanted to clarify, without the opportunity to go back and look at *Hansard*, that when I referred to only six courses being offered by TAFE in the information technology area, I should have said only six courses that are being subsidised. It is possible TAFE is offering other courses, but they would not be attracting any subsidies. I just wanted to clarify that in relation to the point I was making earlier with the minister.

Minister, based on your comments earlier that your department oversees the open data portal but that that area sits with the assistant minister, as I understand it, in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, how often do you meet with the assistant minister for e-government to discuss open data and other e-government matters?

Mr WALKER: The assistant minister has a standard invitation to meetings I have with my departmental officers. I cannot recall the precise frequency, but we would meet regularly—every six to eight weeks—to assess any assistance that my department needs to give. But bear in mind that my department has a fairly modest role in the policy side of open data. The policy determination and the encouragement of departments to be involved comes from the assistant minister. My department, as you have heard, has a functional role in assisting the material to go up but not a policy role.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, you say you meet regularly—at the moment roughly six weekly. According to your published diary, since you became minister you have only met with the assistant minister for e-government once, being 20 March 2013.

Mr WALKER: I think that may have been a specific meeting, but I think you will find that a number of my diary entries are in terms of meetings with departmental officers. It would be those meetings in which the assistant minister would be advised. I do not want to overstate it. I cannot remember the number of times but we have met, as I said, on a regular but occasional basis over that time. There are some important things for us to discuss. But, as I say, my department's role is

essentially a routine one in terms of getting the information up. He and I have informal discussions about whether the department is performing its role. In broad terms, his response is that we are performing our role and he is happy with what the department is doing.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Redcliffe. I call the member for Albert.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I refer to page 9 of the SDS where it mentions that your strategic ICT area is responsible for establishing the whole-of-government procurement arrangements. Does this include the arrangements with Microsoft?

Mr WALKER: Yes, my department does establish and manage whole-of-government ICT procurement arrangements, including those with Microsoft. Procurement arrangements between the Queensland government and Microsoft have existed for over nine years, with the latest arrangement focused on being a step towards achieving the government's vision of ICT as a service.

This is the first whole-of-government contract in Australia to be cloud ready and provides the flexibility to move between the computer and cloud based software making Queensland a government leader in this regard. My department negotiated this three year contract, worth approximately \$26.5 million. This new contract equates to a saving of approximately \$13.7 million, when compared with the previous three year contract.

The government is modernising procurement practices through the procurement transformation program of the Department of Housing and Public Works. My department plays a key role in this. As of February 2014, it was formally recognised as the mega category manager for information and communications technology, which is about these types of procurement arrangements. Currently, my department manages 33 such arrangements from phones to computers through to software, to mention just a few.

It might be a convenient time to advise the committee of what I think is some good news in terms of where the government stands in this matter. We are clearly leaders in the cloud ready area. I have an article from the *Australian* which puts it in terms of Queensland stealing a march on the rest of the governments in terms of our cloud ready proposal. Fran Foo wrote in the *Australian* on 27 May—headed 'Sunshine state puts cloud on horizon'—

QUEENSLAND has stolen a march on the federal government and other states by introducing a mandatory "cloud-first" policy poised to save tens of millions of dollars on technology products and services.

In addition to that, IT news, which is an online magazine has—

Mr LATTER: Excuse me, Minister. Minister, you may like to table that article.

Mr WALKER: Thank you, that is an excellent suggestion. I will table that article.

CHAIR: I think members would appreciate that.

Mr WALKER: I will similarly table this edition of IT news which is headed 'The state of IT—ranking the best and the worst of Australia's states and territories'. It ranks Queensland second amongst the governments in how it shapes up in terms of government IT. I think that shows that we have made significant strides in terms of where we were with IT before this government took office. We are well towards leading the charge. I hate to think that New South Wales just beat us, but they did according to IT news. We will make sure that we remedy that in years to come. I will table both of those documents.

