

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Wednesday 5 June 2019 - Estimates Committee A (Jaensch)

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Wednesday 5 June 2019

MEMBERS

Mr Shelton (Chair)
Mr Tucker (Deputy Chair)
Ms O'Connor
Ms White

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Ms Butler
Ms Dow
Ms Houston
Ms O'Byrne
Ms Standen
Dr Woodruff

IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Roger Jaensch MP, Minister for Human Services; Minister for Housing; Minister for Planning

Ministerial Office

Rowena Gilbertson, Chief of Staff
Anthony Reid, Senior Adviser; Planning
Simon Duffy, Senior Adviser; Housing
Lara Kirkpatrick, Senior Adviser; Children and Youth Services
Lauryn Smith, Adviser; Community Services

Department of Communities - Human Services

Ginna Webster, Secretary
Gail Eaton-Briggs, Deputy Secretary, Children & Youth Services
Sam Gunner, Manager, Executive Coordination & Communication
Rod Fazackerley, Principal Finance Officer
Kathy Baker, Executive Director, Capability & Resources

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Ingrid Ganley, Director, Disability & Community Services
Mathew Healey, Executive Director, Engagement & Innovation
Mandy Clarke, Executive Director, Standards & Performance
Noel Fittock, Manager, Quality Improvement & Workforce Development

Department of Communities - Housing

Ginna Webster, Secretary
Peter White, Deputy Secretary, Housing, Disability & Community Services
Sam Gunner, Manager, Executive Coordination & Communication
Rod Fazackerley, Principal Finance Officer
Kathy Baker, Executive Director, Capability & Resources

Department of Justice - Planning

Kathrine Morgan-Wicks Secretary, Department of Justice
Kristy Bourne, Deputy Secretary, Administration of Justice, Department of Justice
Brian Risby, Director, Policy Planning Unit, Department of Justice
Peter Fischer, Acting Executive Commissioner, Tasmanian Planning Commission
Sally Bridge, Senior Mediation Officer, Resource Management Planning Appeal Tribunal

The Committee met at 9 a.m.

CHAIR (Mr Shelton) - Welcome everybody, thank you minister and thank you members of the committee for turning up again today, as if you wouldn't.

I remind members when it comes to activities on the desk that it is very difficult for *Hansard* to pick up what is going on if we are clicking binders and moving papers around. Be aware of that and be careful. When you are answering a question, if you could speak into your microphones and not be too far away from them so *Hansard* get a clear indication of what is going on.

Questions on notice: I remind the committee that the questions have to be put, the minister has to acknowledge them and accept them on notice. Then, as we know, write them out, give them to the secretary. The secretary will check at the end of the day to make sure that is okay but we need to clarify that the minister takes each part of that question on notice. Make sure of that when it happens to prevent any confusion at the end of the day. Then it becomes part of the official correspondence from the committee.

Minister, we have the opportunity for you now to make a short opening statement and introduce the officers that you have at the table before we get underway, so thank you very much.

DIVISION 2

Department of Communities Tasmania

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Chair, and other members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear in front of you and answer your questions.

I bring to the table with me Ginna Webster, the secretary of the Department of Communities Tasmania. With us to start is Rod Fazackerley, the Principal Finance Officer for the Department of Communities Tasmania.

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I have a brief opening statement. Since 2016 our redesign of the child safety system, Strong Families - Safe Kids has delivered a range of actions to improve outcomes for Tasmanian children, young people and their families.

Last year we invested an additional \$24 million in funding to support this redesign, including 25 more child safety officers and other frontline staff and assisting vulnerable children with very complex needs in out-of-home care.

A major achievement and a major milestone for the Strong Families - Safe Kids redesign in 2018-19 has been the commencement of the Strong Families - Safe Kids advice and referral line and I will have more to say about that as we get into our discussions.

The 2019-20 Budget provides funding for all of our elections commitments as well as continuing significant additional funding for important projects that support our service delivery and continuing reform program. The major focus is on early intervention to reduce the number of children and young people needing to enter care by providing more intensive early support to families who are at risk.

Additional funding of \$16.9 million has been allocated to meet the growth in demand for out-of-home care services, particularly for children in specialised placements with complex needs.

The reality is that there are some children in out-of-home care who require extensive periods of time receiving specialised care with highly intensive wraparound services while safe, appropriate and stable options are found to address their future needs. Some of these children require individualised supports to respond to their extraordinary level of need with a personalised care plan that cannot be met through regular foster care arrangements.

The support often includes modified accommodation, 24-hour seven-day-a-week care and needs met related to their specific needs in education, health and wellbeing. Special support and intervention services that can include therapeutic, medical, disability or similar supports plus additional needs that are over and above that for their health, education and wellbeing.

The funding is allocated for the 2019-20 financial year due to the work that the Department of Communities Tasmania has commenced to look at ways we can better support these children in the future.

This includes looking at other models internationally and interstate and step-down approaches to reintegrate these children back into their communities. Services that are being considered are more effective and less intensive than the highly supported 24/7 rostered care. This work will inform future funding needs in future years.

We are also continuing the rollout of the Strong Families - Safe Kids implementation plan with an additional \$2.3 million to invest in strengthening quality assurance processes, improve practice in investigation and response, delivery of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework, and ongoing change management activity, to embed the principles of the redesign within the operation of the Child Safety Service.

The additional funding will also support the continuation of the serious events review team and cross-agency oversight committee for Children and Youth Services. The serious events review

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process provides a robust objective and timely review of serious events that ultimately improves the quality of care for vulnerable children and young people.

Additional funding has also been provided for the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for additional resources to support the office, to promote the rights and wellbeing of young people, enabling better consultation with young people so they can express their views and opinions and play an active role in decision-making processes that affect them.

Together, our investment in this Budget will increase our ability to ensure that vulnerable children and families get the support they need when they need it. Thank you.

CHAIR - Thank you, minister. Ms 'O'Byrne, before you start, I forgot to mention that we will be having a break at 11 a.m. which is the changeover from Human Services to the next one, as long as the committee is aware of that.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can you take me through how the Intensive Family Engagement Services is working? How many staff does it have? How many families does it support? How regularly do people receive visits? A bit of an overview of how that works.

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, I am happy to do that. As I said in my overview, a key component and mission of the Strong Families - Safe Kids redesign is to better support families before they get into crisis, before harm occurs. By giving earlier support, the idea is that children are less likely to be in harm's way and to be removed from their families and relationships within families are less likely to be breaking down.

We allocated money to this in our first term and, as part of our election commitment, we have committed an additional \$7.5 million over three years for additional intensive family and parenting support services. We have run the pilot for a year. We have added more resources to extend it. There have now been 62 families who have received support and intensive support services under the Intensive Family Engagement Services - IFES.

Ms O'BYRNE - If we call if IFES for the rest of the day, Chair, we will be comfortable with that.

Mr JAENSCH - How has that been performing? We have had that service providing up to 20 hours per week for a period of three to five months using models that focus on improving parenting behaviour and practical supports as well as role modelling for the family. The trial was conducted between December 2017 and November 2018. It involved four non-government service providers. The trial initially provided intensive in-home support to 50 families at a cost of \$1.15 million.

In the 2018-19 financial year, \$1.3 million from the \$7.5 million was used to extend funding agreements with the current providers and a review has been undertaken with input from the University of Tasmania to evaluate the work that has been done. The findings of that review are being considered and we look forward to extending that service.

Ms O'BYRNE - I am just getting my head back around all of the child protection work. Can you take me through how the serious incident review team works? Are they a statewide team? How many staff do they have? How many matters they would have had referred to them? How you would escalate going to the serious incident review team?

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Mr JAENSCH - We call it Serious Events Review Team and if we can use SERT. This is the portfolio of abbreviation to that acronym.

Ms O'BYRNE - No wonder families get confused with us all the time.

Mr JAENSCH - That is why we need wraparound services. The Serious Events Review Team and the Serious Events Review Committee - SERC.

Ms O'BYRNE - SERC and SERT. Can you take me through SERT first? Then we can get on to SERC?

Mr JAENSCH - Both were established in 2017 as a result of our Government's commitment to establishing independent review mechanisms. The SERT team undertakes reviews of child death and serious injury where a child or young person or their family has been known to Children and Youth Services within three years prior to the event. SERT reviews and identifies practice and system improvements largely within our Children and Youth Services system. There is a strong commitment to involve staff in reviews and improvement activities and mechanisms for monitoring and reporting and improving deficits. Once they have been considered by the SERC -

Ms O'BYRNE - Before you head to the SERC, can we stay with the team before we go to the committee? How many people are involved in that team? My question was the staff and their location, the numbers of matters they would have had referred to them, that they would have dealt with, that sort of thing?

Mr JAENSCH - The SERT is currently made up of 2.8 FTEs, which comprises a full-time manager who is also a reviewer and 1.8 FTE in reviewers who are employed as senior quality and practice advisors, what we call SQPAs.

Ms O'BYRNE - Perhaps we could call them senior quality and practice advisors for this committee, minister.

Mr JAENSCH - The SERT team is managed outside -

Ms O'BYRNE - How many matters would they have dealt with? That was the question. Can you explain the team, their location, the number of matters referred to them and dealt with?

Mr JAENSCH - I am happy for the secretary to give you an update on detailed information of cases, of numbers.

Ms WEBSTER - Thank you. Through you minister, there have been 17 SERT reviews completed and those reviews relate to matters from 2011 to 2018. We have six currently in progress.

Ms O'BYRNE - Probably there isn't an answer to this one. Through you, minister, is there a rough amount of time they take or are they dependent upon the case that you are dealing with?

Mr JAENSCH - Around four months, I am told.

Ms O'BYRNE - Thank you. Then some of them go to the committee? Is that what then happens? How do we escalate to the committee's role? Who are the committee?

Mr JAENSCH - The Serious Events Review Committee comprises Scott Tilyard, the deputy commissioner of Tas Police; Richard Cowling, the assistant commissioner of Tas Police; Tony Lawler, the chief medical officer from the Department of Health; Dominica Kelly, the nursing director early years of Child Health and Parenting Services; Ruth Davidson, director of child and student wellbeing at the Department of Education, our own Gail Eaton-Briggs, the deputy secretary for children, Department of Communities Tasmania, Greg Brown, director of strategic youth services, Department of Communities Tasmania, Susan Diamond, the director of program support.

Ms O'BYRNE - There is only one person here I haven't worked directly with at some stage.

Mr JAENSCH - Then I am sure you will have great confidence in them as a team, as you know them well. Pam Honan, director of child safety service Communities Tasmania and Catherine Campbell, manager of governance and risk from Communities Tasmania; and Kate Polglase, principal legal officer for Communities Tasmania.

Ms O'BYRNE - How is that an independent committee then? Your original commitment was it would be an independent process but it appears to be a governmental committee. We do not have any independents. Did I miss the independent person?

Ms O'CONNOR - Should the Commissioner for Children be on that committee?

Ms O'BYRNE - That would be an almost independent person.

Ms O'CONNOR - I would argue they are a statutorily independent.

Ms O'BYRNE - There doesn't appear to be an independent committee. I have police, children's services, education, community services. Did I miss the independent person?

Mr JAENSCH - Do you want me to answer.

Ms O'BYRNE - Yes.

Mr JAENSCH - The SERT team is managed outside the normal CYS operational business units and reports directly to the secretary. The SERT reports go to the SERC.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can you please use team and committee because I think the language is going to be hard to pick up for Hansard, when you are trying to do a C and a T.

Mr JAENSCH - The Serious Events Review Team is managed outside the Children and Youth Services operational business units and reports directly to the deputy secretary of children. The Serious Events Review Team's reports are reviewed by the Serious Events Review Committee, which is across agency -

Ms O'BYRNE - So it is a whole-of-government across agency committee. It is not an independent committee?

Mr JAENSCH - And once they have been considered by the SERC, the SERT's reports are also provided to the Coroner as part of any investigation into child deaths. The Coroner has commended the SERT review process and the quality of reports that have come through. What that

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has meant for us operationally is that when there is an incident we are able to mobilise the review process, gather information and learn everything we can from it internally, rather than waiting for a coroner's report that may be some months or years down the track. What has been reported in a number of coroner's reports is that the coroner's responses to and recommendations to events that the coroner has examined have often been already underway or completed thanks to us having this internal process.

Ms O'BYRNE - I am comfortable with that process. I am interested that it is not an independent committee. How often does it meet and how many cases has it investigated since its formation? I am assuming it is of the 17 that we had before, was it?

Mr JAENSCH - I might ask the secretary to talk about the frequency of meetings.

Ms WEBSTER - There have been 17 reviews completed. I will just have to get some information about the number that have been before the SERC.

Ms O'BYRNE - Scott Tilyard suggested 10 to 12. Can you get me something more formal than that?

Ms WEBSTER - I certainly can.

Ms O'BYRNE - Do I need to put that on notice or can someone provide that?

Ms WEBSTER - No, we can get that for you. They usually meet every three months or so. It depends on the number of matters and the reports that are ready to go before the committee.

Ms O'BYRNE - I do have another question then I am happy to share. How many of those matters that have been referred, those families, would have been subject or supported by the Intensive Family Engagement Services. Obviously, you have some historical ones that we will discount. Since the Intensive Family Engagement Services came in, how many of that 17 in the lesser number that can be run into 12 would have been subject to that level of support.

Mr JAENSCH - Of support?

Ms O'BYRNE - Yes. There are 17 cases that have been investigated. We have established some of them are historical cases. Of the ones that have been in place since you put in the intensive family support program, how many of those cases were families that were being supported through the Intensive Family Engagement Services?

Mr JAENSCH - The secretary has indicated that we can get you that number today.

Ms O'BYRNE - Okay. Do you want me to put that on notice and then as it comes in we just delete it from the process? That makes it a bit easier at the end of the day, if you have not been able to get it. The two questions were the number of cases.

Mr JAENSCH - The number of cases that have gone to the committee is 12. The number of cases you are referring there to.

Ms O'BYRNE - Of those 12, those that would have been with the Intensive Family Engagement Services.

Mr JAENSCH - We will confirm that. I hope to be able to do that while we are in session.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, the reason I am following this line of questioning causes me some significant concern and I thought very deeply about the appropriate place that these matters are raised. I am not going to identify the child; as a former minister I am conscious of that. However, I want to take you to one of those investigations of a child that was supposedly in receipt of support by Intensive Family Engagement Services.

At birth, health workers at the hospital - and I won't identify the hospital but you will know this case as there is no way you wouldn't, having been in your seat - were so concerned for the safety of this child that they suggested the child not be discharged with the mother after birth. My concern is that the decision of the department was to wrap Intensive Family Engagement Services around this mum and her child but it is not clear that this was ever put in place before the child died.

Minister, can you confirm, without identifying this family, whether Intensive Family Engagement Services visited this mum and baby before they were discharged or in any of the weeks from discharge through to the child's death?

Mr JAENSCH - As you have indicated, you appreciate that it is inappropriate for me to be talking about individual cases. I know you are trying hard to make a broad characterisation but if I am going to respond to that it would be to a question around a specific case and I am not entirely -

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, is there a circumstance where a child is at risk that those visits would not take place?

CHAIR - Order, Ms O'Byrne. There are sensitivities here so allow the minister to explain his point of view.

Mr JAENSCH - For me to be able to answer your question truthfully and accurately I would have to know which case we are referring to and I would need to be able to check our records. You and I can both agree that we are not going to be identifying cases here, so I don't think I can answer that question.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, in a circumstance of a child being identified at such significant risk in a hospital that you wrapped Intensive Family Engagement Services around them, can you rule out that there would be a situation where those visits did not take place before the child died? I am happy for you to seek some advice from the secretary.

Mr JAENSCH - It sounds hypothetical.

Ms O'BYRNE - It is not hypothetical. If you are applying Intensive Family Engagement Services in order to keep a mum and child together and you don't provide that service and the child dies, I want you to rule out that there is any potential that none of those visits would have taken place.

Mr JAENSCH - As I said a moment ago, I am uncomfortable providing any definitive response on a case that we have agreed we won't be identifying here. It is just not sensible for me to do so. We are happy to provide some more information to the committee on how the IFES process is triggered and how it works.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, the reason I am raising these questions is because, as you have said, we don't want to have to wait for a coronial investigation to prove that we are failing children, and if there is something we can do to resolve these matters we should be doing so. You have indicated already that is what you do as a result of the reports you get. We are talking about a maximum of 12 cases. We have already identified that many of those are historical, going back to 2011, and many of them I would be very familiar with. There may be only a few that have happened under your watch and this is one of them so I don't believe you would not know about it. I have been in your job and I know how these things impact.

If I thought it might be only a one-off I would be less concerned. I would think maybe this is the process developing, but we are also aware of another incident investigation into a child who was supposedly being supported by IFES who self-harmed in the most horrific manner. You would be aware of this. I am not going to give any other identifying features, but of a very small amount of a very small amount of cases that are being investigated, it would appear from the information we are receiving that your Intensive Family Support Services does not work. If that is the case, minister, by saying people are being supported by this service and then not providing it, we are failing those children. In these two circumstances, we had a death and an unmentionably horrible self-harm incident.

Minister, what I want to know from you is as a result of those investigations, what advice did you receive, can you confirm that they were being supported by the Intensive Family Engagements Services, and what action have you taken? If they haven't been supported, minister, that is a decision for which you are culpable.

Mr JAENSCH - Chair, the member is providing some assertions about one or more cases without identifying those cases, which I won't do in this committee and I don't think she will either, so I can't give the definitive answers she is asking for. I am afraid that's all I can offer. I can talk about the way the IFES process works and how the review process feeds back into our care model.

The overall initiative here is an attempt to provide earlier support and intervention that prevents harm and relationship breakdown and ultimately removal of children from families and removal of children from harm's way. We have run a pilot, extended it, we have reviewed the work that is being done and we are considering improvements and evolution of the IFES program. We are dealing with a very high-risk, sensitive and complex set of issues here and I am very reluctant to give definitive answers when we cannot clearly identify which cases we are talking about, so I am not therefore able to say what advice I received or how we acted on it.

Ms O'BYRNE - Chair, I have one last question on this line.

CHAIR - You can come back to that line but I am sure there are other questions -

Ms O'BYRNE - I am sure the minister would prefer not to come back to this line. Minister, you reviewed the pilot, you received the reports and you can't advise this committee whether Intensive Family Engagement Services failed.

Mr JAENSCH - Chair, the member is again referring to, on one hand, a specific case that we are not identifying and, on the other, asking me if Intensive Family Engagement Services failed.

Ms O'BYRNE - It is incomprehensible that you do not know the answer to that, minister.

CHAIR - Order. I am sure the minister, in other explanations, will get into the discussions about how the process works and so on. Ms O'Connor has a line of questioning and we need to move on.

Ms O'CONNOR - I wanted to get some information from the minister relating to the budget for out-of-home care. As you would be aware, minister, in the Premier's Estimates on Monday he agreed to quarantine the Tourism marketing budget from the efficiency dividend being applied to agencies. Yesterday, when we sought the same commitment from the Treasurer that the out-of-home care budget would be quarantined and, in fact, the entire Child Safety budget would be quarantined from cuts, he refused to give that commitment. Why is it that on the one hand the Premier can say the Tourism marketing budget is safe and on the other that the Child Safety budget is not?

Mr JAENSCH - What are you asking me?

Ms O'CONNOR - Exactly what I asked you.

Mr JAENSCH - The Premier can say what he wants to on *Hansard*; I am not accountable.

Ms O'CONNOR - Here is the issue. Your Government has decided to apply an efficiency dividend across agencies. The Tourism marketing budget, as confirmed by the Premier, is safe from the efficiency dividend. The Child Safety budget is not. The Premier said that -

Mr JAENSCH - You are paraphrasing him. What is your question?

Ms O'CONNOR - Is the Child Safety budget going to be quarantined from the efficiency dividend?

Mr JAENSCH - The efficiency dividend applies to departments so the efficiency dividend will be required of the Department of Communities Tasmania which has many things in it, including the Child Safety Service. The Government has been clear that we will protect frontline essential services and their service delivery.

Ms O'CONNOR - Your Treasurer yesterday could not commit to protecting the child safety budget.

CHAIR - Order, Ms O'Connor, you know the rules. You put the question to the minister. The minister hasn't completed his answer yet you are interjecting on him, taking him in another direction. Please allow the minister to answer.

Mr JAENSCH - The efficiency applies to the department and the secretary of the department will indicate where those efficiencies can be delivered.

Ms O'CONNOR - Are you committed to quarantining the child safety budget from the efficiency dividend?

Mr JAENSCH - We are committed to protecting frontline essential services.

Ms O'CONNOR - That is not the answer.

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CHAIR - Ms O'Connor, it might not be the answer you want but it is an answer from the minister. You have a chance to ask another question.

Ms O'CONNOR - Chair, I looked at the uncorrecteds from yesterday. You pull me up all the time and you let Labor interject constantly. It is a conversation at the Estimates' table. The minister gave a short answer and I asked a short question in response.

Mr JAENSCH - The efficiencies will apply to the department. The secretary will identify where the efficiencies can be met and frontline essential services will be protected.

Ms O'CONNOR - You are confirming that the out-of-home care system is a frontline essential service that will be quarantined from the efficiency dividend?

Mr JAENSCH - The frontline essential services and their service delivery is out of bounds. The Treasurer has said that.

Ms O'CONNOR - The Treasurer said a number of things yesterday which were not reassuring. The line item for out-of-home care, key deliverables, table 2.1 has an amount of \$16.882 million allocated to out-of-home care and then it flatlines in the out years. Yesterday when I asked the Treasurer about this he repeatedly said there is a reform and review process underway and that is why there is no allocation in the Budget whatsoever. What is the base funding for out-of-home care today?

Mr JAENSCH - Chairman, could I ask Mr Fazackerley to give advice on the base funding, noting that the \$16.9 million is additional.

Mr FAZACKERLEY - Correct. This year we received additional funding of \$20 million through the Revised Estimates Report allocation. That has gone into the base. The additional allocation for next year, the Budget year, of \$16.9 million. Can I come back to that in a second?

Ms O'CONNOR - While Mr Fazackerley is finding that information, minister, why have you allowed the out years of the out-of-home care budget to flatline? Can you foresee a scenario where the review process would say no extra resourcing is needed?

Mr JAENSCH - No. We have made a commitment to have a close look at the way that these most complex cases are managed in the future and to take advantage of best practice and changes that are underway in other jurisdictions in Australia and overseas. The complexity and costs of servicing these most complex cases are increasing and the number of them is increasing. That is happening everywhere, not just here. To meet the needs and expectations of how we look after those kids here in the future we have to work out how to do it in the best interests of the kids with better outcomes but also in a manner in which we can have greater control over our costs so that we can deal with more of them as they arise.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, the child safety redesign began under your predecessor in about 2015, so four years later we are still in a space where there is no conclusion to the redesign. The review appears to have gone on for the entire term of the last government and yet we still have no certainty over funding for out-of-home care, one the most critical parts of the Government's funding responsibility in the out years. How do you explain that?

Mr JAENSCH - The Strong Family - Safe Kids redesign is not only one project. It is a suite of reforms. As I mentioned in my overview the delivery of the advice and referral line front end of the system has been a substantial reform. It has been delivered in this last financial year. Ultimately, that will reduce the number of kids, hopefully, entering state care but there will be amongst those young people, kids with serious complex needs who require specialised care. A next phase of our reform is involved in looking at how we get better outcomes for those kids and how we step them down into lower acuity care that is better for them and more affordable for us as a system. Other types of reforms that are included are looking at how we grow and train our pool of foster carers and improve their abilities to deal with kids with differing needs as well.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, it looks from the budget papers there is a continued under-investment in child safety. Then we see budget paper Volume 2 No 1 page 21, Children Services System Management, the budget decreases from \$6.7 million in this financial year to \$4.3 million in 2022-23. It is explained in the footnote - and this old chestnut, I have seen many times before - as a 'redistribution of overhead allocations across the department's outputs'.