CHAIR: I call the member for Redlands.

Mr DOWLING: With reference to the one-stop shop on page 5 of the Service Delivery Statement, can you please provide an update on the pilot in the Lockyer Valley and Scenic Rim area?

Mr WALKER: This is one of the exciting projects, as part of the one-stop shop program. I mentioned before that the one-stop shop is all about one click, one telephone call or one visit to deal with government, however a customer of the government might want to deal with government. One of the key initiatives of the plan is the piloting of new service outlet models which will give Queenslanders easier and quicker access to government services.

We picked the Lockyer Valley and the Scenic Rim regions. The reason we did that is that they seem to us to have a pretty good cross-section of some urban areas, some semiurban areas, some rural areas, some fast-growing areas and some small areas. It seemed to us that it would be a good test of some of things we are doing.

We engaged the community through various methods, including community surveys, seeking feedback through 13QGOV, online surveys, over-the-counter feedback. We conducted five

community engagement workshops. The first of those was held in Gatton, with others following in Laidley, Beaudesert, Mount Tamborine and Boonah. I was pleased to go to the Gatton one and to sit in and listen to what people had to say.

It does bring you down to earth. All of the things come out that we have all struck when dealing with government organisations. Things such as getting the run around, not getting where you want to, having to repeat the same question 50,000 times. All of those came out as part of the discussion. The tensions between those in the community who prefer to deal online—not always, but in general the younger people but also some IT savvy older folk—and those who do not have IT connectivity or IT capability and still need another way to deal with the government.

Basically, summarising the conversation we had at Gatton—and it was replicated in other areas—it was, ‘Don’t waste my time. Make it easier. Help me go online if I can. Improve my experience in dealing with government.’ We have a detailed report of the findings from that community engagement. That has been produced and utilised to inform and develop the options and the implementation plan for the pilot. The plan considers the regional characteristics of the area and it is focused on addressing community needs and improving service delivery through innovation.

As an example of what we will be doing, the pilot services will include one-stop shop physical outlets at Gatton and Beaudesert and digital solutions which will include, for example, a self-service kiosk or video pods in Tamborine, Laidley and Plainland. The Boonah QGAP, which is the existing service, will be refreshed and there will be scheduled mobile services supporting the region from the Jimboomba base. Some of those smaller areas will be serviced by a one-stop shop van. It will be there, say, every Wednesday afternoon from three to five to help people with their dealings with government. New pilot branches will provide extended and consistent opening hours and customer service training to staff.

One of the key pieces of feedback we heard loud and clear in Gatton—and this was, I suppose, natural enough given Gatton’s place in the system, concerned the limited availability of DTMR licensing services in the town. It is a pretty important transport hub. We have moved to fix this in the pilots by making licensing services all day, five days a week in the Gatton one-stop shop service outlet.

Work is underway. We will continue rolling out those improvements in the coming months. The pilot is all about improving service delivery and enhancing our customers’ experience of the services we provide. The lessons we learn through the ongoing evaluation of the pilot will be used as the basis as to how we roll this out right across our state. As always, the focus is on ensuring that customers get what they need as quickly and as easily as possible.

CHAIR: I call the member for Lytton.

Mr SYMES: Minister, your Service Delivery Statement mentions at page 4 the release of the Queensland digital economy strategy and action plan. Can you provide some more information on this achievement?

Mr WALKER: I am happy to do that. I was pleased to launch *GoDigitalQld*, which is our digital economy strategy and action plan. I did that in Bundaberg on 17 June. The reason I did it in Bundaberg is that that community has already prepared itself very well for the digital economy. There has been great collaboration between the Bundaberg Regional Council and the local chamber of commerce and individual businesses there to make sure that they are ready for this project.

GoDigitalQld is our government’s road map to using digital technologies, content and innovative services to boost productivity and connectivity in Queensland. It was an important document to get together and we had a number of consultations to do it. I was pleased to be able to sit in on some of those. I did feel it necessary to make sure that we kept our feet on the ground in this area. The digital area can take-off into the stratosphere if you are not careful.

To me it was a pretty basic point that we needed to start from just to make sure that all of our small businesses know that unless they are digitally enabled and unless they have an online presence they are really under threat in the broader economy. I used a fictional T-shirt shop near my electorate office to say that if the fellow is sitting waiting for customers to come through his door to sell his T-shirts he does not realise that others, myself included, are buying them online with slogans splashed all over them already. He needs to be in that game, as do all of our small business operators.

The policy brings together the government’s key digital economy related initiatives under an overarching framework for driving and coordinating our digital economy activity across government

and across our vast state. It will complement the Queensland Plan vision. The Queensland Plan vision certainly teased out a lot of concern about the ability to be digitally connected and the need to really provide in future for digital services and an ability to engage online for community groups, businesses and government.

The program sets out six clear strategic objectives. It includes 23 main actions to put us on the path to realise our vision for Queensland as Australia's most digitally interactive state and recognised globally as a digital innovation hub.

The six strategic objectives are: economic growth, powered by digital innovation; digital first delivery of better government services—and we have been talking about that; full community and business participation in the digital economy through collaboration. I stress in relation to that goal that that involves community groups as well as businesses. While the digital economy is obviously important to our businesses, more and more community groups are going to find it important.

I use as an example Neighbourhood Watch. I do not know whether this is similar for members on the committee, but certainly for me my physical Neighbourhood Watch groups are getting older and older. It is difficult to get younger people to come out to a draughty church hall on a Wednesday night to hear the minutes of the last meeting and the plans for the future. But young people do want to be involved but they are going to be involved in a different way. For example, Neighbourhood Watch is an area where this government committed significant funds—\$1 million worth of funds—to ensure that there is an online police response, an online blog, online Neighbourhood Watch facilities so that young people do remain involved in that very important community organisation. That is an example of how it applies to community organisations as well as to businesses.

The other three strategic aims are: creating the conditions in which Queensland businesses can innovative and thrive in the digital economy; attracting, growing and retaining talent in Queensland's digital sector and research institutions; and attracting investment and global partnerships to grow our digital economy.

Although I did say I wanted to have the thing based in the very, I suppose, mundane business about small to mediums getting involved in a digital presence, I also want to make sure that we are getting those new digital start-ups, the sort of Halfbrick that Shainiel Deo got going as I explained earlier today. It is important that we are in that game as well.

The government has a vital role to play in setting the conditions for businesses to be able to start up and flourish and to be early adopters of digital technologies, contents and services. *GoDigitalQld* also contains actions that are going to seek to reduce administrative and regulatory barriers on Queensland businesses and industry, particularly our small to medium businesses through the increased adoption of digital delivery of services by agencies and more streamlined business processes.

One of the most significant actions in the strategy is for us to develop a digital government framework to guide Queensland government agencies to embrace a digital-first approach—not digital only, but digital first—as to the future design and delivery of their programs and services. That is already happening. Of course, the government is very much attuned into this with the open data strategy and our one-stop shop and the digital-first process to enable and ensure that departments are dealing in this way with our government customers. That is a summary of the plan. I think it is a very important one. It was certainly great to see the engagement we got in Bundaberg. I am sure that is going to be replicated throughout Queensland as we take the program forward.

Madam Chair, I do have at some stage some corrections, some further information, as to matters that we undertook to give you. I don't know whether you want to fit that in before 5 o'clock, but I wanted to alert you to that.

CHAIR: If you do have any extra information I am sure that it would be appreciated.

Mr WALKER: Are you happy to take that now?

CHAIR: It would be appreciated.

Mr WALKER: I might just have to liaise with the Director-General to make sure that I am giving correct information. There is one that Mr Hill was dealing with so I might ask him to go back and deal with that. I think it is the William Street project.