Having been a minister, I kind of know what that is code for. Can the minister outline precisely what is meant by 'overheads' in child safety and how one-third of the unit's budget can be considered overheads and how and where this money is being reallocated?

Mr JAENSCH - First, I have an answer for you on the out-of-home care budget for the current year budget.

Ms O'CONNOR - We have that in the budget papers 2019-20. I am looking for the base funding for child safety.

Mr FAZACKERLEY - Through you, minister, the allocation for the current year which indicates the base is a total budget for out-of-home care of \$60.736 million which is inclusive of the \$20 million additional allocation through the RER.

Ms O'CONNOR - Without the additional allocation, the budget for child safety would be about \$40 million.

Mr FAZACKERLEY - Almost \$41 million, correct.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you, Mr Fazackerley. Back to the original question about the reallocation of outputs and overheads which most certainly looks like a cut in a third of the unit's budget which almost certainly involves a cut in human resourcing.

Mr JAENSCH - Can you refer us to which item from the Budget?

Ms O'CONNOR - It is budget paper No 2 Volume 1 page 21, Children Services System Management \$1.1 million, a sharp drop in funding.

Mr JAENSCH - If you are happy, I would like to invite Mr Fazackerley to help us with an answer to that question.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, how do you come you don't understand why the system budget for child safety services is being trimmed by one-third?

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Mr JAENSCH - I understand this has, in part, to do with the settling in of the new department structure and extrication of ourselves from a larger DHHS prior arrangement and the way we provide, purchase or share services across agencies. I will ask Mr Fazackerley to give you a more detailed response.

Ms O'CONNOR - It looks like a cut in staff to me but I will wait for Mr Fazackerley's explanation.

Mr FAZACKERLEY - Thank you. What I can say is that does not represent a cost in salary or other costs. As the minister said, there has been a really big exercise in establishing the new agency and disentangling ourselves from both Health and DPAC.

One of the outcomes of that has been the overhead distribution model which will be something we review as we go forward. The movement in the out year there from \$6 million down to four and a quarter million does in fact represent an adjustment of the distributed overheads.

Ms O'CONNOR - What are the overheads, Mr Fazackerley?

Mr FAZACKERLEY - The overheads are the corporate services that support the agency such as HR, finance, IT, costs for the office of the secretary, those types of things. As the minister alluded to a minute ago, some of those services for the new department are on a bureaued arrangement through Health. We still get some services provided where the staff sit in Health and provide a service to both Health and Community Services. We pay for that essentially with a payment of those bureaued services. This movement is a readjustment at an output level of some of those overhead costs and largely that has moved from the system management area in output 1.1 into the children's services area in 2.1.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you, Mr Fazackerley. Minister, when we look at the budget allocation the base funding for Child Safety Services sits at around \$41 million. There has been some extra resourcing go in, as we know. Can you foreshadow that the redesign is likely to see a significant need for increased investment in the Child Safety budget?

Mr JAENSCH - Our intention with the review of the most expensive end of delivery of these services for these very complex cases -

Ms O'CONNOR - Out-of-home care.

Mr JAENSCH - It is complex cases within out-of-home care, not so much the family-based foster-type care and kinship arrangements but where we need specialist wraparound and therapeutic and other interventions - things like modified accommodation, two carers, eyes-on 24 hours-type care. These ones are small in number but very high in cost and growing.

Ms O'CONNOR - That is not quite my question. I only have a few opportunities to ask questions, so if you could just narrow in on my question that would be good.

CHAIR - Ms O'Connor, you have asked the question of the minister so allow him to answer it rather than constantly interjecting. That is twice this morning already and you are going crook when I pull you up. He must be allowed to answer the question.

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Ms O'CONNOR - Estimates was historically a dialogue until you people took over, but anyway, we will just carry on.

Mr JAENSCH - Look what you've done, you've upset the Chair now.

Ms O'CONNOR - I upset him every day.

Mr JAENSCH - What I have asked the department to do, and they are doing, is to look at this increasing number of increasingly complex and expensive cases and work out what can we do to ensure the best outcomes for the kids involved and our continued ability to provide services for them, which we will struggle to do if it grows exponentially year on year. We are searching the world for better solutions that first, lead to a better outcome for the kids and second, better controls on our expenses and our capacity. If we can find ways to stabilise these children's behaviour and their wellbeing and step them down to a lower intensity care regime, it serves both purposes.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, you have not answered the question, which was about the review process and the need for extra resources.

CHAIR - Order, Ms O'Connor.

Mr JAENSCH - The aim is that it reduces the extra resources required over time.

Ms O'CONNOR - From next year?

Mr JAENSCH - As soon as we are able to bring in reform in this area.

Ms O'CONNOR - Well, it has been four years - you're dragging your heels.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, in your original description of Intensive Family Engagement Services you talked about the fact that families received 20 hours per week support, which had role-modelling parenting skills and was a protection and support mechanism. Can you confirm that every family in receipt of IFES support has had 20 hours of visits a week? I may have written it down wrong, it might be 20 hours a fortnight but I thought you said 20 hours per week.

Mr JAENSCH - As I understand that is the model that the initial service was designed around.

Ms O'BYRNE - We got the nod but you couldn't see. That is the advice you provided earlier. Minister, on the basis that is the advice you provided the committee, can you confirm that in the two cases I mentioned that were referred to the serious events review committee, those families would have received 20 hours per week of visit support prior to the death of one child and the serious self-harm issue event of the other.

Mr JAENSCH - The other aspect of this is that it is highly tailored to the circumstances of the individual case.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can you confirm they would have been visited?

Mr JAENSCH - We are in a position where you are referring to specific cases that you have in mind on which I cannot comment specifically without looking at the details of the case.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, we are talking about -

CHAIR - Order, Ms O'Byrne - the same rules apply.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can you confirm that if you apply Intensive Family Engagement Services to a family that they actually get visited before something goes wrong? Can you confirm that for the committee today? I cannot believe you need to seek that advice, minister. You either have Intensive Family Engagement Services that support people or you don't.

Mr JAENSCH - Ms O'Byrne, without us talking about specific cases, if you can't be definitive on this I can't be definitive in my answers.

Ms O'BYRNE - Is there a circumstance where IFES is assigned and they don't visit before a child dies or self-harms? Is there a case?

Mr JAENSCH - It is a strange question.

Ms O'BYRNE - It is the only way I can frame the question, minister, because you are refusing to answer whether or not you failed these children.

Mr JAENSCH - I think the member is trying to elevate this but there is very little detail to go on. In the context of the seriousness of the cases we are talking about I am not going to give definitive answers out of the context of knowing exactly which cases are being referred to, which is not something I will be doing at this table.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, you and I both know you know exactly which cases these are, because no minister in your portfolio would receive those kinds of briefing notes and not know the details of those briefing notes. If you don't read them that is absolutely a shame and an indictment on you.

Minister, in the absence of your answering my question, will you table the review of the pilot of Intensive Family Engagement Services and the reports you have received from the Serious Events Review Team and Serious Events Review Committee since the introduction of Intensive Family Engagement Services? Will you table those documents if you can't answer the questions of the committee today?

Mr JAENSCH - We won't be able to table the SERT or SERC reports because of the very detailed personal information they include.

Ms O'BYRNE - Have you read them, minister?

CHAIR - Order, Ms O'Byrne. The minister is still answering the question.

Ms O'BYRNE - Chair, I don't think we have had answer on this issue.

CHAIR - Order.

Ms O'BYRNE - He can't have it both ways, Chair. He can't say he can't give detail and then at the same time say he requires detail before he answers. It is an absolute cop-out from a minister who is clearly not across his portfolio. This was a death, Chair, and a serious self-harm issue.

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CHAIR - Order, Ms O'Byrne, silence please. The minister is gathering information. You will not comment after you have asked the question.

Ms O'CONNOR - Stop being such an uppity woman.

Ms O'BYRNE - Yes, bloody women. At least, unlike Gutwein, he doesn't just rip into us for being 'silly' or 'childish'.

Mr JAENSCH - On the SERC and SERT reports, the review committee considers the relatively small number of high-level serious events that occur in Child Protection, some of which have been reported on to some degree or are pending coronial inquiry. Disclosing any detail or features of those cases in public Estimates could lead to identification of children in breach of the act, or public debate on matters pending for coronial consideration that could inadvertently lead to contempt of the Coroners Court.

I won't be presenting that information here. I am happy to bring the deputy secretary up to talk about the processes around IFES and risk management in them. I reiterate that in terms of my ability to respond to unidentified individual cases, the member asserts that I will be familiar with cases. I would assert that I am familiar with a range of cases and I don't -

Ms O'BYRNE - How many children have died if there are so many you don't know the one I am talking about?

Mr JAENSCH - I don't intend to guess which elements of which cases the member is referring to in order to provide an answer here today.

Ms O'BYRNE - Chair, I have asked the minister to confirm that a child that died under his watch, who was discharged from the hospital and supposedly in receipt of intensive family engagement support, whether or not that support was provided. The minister would know the answer to that question.

I also want to know whether or not the child who horrifically self-harmed, and the minister knows which case this is, was visited by the Intensive Family Engagement Services?

Does your Intensive Family Engagement Services visit people, and did it visit these two children for whom the outcomes were unacceptable and unforgiveable?

Mr JAENSCH - Chair, for the reasons I have identified, I am not going to provide any more commentary on these unidentified cases. I can't.

Ms O'BYRNE - You know the cases. It is outrageous. You are diverting the intent of this committee. You are responsible for these children, minister, and you know the answers.

CHAIR - Do you have another question?

Ms O'BYRNE - I do. Minister, when do you intend to provide the advice to this committee of whether any of those families were visited?

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Mr JAENSCH - Without identifying those cases and providing details of those cases in a public Estimates hearing, for the reasons I have outlined which refer to the Coroner's Court and our obligations to not identify children and cases on matters pending coronial investigation, I won't be providing those answers.

Ms O'BYRNE - Chair, if I can seek some advice. The minister has made it clear that he does not want the individual children to be identified. I understand that, there is a legal requirement around that, but he can't then use that as his defence to not answer a question. Either, I am required to not identify the child or I am required to identify the child. The minister is not going to answer the question either way. Chair, can you direct him to answer the question, which he clearly knows the answer to?

CHAIR - The minister has indicated that the coroner's inquiry, when you enter a legal issue or it has the ability to get to, then I will accept the answer of the minister. If the minister feels that there are legal issues around this and he can't answer the question, then he can't answer the question.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, since the introduction of the Intensive Family Engagement Services, what changes have you had to make as a result of advice from the Serious Incident Review Committee? What actions have you taken?

Mr JAENSCH - We would be happy to provide you with some commentary on changes that have been made as a result of Serious Events Review Committee recommendations in general and I would like to -

Ms O'CONNOR - The whole committee or just Ms O'Byrne?

Ms O'BYRNE - You will provide it to the committee?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes. I am happy to speak to that now. I will ask the secretary to make comment on that, please?

Ms WEBSTER - Thank you, minister. If I can explain perhaps a little bit of what happens when the report is received by the Serious Events Review Committee. They consider those reports and provide independent advice to me on system-wide observations and recommendations.

We have our standards and performance branch which is independent from Children and Youth Services. The executive director reports directly to me. They provide secretariat support to the committee and they develop a work plan to implement the recommendations and obtain reports on progress from Children and Youth Services to provide to myself on a monthly basis.

Some of the work that has been done in relation to those recommendations, we have rolled out a program of compulsory risk training for Child Safety Service staff covering child development, assessing risks to infants and impact of cumulative harm. We have rolled out training on proper recording of information relating to risk management within information systems. We have developed core competency framework and reviewed and reformatted priority procedures relating to risk and safety management.

Ms O'BYRNE - Through you, minister, did you also ensure that Intensive Family Engagement Services visit people? Was that one of the things that you had to implement?

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Mr JAENSCH - I don't think the secretary should be asked that question.

Ms O'BYRNE - I did say through you, minister. You can take that question. Do you know whether or not that work was done?

Mr JAENSCH - I refer you to my previous answer.

Ms O'BYRNE - That would be no answer. Thank you, minister. Money well spent by the state public service.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, could you please provide an update of the Hodgman Liberal Government's Strong Families - Safe Kids advice and referral line?

Mr JAENSCH - I can and I thank Mr Tucker for his question. The Strong Families - Safe Kids redesign is about finding better ways to work with vulnerable Tasmanian families to increase child safety. A major focus is on early intervention to reduce the number of children and young people needing to enter care by providing more intensive early support to families who are at risk.

We recently reached a significant milestone with the commencement of the Strong Families - Safe Kids advice and referral line, a single front door to the Child and Family Service system, bringing together the family support-focused Gateway service and the child-at-risk focused Child Safety Service to collectively better understand the full needs of children and their families. This means quicker and more seamless referral of calls and cases between the two services.

This change in service delivery means a change in language as well and an opportunity to bring Tasmania in line with the approach of other jurisdictions to national reporting, including greater clarity on what constitutes a notification and what constitutes a child concern report.

Our new language moves away from blaming to more neutral and constructive ways of talking about safety and wellbeing. One of the important reasons for that and one of the benefits of doing that is that we are seeing an increase in the number of people self-referring and contacting the advice and referral line for help, whereas maybe previously these services were seen as a place where you go to to raise a concern about how someone else is doing their job as a parent or about the welfare of a kid.

What we are seeing through early data so far, is a reduction in the overall number of notifications because the service concentrates on providing an appropriate support service at first contact using a conversational approach to understand the situation and what the needs are of the child and the family.

Consistently, 80 to 90 per cent of all incoming calls are being managed within the advice and referral line. That is, many of the children that people are concerned about already have appropriate supports in place or they require support, advice and information that can be provided directly by the advice and referral line.

What we are seeing at this early stage is that although the number of children at highest risk of abuse and neglect remains about the same, through a conversational approach families and children not at high risk are getting the help they need sooner, potentially preventing crisis situations from developing.

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A more thorough evaluation of the early results from the advice and referral line will be prepared later this year, conducted by Professor David Thorpe from Lancaster University in the UK, who has been involved in the rollout of the service, sharing his significant global experience with Child Safety and Gateway staff and their managers and creating a unique service culture with the common goal of providing better service to vulnerable children and families.

Professor Maria Harries, who those around this table will know well, was chair of the redesign reference group, has stated that fundamentally we need to revise and redesign services that provide for the wellbeing of children and families and protect Tasmanian children. That is exactly what the Hodgman Liberal Government is committed to achieving.

Mr TUCKER - Minister -

Ms O'CONNOR - No, you don't get a supplementary question. The minister just spent three and a half minutes answering a dorothy.

CHAIR - Order, Ms O'Connor, it is up to the Chair whether he gets a supplementary question or not. I will make that choice. At this point in time I will not give it to him, but I will make those choices.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thanks, Chair. Minister, could you please provide to the committee total staffing numbers for Children and Youth Services - I am happy to put this on notice - in the years 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 and the projection for staffing in 2020-21? Could I please have a breakdown in that response that details staffing and out-of-home care?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes.

Ms O'CONNOR - I am happy to put that on notice. It is a fairly standard Estimates question that we can just put on notice.

CHAIR - If we have the answers available at the table we can go down that line

Mr JAENSCH - I would be happy for the secretary to provide what she can at the table and if there is other detail that needs to be taken on notice we will do so.

Ms O'CONNOR - Our concern is the cut to children's services system management by a third and I am trying to make sure that is not a cut to staffing levels for an already under-resourced agency.

Mr JAENSCH - You do not trust Mr Fazackerley's answer?

Ms O'CONNOR - I do trust Mr Fazackerley's answer but I also need a response from you.

CHAIR - Order. You have already asked the question so we might move onto the answer.

Mr JAENSCH - I am happy for the secretary to provide what detail she can at the table.

Ms WEBSTER - Thank you, minister. I have the numbers for the Child Safety Service. Ms O'Connor, you asked about Children and Youth Services and that obviously includes a total figure.

Ms O'CONNOR - Children's services, the output.

Ms WEBSTER - In the Child Safety Service, the current establishment as at 31 March 2019 is 243.7 FTE.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thanks, Ms Webster. The question also sought historical data on staffing going back to 2014-15.

Mr JAENSCH - I am happy for that to be answered as well.

Ms WEBSTER - In June 2014 the CSS establishment was 205.7 FTE.

Ms O'CONNOR - Okay, and are all those apparent extra FTEs working in child safety, out-of-home care - what is the mix of staffing there?

Ms WEBSTER - They are all frontline staff so I can break those down. Child safety officers to 31 March 2019, 155.3; team leaders 45; support workers 25.4; and administration and management in Child Safety, 18. The 2014 numbers are child safety officers 132.5, team leaders 20.1, support workers 18, and administration and management 35.2.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you, Ms Webster.

Mr JAENSCH - Since the Hodgman Liberal Government came to government our frontline staffing establishment has increased by 20 per cent.

Ms O'CONNOR - Are you able to define what 'frontline' means in the context of the Child Safety Service?

Mr JAENSCH - This is a theme you have exercised consistently over the last couple of days; I have been watching.

Ms O'CONNOR - You should be reading your briefs rather than watching the Estimates.

Mr JAENSCH - You have had some of that explanation from the secretary just now.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, given that the out-of-home care budget flatlines from next year -

Mr JAENSCH - No, it does not.

Ms O'CONNOR - Well, the out-of-home care extra allocation, okay?

Mr JAENSCH - The extra allocation?

Ms O'CONNOR - There is \$16.8 million and then there is a flatlining for three years in the out-of-home care budget. Are we to understand that there will be an extra allocation against the out-of-home care system for the three years against which there is no extra allocation?

Mr JAENSCH - That will be informed by the work we are doing now.

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Ms O'CONNOR - This review and redesign process which we talked about before has gone on for four years and still next year we don't know if there is going to be any extra money into out-of-home care. It is quite extraordinary.

Mr JAENSCH - That is not true because what has happened is that the Strong Family - Safe Kids redesign process is delivering and its focus has been initially on the advice and referral line. There are a range of other parts of the out-of-home care system that are still to come in terms of the review and reforms. The structural reform we have made so far has been significant and difficult and worthwhile and it will reduce the number of kids entering the system. How we then deal best with the kids in the system are the next stages of the redesign.

Ms O'CONNOR - In the performance information on page 25, volume 2, number 1, the target average daily children in active transition is 40 for 2018-19 and dashboard figures for last year are 33 in July, 99 in August, 97 in September, 171 in October, 228 in November and 280 in December. By our calculations, if the average number of children in active transition in the first half of this year is zero every single month, the annual average will still be 75, 35 ahead of your target. Despite this, the target for 2019-20 is 20. Likewise, the targets are more than double the proportion of investigations determined within 30 days and half the proportion of children in households with five or more foster children. How on earth do you expect to achieve these targets with no substantive new funding in the Budget? This is from table 2.4 - performance information.

Mr JAENSCH - In my overview I said the intention of the reform that has been undertaken so far is to ultimately reduce the number of kids coming into the system -

Ms O'CONNOR - There are no extra resources and you are going to make an amazing jump, apparently, within the space of less than a year.

CHAIR - Ms O'Connor, just because the minister pauses it doesn't give you an opportunity to jump in. The minister is still answering the question.

Mr JAENSCH - It gives her the opportunity but not the excuse, Chair.

Ms O'CONNOR - You weren't here when the Estimates process actually properly functioned as a scrutiny process.

Mr JAENSCH - The changes made that commenced on 3 December 2018 are already reducing the number of children being referred into the Child Safety Service. The numbers you were referring to with the caseloads and the children in the system reflect the legacy of the previous system and a period where the normal operation of the system was disrupted and there was a backlog created of cases that need attention now. What I would like to do is bring up the most up-to-date numbers we have on where those cases awaiting allocation are right now so I would ask the secretary to provide that.

Ms WEBSTER - The most up-to-date figures I have are as at 21 May. We know that the number of children awaiting allocation at case management and response is steadily declining as we stabilise through the transition of advice and referral. As at 21 May there were 36 cases for allocation in response and 78 cases for allocation in case management.

Ms O'CONNOR - How does that compare for the same period last year? Do you have that information?

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Ms WEBSTER - Through you minister, the cases for allocation at response average per day were 91.3 and cases for allocation at case management average number per day were 137.8.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you. Minister, my final question relates to the need for extra resourcing. Can you foresee any possibility of the review process coming back to you as minister with advice to say that more resourcing isn't needed?

Mr JAENSCH - I expect what it will come back with is a different cost structure.

Ms O'CONNOR - No extra resources, just working the system in the same envelope?

Mr JAENSCH - No, not necessarily. What we have had is a series of years where the costs of the out-of-home care, particularly around the most complex cases, has continued to increase both in the number of cases and the complexity of those cases. What we have had each year has been the requirement for additional resources to be applied, and it has been. What I am trying to do as minister now, is to get those costs under control by ensuring that we are doing the right thing by the kids and that we are able to budget for and manage the costs of providing those services better.

Ms O'CONNOR - But you will be asking for extra for extra resource, surely?

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can I go to another area that causes me concern. As part of the reforms and changes around CYS and the referral services, we now have a situation where CYS staff and NGO staff work together, they are co-located and they work together. Can you confirm whether non-government staff, non CYS staff, have access in any way to individual children's sensitive information?

Mr JAENSCH - Could you repeat that for me please?

Ms O'BYRNE - The NGO staff who are co-located with your CYS staff, do they have access to sensitive children's information? What access do they have to children's information?

Mr JAENSCH - I am advised that we have separate database information management system, CARDI and CPIS, which provides a separation for different cases. I am happy for -

Ms O'BYRNE - I am aware of the two systems and I am aware there is some level of interface with the two systems. What I am asking is, do NGO staff have access to sensitive children's information?

Mr JAENSCH - Chair, I would like to bring Deputy Secretary Gail Eaton-Briggs to the table to speak to how that information is managed and how the separation is managed.

Ms EATON-BRIGGS - The non-government staff do have access to sensitive information that is recorded in the Child Protection Information system. The arrangements for confidentiality and management of that information has been recorded and agreed through the contractual agreement that we have with each of the non-government partners, Bapcare and Mission Australia.

Ms O'BYRNE - Thank you. Minister, question to you. What legal advice have you sought around the sharing of confidential children's information?

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Mr JAENSCH - I am advised that legal advice has been sought and taken in the process of designing the advice and referral line and the controls on our obligations to protect sensitive information.

Ms O'BYRNE - Is that advice from Crown Law?

Mr JAENSCH - The Solicitor-General.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can you table the advice?

Mr JAENSCH - I am not in the practice of tabling that advice, no.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can you confirm then, minister, whether any member of the Serious Incident Review Committee has expressed a concern that files are being shared illegally between Children and Youth Services and NGO workers?

Mr JAENSCH - I'm not aware and I confirm that the secretary is not aware of any concerns of that matter raised directly with us.

Ms O'BYRNE - But you do contend that you have advice from the Solicitor-General saying that it is legal to do so?

Mr JAENSCH - That the structure we have for operation of the advice and referral line with the different service providers working together has been informed by the Solicitor-General's advice.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can you let me know, on 1 May, how many cases were allocated to staff who were absent, or to team leaders or other managers? On 1 May, not the last day of May in preparation of Estimates.

Mr JAENSCH - As of yesterday, zero.

Ms O'BYRNE - No, my question was 1 May. Minister, can I go back to the legal advice then?

Mr JAENSCH - On that particular day, not a day before or after, on 1 May, and what was the question for us to take on notice?

Ms O'BYRNE - On 1 May, how many cases were allocated to staff who were absent or to team leaders or other managers?

Mr JAENSCH - I'm happy for us to take that on notice.

Ms O'BYRNE - To finish my questions on the legality and then I am done on this area which, I am sure, the minister will be delighted about.

Minister, you received advice from the Solicitor-General, can you confirm that you followed that advice? Are you confident that there has, at no stage, been any information illegally shared between CYS and non-government organisations? Two questions: did you follow the advice and can you guarantee that there has been no illegal sharing of information?

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Mr JAENSCH - Chair, our principal legal officer was involved with the design process which was informed by the Solicitor-General's advice. We are not aware of any illegal actions.

CHAIR - The minister has answered the question.

Ms O'BYRNE - No he hasn't.

CHAIR - He has and I am going to -

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, until he changed his answer, did you follow the advice from the Solicitor-General on the illegal use of information?

CHAIR - Order. You can come back to that line of questioning.

Ms O'BYRNE - Now you are just running cover.

CHAIR - Order. Ms O'Byrne, you can come back to that line of questioning later on, otherwise you will continually want to ask more and more questions. I need to pull you up.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Chair. This is a matter of significant public interest. Everyone at the table should be interested in this answer. The minister hasn't answered the question of the legality of processes in Children Services, and now you are throwing to a Dorothy Dixier.

CHAIR - The minister answered the question.

Ms O'CONNOR - We have another 40 minutes in Children Services, and this question hasn't been answered.

CHAIR - We can argue about this for 40 minutes if you like, or I can throw to Mr Tucker and we can have the question and we can move on. I am throwing to Mr Tucker, thank you, Mr Tucker.

Ms O'CONNOR - This is disgraceful.

Mr TUCKER - Could the minister please update the committee on how the Government is progressing child safe standards to ensure organisations are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect.

Ms O'CONNOR - You should be embarrassed that you need Mr Tucker to run cover for you.

Mr JAENSCH - I thank Mr Tucker for his question and for the opportunity to update the committee on this important issue which was raised last year in the House of Assembly on a notice of motion regarding child safety standards. The Tasmanian Government recognises the importance of child safe standards to ensure organisations who work with children take steps to create a culture of child safety and adopt strategies to protect children from all forms of abuse.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse recommended a set of 10 national child safe standards to provide a consistent and best-practice approach to children's safety to be adopted as part of the set of national principles for child safe organisations.

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In December 2018 the Tasmanian Government was pleased to endorse these principles. We have started the work to establish a legislated child safe organisations framework which will span from organisational leadership through to policy and procedures that govern service delivery, responses to incidents and continuous improvement. The overall intent is to develop a legislative framework that will give effect to the progressive implementation of child safe standards, compliance regimes and a reportable conduct scheme. When implemented child safe standards will ensure organisations are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect as well as provide a framework to identify gaps and improve policy practices around child safety.

The first step is to embed these national principles into our funding agreements and across departmental policy and procedures.

The Department of Communities Tasmania is currently assessing all options for independent monitoring and enforcement and a timeline for establishing external oversight and monitoring with service providers. A key element of a child safe organisation's framework and oversight of responses to complaints is a reportable conduct scheme, to ensure organisations have in place a child focused complaint handling system that is understood by children, staff, volunteers and families.

Tasmania and all jurisdictions agreed in principle to nationally harmonise reportable conduct schemes similar to the New South Wales model. In preparation for the scheme in Tasmania the Department of Communities Tasmania will review its complaint handling processes and management system. Importantly this will occur in consultation with the child advocate and relevant statutory officers.

One element of a child safe organisation framework which is well progressed is the working with vulnerable people registration. A carer register is also an important safeguarding mechanism to improve the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who are placed in out of home care. A carer registration system will establish the regulatory framework for the registration, reporting, investigation and disqualification of out-of-home carers. Currently, Victoria is the only state that has legislated child safe standards and Victoria is currently undertaking a review to ensure they are robust.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Chair, three and a half minutes.

Mr JAENSCH - Nearly finished. The review will provide valuable insights about Victoria's experiences in implementing and regulating compulsory child safe standards and inform the development of Tasmania's framework.

The Government is also building on work already commenced through the development of the Tasmanian sexual violence action plan and the implementation of the Strong Families - Safe Kids advice and referral line. Other preparatory work which is already commenced includes consultation with our service providers and relevant organisations about embedding the national principles to ensure they have child safe policies and practices in place to prevent, identify -

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, four minutes.

Mr JAENSCH - and respond appropriately to child abuse. Support is being developed with community sector organisations -

CHAIR - I will ask the minister to wind up.

Mr JAENSCH - to address their readiness against these principles and staff training and education is being reviewed to ensure full compliance with child safe standards and this will be finalised over coming months. At the heart of this body of work -

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, it is nearly five minutes and it is on a Dorothy Dix answer.

Mr JAENSCH - is ensuring Tasmania's children are protected from abuse and participate in decisions that affect them and their wellbeing.

Ms O'CONNOR - Two sets of rules. Thank you, Chair. Minister, can you confirm that the manner in which sensitive private information about at-risk children is shared between Child Safety Services and non-government providers complies with the Solicitor General's advice?

Mr JAENSCH - I am advised the legal advice that we had from the Solicitor General came to the department as they were in the process of putting together the advice and referral line, rather than directly to me.

Ms O'BYRNE - Did you seek that advice?

Mr JAENSCH - I would ask if the secretary has any further comment to make on that question.

Ms O'CONNOR - The question is about compliance with the Solicitor-General's advice.

Ms WEBSTER - Through you, minister. In developing the arrangements for the new advice and referral service we worked with our principal legal officer. We sought advice and implemented our processes in accordance with the requirements of that.

In relation to sharing of information around children, sensitive information, obviously there are very strict rules and legislation around the sharing of that information. People who work under the act are fully aware of that. I have not been made aware of any instances where that information has been shared inappropriately. Our NGO partners working at the advice and referral service, like our child safety officers, are professionals. They work with these families and these children on a regular basis and have been dealing with those families and children for some time. They are professional in their role. I am not aware of any instances, none have been brought to me, where there has been inappropriate or illegal sharing of information.

Ms O'CONNOR - Is that confirmation, minister, that the process complies with Solicitor-General's advice.

Mr JAENSCH - As the secretary said, the department received that advice, they acted in accordance with that advice in establishing the advice and referral line.

Ms O'CONNOR - Where you have said 'in accordance', it does not actually point to compliance with advice from your chief law officer.

Ms O'BYRNE - It is very interesting language for you not to say it complies, minister, which I think is the point Ms O'Connor is making. Can you say it complies with the Solicitor-General's advice so we can move on?

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Mr JAENSCH - I am reiterating the answer that the secretary gave you who was dealing with that advice and the process of establishing the service.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, how many for-profit providers has the Government or children services engaged to provide out-of-home care or any one of the services that, for example Safe Pathways, provided under your predecessor?

Mr JAENSCH - Over what time frame is your question?

Ms O'CONNOR - The question is how many for profit providers has children services currently contracted?

Mr JAENSCH - None currently.

Ms O'CONNOR - Is it policy now, following the Safe Pathways debacle, not to engage for-profit providers?

Mr JAENSCH - No.

Ms O'CONNOR - Do you think it is appropriate that for-profit providers are engaged to handle at-risk highly vulnerable children?

Mr JAENSCH - The first consideration when we are procuring services to support vulnerable children is the best interests of the child. We will look to where we can find the most appropriate services to meet their need and conduct our own investigations and due diligence on the suitability of providers. The matter of the business model of the provider is not the first thing we look to.

Ms O'CONNOR - Okay.

Mr JAENSCH - The best interests of the child.

Ms O'CONNOR - Okay, the best interests of the child. This is my last question at the moment, Chair. I am still uncertain as to whether you are confident the Solicitor-General's advice in relation to the sharing of sensitive details or private information relating to an at-risk child is being complied with. I am not trying to cast aspersions on anyone in the agency. I know what a great job they do. The equivocation around the language is concerning.

Mr JAENSCH - I will defer to the secretary's words on that. I did not directly commission the legal advice. It was not delivered to me and I did not manage the process of establishing the advice and referral service. The department and its legal officer have sought advice and received it and used it in the development of that service.

Ms O'CONNOR - But you still have not confirmed that the Solicitor-Generals' advice, once it was sought, is complied with and was not reinterpreted to a certain purpose.

Mr JAENSCH - I have no evidence that there has been any deviation from that advice or problems arising as a result of it.

Ms O'CONNOR - How would you know?

Mr JAENSCH - How would I know?

Ms O'CONNOR - What sort of monitoring of compliance is there? That has been a problem in the past and it was particularly a problem in relation to Safe Pathways. What sort of monitoring of compliance system is in place to make sure that sensitive information is not being misused and to make sure that a situation like Safe Pathways does not happen again?

Mr JAENSCH - I will seek the secretary's advice but would anticipate that the service has a range of procedures to ensure people are aware of their obligations and there are work practices in place that protect sensitive information and breaches of the types you are referring to. In terms of mechanisms to detect non-compliance or report it, I will ask the secretary if she can comment on that further.

Ms WEBSTER - It is exactly as the minister has said. If we become aware of any issues where there has been inappropriate providing of information or accessing information we take action around that and there are obviously State Service issues around how we do that but there are also arrangements with our NGO partners. If we are aware of anything we certainly take action. We make people aware of their obligations under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act and also provide induction around those things.

Ms O'CONNOR - Is there monitoring of children in out-of-home care being delivered by non-government organisations? What is the increased level of monitoring following the Safe Pathways scandal?

Ms WEBSTER - The deputy secretary could talk to the specifics around that but certainly our due diligence around how we place a child is around the child safety officer working with the team of people who know that child, the foster carers.

Ms O'CONNOR - Regular contact?

Ms WEBSTER - Regular contact.

Ms HOUSTON - Minister, how many strip searches have been carried out on children at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre?

Mr JAENSCH - Could you identify a time frame?

Ms HOUSTON - In the last 12 months.

Mr JAENSCH - We refer to the procedures as partially clothed searches but I think we are probably referring to the same process.

Ms HOUSTON - Our information says that the children have been strip searched.

Mr JAENSCH - I would be happy for the secretary or one of her managers to provide some more detail and what that involves. My information is that from 1 July 2018 to 31 March 2019 a total of 204 searches were undertaken at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre.

Ms HOUSTON - What contraband was found in these searches?

Mr JAENSCH - Thankfully none.

Ms HOUSTON - So there were 204 children stripped and searched and no contraband was found.

Mr JAENSCH - No, 204 searches. There are relatively small numbers of kids so it is not necessarily 204 individual kids, it is 204 searches.

Ms HOUSTON - I am also curious as to when the strip searches were carried out, who performed them, who else was present, and how old the children being searched were?

Mr JAENSCH - Getting numbers for that would involve us interrogating the records of the 204 searches over that period of time. What we can do is more generally talk about the procedure, who does them and what is involved. I understand that youth workers conduct those searches but the secretary may have some detail to add.

Ms HOUSTON - Are the Wilson Security guards that have been brought in to replace youth workers in the vacant positions involved?

Mr JAENSCH - I am happy for the secretary to answer that.

Ms WEBSTER - It is not quite correct to say that the Wilson Security guards have been brought in to replace youth workers, but the searches are done by youth workers. It would require a manual search for us to go back through our records to give you the information about each of the individual searches.

Ms HOUSTON - When the youth workers are searching is there someone else present as well?

Ms WEBSTER - Yes, there are two people present when the search is done but what might be useful is if I talk through the process and that may answer your question. A search of a young person includes clothes searches by pat-down or metal detecting wand or, as the minister has said, partially clothed searches. The search procedure includes safeguards to balance the dignity and rights with the safety of the young person and the detention centre. Searches are conducted on the understanding that they may be intrusive and cause some reaction to the young person. We acknowledge and understand that. They must be authorised by the nominated senior officers of the detention centre. Search officers are trained in search procedures. The gender balance is maintained and the young person is not touched by the searching officer. Searches are conducted in a private room. Only the searching officer observes the young person while a second officer only observes the searching officer. There are procedures in place to ensure the young person is never fully unclothed and is always wearing clothing on the upper or lower parts of their body, and the search concludes with the young person being asked to note any issues with the way the search was conducted.

Mr JAENSCH - To add to that, given the matter arising of searching of young people, I have asked the secretary to undertake a review to ensure we are meeting our obligations regarding the safety and wellbeing of staff and residents in our youth detention facility and also meeting our national and international obligations and community expectations of how we are managing kids and their safety in our system. The standard operating procedure is being reviewed and better

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aligned with the Ashley Plus approach we are undertaking at the centre which is a more therapeutic approach to the youth detention system.

Ms HOUSTON - I have some questions about that too.

Mr JAENSCH - I have been advised that the secretary has instructed that the centre ensures detention centre staff are aware that all searches are subject to the manager's discretion and that the exercise of that discretion can be limited by the act, depending on the circumstances. The direction from the secretary means that unclothed searches or partially clothed searches only occur after contact with a visitor when a delegated officer believes, on reasonable grounds, that a search is warranted, such as where there is risk of exchange of contraband weapons et cetera.

Ms HOUSTON - We have been informed that children are searched every time they have a visitor, so instead of just when there is a concern, it is every visit.

Mr JAENSCH - The secretary's direction requires that it is only when a delegated officer believes on reasonable grounds that a search is warranted.

Ms HOUSTON - Can I confirm that some of these children could be as young as 10 years old?

Ms WEBSTER - In terms of the young people currently detained, and we can get information about the historical period you are talking about, the minimum age currently at Ashley is 14 and the maximum age is 17. We have very few children under the age of 10. I would have to get the details.

Ms HOUSTON - I'm aware there have been detainees there as young as 10 years old.

Ms WEBSTER - Not for a very long time.

Ms HOUSTON - How many stand-offs have occurred in the last 12 months?

Mr JAENSCH - We would like some clarification of what you mean by 'stand-offs'?

Ms HOUSTON - It is terminology that the staff use when there has been a situation where they have had to intervene. There has been a stand-off between staff and detainees.

Mr JAENSCH - We don't know. We will need more clarity.

Ms HOUSTON - How many vulnerable children have been placed in isolation?

Ms WEBSTER - Through you, minister. For the 2018-19 year to 31 March there have been 48 occasions of isolation. I note that is a significant decrease from 2017-18, where there were 131 occasions.

Ms HOUSTON - How many assaults have occurred both against children and staff?

Mr JAENSCH - We are seeking some advice for you, Ms Houston.

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Ms HOUSTON - While you are doing that I will move on to another question. How many self-harm attempts have happened at Ashley in the last 12 months and how many times have children had to be taken to the emergency department?

Mr JAENSCH - We will get you numbers for those. If not today, on notice.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, could you please detail how the delivery of the Hodgman Liberal Government's generational change for children and families policies is helping children in out-of-home care and meeting our second-year agenda initiatives?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Mr Tucker, for your question. Outcomes for children and young people in out-of-home care should be the same as for any child in our community. They have the same right to the same expectations and hopes for their future as any kids.

Instability for children and young people in the out-of-home care sector can have negative impacts on their future. Research shows that children who experience instability through moving around between multiple foster homes are more likely to experience emotional and psycho-social difficulties in their lives and more likely to struggle at school and more likely to become socially disengaged as they become adults.

As part of our election commitment, we are extending out-of-home care from 18 years up to 21 years to provide support for young people as they transition to independent living and recognising that kids individually do that at a different pace and they are developmentally ready for independent living at different times. Every kid is different.

As outlined in our second-year agenda, we have released the out-of-home care extension to 21 model to stakeholders and carers. The model provides support for young people in family-based care as they transition to independent living with a step-down approach that continues to provide support during this critical time in a young person's life. They don't only reach a point of finishing in foster care because they have turned 18, but we step-down the care available to them as they become more independent and ready to leave that nest.

Through this staged step-down approach, we are helping to ensure that young people can manage their own finances and move on to independence. The level of support provided will decrease as they take increasing responsibility for their own wellbeing and affairs.

Case management support to young people who are transitioning to independence is also being provided through the after-care support service to assist children and young people in their preparation to leave care. This also supports the development of practical and relevant leaving care plans, with the young person involved throughout the process.

Our election commitment also included \$900 000 over three years to put better processes and systems in place for transfer of guardianship. This is to strengthen the permanency of placement processes for young people who are separated from their families.

This targeted funding will ensure that there is earlier decision-making in the lives of kids to limit moving from one placement to another. It will see better processes and systems in place for transfer of guardianship and adoption, including working with the Family Court to better understand the logistics of a potential increase in permanency arrangements.

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As outlined in our second-year agenda we have now commenced consultation on a framework to provide better processes around ensuring children have stability in their placements out of home. Further work will be done to streamline the adoption process to make it easier in cases where permanency is the best outcome for a child.

Transfer of guardianship already forms part of a suite of options available to children and young people rightly focused on prioritising permanency for at-risk children who are in need of stable care. Achieving stability and improving permanency outcomes for children in out-of-home care is also a focus of the recently released Fourth Action Plan 2018-2020 supporting families, communities and organisations to keep children safe under the national framework for protecting Australia's children.

Stability is critical to the ongoing development of the wellbeing of children and young people to improve their life in out-of-home care and to help them feel safe and secure. Having good permanency processes for children and young people will help them to achieve this, and I thank you for your question.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, the Department of Health and Human Services engaged Noetic Solutions to develop the options paper for a custodial youth justice model in Tasmania. which was a very extensive report. They recommended a number of findings that would improve the humanity for children who were required to spend some time in detention and improve their rehabilitation as well as reduce cost to the Tasmanian community from the current situation with Ashley.

Their recommendations were to build two purpose-built secure detention facilities, one each in Hobart and Launceston smaller than Ashley and to support that with a substantial body of alternatives to detention and other service improvements. Given the evidence that you have just been hearing about the current situation for children at Ashley and the increasing amounts of violence and all of the other really serious issues, how do you think it is going? Your Government refused to implement the findings of this report and you made a decision to stick with the current model, probably because of voting around Deloraine and wanting to curry favour with the local community in some way or another, I do not know -

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, it is an opportunity for you to ask a question not make statements.

Dr WOODRUFF - You did not take their advice. Things are going badly. Do you think it is time to reconsider the policy approach you have taken and to close Ashley and do what this report recommended?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you. There are a number of assertions that you have made that I need to just check and challenge. You have not referred to any specific instances of where things are getting worse at Ashley. The questions were raised before about incidents of assaults and so on. We have not provided those responses just yet so you are working on fairly thin material.

Dr WOODRUFF - We have had the information over years about the situation at Ashley. It is not just the questions that were asked then.

Mr JAENSCH - We have not rejected the Noetic report and we have not opted for business as usual or no change. What we have done instead is to take the facility we already have and make it fit for purpose. A fit to our new more therapeutic youth justice approach statewide. We have commissioned further work on the facility at Ashley and how it can be made fit for purpose and to

align with that therapeutic approach. I have seen a report which is now with my department to provide me advice on how we proceed. We have allocated \$7.28 million in the Budget and you will see it over the next three years in the budget papers to invest in a redesign of the Ashley Youth Detention Centre facility to fit this therapeutic model.

CHAIR - I will give Dr Woodruff one more question but you need to be aware, Dr Woodruff, that that is probably going to be it because your predecessor was able to, as she normally does, achieve more questions than she probably should be allocated. The last question, Dr Woodruff.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, have you worked with the organisations that were specifically recommended that the Government engage with in order to improve the outcomes for young people who go to Ashley? The organisations, such as the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, TRACA, White Lion, Save the Children, the Australian Childhood Foundation, and to instigate programs that were shown to be successful, like the Tasmanian wilderness therapy program and the connection to country program for young Aboriginal children who are offenders. Are you doing work with those communities, specifically around children who spend time in Ashley? Are children engaging in with those organisations?

Ms STANDEN - How many questions, Chair?

CHAIR - Order.

Mr JAENSCH - I am aware that the department has frequent contact with many of those organisations, particularly in relation to the Youth Justice system.

Dr WOODRUFF - Ashley in particular.

Mr JAENSCH - Some of them are providers of services that are engaged at Ashley, and as we move into a work plan and a strategy for rolling out the redesign of the Ashley Youth Detention facility, we will definitely be engaging with those organisations to get their input.

Dr WOODRUFF - Are the Tasmanian wilderness therapy and connection with country programs running at the moment?

CHAIR - Order. Ms Woodruff, Ms Houston has the call.

Ms HOUSTON - Minister, I'm sure you would agree the visits from families and carers are vitally important for children in detention. It has been brought to our attention that at times there have been changes to visiting hours and this has not been communicated to families and carers. Can you please explain how you will ensure that this does not happen again? Also, the amenities, specifically the visiting room, is very unpleasant. Are you taking steps to improve this?

Mr JAENSCH - First, I'm unaware of changes to visiting hours. I would ask the secretary to respond to that and how any changes can, or will be, communicated to families.

With regard to the visiting room, I note that the architect and Youth Justice Services planner, who has provided us with some recommendations regarding redesign of the Ashley site, has made some recommendations around those visiting rooms as well and their suitability, and how they contribute to the de-escalation of those events which can sometimes be difficult for people and disruptive to others.

I might ask the secretary if she can speak to the visiting hours question.

Ms WEBSTER - Thank you. Through you, minister, I have just sought advice and I am not aware of any change nor is the current acting director of Strategic Youth Services or the deputy secretary aware of any. If there were any specifics we would be happy to have a look at that.

I would say that sometimes they may, and we are not aware of any, but visiting hours or visiting arrangements may change for operational reasons, or for safety and security reasons. That is at the discretion of the centre manager who has a much better understanding of the mood of the centre and things happening on the day, but we are not aware of any specifics.

Ms HOUSTON - The concern raised by families was that those had changed and they weren't aware, so they had turned up there for visiting hours, and then weren't able to see the children they had travelled out to see.

Mr JAENSCH - I think the distinction the secretary was making was whether those were changes to normal visiting hours, or if it may have been on that day that there was an operational reason that things were locked down, or whatever.

Ms HOUSTON - Minister, families have raised concerns about the communication around release protocols. Could you tell me what the protocols are?

Mr JAENSCH - When a young person who is on detention is released from Ashley Youth Detention Centre with notice, exit planning is undertaken by a case management team. The exit procedure for young people ensures that collaborative exit planning and review processes are applied for young people who leave detention after serving their sentence. Over the last 12 months work has progressed to improve the exit planning for young people released from Ashley.

Wherever possible formal exit planning commences six weeks prior to the young person's earliest release date. If not, it commences with sufficient time to engage all relevant stakeholders and develop a formal plan. Exit planning involves working with family and a range of government and non-government stakeholders to ensure everyone is acting in the best interests of the young person who is exiting. During the process, engagement occurs with a parent or carer or guardian who is encouraged and supported in contributing to the exit planning process.

Where a young person is on a Care and Protection Order their child safety officer is involved in ensuring post-release arrangements are consistent with their case and care plan. This occurs regardless of whether a young person is held on remand or on sentence. Likewise, a young person's community youth justice worker is engaged in the process to ensure services and interventions from their custodial case plan are reflected in their community plan, where still relevant.

The exit planning process includes the identification of goals and support strategies for the young person and considers the young person's support networks and life skills to identify and address any gaps. Through the exit planning process young people often agree to engage with a Save the Children worker around recreational activities and the Department of Education's youth justice court officer around an education plan. Planning also incorporates where the young person will live upon exit from Ashley and what support services will be available to them.

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Ms STANDEN - Minister, is it true that a four-point criteria has been set for carers to be eligible to extend their out-of-home care to 21? Why and what are these four points?

Mr JAENSCH - Exiting to 21? A four-point criteria?

Ms STANDEN - Is it true that a four-point criteria has been set for carers to be eligible to extend their out-of-home care to 21? If that is the case, why, and what are these four points?

Mr JAENSCH - I am advised that the criteria you are referring to - which I assume are the criteria you are referring to - applied during the trial period for the extension of out-of-home care to 21 but no longer apply now that we have our model resolved and in place.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, can you please outline how the Hodgman Government responded to the first meningococcal outbreak for children and young people in and out-of-home care?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, I can and I am proud of this. It is one of the things that has happened on my watch that has exercised our role as parent, in some ways, for children in the out-of-home care system. Protection against meningococcal disease through vaccination is essential, particularly for young people. We acted quickly to ensure that as many children as possible under our guardianship and custody orders received the free ACWY vaccination. For those children who did not receive the vaccination in the months immediately following the start of the program, Children Youth Services contact carers by phone and email to follow up when appointments were being made or to understand why a child would not be receiving the vaccination. There are instances where young people are deemed old enough to make their own decisions about these things. For example, those who are 16 or 17 refusing to participate, those who suffer from a phobia of needles, those who are turning 18 or those who are in the process of transitioning out of our care. Importantly, we have worked with all children and carers in out-of-home care to ensure that those who are competent to make their own decisions have done so with all the relevant information available.