Mr Hill: Thanks, Minister. The question was in relation to the dashboard results relating to the 75 William Street data centre migration. I said off the top I thought the completion date was July. The original completion date was actually May so I apologise for that. Then you asked about the change in

budget and why that had decreased. Essentially it was based on original project costs that were based on an option to migrate services that were based on a worst case scenario so that is what the budget worked to. Through the procurement process a cheaper alternative was identified and the cost reductions for the transition have been achieved resulting in the updated budget. So we budgeted on worst case; through some smart procurement we have actually delivered a better result.

Mr WALKER: Thanks, Mr Hill. I have just had some information back from my office, Madam Chair, that may be of interest to the member for Redcliffe. I am certainly advised that in my published diary meetings with Mr Stevens are shown on 12 February, 2 April and 21 May. They may not be shown with Mr Stevens' name there, they may be with Assistant Minister for e-government or something which may explain why they were not picked up. I believe, and I don't have these to hand, there would certainly be other meetings with QGCIO, for example, at which Mr Stevens would have attended but wouldn't be shown specifically as meeting with Mr Stevens.

Ms D'ATH: Could I ask you to repeat those dates, please?

Mr WALKER: Yes. 12 February, 2 April, 21 May.

Ms D'ATH: You believe they are all this year, 2014?

Mr WALKER: Yes.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you.

Mr WALKER: I think you will find that they are meetings with the QGCIO and Mr Stevens and the directors-general met with Assistant Minister Stevens as well. Mr Hill is really good, but his writing is not as good as he is.

Mr Hill: Thanks, Minister. I meant to say this is really the dashboard in action, isn't it? In relation to the DCC project I said before that the project had reached a migration of 95 per cent for email. It is actually 100 per cent. They actually managed to get the last part of the department that was due to migrate across on the weekend. That was the State Archives. It is actually 100 per cent completion. It will now move into stage 3 of that project which is the collaboration. We will scope that up and you will also see that on the dashboard as well.

Mr WALKER: Madam Chair, there have been, I think, different figures given by a number of us in respect to funding support to CIAF during discussion in the Arts section. I think Ms Herring was mentioning a figure of 1.4 million. I think the figure that I referred to was \$1.568. Just to clarify, 1.568 is the correct figure. I think Ms Herring was just giving a general figure rather than a specific one. Director-General, do you have one to clarify as well?

Ms Rickerby: I do. I have a correction when I was talking about the Science and Innovation Action Plan reporting being on our website. I was talking about the outcomes we are delivering with this plan and that we publish our progress report. I was being overly ambitious because the plan has only been up there since October and we only review it after 12 months. So we certainly will be having the progress at that point but we are not doing interim progress reports.

CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Rickerby. Minister, with reference to the fundamental change in the management of government ICT on page 5 of the SDS, can you outline the reforms that have taken place to avoid another failed Health payroll disaster?

Mr WALKER: Thank you, chair. The government has been working hard to ensure that Queenslanders never have to face another debacle like the Labor-led failed Health payroll system. I think Commissioner Chesterman in his report said that that was probably the worst example of public administration failure that he had seen. There is a waste and mismanagement cost here of \$1.2 billion that could have been spent delivering more services to Queenslanders. In order to clean up the mess left by Labor the government commissioned an audit of ICT within the Queensland government and that was undertaken by the QGCIO during 2012. Following the audit we have put measures in place to ensure transparency around the way departments govern and report on their ICT projects and programs of work. Improved governance, including clear accountability—and we have seen a bit of that today with the dashboard—has been identified as a key risk mitigation strategy for ICT and ICT enabled initiatives.

Under the ICT strategy my department has developed the ICT Management Framework and that framework outlines clear accountabilities for initiatives, drives the application of best practice portfolio program and project management, gated reviews and assurance. The Queensland government ICT program and project assurance framework defines the assurance roles and responsibilities and defines risk based assurance based on the complexity and potential impact of the

initiative. Agencies must demonstrate their compliance with the ICT Management Framework and wider government and ICT policies before making submissions to the Procurement and ICT Directors-General Council which is a council, a group of directors-general, who supervise these matters. The QGCIO supports agencies in the submission process and provides ongoing executive support to the directors-general council. Then, of course, to help ensure openness and transparency my department has also led the development of the ICT dashboard which helps to restore accountability in government with all departments providing their project related information and updating it regularly. I will just see whether Mr Mills wants to add any more about the process and how he sees it working as QGCIO.

Mr Mills: In summary, ICT governance help minimises program and project risks and prevents the sorts of problems we have seen in the past. As the Minister said, key parts of that are the management framework which includes the investment and assurance review process which my division oversees. We have implemented a project, program and portfolio framework based on international standards associated with management processes. We now have oversight at director-general level through the Directors-General Council, which is a group of directors-general from the agencies that look at all major funding initiatives. Also the contestability units established in agencies ensure that there is digital assessment of the ICT sourcing options.

Mr WALKER: Madam Chairman, I do have some further information on the information sought by the member for South Brisbane on ticketed events. Is it appropriate to read that into the record now?

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr WALKER: I think the member was looking for ticketed exhibitions over the last couple of years. The figures I have here are that for 2013-14 there were three ticketed exhibitions and the total attendance to the ticketed exhibitions for the year was 324,251. The percentage of attendance to ticketed exhibitions as against total attendance was 24 per cent and the relevant exhibitions were *Cai Guo-Qiang: Falling back to earth* with 229,323 people; *California Design: Living in a modern way*, 59,999 people—I wish that my sister had gone to that one just to make it 60,000, but she didn't; and *Quilts: 1700-1945*, attended by 34,929 people. A total attendance to QAGOMA of 1.352 million people. In 2012-13, one ticketed exhibition and the commencement of the *Quilts* exhibition. Total attendance to ticketed exhibitions for this year was 119,659. The percentage of attendance to ticketed exhibitions as against total attendance was 9.5 per cent. The relevant ticketed exhibitions were *Portrait of Spain: The masterpieces from the Prado* which was attended by 111,830 people and *Quilts*, for part of that year, attended by 7,829 people. In 2011-12 there were five ticketed exhibitions. The total attendance to ticketed exhibitions for the year was 257,445 people. The percentage of attendance to ticketed exhibitions to total attendance was 16.5 per cent. The relevant exhibitions were *Surrealism* attended by 93,106 people; *Henri Cartier-Bresson* attended by 27,519 people; *Matisse: Drawing life* attended by 96,111; *Modern Woman: Daughters and Lovers* from the Musee d'Orsay Paris attended by 31,371 people; and *Art, Love and Life* attended by 9,338 people.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I call the member for Redcliffe.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, you can take this on notice just as an addition in relation to the information you are getting on the dashboard for us. If you could provide how many projects have been either an amber or a red over the time that the dashboard has been operating it would be appreciated.

Mr WALKER: That is an expansion. I think you originally asked for red?

Ms D'ATH: I think I asked at the time how many amber.

Mr WALKER: Amber or red.

Ms D'ATH: Amber or red over the life that the dashboard has been operating. Minister, you specifically answered questions in relation to Q Health and the payroll issue and what your department has done to endeavour to ensure something like that didn't happen again. Looking at the document that you tabled earlier, being the list of initiatives on the ICT dashboard, Q Health has seven projects that are listed as amber currently, the largest number of projects overall of the departments. Those are projects that go to authentication and authorisation, the rapid sign on, the cardiac information solutions program, credentialing project, metropolitan intensive care unit project, payroll self-service project, standard operating environment and the Viewer clinical data repository based service. Can you advise what advice and what assistance you are giving to Q Health, mindful of what has happened in the past with Q Health, and what work is being done right from the start of these projects to endeavour to stop projects becoming amber in the first place?