As at 13 May, 88 per cent of children under orders had received the vaccination and that is well above the population health services data for the broader community of 77 per cent of kids under the age of 19 who have received the vaccination. There are 22 children we are currently following up to identify why their vaccinations have not yet occurred. If necessary and where appropriate, child safety officers can arrange for vaccinations and take kids to appointments to ensure that happens.

I thank our Child Safety Service staff and the carers of these young people for their commitment to the health of kids in out-of-home care and our wonderful Health staff for their efficiency and their contribution to this public health response. The children in out-of-home care should have the same level of care, someone looking out for them, as the rest of the kids in our community, and we made sure that whilst the uptake of the meningococcal vaccinations was voluntary, we acted like a parent in the best interests of our kids and did everything we could to make sure they had the opportunity of the protection that was afforded.

CHAIR - Thank you, minister. The time allocated for the examination of Human Services is now concluded. We will have morning tea and then start in five minutes time on Housing. I will allow the minister to wind up and thank the members of staff.

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Mr JAENSCH - Chair, we have a couple of answers that we undertook to provide. Are you happy for us to provide that now?

CHAIR - Yes, do that before we finish, although I need to inform you we are eating into the time for Housing a little bit.

Mr JAENSCH - I will ask the Ms Webster to provide those answers now.

Ms WEBSTER - In regard to the Ashley questions, these are from the Report on Government Services and as you know, there is a bit of a lag with that data. In the 2017-18 Report on Government Services there were 19 assaults of children and that was by other children in Ashley, other residents. None of those required overnight hospitalisation. In terms of self-harm for the same period 2017-18, there were five. I don't have any more up-to-date data.

There was also a question about 1 May with cases allocated to team leaders. The number at 1 May was 129. Those cases are being actively triaged with oversight by senior staff as well as being worked with the team leader. There are no priority cases yet to be allocated. If a staff member is absent, the team leader has oversight of the matter. Those matters could be where a staff member is absent on leave for a short period of time.

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you very much.

The committee suspended from 11.04 a.m. to 11.13 a.m.

DIVISION 2

(Department of Communities Tasmania - Housing)

CHAIR - Minister, please introduce the officers at the table and make an opening statement on Housing.

Mr JAENSCH - Chair, at the table we have the secretary of the Department of Communities Tasmania, Ginna Webster; Peter White, deputy secretary for Housing, Disability and Community Services; and Rod Fazackerly, principal finance officer for the Department of Communities Tasmania. I gladly accept your invitation to make a short opening statement.

In recognition of continuing demand, the Hodgman Liberal Government has allocated almost \$68 million in the 2019-20 Budget to boost the supply of new social and affordable homes. This will support the continued momentum of our delivery of homes for Tasmanians who need them. We have heavily front-ended our \$125 million Housing commitment to accelerate the building of more houses to address our supply challenges sooner. The allocation in this financial year under our Affordable Housing Action Plan is \$40.5 million, with a further \$27.4 million allocated for Housing Tasmania's capital program. This includes the purchase and construction of new social housing to support the initiatives in our second action plan.

Bringing forward this considerable investment is just one of the ways we are building more homes for Tasmanians in need faster. Our first affordable housing action plan 2015-19 set out a number of targets we are working towards to provide more affordable homes to Tasmanians in need

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by increasing home ownership, unlocking more land for new homes and providing more social housing.

As previously advised in the quarterly housing report in March this year we remain on track to assist over 1600 households, including new supply of 941 affordable lots and homes by the end of June 2019. We are due to report against those achievements of those targets at the completion of the June 2019 quarter.

I know there has been a lot of interest regarding the delivery of these targets as we approach the end of this month and this financial year. Given that we are now on the home straight I would like to take this opportunity to update the committee on the considerable progress that has been achieved. I am pleased to report that at the end of May we had delivered 316 homes out of our 372 homes social housing target. Right now we have over 100 homes at an advanced stage of construction, including being in the final stages of fit-out, finishing driveways and completing landscaping.

This is part of a total supply of 843 affordable lots and homes against the 941 target, with a month to go. We are on track and have, at the end of May, assisted a total 1438 new households out of the 1600 target with a range of responses that are suitable for their needs, including 347 households assisted into affordable home ownership, 291 affordable land lots released to help people out of the tight rental market and into their own home so they can enjoy the benefits of our growing economy too, 316 new social housing dwellings have been constructed for those who need social housing support, with particular attention to social housing for older people and people with disability, 269 households have been assisted into affordable private rentals and 111 new units of homeless accommodation have been provided.

This is in addition to Tasmania providing subsidised social housing for around 12 000 households every day and on average around 200 households assisted with affordable private rentals each month through our private assistance rental program delivered by Housing Connect. It is also pleasing to see that the housing register has stabilised, which means that we are addressing new demand for social housing. We are investing nearly \$200 million in Tasmania's first affordable housing strategy, addressing the full spectrum of need from crisis accommodation to social housing and affordable home ownership so every Tasmanian who needs one has a roof over their head. We are confident that our strategy, supported by two action plans, combined with the \$30 million housing investment under the city deal, nation leading building approvals in the private market and historically low home loan interest rates will see the pressures Tasmanians are currently experiencing start to ease as supply meets demand. I am happy to take questions.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you, minister, for that overview. I note that you have once again alluded to 941 lots and homes to be delivered by the end of June. You know that you have promised, the Premier has promised, in your own affordable housing strategy, 900 new homes. You know that you have mentioned in the parliament on numerous occasions up until about June of last year, when you changed your language, that you would promise to build 900 new homes by the end of June. That means that in just 26 days you have something like 26 houses per day to be built every day for the next 26 days.

Your Government hastily organised what you called a housing summit last year when it became apparent through the media that thousands of Tasmanians were in acute housing stress and many Tasmanians were sleeping rough. This was little more than a cynical PR exercise. A critical part

of your Government's reaction to the housing crisis was to make bold promises for which you must be accountable.

CHAIR - Can we get to the question?

Ms STANDEN - I will wind up the question, Chair. You did not promise to deliver lots of land, you did not include in that target refurbishments or renovations of existing properties. You promised to build 900 new homes. Can you guarantee this promise will be delivered and each of those homes will be built at a time when Tasmania is at an unprecedented housing and homelessness crisis?

Mr JAENSCH - I thank the member for her question. When our affordable housing strategy was launched and our first action plan for 2015-19 was published, in the opening pages of that we acknowledged that the issue that Tasmania is facing with housing is one of supply. There is a map, this is from 2015, which outlines the total new supply - 941 is the magic number. It covers a range of different modes of delivering supply to address the market. Some of those are new standalone homes, some of them are units built for elderly people, some of them are community housing developments, some of them are land that is needed in areas where it is needed that is priced well and set up so that you can build homes. You need land to build homes. Land has always been identified as part of the supply challenge that we are facing. Before I became minister in March last year, Ms White and others also attended the housing summit. One of the priorities reiterated there was the identification and release of land to build on.

In our internal reporting we refer to supply as being the thing that we are delivering against and that we are measured against. In some cases it is houses, some cases it is supported accommodation, homeless shelters, in some cases it is land. We call it supply in our internal reporting. Supply does not mean much to the average punter listening to it because it is shop talk but it is made up of many things. The Government needs to address the need for supply of more homes across the board. Included in that is provision of land for affordable housing for people who are in need of affordable housing where they need it. So when we're releasing land in some cases we're rezoning land and doing the building ourselves. Sometimes we are working with a community housing provider to build a property that someone needs. Then they rent it to them and recover a proportion of the rent through Commonwealth rental assistance.

In some cases people are able to borrow money and build a house themselves. In some cases it is a hybrid of those where we are maybe part financier through taking an equity in their mortgage under HomeShare. There are many different ways of doing this and we enable this -

Ms STANDEN - That is not what you promised, minister.

Mr JAENSCH - among other things, by providing land where it is needed, which was not there before.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you, minister. I acknowledge that there is a pipeline towards new supply but page five of the action plan stage one 2015-19 states -

The Government's target is to increase supply by around 900 new homes.

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I have many statements that I could quote you where you have stated in the media and in the Parliament of Tasmania that you will commit to this target of 900 new homes. Isn't that the case, minister?

Mr JAENSCH - Could you just read the quote again, that you have.

Ms STANDEN - Page 5, about two-thirds of the way down the second paragraph you are holding the very same document, 'increase supply by around 900 new homes'.

Mr JAENSCH - That is right. Our aim is to increase supply of housing for Tasmanians. That can't happen if where we need the houses there is no land available.

Ms WHITE - You made the promise to build 900 new homes. You have not kept your word.

Mr JAENSCH - No, I am going to the specific question that Ms Standen asked, to increase supply. To increase supply in the areas of high demand where there is no land available no one can build houses.

Ms STANDEN - The Government's target is 900 new homes by the end of June and you know it.

CHAIR - Order, Ms Standen. Do not interject. You have asked the question.

Mr JAENSCH - Making land available and getting it into the market through a range of means is a legitimate part of that. That was embedded in action plan number one. That is what we are delivering on. By the end of this month we will have delivered on all of our targets.

Ms STANDEN - Why does your media release of 17 July 2018 say that you will deliver over 900 homes for low income Tasmanians by this time next year?

Mr JAENSCH - What we have is a commitment, as you put on the record a moment ago, to increase supply by around 900 new homes. The mechanisms for increasing supply are many. Part of that is releasing land that is ready to build on in the right areas and for the right homebuilders and the right first home owners who require affordable land in the right areas, appropriately zoned. That is part of supply of that 900.

Ms WHITE - It is not consistent with your strategy and the press release issued by your predecessor.

Mr JAENSCH - Is this a question?

Ms WHITE - Yes it is, because you have not kept your word. The press release from 23 August says quite clearly the strategy announces 'a four-year action plan that includes building more than 900 new homes'. It doesn't mention lots, it doesn't mention land. It says specifically 900 homes by the end of this month. Will you deliver that commitment?

Ms STANDEN - That's 25 new homes per day.

Mr JAENSCH - As I said before, we have built directly as our social housing target 316 so far of the 372 social housing dwellings. Over 100 of those homes are at an advanced stage of

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construction that will be delivered by the end of the month across the range of different components of supply. So far 843 affordable lots and homes have been delivered, with more than 100 under the final stages of construction.

Ms STANDEN - Not lots, minister, we are talking about new homes. You committed to 900 homes. When will you deliver them? If not by the end of June, then when?

CHAIR - Order.

Mr JAENSCH - I have answered this question here and in previous question and answer sessions in parliament and elsewhere. The Labor Party is being quite dogged on a semantic point.

Ms STANDEN - This is your own target - roofs over people's heads, minister.

CHAIR - Order.

Mr JAENSCH - What everybody in this sector has been talking about since 2014-15 when Affordable Housing Action Plan 1 was built is that supply is king when it comes to addressing the housing shortage and where there is no land there can be no homes.

Ms STANDEN - When will you deliver the 900 homes? You won't answer.

CHAIR - Order, Ms Standen. I am moving on.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, you said earlier that the issue for Tasmania is to do with supply. It is also to do with the cost of housing, the standard of housing and security of tenure for people who live in housing. You would be aware that yesterday the Tenants' Union successfully appealed a case that Housing Tasmania took to the full bench of the Supreme Court which found that Housing Tasmania is obliged to provide security of tenure, safe tenure and affordable housing on the basis that it is part of the objectives under which you operate. That case was about a 55-year-old intellectually disabled man who was evicted on the basis of the end of his lease without being given an opportunity to appeal or an explanation for the reasons for his eviction. The appeal was found in favour of that tenant. Can you please tell me how many tenants have been evicted on the basis of end-of-lease over the last year as defined under section 42(1)d of the Residential Tenancy Act?

Dr WOODRUFF - Over the last year.

Mr JAENSCH - For 2018-19, to 31 March evictions at lease end totalled 10.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. The decision in the case of the wrongful eviction of Mr Gregory Parsons, an intellectually disabled man, was handed down by the full bench of the Supreme Court. Housing Tasmania knew this case was being appealed from around October 2017, about 18 months ago, and it would have been prudent for Housing Tasmania to wait for that decision of the Supreme Court and then the full court of the Supreme Court before attempting to evict any other tenants on the basis of an end of a lease. What are you intending to do with those tenants who have been evicted into homelessness who were not provided with reasons for their eviction or an opportunity to have their decision reviewed?

Mr JAENSCH - Housing Tasmania will take time now to consider the various implications of yesterday's court decision. I can comment more generally on the issue of evictions. Housing

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Tasmania manages its tenancies in line with the Residential Tenancy Act and works closely with tenants to maintain their tenancies. Eviction is always an action of last resort and only occurs if a tenant seriously and repeatedly breaches their tenancy agreement and defaults on arrangements that are made to ensure that they comply with their lease, including refusing to engage with support providers.

Dr WOODRUFF - But that wasn't what happened in this case, was it? That's the point.

CHAIR - Order, Dr Woodruff.

Mr JAENSCH - It happens in all cases.

Dr WOODRUFF - It didn't happen in this case, that is absolutely misleading.

CHAIR - Order, Dr Woodruff.

Mr JAENSCH - If a tenant takes reasonable steps to remedy breaches such as entering into an arrangement to pay-off arrears, eviction action will be stopped. Tenants are provided with clear information about their responsibilities and potential consequence for continued behaviours. Where eviction action is taken, the tenant is offered referrals to appropriate support services. I am mentioning this because Dr Woodruff in her question referred to eviction into homelessness. Tenants who are evicted are offered referrals to appropriate support services, including crisis accommodation providers and other housing providers. No tenant is evicted into homelessness without crisis or support options being offered.

Dr WOODRUFF - You didn't answer the question, with respect, minister. The court found that Housing Tasmania is not giving tenants natural justice. You have had 18 months while something in the order of 20 tenants - 10 last year plus another 15 tenants for the previous year, so something in the order of 10 to 20 people - have been evicted over that period of time, possibly without natural justice. What are you going to do about them in light of this case? Will you give them an opportunity to have their decisions reviewed, which is what this man had never been given?

Mr JAENSCH - As I said earlier, Housing Tasmania will consider the implications of the court decision.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can you confirm that Housing Tasmania will not be appealing this full bench of the Supreme Court decision to the High Court?

Mr JAENSCH - I confirm that Housing Tasmania will consider the implications.

Dr WOODRUFF - So you are actually leaving the door open to appeal, despite the fact that it was found that you were acting against natural justice. You are evicting people into homelessness, you are not giving them a chance to review a decision and you are not giving them the reasons for decisions. Like this intellectually disabled man, you are ending their lease at a time where you have just said there is a desperate shortage of housing in Tasmania, and you are actually leaving the door open to appealing this to the High Court.

Mr JAENSCH - I will be taking advice from Housing Tasmania on what the implications are of the court's decision.

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Dr WOODRUFF - So that is a yes.

Ms STANDEN - Minister, in Estimates last year, you committed to delivering 444 dwellings, social housing developments, by the end of June, that was new dwellings, 444 in total. You have just said that you currently have built 316 from a target of 372. I am trying to understand these figures, minister, because your original document set a government target of 900. Estimates of last year said that there would be least 444 dwellings and now you are talking about achieving 316 to date of a 372 target. Which is it? Which promise have you broken?

Mr JAENSCH - As the member well knows, the target under the Affordable Housing Action Plan 1, is to deliver 372. At this point, we have delivered 316 and are confident of delivering 372, and then some. At Estimates last year -

Ms STANDEN - As of the end of June?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes. At Estimates last year, in this discussion or a variation on it, what was shared with the committee was what our projections were of what we thought might be possible to achieve over and above the target in the Affordable Housing Action Plan 1. After that, quite mischievously, Labor, in particular, has declared that to be the new target and has used that as a measure -

Ms STANDEN - Oh, it's our fault.

CHAIR - Order, Ms Standen.

Mr JAENSCH - and then said that we have retreated back to another target and therefore we are moving the goalposts which is absolutely disingenuous.

Ms STANDEN - You committed to 444 new social housing dwellings.

Mr JAENSCH - No, we committed to meeting our target, which is 372 social housing homes. We shared with the committee our projection that we believed we were going to be able to deliver more than our target, and that was possibly 444. I remain ambitious that we can do that but our commitment is to meet our target and we are on track to do that.

Ms STANDEN - So 372 by the end of June?

Mr JAENSCH - That is what is in the Affordable Housing Action Plan target and I am committed to reaching that. I also believe that we can exceed it and -

Ms WHITE - But not the 900 though?

Mr JAENSCH - The 941 affordable lots and homes, definitely, supply of, as you read into *Hansard* a little earlier.

Ms WHITE - I have a litany of commitments that you have given where you have said specifically 900 homes.

Mr JAENSCH - Supply of 900 homes.

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Ms WHITE - That's not a lot, is it, minister?

Mr JAENSCH - You can't build a home without the land and some of those homes, we are building directly by contracting builders, some we enter into an arrangement with a third party, like a community housing provider, who builds the home. In some of those cases, we make it possible for someone to build their own home, who would not have been able to without the supply.

Ms WHITE - Can you give a definition of a home?

Mr JAENSCH - Various definitions of homes. What we are dealing with in Tasmania's current affordable housing situation is having a supply of housing across Tasmania that meets demand.

Ms WHITE - Do you think a block of land is a home?

Mr JAENSCH - When demand outstrips supply, including that there is no land available to build on in the areas of highest demand, the price of everything that is in the market goes up. That is what has created the pressure on people, including, as your party has pointed to repeatedly, people who have not been traditionally social housing tenants, who have low to moderate incomes, who aspire to home ownership but haven't been able to realise that dream because the market has been too hot for them.

Where we are able to deliver appropriately priced, serviced and located land to that group of people, it is a supply solution for them. Good on them if they can build their own home and if we can assist them to do that with HomeShare or other products, all the better. It is all part of the mix; it is not just one solution for everybody.

Ms WHITE - Minister, do you acknowledge that your language has changed and that you made multiple commitments to build 900 homes by the end of this month, and now you have talked about lots as a component of that target. Just honesty would be appreciated.

Mr JAENSCH - Land lots have always been part of the target.

Ms WHITE - Your honesty would be appreciated.

Mr JAENSCH - Land lots has always been a part of that target.

Ms WHITE - It was not named up as lots of land in the strategy. It has not been named up as lots of land in the multiple press releases that were issued by yourself or your predecessor or in the debates we have had in the parliament. It has always been homes.

Mr JAENSCH - The difficulty is that, particularly in a political discussion or through media, what happens is that the concepts and the language gets dumbed down as you continually demand that we deliver homes.

Ms WHITE - I beg your pardon, this is your own language.

Mr JAENSCH - You choose which language, what you consider to be a home that delivers on that. What people involved in the affordable housing social services sector -

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CHAIR - Order, allow the minister to answer. Order.

Mr JAENSCH - People who have been part of the consultation for our Affordable Housing Action Plan 1 and 2 and who attended the summit in March last year recognise is that one of the great constraints to addressing demand for housing in Tasmania - particularly in the greater Hobart area - has been access to suitably-zoned land in the areas of greatest demand.

You cannot address Tasmania's housing shortage without providing access to a supply of suitably-zoned land in the appropriate areas. That has been a key feature of the Affordable Housing Strategy from day one and it is a target that we are going to meet and we are going to continue to meet into the next action plan.

Ms WHITE - Perhaps a simpler question is, of your 941 target, how many of those are lots of land?

Mr JAENSCH - As I reported, delivery of 291 I think the target was -

Ms WHITE - That 291 of that 941 is just a block of land, just a bare patch of dirt with no roof, no services.

Mr JAENSCH - No, it is serviced blocks of land but it also includes -

Ms STANDEN - Electricity is helpful when you are in a tent or a caravan.

Ms WHITE - Of that 941 can you just confirm, minister, 291.

CHAIR - Order, sorry Ms White, until the minister completes his answer and as far as I can see he is still searching for some information.

Mr JAENSCH - There are 291 new affordable lots completed so far of an original target of 267, just quietly.

Ms STANDEN - What is affordable?

Ms WHITE - That means you have only provided 650 homes and you had a target of 900 homes, do you concede that that is a failure?

Mr JAENSCH - I do not believe that you are in a position to make up your own measures for what you consider to be achievement or failure of targets -

Ms WHITE - You are failing to meet your own targets.

CHAIR - Order.

Mr JAENSCH - which are not due until the end of this month. At this stage, the target was for 267 new affordable lots of which we have delivered 291. One-hundred-and-eighty are HomeShare or new home ownership cases, we have delivered 171 so far. New social housing the target was 372 of which so far, we have delivered 316 and new homeless and supported accommodation, 99 units of which we have delivered 65 so far.

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Ms WHITE - That is 650 of the 900 homes you have promised.

Mr JAENSCH - So far 843 in our supply column of 941 committed to in this action plan.

Ms WHITE - Some of them are just patches of land a bit of dirt not a roof over somebody's head.

Mr JAENSCH - You can go around on this all day.

Ms STANDEN - It is smoke and mirrors, isn't it?

Ms WHITE - You need to be accountable.

CHAIR - Order, order.

Ms WHITE - It is the responsibility you have to the people of Tasmania to be honest.

Mr JAENSCH - The people that are fed into our Affordable Housing Strategy and our action plans, one and two, identify the availability of suitably-zoned and priced affordable land as a fundamental component of supply to address our affordable housing challenges. You are choosing an indicator to suit -

Ms WHITE - They are just different to the target of 900 homes.

Ms STANDEN - No, these are your targets, you changed your language, you will not explain why and in your stage two plan you go further to talk about 2400 new homes.

CHAIR - The minister has answered these questions.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you, Chair. Minister, I am struggling to understand how the case that was found in favour of the tenant that you evicted, Gregory Parsons, taken on behalf of the Tenants' Union, that case was about the basis of an end of lease under the Residential Tenancy Act. Can you please explain to me if, as you said before, tenants are only evicted for continuous breaches of their lease, how it is possible that Mr Parsons or anyone else could be evicted due simply to the expiry of the lease?

Mr JAENSCH - Chair, two things. First, I do not intend to go into details of the case in question at this hearing. Second, I will be receiving advice from Housing Tasmania regarding the implications of the court decision that came down only yesterday afternoon so I do not want to comment any further on any of the ifs or whats on that.

Dr WOODRUFF - No, excuse me, that is just squibbing the question I asked. How is it possible for anyone to be evicted for end of lease when you have just said it is only continuous breaches of lease that a person could be evicted for?

Mr JAENSCH - I have given an answer around how we manage tenancies and the circumstances of eviction. I do not have anything more to add.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Can you say then that you will instruct Housing Tasmania to never evict a person without the tenant being provided the underlying reasons for their eviction and being provided with a right of review?

Mr JAENSCH - As I said, the court decision taken yesterday is something Housing Tasmania needs to consider in detail and provide me with advice on. I will not pre-empt anything coming from that.

Dr WOODRUFF - Fair enough. Leaving aside that, is it the case, then, that tenants are not provided at the moment with the underlying reasons for their eviction and the right to review in every single instance?

Mr JAENSCH - Tenants are provided with clear information about their responsibilities and potential consequences for continued behaviours.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is not the answer. When they are given a notice of eviction -

Mr JAENSCH - I am not sure I am going to satisfy you but that is the answer I can give.

Dr WOODRUFF - You just need to answer the question. Are they given a statement of the reasons for their eviction and an opportunity to have that decision reviewed?

Mr JAENSCH - If a tenant takes reasonable steps to remedy breaches, eviction action will be stopped.

Dr WOODRUFF - Are they given the opportunity of a review?

Mr JAENSCH - I do not know what you mean by review.

Dr WOODRUFF - To appeal or to put their case in a formal sense.

Mr JAENSCH - I think you have constructed that question.

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes or no? Either that mechanism exists or it doesn't. Is there a review opportunity available to them? If they get a notice of eviction do they get given a statement as to why they have been evicted and if so, can they go to some body or review panel and argue a case?

Mr JAENSCH - I think that goes to the heart of the matter that the court decision was provided on yesterday. We will be considering that matter and how it was dealt with in that case and what its implications are for the future and I will wait for Housing Tasmania's advice.

Dr WOODRUFF - It goes to the heart of the matter that Housing Tasmania is evicting people from premises in a way that does not afford them natural justice.

Mr JAENSCH - You can say what you like about that but I am taking advice from my department based on what the court said.

Dr WOODRUFF - I am saying what the Supreme Court found, that it is inhumane to evict a person into the current housing crisis situation without even giving them an opportunity to mount a defence or to understand why that is happening to them. This case involved an intellectually

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disabled man so you can't really get much more barbaric than that. Given that there is a housing crisis, this is a simple thing you could fix to give people natural justice. They are your responsibility, minister.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, that is a statement not a question.

Ms STANDEN - Chair, on the matter we have just been discussing about the Supreme Court case regarding the decision on a Housing Tasmania tenant, could the minister outline the cost to the state Government of pursuing that case?

Mr JAENSCH - I don't have that information to hand. The matter was resolved by the court yesterday so we don't yet have a figure on the costs associated with that.

Ms STANDEN - Would you be willing to take that on notice?

Mr JAENSCH - I would be willing to see what we can provide.

Ms STANDEN - So we can put that on notice?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you, minister. Back to your Affordable Housing Action Plan 2, on page 5 you talk about increasing the total of new affordable homes to 2400. Given your discomfort in recommitting today to your target of 900 in stage 1 of the plan, will you commit to this target of 2400?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, we have. It is in your hand. That is the policy document.

Ms STANDEN - So you guarantee that you will reach that target?

Mr JAENSCH - That is our commitment.

Ms STANDEN - Which is different to the last commitment that you won't achieve.

Mr JAENSCH - I think you are being funny now. I ask you to read the document in your hand in full.

Ms STANDEN - I have.

Mr JAENSCH - In which case you will see that our supply commitments are made up of many different forms of supply, which include -

Ms STANDEN - Please don't patronise me, minister. This is your language.

Mr JAENSCH - Well, please don't pick a number out and then ask me to commit to something out of context.

Ms STANDEN - This is your foreword to your document.

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Mr JAENSCH - Correct. It refers to what is in the document which gives you the background information you need.

Ms STANDEN - It says new affordable homes to 2400, so that would be homes, not lots and homes. That would be dwellings, actual houses. Is that correct?

Mr JAENSCH - My answer remains the same. I am not sure you are going to move from your position on what you count as supply and what is required to build, including land.

Ms STANDEN - I'm not the one who changed my language, minister. You committed to that in the media and the parliament.

Mr JAENSCH - The Affordable Housing Action Plan stands, as does its targets and our commitment to reach them, as it does for the first action plan which we will deliver on by the end of this month.

Ms STANDEN - Minister, if you would just achieve your targets and not change your language, this would all go away.

CHAIR - Ms Standen, order.

Ms WHITE - So you can't confirm they will only be homes, they will be lots and homes?

Mr JAENSCH - There is a range of different measures, as I read out to you before, that make up the supply target of 2400 that is in the overarching Affordable Housing Strategy.

Ms WHITE - Can you confirm that includes vacant blocks of land?

Mr JAENSCH - Affordably priced, well located serviced blocks of land for people building their first affordable home.

Ms WHITE - It is important that people understand what you mean when you say 'home', minister, because it is very different to the understanding most people have. Most people recognise a home to be a roof over somebody's head, not a block of land. When you make a commitment like that you need to be much clearer because people feel let down by you because you have not met your own targets.

Mr JAENSCH - To a person who is in housing stress right now -

Ms WHITE - A tent on a block of land is not going to appease the housing stress situation.

CHAIR - Order.

Mr JAENSCH - To a person who is in housing stress right now, who has a moderate combined income and is finding their ability to save for a home, which is their dream, has moved further out of reach because of the high cost of maintaining their rent, if we can identify and provide preferentially to them an affordable block of land in a suburb they need, which is small and therefore more affordable and which is serviced, that means they don't have to go through that which is available on the market where it might not have been before. Particularly where we are able to work with them through HomeShare, we can give them their dream back and they can get a house

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of their own for the first time. That is a home to them. We make no apology for addressing that part of the market. If that delivers a home, that is a result for that family and we will count it.

Ms WHITE - That's fine, minister, and I commend anybody who is able to build a house on a block of land that may be supplied either by you or anybody else, but you need to be clear - and all I am asking is for you to be honest - that when you say a home you actually mean a block of land, because that is what you have now confirmed.

Mr JAENSCH - No, when we say a home we don't mean a block of land. We recognise that in the supply of homes for Tasmanians, which everyone agrees we need and which in some parts of this discussion you accept that supply of suitable zoned land is an important component of it, we need to count that as something that we commit to and invest in and we deliver on -

Ms WHITE - You need to be honest when you talk about that being included when you talk about a home.

Mr JAENSCH - and when you pick up this issue every time and then claim that we have failed to meet our obligations then you are being disingenuous.

Ms WHITE - Because every time you talk about a home and not a block of land, minister. I am asking you to be honest. You have a chance to clear things up.

CHAIR - Order, Ms White, please do not interject.

Mr JAENSCH - You know that I am being honest.

Ms WHITE - You just need to be clearer.

Mr JAENSCH - You are picking this apart every time for political purposes.

Ms WHITE - My word I am because a home to me means a roof over somebody's head not a block of land.

Mr JAENSCH - How do you get the roof over the head? You need land and you need to build a house on it.

Sometimes it is the Government doing all of that and renting it to someone for 30 years. Sometimes it is providing a block of land that was never there at a price that people can afford and assisting them to get in to a house of their own. There are different strokes for different folks in this one. Sometimes it is supported accommodation for young people leaving the youth justice system or out-of-home care; sometimes it is aged care for people who would otherwise be homeless; sometimes it is crisis accommodation; sometimes it is a brand-new standalone two-bedroom unit as part of social housing; and sometimes its assistance to build a home of your own.

We have people in all of those layers of need and we need to address them all and we will count what we achieve against those targets in all of those cases and we will add them up and we make no apology for that.

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Ms STANDEN - Are you at least able to define how you would describe or define affordable land? How would you define that or is that actually a price point? A given percentage below the market, for instance?

Mr JAENSCH - No, when we are selling land on the market we are - and I may ask the deputy secretary to provide more detail on this - going to considerable lengths to make sure it is affordable. First, it is in areas of demand where there isn't land available to build on and therefore prices are very high for any that become available. So increasing the supply in those areas offsets demand to some extent and lowers prices generally. Second, we are providing land in lots that by being small in size and being already developed, represents more affordability and less cost of entry to market for people. Third, there is also processes by which we are preferentially making that land available to people who would qualify for programs like the HomeShare program before releasing it to the broader market. We are giving people in our target affordable home ownership market a preferential opportunity to get in there. All of these things go to making that land more affordable to buy than it would have been in the general market if it was available at all.

Ms STANDEN - So, there is no absolute definition of affordability then, so say 20 per cent below market?

Mr JAENSCH - It is a relative term I think you will find and we do not set affordability as a component of how land is priced when it is going to market. I might just ask Mr White if I am able to if he has any details to add to that.

Mr WHITE - Thank you, minister. The land release we have had around Tasmania, as the minister alluded to, at times lots are sold at market value and typically a lot of the land we have in the market is at an affordable price and we look at that around the ability for people who say would be -

Ms STANDEN - By affordable you mean lower, through you minister, just a point of clarification. I am just wondering if the deputy secretary has a definition of affordability in his mind?

Mr JAENSCH - I am happy for him to respond to that. I believe I have given some mention of it as a relative term.

CHAIR - Just before you start. Just a reminder that when an officer is at the table we do not interject on the officer. If you have a point of clarification that can be asked after the officer has completed his explanation, so please do not interject on officers.

Mr WHITE - Through you, minister, we would see that the affordability here relates to other households that we target through the HomeShare and Streets Ahead program. The eligibility for that is very clear and has been available. What that typically means for land is a lot of the land we sell in certain areas is affordable by its nature at market rates. For example, land we subdivided at Devonport and Somerset under the land release program has been selling at market value which in that region is about \$85 000 to around \$110 000 per lot.

In some other areas we have land available at lower rates than that and, in some cases, it may be a higher value depending on the market conditions. Where people access HomeShare, they can often receive, as part of the HomeShare package, a reduction on the land price as part of the equity that the director holds under the HomeShare program.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, the unanimous decision by the Full Bench of the Supreme Court yesterday held that the appeal taken by the Tenants' Union for Mr Parsons should end the injustice that Housing Tasmania has been exacting over tenants by using end of lease -

Mr JAENSCH - That's your judgment.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is their words. The Full Court found that there must be strong grounds for eviction instead of the instance with Mr Parsons where no reasons were given for eviction and there was no chance to remedy the breach or seek review.

There are some odd 13 000 social housing tenants in Tasmania. That sounds wrong, I will take that back. There are some 13 000 -

Mr JAENSCH - Some of them are odd, as they are in any group of people.

Dr WOODRUFF - There are some 13 000 tenants in social housing in Tasmania and those people would see this as a victory for the security of their tenure.

Mr Parsons has an intellectual disability. He lived in his Glenorchy home for 10 years, he was evicted without a statement of reasons and without an opportunity to review that.

My question is, minister, that Ms Courtney has flagged a review of the Residential Tenancy Act. Will you rule out seeking as one of the terms of reference to that review, that the law be amended to give Housing Tasmania the chance to continue to evict on the basis of end of lease?

Mr JAENSCH - As I said earlier on, the court decision came down yesterday. I am yet to receive from my department their advice on the implications of that.

Dr WOODRUFF - This is about the standing position of how a tenant. It has nothing to do, leaving aside the findings of the court - which only just reinforced the natural justice which should be operating - you have a position in the department at the moment of using end of lease as a way of terminating the housing that you provide for a person.

Mr JAENSCH - Under the Residential Tenancy Act.

Dr WOODRUFF - No, are you talking about making sure that the review of the Residential Tenancy Act would still continue the situation where people can be evicted unjustly without having an opportunity to review? Without being giving the reasons for their eviction?

Mr JAENSCH - Chair, I am not going to speak for Ms Courtney and I am awaiting my department's advice on the implications of the court decision yesterday.

Dr WOODRUFF - Perhaps the department's staff could answer this question, minister? Is this something -

Mr JAENSCH - No, I have given you the answer; that is our answer.

Dr WOODRUFF - So you are not actually going to reflect on the gravity of what is happening for people who are evicted without any just cause from houses that you manage? You provide

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homes for people, minister, and the case of a man who was evicted without just cause. Doesn't that reach into your heart? Wouldn't you want to administratively give them the opportunity, instead you are evicting them into homelessness.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, you put the question and then you have continued on with a statement. Please allow the minister to answer the actual question.

Mr JAENSCH - There are a range of issues and implications surrounding the court's decision. As a minister, I am not going to make any statements or undertakings without taking advice from my department.

Ms WHITE - Have you seen the photo of Mr Parsons?

Mr JAENSCH - I have.

Dr WOODRUFF - Doesn't he look like a lovely person who may need to have aspects of his tenancy adjusted because of his intellectual disability? He would like to understand the reasons for why he was evicted from his property after 10 years. Year on year, 10 years, his home, but he was kicked out into homelessness and it was only because of the Tenants' Union valiantly continuing to take this case against Housing Tasmania that the Full Bench of the Supreme Court found again in his favour. The court found that you have been unjustly evicting people like Mr Parsons.

CHAIR - What is your question, Dr Woodruff?

Dr WOODRUFF - Surely the minister is not going to have to wait to have a conversation about this?

CHAIR - If there is no question, Ms Standen.

Ms STANDEN - Minister, I understand that there are lots of land currently available on your website, affordable lots of land, supposedly, in Summer Hill for \$150 000 and in Moonah for \$125 000. Would you call that affordable?

Mr JAENSCH - This is going to be the third line of questioning in a row which is going to definitions of terms of what a home is and what affordable is rather than how we are providing relief to the pressures in the Tasmanian housing market at the moment. The pricing of the land available on the website of Housing Tasmania, is HomeShare candidate land. I might ask Mr White to provide us with some information on how the pricing of those blocks is arrived at.

Ms STANDEN - I just want to know if you think \$125 000 or \$150 000 is affordable?

Mr JAENSCH - I do not think that my personal opinion on what is affordable for me or in that market or to somebody who we are targeting this land to is particularly germane. What I want to do is ask Mr White, if he is willing to, to provide some more detail of pricing of those blocks that are on our website.

Ms STANDEN - It might be affordable for you.

Mr JAENSCH - Are you interested in that information?

Ms STANDEN - Absolutely, thank you.

Mr JAENSCH - Or are you asking me for my opinion.

Ms STANDEN - I did ask you but you failed to answer that.

Mr JAENSCH - I don't think my opinion of what is affordable to me is of interest to anybody really. But I would ask Mr White to speak about how that pricing is arrived at.

Mr WHITE - Thank you, minister. The pricing we have for our land is based on the market value set by the Valuer-General. Whenever we have land identified to go onto the market the Valuer-General will provide us with updated market valuations. That is the price at which we aim to sell the land. In terms of its affordability, under the HomeShare scheme purchases under that program of house and land packages can go up to around \$400 000. If you are looking at costs of construction with the lots of land, I would suggest that those prices you have alluded to - I'm sorry I don't have the information in front of me - \$125 000, \$150 000, would fit within those affordability parameters, within our range of what we suggest is affordable for people potentially eligible for HomeShare. Some of those lots will also be sold to people in the general market who may not want to take up HomeShare or may not be necessarily eligible.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you, Mr White. Four hundred thousand dollars for a low-income Tasmanian, whether they are in work or on benefits, would not meet the test of affordability in my mind. Back to your target of 2400 new homes in the Affordable Housing Action Plan stage 2. Notwithstanding your commitment to 2400 homes in the foreword, I note on page 22 you provide a breakdown of those 2400, including 670 new lots of land. Could you provide over the forward Estimates a breakdown of that 2400 for every financial year and what your targets are in relation to the various aspects of supply that you have alluded to?

Mr JAENSCH - No, that is not something I can provide here and it is not something which is finally resolved either. There are work programs underway or being developed for each of the categories of supply and assistance across the forward Estimates. We also need to factor in our contracting program. One thing we have committed to in action 3.1 in the action plan is to release an indicative schedule of tenders covering the four years of the action plan.

This is something that the community housing providers and the building and construction sector have asked us to do so that they can see the pipeline of work ahead, schedule their availability, their contractors and suppliers and smooth the work through so we don't run into bottlenecks of demand. We will be releasing that schedule of tenders soon. The negotiation of that and the availability of builders and partners will define exactly the time frames and the numbers associated with that. We can be indicative at this stage. This isn't wishing to be evasive, it is just that we have found that every time we right a number down you hold it up all the time. So we will ensure before we commit those numbers we will be clear on them. That will come at the point of being able to lock down those contracts.

Ms STANDEN - If it is too difficult for you to take account of slippage under the last AHAP stage 1, you would at least at this stage, only one month out from a new financial year, have targets for the upcoming financial year. Could you at least provide that? This time last year you committed to 444 new dwellings and you won't achieve that. What is your target for this financial year?

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Mr JAENSCH - For the financial year coming, we don't have a published target yet for that period. Since the Affordable Housing Action Plan was launched we have brought forward our Budget initiative of bringing forward \$20 million from the out years into the next two financial years to accelerate the program. That has required some adjustment as we work out what can be brought forward and how we are going to contract that with whom. The overall intent of that and the clear statements we have made is that in this next four years we'll bring forward as much work as possible to the first couple of years, because this is when the demand is hottest. We do not want to be waiting for a scheduled budget drop in three years time to complete work if we can bring it forward. We have had the budget control and capacity to do that.

I am grateful to the Treasurer for the ability to do that. We will be putting out our proposed work plans. What we will also be doing is appointing a reference group for our Affordable Housing Action Plan 2, which will work with me and my department to determine that work program and to change it if need be to respond to events or opportunities. It needs to be a living plan. The 2400 that you refer to, to be clear, refers to the total supply delivery across the two action plans, not just action plan 2. I want it to be clear.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, you have made some strong statements that the Government is investing in housing. Can you please explain why the target for housing applicants to be housed for the next financial year is exactly the same as the target you have for this financial year, which are lower targets than the actual number that were housed in 2016-17?

Mr JAENSCH - Which target are you referring to?

Dr WOODRUFF - Budget paper no. 2 vol. 1 page 29. Applicants housed had 1047 people housed in 2016-17 and 901, a huge drop, last year, and a target of only 1000 for this year and next year. It doesn't look like an investment in housing to me. It looks like we are going backwards.

Mr JAENSCH - That is more of an accounting target than a policy target.

Dr WOODRUFF - What? A target is a target.

Mr JAENSCH - In terms of the performance information in these documents, it looks like a fairly round number rather than something that is generated out of a particular action plan

Dr WOODRUFF - Are you saying that your targets are not based on anything but are just numbers written on the back of an envelope? Targets are meant to be based on real matters.

Mr JAENSCH - No, I am saying that is not the target in our action plan, which would be the thing that drives -

Dr WOODRUFF - It is in the budget papers. It is related to the investments you are making which is showing quite clearly that your investments are not expected to house more people than were housed two years ago.

Mr JAENSCH - I think we would be above that target, in which case I would be very happy to report that we are.

Dr WOODRUFF - Why is it not written in there?

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr JAENSCH - I am just going to seek the secretary's advice.

Ms WHITE - What else is wrong in the budget papers, because that is pretty alarming?

Mr JAENSCH - This is a Human Services statistic, a dashboard indicator, which shows the number of applicants housed in public housing and community housing properties. There were 901 in 2017-18, which was associated with relatively low turnover of properties and high occupancy rates.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is 146 less than the previous year.

Mr JAENSCH - There have been 792 applicants housed this financial year to 31 March and if this trend continues we will exceed the number of applicants housed last year by over 150. These numbers fluctuate. They are dashboard indicative numbers for trend purposes. The numbers of people actually housed will be determined by how we are able to get stock onto the ground and move people through from the Housing Register into new stock. That is what the Affordable Housing Action Plan is about.

Dr WOODRUFF - I want to pull you up here. I think you are being deliberately -

Mr JAENSCH - I think 'obfusatory' is the word you are looking for, but I am not.

Dr WOODRUFF - No, you are misleading us. Okay, we'll confirm that there was a drop of 146 people who were actually housed between 2016-17 and 2017-18. I presume those figures are real and not just back-of-the-envelope figures.

Mr JAENSCH - I think I have referred to in my last answer -

Dr WOODRUFF - The budget papers say there was a drop of 146 between 2016-17 and 2017-18. My question is why are we still targeting for less in 2018-19 and in this current year? Why is that the case? It is not an indication of a government that is putting investment into Housing as an increasing budget item.

Mr JAENSCH - In terms of the targets in the budget papers, those figures were set prior to the extra investment that was announced as a budget initiative.

Dr WOODRUFF - Could you please give me the updated target figure then?

Mr JAENSCH - I think that is the target in the budget papers.

Dr WOODRUFF - The target now is less than it was two years ago of how many people you are expecting to house. This is your major investment in Housing when we are in a housing crisis.

Mr JAENSCH - The department advises that they have not updated the target. That is the target that was provided in the preparation of the budget papers.

Dr WOODRUFF - Could you please provide the updated target?

Mr JAENSCH - It seems to me that as 1000 is a very round figure I would expect it is a trend figure and I do not know what our scope is to amend a target like that in a budget.

Dr WOODRUFF - Hold on, are you saying that you just put rubbish figures in the Budget because -

Mr JAENSCH - No, I am not saying that at all.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, could we have the real figure, please? Could I put it on notice if you do not have it at the table? Could you please provide the target for 2018-19 and 2019-20 of people who are going to be housed?

Mr JAENSCH - I will undertake to get an answer to that question for you.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Do I need to put that in writing? Can you do that today?

Mr JAENSCH - Maybe not today, but I will get you an answer.

Dr WOODRUFF - Okay.

Ms WHITE - What you just admitted, minister, is that the money that was brought forward in the Budget was not strategic or planned, it was an afterthought because you have just confirmed the data in the Budget does not reflect that funding. At what stage did you decide to bring the money forward?

Mr JAENSCH - We make no apology for pulling all the levers that we can to address the current situation in Tasmania's housing market. In the preparation of the Budget there are lots of processes and submissions made and there is also a share of argy-bargy that happens as we are getting the Budget together. If, as Minister for Housing, in that process, right up to the death-knell, I can secure more money earlier for my area of responsibility -

Ms WHITE - It is not more money. Be truthful, it is not more money.

Mr JAENSCH - Well, it is more than it was going to be in 2019-20 and the year after. If I can get more money sooner to deliver results for Tasmanians, I will. I make no apology about that.

Ms WHITE - So that data is wrong because you didn't actually know you would have that money until the death-knell. You have confirmed that yourself.

Mr JAENSCH - Tasmanians who are concerned about our housing situation would expect me to be fighting for resources to deliver on our targets and deliver results to Tasmanians. I will bring forward money if I can to do that.

Ms WHITE - You have confirmed it is not a strategic decision, it was at the death-knell that you have been able to pull this money forward, which means the data in the budget papers is wrong. You haven't met your targets for this financial year, so what confidence can we have that bringing money forward will actually be spent on delivering the promises you have made? You haven't been able to outline that for the committee. The shadow minister asked you how many homes would be built next financial year with the money you have brought forward and you don't even know. This is some kind of rushed decision you have made and you don't have any details.

CHAIR - Do you have a question, Ms White?

Mr JAENSCH - In the last budget we committed \$125 million over five years as part of \$200 million over eight years for the largest-ever Tasmanian Affordable Housing Strategy. That, as you might recall, was at the time projected to be \$25 million a year over five years. We brought \$25 million forward so that we could ramp up the number of building projects that are underway and they are now delivering and will be continuing to deliver over the next four years. In this Budget we have been able to bring money forward from the out-years to deliver more houses sooner.

Ms WHITE - But you can't say how many houses. This isn't strategic. It is a rushed panic in response to the problems we are seeing.

Mr JAENSCH - No, it's not, it is a response to an urgent need. I am confused by members opposite who on one hand want to declare things as an emergency and criticise the Government for not doing enough, and on the other hand saying you would rather I be strategic and have this all mapped out across five years and wait three or four years before we deliver houses. We will bring forward resources and deploy them as quickly as we can to address the current needs of Tasmanians.

Ms WHITE - What are you going to spend the money on in this current financial year? Can you detail that, please?

Mr JAENSCH - We have identified that the projects most able to be brought forward and in highest need are the social housing components, the new builds, under AHAP 2. Some of the other initiatives, things like the youth foyers and others that have been spoken of, have a longer lead-time because they require site selection and development of various partnerships to run them et cetera. At this stage, the focus of the brought-forward funds will be on accelerating our social housing building program.

Ms WHITE - Which you have failed to meet targets for.

Mr JAENSCH - We haven't failed to meet any targets and we are well on track to meet the targets we have.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, can you update the committee on what has been done to deliver emergency support to those Tasmanians experiencing homelessness?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you for your question, Mr Tucker. Homelessness is indeed a complex problem and one that needs to be addressed with compassion and sensitivity. Every case is unique and every story is different. The Tasmanian Government and our Housing Connect partners are committed to supporting people into secure and stable accommodation. We know there are Tasmanians in housing stress right now. I do not shy away from these challenges and that is why I am working hard to deliver our Affordable Housing Strategy.

Our second action plan provides a broad range of options to assist Tasmanians who are in greatest need. We have front-ended the funding for this plan with almost \$68 million for social and affordable housing in 2019-20. We know that some people are in urgent need now. That is why we have brought money forward. Just after I became minister we provided additional funding for immediate emergency accommodation and support for Tasmanians in need. This was implemented ahead of the last winter season. The funding was used to secure a mix of cabins, hotel and motel style accommodation with the emphasis on providing safety and security for those in greatest need over the winter period as they moved into more permanent accommodation.