Mr WALKER: The first thing to point out, of course, is that while my department manages the dashboard and the reporting through the dashboard, the projects are housed in are the responsibility of the home department. I will ask the QGCIO to advise what involvement the department has or his office has in those issues?

Mr Mills: Queensland Health are just going through a revamp of their ICT governance structure which was announced by the DG of Health several weeks ago. Some examples of involvement: myself and Mr Stower are both members of the payroll working group which is looking at the next generation of payroll—that work has commenced—including other independent members from outside Health. They are just revamping their ICT structures and I have been invited to be a member of their senior information technology steering committee. Members of my staff are also members of lower level committees on their work and also we do get invited onto specific project boards when appropriate.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, does your department only get involved at the point that it becomes amber or red or are you involved from the start of these projects?

Mr DOWLING: Madam Chair, could I interject and get some clarity around the green, amber and red light situation? I get the distinct impression that they can lapse in and out of green, amber and/or red so to ask a question how many times a project is in amber or how many amber projects there have been could be false and give a misleading account. Is that an accurate assessment from my point of view? With the amber, red and green for projects, I imagine they are simply there as an indicator to draw attention to the respective minister and the respective department that they need to address something if it slips from green to amber and it is corrected so the project is back on track and it is simply an indicator, not a measure of the project falling or failing?

Mr WALKER: I think that analysis is correct. Certainly projects are reassessed as they go along. They might fall behind in time and then they are caught up or budgets might be rejigged along the way because it is realised that an additional component is needed or a component is not needed or, as Mr Hill just pointed out, that savings are made along the way. So it is a very fluid situation. I respect the information that the honourable member is seeking. It is of course subject to that very fact that a project might have been red for one reporting period but it has caught up or it is now back on track. That does make it difficult to assess. I am happy to try to give the information in the way that the honourable member sought it, but it does have the restrictions that you rightly point out.

Mr DOWLING: Could you tease out for the benefit of all the members: if a project goes amber and then back to green and then back to amber, would that be reflected as two separate incidents within the one project? We might get a number that 100 projects went amber but it might be one project went amber half a dozen times rather than—

CHAIR: Member for Redlands, I think we are cutting across the opposition's time frame here.

Mr DOWLING: I apologise.

Ms D'ATH: Thank you, Chair. Minister, I think we might have got sidetracked there. I am keen to try to get in a couple of other questions before we finish, but I was asking whether your department is involved in assisting with these projects in other agencies from the beginning or you only get involved once it gets to an amber or red stage?

Mr WALKER: I will ask Mr Mills to talk about the detail of that, but in broad terms the management process we have does involve my department being involved from the very beginning of major projects including any budget submission to CBRC or cabinet submission to approve a program, not so much to underwrite the fact that what the program the department is seeking is one that meets its own business needs. That is really one for the department but in relation to its fitting into the overall process that is more for my department to assist with, to confirm that it is where the government is going in its broad IT strategy. When it goes to the Directors-General Council, for example, one Director-General might say, 'This is something we have already solved standing on our heads. Why are you doing it this way?' There are those sorts of processes as we go through. There is a broader involvement but I will ask Mr Mills to speak in more detail.

Mr Mills: As part of the new structure all agencies are required to undertake independent assurance of all their ICT projects. For the lower level, lower risk ones that can be internal but once they reach what we call level 3 and 4 risk rating that must be independent external assurance. At each gate—there are a series of gates and I will not go into that detail; that would be quite a long, boring conversation—they need to do that. If the gate is further than six months apart they are

required to do one every six months so there is structure in place for the governance bodies within those agencies to have independent reviews of how that project is going.