It included additional resources for Housing Connect to support people in emergency accommodation. Housing Connect and these new on-ground resources regularly visit a number of sites to connect with people who were in need of that assistance. The requirements for secure temporary accommodation change to adapt to every client's unique circumstances and need. I am advised that there are between 40 and 60 rooms available for secure accommodation options for people experiencing homelessness every night in greater Hobart. Housing Connect connects eligible Tasmanians to appropriate housing assistance and services, including private rental assistance, supported accommodation, crisis and transitional accommodation, after-hours assistance and housing support services.

As part of our second action plan and in consultation with the Housing Connect partners we have now embedded this outreach support across the plan for the next four years. What started as a plan for last winter has been extended across the last 12 months and has now been embedded in our plan for the next four years. This extension of funding will enable Housing Connect to continue their emergency support to people with complex needs who require tailored assistance.

Taking a more client-centric approach to those accessing support and finding appropriate accommodation is a key to addressing homelessness. It builds on our investment in a network of shelters, transitional accommodation options and supported accommodation facilities across the state. Under our first Affordable Housing Action Plan we delivered the DIY Dad's facility, which for the first time provided shelter for fathers with children in the south. We centralised and expanded the Hobart Women's Shelter, providing an increase of over 60 per cent in the number of beds available there. We delivered the Colville Place youth at risk response centre, which assists young people at risk to connect to appropriate services and stable living environments; and Eveline House, the Devonport youth supported accommodation facility managed by Anglicare.

This youth foyer model provides stable accommodation whilst assisting young people into education and employment through an innovative partnership with the social enterprise, Loaves and Fishes. Action Plan 2 is investing in more services and continues our investment into shelters and crisis accommodation including the development of homeless accommodation for women in partnership with CatholicCare in the south of the state, which is well underway.

A new youth foyer providing accommodation, education and employment outcomes for your young people at risk of homelessness in the south will also be constructed. Also, in the south, the Bethlehem House Men's Shelter will also be expanded to increase its capacity to assist men in need of shelter and housing assistance. We will partner with Hobart City Mission to construct new homeless accommodation for older men in the south.

Magnolia House, Launceston's women's shelter, will also be expanded to increase its capacity to assist women and children out of crisis and into stable accommodation. A new youth at risk response centre will be constructed in Launceston along similar lines to the Colville Place model to provide assistance to young people under 16 to access appropriate supports. A new youth foyer will be constructed in Burnie to assist young people on the north-west coast and the north-west coast will also get a new shelter to assist men, both with and without children, out of crisis and into stable living arrangements. We are also delivering the construction of the Wirksworth Integrated Aged Care Facility at Bellerive which will provide much-needed accommodation for around 50 elderly Tasmanians who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. The development application has now been approved by the council and we are moving to the next phase shortly.

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Our plan sets out the shape of our initiatives and is focused on building more homes, releasing more land and providing supported accommodation for targeted groups so that Tasmanians have better access to the housing and support they need.

Ms STANDEN - Minister, given that you will need to report on your targets at least by the end of September which will be the end of the first quarter for your AHAP 2, when will you publish your proposed work plan for 2019-20?

Mr JAENSCH - I agree with you. We need to and we intend to continue the quarterly reporting. We will be establishing a schedule of deliverables to report against. They will be based on the numbers that are in the Affordable Housing Action Plan 2, which take account of the totals across the Affordable Housing Strategy, noting that we do not know what the final numbers for delivery of those targets under AHAP 1 are just yet.

Ms STANDEN - No, because you still have 26 days to go.

Mr JAENSCH - We have and I know that you are quite cynical about that.

Ms STANDEN - Understandably, I think, minister.

Mr JAENSCH - One of the factors that we have to deal with is that given the time frame of the Affordable Housing Action Plan is to conclude at 30 June this year, a number of the contracts for delivery of housing and other outcomes under that were built around that as an end date for those contracts. What that has meant is that we are getting a lot of delivery right at the end. That is not ideal both in terms of work load management and also in terms of staging -

Ms STANDEN - But you are not at the end are you, about the half-way point in fact?

Mr JAENSCH - Good use of the -

Ms STANDEN - So you will not say when you will publish your work plan?

Mr JAENSCH - What we are doing is publishing, as I said before -

Ms STANDEN - I cannot believe that your department does not have one.

CHAIR - Order.

Mr JAENSCH - a schedule of tenders -

Ms STANDEN - It is a straightforward question, Chair.

Mr JAENSCH - which once we have engaged the interest of community housing providers, builders and contractors and others will give us a clearer idea of what the final work plan will be and which we will be reporting against, starting in the first quarter of the new financial year.

Ms STANDEN - I cannot believe that you do not have targets, but still accepting that. Poor department.

Mr JAENSCH - We have for internal purposes.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Ms STANDEN - For internal purposes, but you will not publish those for the people of Tasmania.

Mr JAENSCH - By the time we publish them we want to be very clear about what they are and how we are going to deliver on them and I am sure you will look forward to us publishing them.

Ms STANDEN - Minister, the Affordable Housing Action Plan stage two commits the Government to building a range of new and extended emergency and transition accommodation facilities. Does the budget for 2019-20 and forward Estimates contain recurrent funding commitments for the ongoing operational costs of these facilities? It is one thing to build and extend and quite another to staff them.

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, accepted. No, the Budget and forward Estimates at the moment address mainly capital works associated with getting those projects up. There is quite a lead time, as I indicated earlier, to the development of things like new youth foyers, the locations, the partners and the models for delivery of those. The focus currently is on the work program for delivering them. As the business case and the service delivery models evolve we will be in a better position to know the detail of the recurrent operating costs and allocations will be made accordingly in future budgets.

Ms STANDEN - So there are no funds specifically committed to enable the operation of the new youth at risk centre in the north and the expansion of Thyne House and the expansion of Magnolia Place and the youth foyers in Hobart and in Burnie and the new men's shelter in the north-west?

Mr JAENSCH - For those of the initiatives that you have listed that are new, the recurrent operating does not kick in in this Budget. In future budgets there will be an allocation reflecting those costs.

Ms STANDEN - Minister, in your second-year agenda document you committed to building homes on new fast-track rezoned land. Three parcels of land were approved by the parliament last year through the Housing Land Supply Orders. Can you advise how many new homes have been built, or are in the process of being built, on those parcels of land and the expected date of completion?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you for acknowledging that land supply is critical for us meeting increased demand for housing and put downward pressure on rental prices. We need to pull all the levers we have available to us to provide more housing for Tasmanians in need in all markets, including the release of more affordable land lots. By the end of 2023 across our two action plans we will have released 670 lots for this purpose. You will recall that parliament last year passed the Housing Land Supply Act to establish a new process to rapidly rezone surplus crown land and land owned by Housing Tasmania to allow that to happen.

The first set of orders under the new process passed last year without disallowance in both Houses of parliament. That included sites in Devonport, West Moonah and Rokeby, with the potential to yield over 100 dwellings. The rezoning for Rokeby and Moonah is now complete and Devonport is in its final stages. Parliament's consideration of those orders then triggers the process of rezoning which is now complete for Rokeby and Moonah and in its final stages in Devonport.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Last week I presented another housing land supply order in parliament, this time for a parcel of land in Newnham, a suburb of Launceston. This 2.4 hectares could potentially yield up to 75 dwellings dependent on the type of development proposed.

Ms STANDEN - But no sods have been turned, is that right?

Mr JAENSCH - No, not at this stage, because the aim was to get that land into a position where it can be built on.

Ms STANDEN - Rezoned. It is not particularly rapid though is it?

Mr JAENSCH - It is far more rapid than it would have been without our process.

Ms STANDEN - I understand that, but when there is something like an 18-month time lag in building construction it is not particularly fast.

Mr JAENSCH - The controls built into the act, which parliament agreed to and which our consultation and advice led us to, means sometimes we need to schedule a tabling of documents and then wait for parliament to sit for five consecutive days for both Houses to pass their disallowance before we can kick it off. This means work can be done but it reaches a halt point.

Ms STANDEN - It is not particularly rapid is my point.

Mr JAENSCH - It is far more rapid than it would have been under normal circumstances.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, you talked before in response to Mr Tucker's question about treating people in housing stress with compassion and sensitivity -

Mr JAENSCH - Correct.

Dr WOODRUFF - and that you are aiming to assist Tasmanians in the greatest need. Can you please explain why your estimates for this current year and for the next year the budget year of 2019-20 to allocate houses to those in greatest needs has dropped so dramatically? It was actually 98 per cent of houses were allocated to those in greatest need in 2017-18. The current year that has dropped down to an 80 per cent target and next year is also an 80 per cent target. Are these more rubbery figures that do not mean anything? They are a holding place because they are only targets? Are you really only proposing to provide housing to 80 per cent of people in greatest need?

Mr JAENSCH - No, I would hope that we could exceed those targets.

Dr WOODRUFF - I would hope so because they are almost 20 per cent lower than the last year.

Mr JAENSCH - What I will aim to find for you is what our current trajectory is on those.

I would like to ask Mr White to make reference. Some of the targets we adopt for the purposes of the budget papers are things like national targets which go to how our performance is reported in national data sets such as the RoGS. I will Mr White to explain why that target is as it is and its basis to our actuals over the last couple of years.

Mr WHITE - Thank you, minister. The 80 per cent figure is really seen as national benchmark around allocations of priority across all social housing providers. Therefore, it has been included in those tables on that basis. As the figures showed, in the last financial year 98.3 per cent of allocations went to those in greatest need.

Our percentage of priority applicants housed this year to date to 31 March was 95.7 per cent within Housing Tasmania.

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, minister, does that mean that we don't set targets for these things? It is only the national target and we have what we have? Is this the target we are aiming for, 80 per cent?

Mr JAENSCH - The answer to that, as Mr White alluded, is this is a benchmark more than a target. It is a way of measuring how we are performing against a national norm that all jurisdictions will be reporting against.

Dr WOODRUFF - Is that also the case for the average wait time for people who are housed? The budget papers show a target of 41.5 weeks, which would be less than the actual figure of this year. For 2017-18, the last actual figure we have, was an average wait time for people to be housed of 63 weeks. The year before that it was 47 weeks. It steeply went up by 16 weeks from one year to the next.

Can you give me the year to date? You don't have the final figures in the budget paper. What was the year-to-date average wait time for people who were housed? Isn't this a bit of a heroic target given that we were at 63 weeks only last year?

Mr JAENSCH - I will ask if Mr White can provide us with a year to date and also the basis for the target that is reported in there.

Mr WHITE - Thank you, minister. The target referred to here is one that is seen as a national benchmark, often around that nine-month period. That is why that is put in the budget papers. I the year to date for 2018-19, the average wait time for the people we have housed, this is all people, has been 54.1 weeks. That is to 31 March.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is still 13 weeks above the national average benchmark.

Mr WHITE - That is correct.

Mr JAENSCH - And below last year's actual by a significant margin.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is heading in a better direction.

Mr JAENSCH - It is.

Dr WOODRUFF - Still substantially more than the previous year.

Mr WHITE - It is a reduction of 9.2.

Mr JAENSCH - It is a significant reduction.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Dr WOODRUFF - In the average time to house priority applicants, which is different to average people, you have a figure here of 36 weeks as the target this year. Can you please tell me the year to date for that metric?

Mr WHITE - The year to date to 31 March for the average time to house priority applications is 50.3 weeks, which represents a reduction of 9.3 weeks over last financial year,

Mr JAENSCH - Again, a significant improvement but still too high. That is why we have to deliver more houses sooner. That is why we have brought money forward and we will accelerate our social housing program.

Ms STANDEN - Nearly a year for people escaping domestic violence.

Mr JAENSCH - That is why we are working with some urgency.

Dr WOODRUFF - The Budget details a loss of \$5 million to the operating budget of housing services in 2021-22.

Mr JAENSCH - Can you refer the page?

Dr WOODRUFF - It is budget paper vol. 2 No. 1 page 41. It is a loss of \$5 million to the operating budget for housing services in 2021-22 due to reduced funding under the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement. Can you please tell me what will be cut as a result of that \$5 million loss?

Mr JAENSCH - The variation reflects changes in funding under the NHHA as well as changes to applied overheads, so there are two elements to that. Earlier today Mr Fazackerley was able to provide a response regarding the changing application of overheads component so I might ask him to comment on this line as well and that variation.

Mr FAZACKERLEY - The changes in the output allocations are reflective of two things broadly, and it goes to the nature of output reporting in the Treasury papers, as we are all aware. There are real or cash movements and the one referred to around the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement falls into that category, where we have taken the opportunity to restate the budget disclosures to show the new figures provided by the Commonwealth. We also have reallocation of overheads which, as we went through with the earlier output group, reflects the distribution of non-direct overhead costs. If we think of things like corporate services to support the agencies, we have costs attached with the office of the secretary, corporate services, finance and HR. They all need to be distributed across the outputs because they don't appear as a discrete disclosure in the way the budget papers are done because they support the activity across all output groups.

The creation of the new agency had us faced with an initial distribution based on the disbursement from the prior agencies of Health and DPAC. We have taken the opportunity to review those and look at what is probably a more appropriate distribution in some cases. This is saying what percentage of my own group's time is spent on each of the various outputs. In some cases that initial cut we had allocated through the initial allocations from the distribution of the former agencies wasn't quite how we saw it as being an appropriate split, so we have taken the opportunity to amend those slightly.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Dr WOODRUFF - Thanks for that lengthy answer. Does that mean there is \$5 million in cuts from SES and corporate services? I didn't hear anything else. I am concerned to understand whether a \$5 million cut from the federal government's Housing and Homelessness Agreement is going to have any impact at all on housing and homelessness services to actual people. I am assuming from what you said that it won't. Is there a \$5 million cut in people at that level?

Mr FAZACKERLEY - No, there is not. What we are looking at here is a redistribution. We are taking some allocated overheads off output 5.1 Housing Services and reapplying them to somewhere else. If you think of it in terms of a one-off redistribution of effort we might look at the effort of the secretary and how much of her time she spends looking at housing matters as opposed to disability or sport and recreation matters. We have taken the opportunity to say that the initial allocation or the output component of this answer wasn't one we thought was reflecting the current work patterns so we have taken some money out of output 5.1 for the overhead split and moved it to one of the other outputs. I would have to get a breakdown of the actual distribution but there is quite a bit of reassessment and redistribution.

There are a couple of other ones I would like to mention here. Because it is an accrual-based approach, for other items like depreciation, the initial allocation we had for this output - which again was a legacy one from prior agencies - had a depreciation figure which wasn't quite right for our revised agency. The move from the 2018-19 to the 2019-20 numbers which we are primarily talking about has about a \$3.3 million reduction which is related to a restatement of depreciation, which is a non-cash item, as you know.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can I put on notice the redistribution to the other outputs? He suggested he could do that.

Mr FAZACKERLEY - The details that support the budget are quite lengthy and detailed and it is not a simple one-line redistribution in most cases. It is a reassessment and a redistribution, taking account lots of other things. We could give a summarised version of that to be tabled.

Mr JAENSCH - In Mr Fazackerley's response to you the indication is clear that the fluctuations you are talking about do not reflect a change in what the department is going to be delivering in Housing. It more relates to how the administrative resources of the department are being managed.

Mr TUCKER - Could the minister please update the committee on the pilot private rental incentives scheme and how it will progress into the future as a way of assisting Tasmanians into the rental market?

Mr JAENSCH - I am very happy to do that. The private rental incentives scheme was launched as a pilot last year as part of our Affordable Housing Strategy 1. The pilot program was designed to encourage property owners to make their affordable homes available to low-income earners as rentals. The initiative is designed to target good-quality properties within the lower price range of the private rental market in areas of highest demand. Under the pilot, incentive payments of \$13 000 were given to property owners in the south and \$10 000 for property owners in the north and north-west to make their homes available for the program. This initiative is specifically targeting properties that have either not been rented before or are being used for short-term rental or properties that are currently not low-priced in the areas of greatest need.

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As at 29 May this year, 111 properties had been approved into the pilot, with 67 in the south, 23 in the north and 21 in the north-west, and on the tenants side, 84 households have been housed, with 58 in the south, 11 in the north and 15 in the north-west.

Under the second stage of the Affordable Housing Strategy we committed to continuing the scheme after completing an evaluation of this pilot phase. The evaluation has now occurred and, as a result, the model has been modified to ensure even more stability for both property owners and their tenants. Longer lease terms of two years will now be offered with the option to extend for a further two years. The maximum weekly rental amounts and incentive amounts for property owners have also been updated. The incentive amounts vary by region and property type to reflect market conditions and supply and demand. Rents for tenants are capped at between 25-30 per cent below median rental rates.

The revised incentive amounts available to property owners are \$14 000 at \$7000 per annum for two years for one- and two-bedroom properties in the north and north-west, \$12 000 on the same basis for three- and four-bedroom properties in the north and north-west, \$18 000 for one, two- and three-bedroom properties in the south, and \$16 000 at \$8000 per annum for four-bedroom properties in the south of the state.

We are discussing these updates with existing property owners and tenants of the program now to confirm if they wish to continue in the program. In some cases, property owners may choose to enter into a direct rental agreement with their tenant and we would be happy if they did so. This scheme works by matching a tenant's needs with rentals that ensure they can maintain safe and secure housing. It is about understanding what tenants' needs are and meeting their requirements. Particular attention is being paid to looking after existing tenants as we transition to the full rollout under this new model. We are also in the process of seeking interest for a community housing provider to manage the delivery of the program in this new phase.

Ms STANDEN - So to be clear, that is a cost of up to \$1.4 million for 111 houses, which is below your target of 120. I do welcome the extension of leases to 2x2.

CHAIR - Do you have a question, Ms Standen, or will I move on?

Ms STANDEN - Yes, Chair. Minister, you committed to commence the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative - or HASI - trial by June 2019 to better support people with mental illness linked with stable housing and supported accommodation. Can you advise the committee what funding has been provided under this initiative for support workers?

Mr JAENSCH - I do not have any detail on that here. I would refer you, though, to Mr Ferguson. This is a mental health initiative and I think he is best placed to answer that one.

Ms STANDEN - News to me. Thank you. Rather surprising.

During financial years 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 how many properties have specialist homelessness services had to return to Housing Tasmania because funding was not provided to support clients in these properties?

Mr JAENSCH - I am advised that the department is not aware of any properties across the period 2016-19 being returned to Housing Tasmania due to there not being enough resources to support the clients.

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Ms STANDEN - Right. That was 2016-17. I asked -

Mr JAENSCH - No, across the period 2016 to 2019 the department is not aware of any properties across that period being returned to Housing Tasmania due to there not being enough resources to support the clients.

Ms STANDEN - Are you able to advise how many properties in total were handed back in each of those financial years with a regional breakdown?

Mr JAENSCH - In relation to the question about how many properties have specialist homelessness services had to return to Housing Tasmania because funding was not provided I am not aware of any during that period.

Ms WHITE - The question is now different from that.

Mr JAENSCH - So, which houses are you talking about now?

Ms STANDEN - The distinction is, the first question related to being handed back on account of not providing support to the clients in those properties. Now I am asking in total how many properties were handed back?

Mr JAENSCH - By who?

Ms WHITE - By those providers, minister, but without specific explanation or reason for why they were returned.

Mr JAENSCH - So the question is how many properties were returned to Housing Tasmania by specialist housing homelessness service providers. I am happy to ask Mr White to help me with that answer.

Mr WHITE - Thank you, minister. We would have to take that question. It would have to be phrased in terms of what you are asking for. To give an example Hobart Women's Shelter, which we redeveloped from what was a formerly dispersed model, has provided 15 units. As part of that process the units they used to manage as part of their program have been handed back to social housing. Is that what you are asking about?

Ms WHITE - Yes, that as well as any others that might have been returned for any other reason.

Mr WHITE - Any other reason, okay. I make the point that you would need to consider in that case there was an increase in the number of units. It was not a loss to the services.

CHAIR - I think the question needs to be clarified so the officers know what they are specifically looking for.

Ms STANDEN - We are looking for how many properties have been handed back in each of the financial years 2016 to 2019 by specialist homelessness services, community housing providers or by any other source by region and in total. Would you be willing to take it on notice?

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Mr WHITE - We can attempt to provide that but what I am interested in is what is the context to that? In the case of the Hobart Women's Shelter this reflected their decision to go to a consolidated model of providing that supported crisis accommodation. It is a reflection of that change in operating model rather than there being any failure of funding or service delivery.

Ms STANDEN - So there might be a range of reasons why the properties are handed back but I am just asking how many were handed back.

Mr JAENSCH - From anyone who had them who was not Housing Tasmania?

Ms STANDEN - That is correct.

Mr JAENSCH - Is that information that we can assemble from our records?

Mr WHITE - I believe so, minister.

Mr JAENSCH - I can't imagine there would be too many of them. We are looking over several years.

Ms STANDEN - Three financial years.

Mr WHITE - Specialist homelessness providers.

Ms STANDEN - Community housing providers and any other that you are aware of.

Mr WHITE - We will provide as much complete information as we can within reason.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you for that, minister. You are happy to take that on notice?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes.

Dr WOODRUFF - The homelessness crisis is continuing and it is getting worse and winter is getting colder. The Hobart City Council, as you would be aware, has taken the step to do everything it can to try to house the people who are in a crisis situation in and around the Hobart region. What is your engagement with this process with the Hobart City Council? Are you going to be involved with them, looking at their suggestions of putting people in any buildings, including in converted shipping containers? What relationship do you have with the council on this matter?

Mr JAENSCH - We have a good relationship with the council and we are working with them on a number of issues that relate to planning and housing, including working with them on the development of some new planning rules that will facilitate more medium-density infill development in the city area as another way of addressing demand for accommodation in central Hobart. This is not well catered for in the current planning system. We have an open dialogue with the council and I with the Lord Mayor on these types of issues.

We note the decision that the council took at its meeting on Monday night, I think it was, to convene a meeting with a range of people involved in the sector and myself. I am very happy to enter that discussion with them. I meet frequently with people in the social services and social housing sector to update what the demand is like, how the existing programs and services are

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coping, what changes might be needed or suggested in terms of refining the way we do that to meet demand. Every season is different.

I am happy to be going into a further discussion with the council on those sorts of issues for the citizens it is trying to serve well.

With some of the ways of providing emergency or crisis accommodation that you refer to we have taken very clear and strong advice over the last year or so from TasCOSS and Shelter and others who are in the business of providing crisis and transitional accommodation. Some of the suggestions coming forward aren't desirable in terms of creating concentrations of people in housing crisis for their own good. There's the notion of homeless camps and so on. We have been strongly advised against creating those sorts of situations and instead looking at the capacity of existing supervised supported transitional accommodation models and ensuring better throughflow of people coming into the crisis accommodation system and then into longer term housing.

Dr WOODRUFF - So, if they come up with some novel ideas that have not been facilitated or worked on so far which are supported by groups like TasCOSS or Shelter or other groups which have expertise in the area, would you be putting money towards that? The things you have talked about such as planning rule changes are not going to help a person who has to sleep outside in the middle of a freezing cold winter tonight.

Mr JAENSCH - No, they are not but we need to be investing for the future as well so that we are strategic.

Dr WOODRUFF - And there are nearly 200 people like that right here in Hobart.

Mr JAENSCH - My answer is certainly yes. We don't think we have all the solutions in place now and that the Government has this all locked down. We do not know what all the answers are. We have just been through a process in the latter part of last year, consultation with 100 stakeholders to inform the development of our second Affordable Housing Action Plan.

Dr WOODRUFF - TasCOSS panned aspects of it. It is totally underwhelming your investment in this area.

Mr JAENSCH - TasCOSS and others actually supported the action plan.

Dr WOODRUFF - Deeply disappointed in this Budget.

CHAIR - Order.

Mr JAENSCH - What I have told people in that sector is that among the broad range of actions, including an adaptive, responsive crisis and homelessness component, we have a Budget and an action plan with actions in it. If inside those actions there are specific initiatives that have good support that we need to bring forward then we stand ready to do that.