At certain gates those reviews then come to my team for a further review and then we take that to the Directors-General Council. When they are going to CBRC or asking for funds it then goes to the minister with our advice on whether he should co-sign those submissions or not depending on all the information we gathered in that period.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, I wish to go to the quality of IT listed on page 9 of the SDS. You have talked about the importance of quality assurance and assisting departments to have the best quality of data available and systems that are value for money but working efficiently as well. I particularly want to take you to the results of the Auditor-General's report on internal control systems for 2013-14. I am sure as a minister you take the Queensland Audit Office reports very seriously, as any government does, but this particular report notes that the information systems and information security remains the primary area of audit concern making up 84 per cent of information systems issues identified compared to 64 per cent in the previous year of 2012-13 and 83 per cent in 2011-12. It identifies the main security weaknesses identified: inadequate review of system user roles and their activities; users having inappropriate access to sensitive or restricted transactions; vulnerability to external attack from the internet and management of privileged accounts including restricting access to these accounts and monitoring of account activity. Minister, considering the most recent reports in the media about release of personal information of an employee with Queensland Health, Dr Anthony Lynham, can you advise what steps as the ICT minister you are taking to prevent the leaking of confidential information across government and to—

Mr DOWLING: A point of order, Madam Chair: I think that is presumptive. There is innuendo there.

Ms D'ATH: The information is now in the public arena that has been obtained without that employee's permission.

Mr DOWLING: It is implying that it has come from the government.

CHAIR: Member for Redcliffe, get to the point of what your question is. There is a lot of comment and discussion there.

Ms D'ATH: Minister, it is a serious allegation. As ICT Minister, are you taking any steps to investigate whether there has been any confidential breaches and taking up the Auditor-General's comments about concerns of a lack of review and inappropriate access to sensitive or restricted transactions?

Mr WALKER: Certainly we are taking the Auditor-General's report seriously, as we should. In July 2014 the Queensland Audit Office report No. 1 for 2014-15 titled *Results of audits: internal control systems* was tabled in the parliament. As you said, it summarises the results of evaluation of the systems of financial control across 21 government departments. A part of this audit focuses on the IT systems controls and their effectiveness. So it is not all to do with IT systems but there is a part of it to do with IT systems. Information systems issues increase slightly to 25 from 22 last year, so it is an issue for us. It falls within Mr Mills' purview and I might ask him to comment more specifically on the Auditor-General's report.

Mr Mills: When you look at the Auditor-General's report, most of the issues he raised were around system management: its inadequate review of system user roles and their activities; users having inappropriate access to sensitive or restricted transactions; vulnerability to external attack from the internet; and management of privileged accounts. All of those are around the day-to-day management, which is the accountability and responsibility of the agencies. We are working with those agencies and advising them of those issues. We are now commencing a program of work to look at the vulnerabilities of agency systems and working with agencies on mitigation strategies to mitigate those that we find.

CHAIR: Thank you for that. We have now come to the end of the opposition question time. I call on the member for Waterford.

Mr LATTER: Minister, I note your previous reference to IT media, and thank you for tabling that. Naturally it recently awarded Queensland second place in comparison to other states. Do you believe that your ICT renewal agenda referenced on page 5 of the SDS has contributed to this and/or is there anything further that you would like to add?

Mr WALKER: Thank you for that. I am sure the ICT renewal agenda certainly contributed to our placing towards the top of that list. The progress made to date and the deliverables that we have

produced provide a foundation that will enable government agencies to progress their own ICT reform. Over the next 12 months the focus for us is going to be on working with industry and government agencies to drive renewal by building capability, identifying synergies and opportunities and overcoming barriers. There are clear benefits to be gained from continuing with the ICT renewal agenda which will show demonstrable results. As the Director-General and I both commented this morning in another context, many plans have been prepared. Now is the time for putting them into effect and for gaining the benefits of those. The action plan will be reviewed to ensure it is aligned with the Queensland Plan. Ongoing renewal work will be centred on working in partnership with government agencies and with industry to ensure the ICT strategic vision for a transformed ICT climate is achieved.

I think the progress that we have had to date has led to a number of things—clearer accountability in processes to ensure successful ICT investment decision making and appropriate risk management through the procurement and ICT Directors-General Council governance body; the mechanisms for small to medium enterprises to actively participate in contracting government business; an enterprise social network that can be leveraged for collaborative and ideas sharing amongst government communities; a workforce planning framework focused on delivering improved outcomes from workforce transformation activities—that will be an important one for us—improvements to the open data portal potentially leading to growth opportunities for the community; an arrangement supporting departments to source and/or develop critical skills through a university network; greater transparency of significant government initiatives through the public-facing ICT dashboard; and new tools to support the practical application of the contestability framework to ensure the best value for money and ICT service delivery models for agencies. The renewal program has brought us to a good point. We still have a lot to do to deliver on it, but the signs are good, the ranking is heartening, and we will continue to pursue improvements in that regard.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. We have about two minutes left for a final question.

Mr WALKER: Madam Chair, I do have one other clarification so perhaps I could squeeze that in first, if I may?

CHAIR: Yes, please do.

Mr WALKER: Ms Roach has just passed me this note that she indicated—this is to do with open data—that by 30 June 2014 DSITIA had published 188 datasets. That is the correct figure. However, more specifically, 160 datasets were published in 2013-14. Some were published prior to 1 July 2013, and 31 datasets have been initially identified to deliver in 2014-15.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. There are two minutes left for the member for Albert.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Minister, with reference to your department and the provision of payroll services on page 10 of the SDS, since the Health payroll debacle have any payroll systems been upgraded?

Mr WALKER: They have. My department's shared corporate services division is the area that provides payroll and other services that underpin the smooth operations of government agencies in this regard. To make sure she does not miss her place in the sun, because it is her section that deals with that, I will ask Ms Jeans to give you the detail on the pay systems upgrade.

Ms Jeans: Since 2013 we have acted to secure the delivery of public servants pay. Queensland Shared Services manages a number of payroll systems that have been out of vendor support and therefore considered to be at risk and requiring remedial attention. Those payroll activities are delivered across three different platforms—SAP, Aurion and Lattice. The Department of Transport and Main Roads' SAP HR payroll system has been recently upgraded and went live in June this year and now has an upgraded SAP platform. The Aurion system has been upgraded to meet vendor supported version 10.3. That work was completed in November 2013 and we are in the process of migrating many agencies left on the old SAP unsupported systems across to the Aurion upgraded system. There are already 11 customers on that Aurion platform and another eight agencies to be transitioned.

The unsupported Lattice hardware system, which supports the former Department of Community Safety, has been replaced with virtual servers and new hardware to mitigate against any hardware failure risk until a solution upgrade replacement project is completed. This work was completed in October 2013. The replacement of Lattice HR payroll systems is currently being progressed for a public tender for an as-a-service offering being led by the Public Safety Business Agency.

CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Jeans. Is there anything further you wanted to mention, Minister?

Mr WALKER: No, Madam Chair. We will certainly aim to have any matters we have taken on notice reported to you by five tomorrow.

CHAIR: The time for consideration of the estimates of the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts has expired. Minister, on behalf of the committee I particularly thank you for your commitment today; the director-general, Ms Sue Rickerby, the six arts CEOs, Mr Evan Hill and all of the departmental officers who have contributed today. I know it is an enormous amount of work. I particularly thank you all for your attendance here today. Your responses to any questions on notice, as you mentioned, are due with the committee secretariat by 5 pm tomorrow, which is Friday the 18th. This completes the committee's hearings into the matters referred to it by the parliament. Before I conclude, on behalf of the committee I would like to thank all the of the Parliamentary Service staff who have assisted today particularly under the direction of our research director, Bernice Watson, all of the research staff who have assisted and all of the other parliamentary officers including Hansard and those who have been assisting Hansard today. We really do appreciate your effort. The committee's report on both of the portfolios considered as part of the 2014 estimates process will be tabled by 1 August this year. I now declare the second and final 2014 estimates hearing of the Education and Innovation Committee closed.

Committee adjourned at 5.02 pm