Ms STANDEN - Chair, I believe I am under allocation of questions. We finish on a DD, is that right?

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Mr TUCKER - Minister, Tasmania has the highest rate of home ownership in the country and enviable building approvals. What is the Hodgman Government doing to maintain the momentum of home ownership?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Mr Tucker, for your question.

For many Tasmanians, at the moment, home ownership, can sometimes seem to be out of reach, particularly for people on low incomes. There is help to make that easier. We offer programs that can reduce the cost of buying a home. If you are on a low or moderate income, assistance is available to buy a house under the HomeShare and Streets Ahead programs. The HomeShare Program assists eligible Tasmanians on low to moderate incomes to realise the dream of home ownership. It is now available to all public housing tenants.

It can be used to purchase dwellings owned by the Director of Housing, that are either for sale or on the open market, or being sold to existing tenants. There are also options to purchase a new house and land package, a newly built home, or build a new house on your own block of land. Over the last 10 years, HomeShare has enabled more than 560 Tasmanians to purchase a home. Tasmania's Affordable Housing Action Plan 2019-23 will continue to support HomeShare purchases.

Many buyers may also be eligible to access the First Home Builder's Grant of \$20 000, which is being extended for a further year in this Budget. Last year, we increased the maximum deposit assistance from \$59 119 to \$80 245 under HomeShare. This increase was supported with a corresponding increase in income eligibility. As a result, a single person can now earn up to \$81 011 per annum, and a couple with four children can earn as much as \$145 868 per annum and still remain eligible for HomeShare.

These changes have been designed to ensure that HomeShare can continue to provide low- and moderate-income earners with a pathway to home ownership. Our current Housing Tasmania tenants are exempt from income eligibility and asset limits to qualify for HomeShare. There has been a significant increase in the number of individuals and families assisted this financial year.

The number of HomeShare purchases has more than doubled when compared with the same time last year, from 23 to 52. This is due in part to a new awareness campaign we launched in September. As at 31 March, there were also 47 HomeShare pre-approvals and six unconditional approvals in the system. This financial year, there has been a significant release of affordable, serviced vacant land lots across the state which are available for purchase through the HomeShare scheme.

The revenue generated from HomeShare directors share buyouts within this financial year is just above \$2.25 million. This revenue will be returned to the HomeShare budget and utilised for further HomeShare assistance.

To maximise its success, a review of the current Home Ownership Assistance Program is planned for next year and this will inform and ensure that HomeShare continues to deliver on its objectives into the future, helping more Tasmanians into home ownership.

CHAIR - I need to inform the Committee that it is now time to break for lunch. We will reconvene at 2 p.m.

The committee suspended from 1.10 p.m. to 2 p.m.

CHAIR - We have an hour to complete Housing and then we will move into Planning.

Ms STANDEN - Minister, has the Government given up trying to persuade the federal government to waive the state's Housing debt?

Mr JAENSCH - No, we have not. We will always advocate to get the best deal for Tasmania. As you know, our total debt outstanding under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement is currently \$156.7 million and in 2019-20 we will make total repayments of \$15 million, including principal and interest payments. What I note on that number is that over the last few months we have had the ability to negotiate with the Morrison Government a contribution of \$30 million for social and affordable housing in the Greater Hobart area under the City Deal. That came after some discussions around things including the Commonwealth Housing debt and my take on the \$30 million is that it is like two years of debt relief and we will make good use of it and show them what we can achieve with that much extra in our budget and use that as a leverage point.

I can also confirm that on confirmation of the new federal Cabinet arrangements and portfolios I have written to the new federal Housing minister, Michael Sukkar, and the Assistant Minister for Community Housing, Homelessness and Community Services, Luke Howarth, raising the matter with them and asking for an opportunity to discuss my portfolio areas and issues including the Commonwealth Housing debt with them.

Ms STANDEN - Excellent. As we know, those payments will continue through to 2042, so \$30 million in the context of that would be good to go far further; we can all agree on that.

In relation to maintenance of public housing, how much has the maintenance budget for Housing Tasmania changed since the commencement of the Better Housing Futures program? Could you provide year-on-year data from 2013 to 2019 for the maintenance budget for public housing and the maintenance budget for Better Housing Futures properties?

Mr JAENSCH - I am happy to answer that. While a small number of Housing Tasmania properties may be vacant at any one time, it is not uncommon that properties people assume to be public housing are not actually owned by the Government. You rightly identify there is a difference between public and social housing that is managed by community housing providers. Public housing properties can be vacant for a number of reasons, such as the previous tenant has moved out and maintenance is being done, or the properties is no longer useful or meeting purpose and will be sold.

Some properties are held for redevelopment in order to replace no longer useful properties with a larger number of brand-new dwellings. Current vacancy rate of 0.5 of 1 per cent. Turnaround times for public housing properties now sits at 23.9 days, which is below the national benchmark of 28 days. Whilst any improvement in turnaround times is welcome, it is disappointing that sometimes issues like instances of arson and vandalism are affecting the availability of some properties being available for Tasmanians who seek public housing. We work proactively with our community housing providers, Crime Stoppers and others to reduce the impact of this crime and have been taking deliberate steps also to address the 16-year maintenance backlog legacy with

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actions like integrating energy efficiency improvements into planned maintenance with an investment of over \$2 million per year.

Housing Tasmania provides responsive maintenance to repair and replace items in accordance with the Residential Tenancy Act 1997. Housing Tasmania also manages a planned maintenance program which aims to improve amenity and the economic life-cycle of dwellings identified as being suitable for retention under its strategic asset management plan. The planned maintenance program has been incorporated into normal business and directly addresses life-cycle issues such as deferred maintenance, but in turn helps reduce responsive maintenance as well.

Key deliverables over the current financial year have been upgrading heating, replacing old steel windows, external painting, upgrades to community housing, disability upgrades, security upgrades for the Keeping Women Safe program for relevant properties, floor covering replacements and continuation of lock upgrades.

As to the maintenance budget by year for public housing, in accordance with your question, for 2013-14, \$32.8 million; for 2014-15, \$21.3 million; for 2015-16, \$20 million; for 2016-17, \$22.6 million; for 2017-18, \$23.4 million; and for 2018-19, \$22.99 million. The maintenance budget by year for Better Housing Futures is given as an average cost per property, so it is a different measure, and that commenced in 2014-15 at \$3263 per property. In 2015-16 it was \$3310; 2016-17 it was \$2810; 2017-18 it was \$2499, and year to date for 2018-19, \$2269 as at 31 March 2019.

The declining average per property under the Better Housing Futures stock is the result of their property upgrade programs which has also reduced the deferred liability. As at 31 March, the total year to date deferred maintenance liability was \$60 million for public housing and Better Housing Futures together, of which \$25 million is in the area of public housing, and \$34.55 million in Better Housing Futures.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you, minister, for that comprehensive answer. Can you advise how much your department spent on maintenance for 2018-19?

Mr JAENSCH - The number is 22.99.

Ms STANDEN - Could you provide a breakdown of the maintenance money that has been spent? You have mentioned responsive and planned maintenance, your upgrading energy efficiency programs? Are you able to provide a breakdown of those?

Mr JAENSCH - For heating and energy efficiency during 2018-19 up to 31 March, approximately 964 homes have been upgraded to heat pumps through the upgrade program, exceeding the target of 750 homes. The full year achievement through all the programs is expected to be around 1000 new heaters. In summary -

Ms STANDEN - I was after a breakdown of the budget.

Mr JAENSCH - Approximately 65 per cent of publicly maintained properties have heat pumps installed. A breakdown of the budget by -

Ms STANDEN - Responsive maintenance, how much on planned and how much on heater upgrades and energy efficiency programs?

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Mr JAENSCH - That is the heater upgrades.

A breakdown for 2018-19: lock and master key upgrade - \$250 000 will have been expended on the master key rollout program to 492 properties.

Upgrades to the Better Housing Futures properties were completed last financial year.

Ventilation during 2018-19, replacement of steel framed windows was completed with the spent of \$640 000. This work complies with requirements for ventilation outlined in the Residential Tenancy Act.

External painting, \$530 000 expended on the external painting program, which will be doubled in 2019-20.

Responsive maintenance, emergency and urgent repairs are carried out in line with the Residential Tenancy Act 1997 to ensure the health and safety and wellbeing of tenants and to protect Housing Tasmania's assets.

As a result of new maintenance contracts, from 1 July 2018, priority levels changed to provide a greater range of response times. Priorities one, which is emergency, and two, which is urgent, became same day response and two days respectively.

Ms STANDEN - Just the total spend will be fine.

Mr JAENSCH - Responsive maintenance total spend - the full year for 2018-19 responsive maintenance was \$13.5 million.

Ms STANDEN - I think we got there, responsive planned maintenance and heater upgrades I think we were there. So, what is the maintenance budget for 2019-20?

Mr JAENSCH - Overall?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes.

Mr JAENSCH - It is \$22 335 725.

Ms STANDEN - What proportion of the maintenance budget will be expended on asbestos removal, do you know?

Mr JAENSCH - I might know. During 2018-19, 37 properties had asbestos related maintenance and testing undertaken at a total cost of approximately \$37 800, that is 2018-19.

Ms STANDEN - The estimated maintenance liability for Housing Tasmania?

Mr JAENSCH - Around \$25 million.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, following along from the questions of Ms Standen around heating in Housing Tasmania houses, could you please tell me the number of heat pumps that have been installed? I think you said 65 per cent of properties have heat pumps. Is that correct?

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Mr JAENSCH - I think I said 1000 so I am just going to check.

Dr WOODRUFF - Could you please tell me the numbers over the last three years?

Mr JAENSCH - We are on track to install around 1000 heat pumps this financial year and the proportion of properties with heat pumps installed I think the number was 65 per cent of director owned properties or of public housing properties, I am just checking.

Mr WHITE - Public housing.

Mr JAENSCH - That is under the state's direct control and maintenance under Housing Tasmania.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thanks. Last year in answer to a question from Ms O'Connor you said that 2385 heat pumps had been installed by your Government over the last four years. So are you saying there has now been an additional 1000 in this financial year.

Mr JAENSCH - A thousand in this year. That is the estimate at the end of year.

Dr WOODRUFF - The total number then that have been installed since your term of government.

Mr JAENSCH - I would say it is adding the two together.

Dr WOODRUFF - I would have thought so too.

Mr JAENSCH - So the cumulative total as at 31 March would be 5385.

Dr WOODRUFF - Could I have those figures, is that possible, for the last four or five years?

Mr JAENSCH - Okay, heating types in public housing. Heat pumps, this is in public housing so this is Housing Tasmania managed properties. This will show me how many new ones are added wasn't it? I am just going to get Peter to watch me do this so that I get it right. In 2014, 1008 were added, is that right?

Mr WHITE - Yes, minister.

Mr JAENSCH - Then 258 in 2015, 739 in 2016, 1026 in 2017-18, and in the following year 964 to 31 March. The 1000 is an estimate for the year. The total number of heat pumps installed as at the end of March 2019 was 5385, 64.9 per cent of properties. There were 3995 heat pumps installed between 2014 and 2019 to 31 March, which is a lot.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is good, 65 per cent. That means 35 per cent of properties do not have heat pumps. What is your target for this coming year for installations and what is your plan for having 100 per cent of the properties with heat pumps? I understand that is the most efficient and cheapest form of heating available in the sorts of properties that are named.

Mr JAENSCH - It is. As is reverse-cycle hot water. That information is coming. As I understand it the priority in the replacement program, the upgrade program, is going to the oldest

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and least efficient types of heating first and making its way through, ultimately replacing all of them.

Dr WOODRUFF - There are not still properties on oil heating are there?

Mr JAENSCH - No, but there are properties on old electric heating. Gas is out there as well. Housing Tasmania will continue to prioritise the remaining 1358 direct electric heaters for upgrade where appropriate over the next two years. Another issue that I've become aware of is that sometimes the configuration of the properties does not lend itself to a heat pump. If they do not have an appropriate external wall, say in a block of units, there needs to be alternatives found. Some of those properties will not be candidates for heat pumps. If they have the older less energy-efficient and cost-effective forms of heating they will be upgraded to the best that we can manage in those properties.

Dr WOODRUFF - What is the next best after a heat pump, what is being offered for those properties?

Mr JAENSCH - I will ask Mr White.

Mr WHITE - Natural gas is seen as a preferable one but, as the minister said, what we would do with some of those where they must continue to have, if I can use the term, direct electric heating in a small unit, we'd aim to do energy efficiencies there to reduce the heating cost for the tenant through better insulation of the home. There are changes in technology all the time so we can put heat pumps into more dwellings than we could say five years ago.

Dr WOODRUFF - Are all people offered heat inclusion and insulation and the other things that are required to make houses energy efficient in addition to a heat pump? Are they offered that as a package?

Mr JAENSCH - The improved energy efficiency upgrade, is that what you mean?

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes. You are providing heat pumps, which is good, but there is a lot more that can be done for almost nothing in terms of behaviour and kind of small cost additions to the property.

Mr JAENSCH - Yes. I am aware that there are various information products that are provided to assist people with managing draughts, mould, ventilation and other issues which make the place more comfortable for them but also reduce some of the deterioration of the properties by keeping them dry.

In 2018-19 up to the end of March, approximately \$3.83 million was spent on energy efficiency improvements to approximately 3434 properties, including heating upgrades, draught-proofing, replacement of floor coverings, dual-flush mechanisms, water fittings and insulation.

Some of the other upgrades we talked about with programs like the replacement of steel-framed windows, that is also to do with conduction of heat and the thermal efficiency of those properties.

Ms STANDEN - How many public and community social housing properties do we have now?

Mr JAENSCH - Public and community?

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Ms STANDEN - Yes. Housing stock owned and managed by the director of Housing and community managed housing stock.

Mr JAENSCH - There are 12 485, which includes social housing in categories of public, Aboriginal and community. It includes supported accommodation, Better Housing Futures and other community housing.

Ms STANDEN - What is Housing Tasmania's sales target?

Mr JAENSCH - I don't know if there is a sales target as such.

Ms STANDEN - Can you advise how many Housing Tasmania properties have been sold since March 2016?

Mr JAENSCH - There have been 38 public housing dwellings and 63 vacant land sites sold in the financial year to 31 March 2019. In terms of sales targets, I don't think there is one.

Ms STANDEN - The 38 you have given me, that is for 2019-20 is it?

Mr JAENSCH - The year 2018-19 to date at 31 March. We still have one quarter to go there.

Ms STANDEN - Yes. Have you got the 2017-18 figures as well?

Mr JAENSCH - In 2017-18, 77 properties sold.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you. Do you have the sales value? Are you able to advise the committee of the sales value of those properties and has that been transferred to the capital improvement program?

Mr JAENSCH - I have a figure in front of me for the financial year to date. Capital return of \$6.94 million and the income received from the sales goes into the capital program to support new and upgraded dwellings and land developments.

Ms STANDEN - Are you able to advise how many land parcels have been sold since March 2016 and what was the value of those? You said 63 land parcels in the current year to date.

Mr JAENSCH - We can get that number for you.

Ms STANDEN - Would you be willing to take that on notice?

Mr JAENSCH - We can take that on notice. That is land sales?

Ms STANDEN - Land parcels sold in 2017-18, so since March 2016. You have given me already 63 land parcels in the 2018-19 year to date. I am after the value as well across those two years. Are you happy to take that on notice?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes. We have some information for you right now and we can add others later on.

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Mr FAZACKERLEY - For 2017-18, I have a number of six land lots sold for a total of \$1.062 million in revenue.

Ms STANDEN - Do you have the value for the 63 parcels in 2018-19?

Mr FAZACKERLEY - Yes, we do. We have a land value here of \$1.807 million. I note that the number of lots mentioned in the response earlier would include lands transferred for nil value and arrangement. The revenue to Housing Tasmania is \$1.807 million for the current year to the end of March.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you. Minister, can you please detail the Housing Tasmania's debt write-offs?

Mr JAENSCH - I might ask Mr Fazackerley to report on that one as well.

Mr FAZACKERLEY - Can I ask for what period?

Ms STANDEN - This financial year.

Mr FAZACKERLEY - The write-offs are done at the end of the financial year so we don't have a write-off figure for 2018-19. That will be processed at the end of June. We have a long process of assessment of debts to make sure they are appropriate to write off, of course. I would also note that a debt written off in the Housing space is written off in an accounting sense but could, in the future, be recoverable when clients re-present to Housing. We might re-recognise the debt at that point. For the last write-off amount, 2017-18, the amount written off was \$772 538.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you. Minister, could you please detail the cost of rates and taxes by council area?

Mr JAENSCH - I don't think I have a listing per council area. We can do total amounts, but not by area.

Ms STANDEN - Would you be willing to take that on notice, minister?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, we can generate that.

Ms STANDEN - From the figures you have just provided us, last year indicates a decreased stock by something like 102 by our calculations. Last year you said there were 12 587 public and social housing properties and the figure you just gave us means we have decreased stock by 102. Would you agree with that assessment?

Mr JAENSCH - I am just checking that we are looking at the same source of figures for both years so that we have a comparison.

Mr WHITE - Minister, the figures I have for the portfolio size show that at the end of 2017-18 there was a total of 12 456 properties and the number we just provided then I think was 12 485.

Ms STANDEN - Okay. To conclude that line of questioning, last year you estimated that we would have 12 804 public and social housing properties and the figure you just gave us is 309 short of that. Would you agree with that?

Mr JAENSCH - I don't know what you were referring to last year. Was that a projection of how many properties there would be at this point in time?

Ms STANDEN - I think you said that estimates for the end of the 2018-19 financial year would include a total of 12 804 properties. This is from Estimates last year.

Mr JAENSCH - Out of context I'm not quite sure figure I would have been referring to there.

Ms STANDEN - The figure of 12 804 was 7379 public housing properties together with 5290 community housing properties. I think the figure you just gave us then was 319 less than that.

Mr JAENSCH - What I am trying to understand, if that is part of an answer I gave, what projected figure I might have been looking at because I need to ensure if I am following up on that I am looking at the equivalent current figure. I am happy to take that on notice and we will work our way back to the *Hansard* of those Estimates and resolve that.

Ms STANDEN - I appreciate that; thank you, minister.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, how many services does Housing Tasmania provide funding for to provide support for homeless people? Could you tell us where they are located and how many beds there are, maybe by region?

Mr JAENSCH - I will see what I have. There are currently 17 homeless shelters in Tasmania, with four in the north, four in the north-west and nine in the south. Six of the shelters are specifically for women with or without children who may be escaping family violence.

Dr WOODRUFF - Would they be classified as family violence shelters or are they for homeless women?

Mr JAENSCH - Not strictly. Eight are for young people aged 13 to 20, one is for children aged 12 to 15 and two are for single men. Under our second action plan, a new shelter for men with or without children will be constructed in the north-west. What was the other piece of information you were looking for?

Dr WOODRUFF - How many beds are there?

Mr JAENSCH - What the capacity is?

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes.

Mr JAENSCH - I don't think we have that.

Dr WOODRUFF - Is it possible to get that and could you table that information?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. What is your estimate of how many homeless people there are in Tasmania?

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Mr JAENSCH - I read the same reports as you do, which vary between census figures from 2016, which I am sure are no longer accurate, and also the commentary that there is an uncounted number of people who will be couch surfing and otherwise informally homeless. It is hard to get a hard number around it. I think it dangerous to try to nail a number because you would not want to under or over estimate that and I am sure it fluctuates.

Dr WOODRUFF - It would be really important for us to have a better handle on how many people are homeless. Wouldn't you agree that we should. I mean my question is are you going to do an audit?

Mr JAENSCH - Everybody who comes up with figures explains why it is likely to be underestimated so I am not going to hazard to try to put a top figure on it because I do not want to be accused of underestimating the issue.

Dr WOODRUFF - You are the Minister for Housing.

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, I know.

Dr WOODRUFF - You have got the best levers at your disposal to collect the information and to assess the level of funding. Excuse me, Ms Standen.

Ms STANDEN - You have had four questions.

Dr WOODRUFF - Excuse me. That is rude. I am in the middle of asking a question.

Ms STANDEN - You are making a statement.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff has the call.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, you have the levers at your disposal and you have the best ability to be able to make an assessment to see whether the investment is matching the need. If the figure is 50 or 5000 it really makes a difference to how much should be invested. Will you conduct an investigation in the next few months with the services that you fund, with the organisations that do the outreach to people who are sleeping in the Domain to get a better handle on how many people are sleeping outside, sleeping rough at night as well as couch surfing so that have got something other than 2016 figures to go on?

Mr JAENSCH - We take a keen interest in data and the ability to project demand and under the second Affordable Housing Action Plan we have made some specific commitments to work with the social services sector and the University of Tasmania to get better longer-term demand projections for social and affordable housing and homelessness services in Tasmania.

Dr WOODRUFF - So you are doing research on homelessness in particular, an audit on homelessness?

Mr JAENSCH - Across the spectrum of housing need we have undertaken that we will be doing some research there and that is about informing policy and planning going forward. More specifically, we have undertaken in the Affordable Housing Action Plan to stand-up a task force to investigate the issues of younger Tasmanians under 16 not in the out-of-home care system who are presenting homeless or at risk of homelessness. There seems to be a gap in service delivery and

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policy around that group and that has been identified by various advocates and research bodies and so that is a piece of work that we will be getting into.

In the immediate time frame, apart from those activities, we will be taking our advice mainly from those who are working directly in the sector like the people that I sat down with for a couple of hours yesterday morning to get an update on what the demand is for services right now in Tasmania and how are we responding to that. We can do that without a definitive census of homelessness as an urgent activity. We do not have, I suppose the luxury, I do not think it would cut the mustard for me to be explaining to people that I was waiting for definitive numbers on homelessness before mounting a response.

Dr WOODRUFF - Conversely if you do not ask you do not know what the problem is.

Mr JAENSCH - We do listen to what organisations like Shelter Tasmania, Anglicare and others who are working closely with the sector who advise us what the level of demand is right now, in various different formats.

Ms STANDEN - Minister, on the capital investments program can you advise the balance of that program?

Mr JAENSCH - Are you looking at a particular budget item?

Ms STANDEN - The capital investment program.

Mr JAENSCH - Mr Fazackerley is best-placed to give us that.

Mr FAZACKERLEY - The allocation in the budget papers, as the minister mentioned earlier, is in the budget year 2019-20, looking at page 35 has a total of \$80.498 million allocated. Most of that is in the housing space. I will run through it quickly.

We have the Tasmanian Affordable Housing Action Plan 2, which has been talked about earlier, \$40.5 million. Non-works housing, which is the principle component of the CSHA debt repayment we talked about earlier, \$8.017 million; and Housing new projects, \$27.419 million, which the minister also mentioned earlier.

In addition to that, we have two other items allocated here. The redevelopment of the Ashley Youth Detention Centre which has a 2019-20 allocation of \$3.562 million and the indoor multi sports facility under the minister for Sport and Recreation with a \$1 million allocation in 2019-20.

The amounts vary through the out-years, running it down to \$25.821 million in the 2022-23 last year of disclosure.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you, Mr Fazackerley. Minister, the Housing fund has \$1.1 million for 2019-20 and \$1.2 million for 2020-21 and zero from that ongoing, can you please advise what the \$1.1 million and the \$1.2 million over the next two years will be allocated or spent on?

Mr JAENSCH - I am advised that these are the tail end payments to investors under NRAS and another Commonwealth-funded program which is winding out to its conclusion. I am happy to ask Mr White for a little more detail on that if you want to know who those payments are going to.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you.

Mr WHITE - Thank you, minister. As we identified, the one remaining project we have within the Housing fund is the National Rental Affordability Scheme or NRAS. The required payments under that are expected to cease in 2020-21. As at 1 July 2018 the housing fund balance at Treasury was \$3.96 million. In 2018-19 we are anticipating \$1.1 million of that will be spent towards NRAS in addition to the \$569 000 we had carried forward from 2017-18.

Over the next two years we have \$1.1 million to be spent in 2019-20 and \$1.2 million in 2020-21 to support the last of the stage 4 NRAS properties and the payments required with those.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you, Mr White. Can you please advise us on the Youth Castle program, specifically how many youths have been assisted by the program and the cost of the program so far? Have the youths transitioned from out-of-home care to Youth Castles and will you be continuing the program?

Mr JAENSCH - We will take the issue of dollars associated with our program on notice. I understand six Youth Castles were deployed. I don't know the status of the young people following that through so I am happy to get that on notice as well.

I want to check on one other matter, though. I am looking for a little bit of detail on a related matter that might be of interest to you.

A related initiative under the AHAB 1, we now have 20 backyard units on the ground across the state. These are a prefabricated or manufactured dwelling unit which is deployed onto the same block of land as an existing Housing Tasmania property. They are suitable for a family which includes young people who for various reasons are needing to leave home but maybe before they are ready to be separated from the support of their family and where there is a possibility that they may end up not being able to compete for housing and become homeless. There are 20 of those now deployed.

A couple of Tasmanian manufacturers are producing an excellent product which has turned out to work quite well. We have had good cooperation from local councils in the planning and other arrangements that are required to install these units as a youth homelessness prevention measure. This type of accommodation might have other applications within our broader program, including where we might be releasing smaller blocks of land for single occupants who are not looking for a whole house and a garden but a higher density form of living. The manufactured housing gives us the ability sometimes to deliver new housing faster than we could build it on the ground, particularly at times of high demand in the building sector.

The Youth Castles experience has spawned another generation of social housing deployment, but also but also another product that we can use that is increasingly not like temporary housing. It is modular small housing for people in the mix. A very large number of people on our social housing register are applying for houses of which they would be sole occupants.

Ms STANDEN - I am not challenging its usefulness in the mix. You did not answer a couple of components to that question, specifically about youth castles. I asked how many youths? You said you would take the cost on notice, whether they have transitioned from out-of-home care and will you be continuing the program? Would you like to take all of that on notice?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes.

Mr TUCKER - Critical to addressing the housing shortage, minister, is the supply of new affordable service lots. Could the minister provide an update on progress on releasing land for more housing?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Mr Tucker. This gives me an opportunity to expand on a topic we spoke briefly about earlier in the context of the housing land supply orders. Members will recall I was able to report that the first set of orders under the Housing Land Supply Act passed through both Houses of parliament without disallowance last year and they included sites in Devonport, West Moonah and Rokeby, with the potential to yield over 100 dwellings. The rezoning is now complete for the Rokeby and Moonah sites and the Devonport site is in its final stages.

Last week, I presented another housing land supply order in parliament, this time in Newnham, 2.4 hectares in area potentially yielding up to 75 dwellings depending on the type of development that ends up being pursued there. I am pleased to advise today that we have just commenced the consultation process for a parcel of land owned by the director of Housing at Huntingfield in the state's south. Without pre-empting the outcome of that consultation process with interested parties and neighbours, the Huntingfield order proposes to add approximately 37 hectares of land zoned inner residential and also includes land zoned open space and local business. This will serve the needs of a new community and its surrounds. Under the provisions of the order and the Kingborough Interim Planning Scheme, the Huntingfield proposal of 37 hectares may yield in excess of 450 residential dwellings when it is fully developed. All land that is identified for rapid rezoning under the Housing Land Supply Act will be used for a mix of social and affordable and private housing options. We will continue to work to identify more land in high-demand areas around Tasmania to increase supply.

All of our draft orders undergo consultation in accordance with the act and feedback is sought from a large number of interested parties, including neighbours, councils, state agencies and utilities. The process we are using, Ms Standen, you are right, took a while to get going because we had to build new legislation. Now that it is in operation, to be able to identify land, to rapidly prepare an order, to get it in front of both Houses of parliament for five consecutive days without disallowance and then progress to gazetting that rezoning straight away, cuts many months, up to a year or so, out of the process. It is working now. Together, we will have 450 plus 100, that is capacity for 550 new dwellings a year after that piece of legislation was first thought of. Thank you for the question. I am pleased to be able to announce that the Huntingfield project is out now for consultation.

Ms DOW - Minister, you spoke about the consultation process around the rezoning. If I understand you correctly that is in line with planning policy and the consultation that occurs as part of that process. Given that there may be some community concerns that fall outside of that that aren't able to be assessed against the merits of the scheme, what other mechanism for community consultation will you undertake? Is there a plan to do any other consultation in partnership with the local council?

Mr JAENSCH - The Housing Land Supply Act process goes to the rezoning. The subsequent development applications for use of that land then proceed through the normal planning process with the requisite notifications involved there.

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Ms DOW - There won't be anything additional outside of that system?

Mr JAENSCH - That is right.

Ms STANDEN - In your Affordable Housing Action Plan stage 2 you include an initiative to review the housing dashboard measures. Are you changing reporting to deliberately avoid comparisons with longitudinal data to avoid accountability?

Mr JAENSCH - No.

Ms STANDEN - Can you provide any detail on what it means to review the housing dashboard measures and the intent there?

Mr JAENSCH - There are a few reasons for that. One is that in the interests of accountability and transparency we want to be able to create some alignments say between the dashboard for delivery of housing outcomes and the quarterly reporting we are doing on our Housing Action Plan. If we can get some alignment between those and reduce any ambiguity in the things we are reporting on, so that we don't have to explain and try to convince people each time that we are not double counting then we will do. We will be consulting with our stakeholder audience as to what fields of information are most useful to them. We know that the dashboard is important as a transparency and accountability measure. We do not want to be seen to be avoiding or amending scrutiny, any of those sorts of things, so we need to get it right. We will approach it slowly, carefully and openly but, in my view, the more consistent the information that we collect and report across dashboards, quarterly reports, logs, et cetera, the less room there is for misunderstanding or misrepresentation of any of that information.

Ms STANDEN - We have had a lengthy examination of the importance of language; it is just that business of longitudinal data and comparisons is very important, I think. Minister, what is the daily average for people under the age of 18 and, specifically, under the age of 16, in crisis accommodation? Finally, to conclude that line of questioning, how many beds are available specifically for young people daily for crisis accommodation?

Mr JAENSCH - We don't have that in a file here today. I am happy to take that on notice and see what we can do, given that we would be going to third parties, I think, for some of that information as well. I am happy to take the question as you have put it on the record.

Ms STANDEN - Thank you, minister. On the stock leverage program, how many properties have been transferred to community housing providers under the program, and what was the total value of those properties? Can you confirm whether there will be further transfers over this term of government?

Mr JAENSCH - I am happy for Mr White to report directly to the committee on that.

Mr WHITE - To date we have transferred titles of 230 properties and there is a further 100 to be transferred on completion of the projects that were linked to the title transfer or stock leverage programs.

Ms STANDEN - Do you have the data on total value and whether there will be any further transfers over and above that 100 over the term of government?

CHAIR - Minister, I need to inform you that the time for deliberation is now concluded and we now need to move into the next session, which is Planning.

Mr JAENSCH - May I quickly answer that last question?

CHAIR - The problem is that it is cutting time out of -

Mr JAENSCH - I will take that question on notice and we can provide you with a response on that. Chair, I also have answers to questions from the Human Services portfolio - what would you suggest I do? Can I report them to the committee or hold them over and provide them later?

CHAIR - The same rules apply. We are actually cutting in as far as the time allocation goes.

Mr JAENSCH - Okay, we will hold that answer off.

Ms STANDEN - I would like to take this opportunity to thank the minister and his officers.

Mr JAENSCH - I thank the Department of Communities Tasmania and all their staff who have been here and for their excellent work through the year. Thank you very much.

DIVISION 6

(Department of Justice)

CHAIR - We now move into the last hour of examination under the portfolio of Planning. Minister, I will give you the same opportunity to introduce the officers at the table and a short introduction, please.

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you. I introduce the secretary of the Department of Justice, Kath Morgan-Wicks, and Brian Risby, who is head of the Planning Policy Unit.

I have a short opening statement. I would like to begin by outlining the Government's progress in delivering planning reform and the next steps of the reform agenda.

When I first started as minister in this portfolio I was acutely aware of a level of planning reform fatigue across the local government sector in particular, who have been on the journey of reform for more than a decade. I share their enthusiasm to finalise the statutory reform process and move on to the strategic elements of our planning system, that have taken a back seat for far too long, to the planning scheme and the interim scheme's processes before that.

As the finalisation of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme remains our highest priority, I set about first assisting councils to finalise their components, the Local Provisions Schedules. In late 2018 I wrote to all of our local government councils expressing my desire for all of the LPSs to be submitted to the Tasmanian Planning Commission for statutory assessment by the middle of this year. To assist in meeting that target, we built an acceleration program whereby a specialist project team drawn from the Planning Policy Unit and the Tasmanian Planning Commission has been working alongside council planners directly to assist them in various ways to finalise their LPSs. This is in addition to the \$100 000 previously provided to each region of the state to assist with preparation of those same planning instruments.

I am pleased to advise now that many councils have met that target early and there is a very clear schedule of commitments in place for remaining councils to deliver their LPSs. As of 30 June, it is expected that there will be 12 Local Provisions Schedules formally lodged; there are currently 11 in hand. A further seven will have been endorsed by their council and will soon be submitted. The remainder are due to be endorsed by their respective councils during July and August. A number of councils have progressed to the public exhibition stage following preliminary review by the Tasmanian Planning Commission. The guts of the work in building the LPSs has largely been done and for those councils who haven't yet submitted, it is more a process of formalising that through their schedule of council meetings before submission.

I am very grateful to local government for being so responsive to that call to action. I am very keen to move beyond this part of the planning reform agenda now and to commence much-needed work on strategic policies that will guide the development of our communities and our state and the subsequent reviews of regional land use strategies, which are now falling due.

To this end, you will be aware that we have also developed and passed through the Parliament amendments to the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993, LUPAA, to provide a mechanism to develop Tasmanian planning policies along with comprehensive consultation and a review process for their assessment. The formal preparation of the draft TPPs, as we call them, has now commenced, with the first stage consisting of the release expected shortly of a scoping paper seeking broad views on the current issues that the Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPPs) should be addressing and how the initial suite of planning policies should be structured and integrated.

In addition to our reform we have also been pulling planning leaders to help in the supply of housing across Tasmania. Last year, we developed the Housing Land Supply Act 2018 which enables the fast track re-zoning of Government-owned land and therefore accelerates the supply of affordable housing. This was a key action identified from the 2018 Housing Summit. Not only has the legislation passed the Parliament but we have also put a number of land parcels through the process and we will continue to rollout more land for re-zoning into the future. I do not know if you were here but we announced today that the Huntingfield parcel is now out for public consultation and thanks to the PPU and their work on that.

In response to concerns raised about compliance and lack of robust data regarding the short-stay accommodation sector, our department has developed and passed through the Parliament the Short Stay Accommodation Act to ensure compliance and to provide accurate data regarding the short-stay sector in Tasmania. For the first time in Australia, the new legislation will provide a robust dataset which will give us a clearer picture of the impact of the short-stay sector and inform future regulatory policy and planning settings.

Looking forward, we remain committed to our planning reform agenda which includes finalising the Tasmanian Planning Scheme, moving from draft in the LPSs to their assessment and approval by the Tasmanian Planning Commission; development of Tasmania's first suite of planning policies, as mentioned under our new legislation; and developing a robust and comprehensive framework for the state's regional land use strategies to be reviewed and updated following the development of the TPPs. In line with the Premier's commitment in his state of the state speech earlier this year, we will be developing new planning rules and performance standards tailored to drive development in medium density apartment-style developments in our urban areas increasing housing, choice, diversity and supply for Tasmanians.

We will also be finalising the reform of major projects legislation, replacing the projects of regional significance process with a new major projects assessment process later in the year. We will be re-zoning more government-owned land through our Housing Land Supply Act process to release even more land for affordable housing in line with our action plan stage two, and implementing the Short Stay Accommodation Bill, the first of its kind in Australia, to ensure compliance in that sector.

Dr WOODRUFF - This is a very long introductory statement.

Mr JAENSCH - There is just so much good work.

Dr WOODRUFF - We are ready to ask the questions, minister

CHAIR - And the more you interject the longer it will take.

Dr WOODRUFF - It should just be recorded how unreasonable this is.

Mr JAENSCH - The Hodgman Government remains committed to continuing the significant work to put in place a robust contemporary planning system that will provide certainty and consistency in the rules and objectives of the planning system across the state and one that is underpinned by evidence-based policies that clearly describe the planning outcomes Tasmania needs. I thank my department and local government that we have worked with for their support and cooperation in the work done in the 12 months so far that we have had.

Ms DOW - Minister, do you agree that planning is a whole-of-government responsibility?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes.

Ms DOW - Minister, the state has a population strategy, a tourism growth strategy and has experienced unprecedented growth in recent time. We just put stress on essential services and, as you would know as the Minister for Housing, on housing across Tasmania. Right now, we do not have the planning policies to say how we want Tasmania to be in the future or to guide any future developments. When will the Tasmanian planning policies be completed?

Mr JAENSCH - As I mentioned in the overview, we have commenced the preparation of a scoping paper. There has been some preliminary consultation on a set of demonstration planning policies in 2017. We have received detailed feedback on them and we are processing through that at the moment to make sure that we are taking that advice abroad and that is informing the next stage of the process.

The formal preparation of those draft TTPs has now started with the preparation of a scoping paper which will be seeking broad views on the current issues the TTPs should address and how that initial suite of policies should be structured and integrated.

Ms DOW - My question was when you expect that to be completed?

Mr JAENSCH - I anticipate that the release of the scoping paper will be very soon. Scoping work is to be concluded in 2019, drafting in the first half of 2020 and assessment hopefully in the second half of 2020.

Ms DOW - Can you please explain to me why you have decided to go down the path of rather than state policies, which was originally suggested a long time ago, to now Tasmanian planning policies and explain to me the difference between the two and why you have chosen one over the other?

Mr JAENSCH - Unlike state policies, the TPPs will inform the development of, rather than overriding, other planning instruments. For example, the TPPs might inform the way a regional land use strategy guides settlement patterns and growth or the allocation of how much land should be available for particular sectors, such as industrial development. It will also inform reviews of the planning directions and controls set out in the SPPs that apply to individual development applications and the application of zoning and overlays in LPSs. They are not intended to apply to individual development applications. They are only about, and directed at, the land use planning system, whereas state policies have a broader remit across government more generally.

Ms DOW - On that point, isn't it important for government to have those policies around planning?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, and there can be interplay between Tasmanian planning policies and the existing and future state policies as well. You can have both but the Tasmanian planning policies in my portfolio and our land use planning system need to be focused on what the planning policy is and that has been missing for too long.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, section 30(c) of the State Policies and Project Act 1993 relating to the functions of the Tasmanian Planning Commission under the act requires that a State of the Environment Report is produced every five years. Section 29 requires that. The last Tasmanian State of the Environment Report was published in 2009. It has been overdue for the entire term that you have been minister. This year marks the second report that should have been produced under your government. There is should have been one in 2014. There should be one this year. Today is World Environment Day. Will you deliver on your responsibility under law and when can we expect to see this report given it is now more than five years overdue?

Mr JAENSCH - Could I ask the Acting Executive Commissioner of the TPC to attend the table and to comment on that question as the State of the Environment Report is a responsibility of the independent commission?

Dr WOODRUFF - It is your responsibility to make sure it happens.

Mr FISCHER - We have commenced preparations for the state of the environment reporting. There are matters we have work through and things have changed in this space quite considerably in relation to matters across all of Australia and worldwide, so we are looking at those sort of things now and how best to approach it. The preparations are there. We have employed a person who is highly skilled in relation to SOE as well and that person is working on a project plan and that will be available soon.

Dr WOODRUFF - Could you define 'soon'?

Mr FISCHER - I can't really; it is a matter of when information becomes available to us. She is doing a lot of work in relation to others who are doing SOE across Australia and once we get that information that will be part of what we need to then establish what is appropriate in terms of moving forward.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, it sounds as though this is all about scoping the exercise for the methodology to undertake a State of the Environment report.

Mr JAENSCH - When was the last one done?

Dr WOODRUFF - I just said, 2009, under the Labor-Greens government. Your Government has not fulfilled the requirements of the act twice now, so I appreciate there is something starting but that just sounds, to be honest -

Mr JAENSCH - You should be overjoyed.

Dr WOODRUFF - No, I am not overjoyed because there are desperate changes in the environment and we need to track what is going on. The State of the Environment report is meant to look at the changes so we can have some sense of how we are going as an island in protecting the environment. There are no surprises that your Government is stalling on this.

Mr JAENSCH - I'm sorry, we're stalling somewhat less than the last government we replaced.

Dr WOODRUFF - Rubbish! How can you say that?

Mr JAENSCH - Was there a State of the Environment report under the last government?

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes, exactly.

Mr JAENSCH - In 2009.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is what I am saying.

Mr JAENSCH - So we are acting now.

Dr WOODRUFF - You are two terms past providing a State of the Environment report so why are you sitting there with a smug look on your face? How much money have you put into supporting the Planning Commission to do this work?

Mr JAENSCH - I am not smug, I am pleased that the Commission is making the moves it has.

Dr WOODRUFF - When will it be finished?

Mr JAENSCH - I do not have a work plan from the commission.

Mr FISCHER - We still need to work on that before we can answer that question.

Dr WOODRUFF - So, no idea. There is basically no money going towards it. You don't care. Don't ask, don't know.

Mr JAENSCH - I think that is unfair.

Dr WOODRUFF - I think it is totally fair. We are seeing an extinction crisis around the planet and you're not interested in asking the questions.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, can you please advise of the progress of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme and how it will provide certainty and consistency across the state?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Mr Tucker. Our number-one priority in the Planning portfolio is to deliver on our commitment to developing the statewide Tasmanian Planning Scheme, the first of its kind in Australia. The Budget contains \$2 million over four years for completing this task along with other planning initiatives.

The Tasmania Planning Scheme consists of two elements - state planning provisions, or SPPs, and local provisions schedules, or LPSs. The state planning provisions provide a statewide consistent set of planning rules applying across 23 generic zones that indicate what land use and development is appropriate to each zone. In addition, the SPPs contain a suite of 16 codes providing clear pathways for dealing with land use issues which occur across Tasmania and which may apply across a range of zones, covering matters such as natural hazards, natural assets, local heritage values and electricity infrastructure.

With the same rules applying in the same zones right across the state, the community, investors and developers alike will have unprecedented consistency and certainty in what can go where, and most importantly, know what to expect when they enter the planning system processes. All can have an agreed outcome on the use and development that is permitted and in what location so that they are all playing by the same rules, no matter where they are in the state.

As you are no doubt aware, the SPPs were made in 2017 and the LPSs which are developed by each of the local councils are the final component needed to complete the Tasmanian Planning Scheme. The LPSs contain maps showing where the SPPs will apply, along with local provisions like specific-area plans or particular purpose zones that councils may wish to use to address matters of local importance.

We are working closely with local government to finalise their LPSs and in late 2018, as I mentioned earlier, I wrote to councils asking for them to bring that activity forward to complete by the middle of the year. I am pleased to confirm that process is well underway and we have 12 LPSs in hand and the remainder are due between now and August. I am keen to move beyond this stage and into the strategic work and, importantly, to get our local councils, their planners and those who work with the planning system to the end of the process of reform of our planning instruments and to engage the community.

I think there is a real appetite right now in Tasmania for having a discussion about where the state is going next and to capture that in a series of policies that will guide our regional land use strategies, which have never had as much work to do as they do right now with new developments, new ideas and people wishing to be confident that there is an overarching plan and controls on new development and they have their say. We will give them the opportunity to do that as part of the TPP process and I look forward to working with our councils to get those TPPs in place and the regional land use strategies revised and on the ground.

Ms DOW - Minister, can you please break down for me the number of staff employed in the Planning Policy Unit this financial year and the number proposed for next financial year, and the same for the Tasmanian Planning Commission?

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Mr JAENSCH - In the PPU there are seven FTEs for a head count of seven, and an additional two in 2019-20. You will reflect the additional budget allocation for this increased workload.

Ms DOW - And the TPC?

Mr JAENSCH - In the TPC there are 20.31 FTEs for a head count of 23.

Ms DOW - Was that last financial year or this financial year?

Mr JAENSCH - That is as at 31 March 2019. We are working through, at the moment, the resourcing plan for the year to come.

Ms DOW - Do you think there will be an increase in staff?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes.

Ms DOW - Can you rule out the efficiency dividend proposed by the Government being taken from the Policy and Planning Unit and the TPC?

Mr JAENSCH - The efficiency dividend applies to departments and the secretary of the department will be identifying areas in which the efficiencies can be achieved as part of our internal process.

Ms DOW - You would acknowledge, though, with the considerable amount of work that needs to be done that there should be a high priority area for investment in additional staff.

Mr JAENSCH - That is why we are investing in additional staff, most definitely recognising that, and putting an extra \$2 million over four years into the effort. At the same time, the efficiency is about how efficiently we use our resources. As people who manage considerable public funds, that is our job and we are expected to always be looking at whether we are using that money as efficiently as we can to do the job.

Ms DOW - Will you rule out making any changes to the role of the TPC in Tasmania?

Mr JAENSCH - There are no plans to change the role of the TPC in Tasmania.

Ms DOW - Thank you. I move on now to councils and the community. I touched on that earlier when we were talking about Housing and mechanisms for consultation around planning changes. Has there ever been any consideration given by government to additional resources around independent advice for people who are entering the planning system that, quite rightly, those administering it can't provide because that would be biased to do so and councils can't do that, particularly even from an elected representative point of view. Has there ever been any consideration given by government or the department about how you can better support people through the process and provide them better with information?

Mr JAENSCH - Could I ask Mr Risby to comment on the planning policy and its role in providing advice and education regarding the planning process?

Mr RISBY - Thank you, minister. The PPU has a fundamental role in explaining the way the planning system works. One of the targeted new positions we would be looking at is a

communications engagement position, particularly with local councils. There has been a process to build the new website over a couple of years and to increase the amount of information on that.

There is a bit of a lack of information around how some of the system works and what you need to do. We have relied on local councils doing that in the past. With the state moving into this space more, we need to increase that information around the state's planning component. That's part of the budget allocation and we will be improving that.

Ms DOW - Minister, do you plan to change the role of councils as local planning authorities?

Mr JAENSCH - I have no plans to change the role of councils in the planning system.

Ms DOW - You can rule that out? Your Government is not planning on changing the way that councils administer planning?

Mr JAENSCH - There are no plans to do that.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, the Central Highlands Council voted earlier this year to block a private development proposed for the World Heritage Area at Lake Malbena. The proponents are challenging that decision in the Resource Management and Planning Appeal Tribunal. The Solicitor-General gave advice to the Attorney-General and the Attorney-General has joined as an interested party and is seeking to see whether the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act means that developments such as these no longer need to be assessed by councils. What action are you going to take if the court determines that developments in reserves do fall outside the LUPAA? Will you make a commitment to closing the legal loopholes?

Mr JAENSCH - I understand that the council's decision is now subject to an appeal before the Resource Management and Planning Appeal Tribunal. These proceedings are underway now, it is not appropriate to provide any sort of commentary, let alone speculate on outcomes of that process. I have nothing more to say on it.

Dr WOODRUFF - No, that's not good enough. This is a question, it is not about that case. It's a question about -

Mr JAENSCH - It is because you specifically said 'if the outcome is so and so what will you do?' I am not going to speculate and I'm not going to comment on this case that is currently before the tribunal.

Dr WOODRUFF - Have you sought advice from the Solicitor-General yourself as the Minister for Planning about the impact on local councils, for the Attorney-General joining and challenging?

Mr JAENSCH - We don't seek advice from the Solicitor-General on hypotheticals.

Dr WOODRUFF - What do you mean? I mean, the Attorney-General sought advice on a hypothetical. There was no reason for the Attorney-General to approach the Solicitor-General and get that advice.

Mr JAENSCH - I am not going to provide any commentary on the to and fro of legal advice. I am not going to go there.

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Dr WOODRUFF - This has a huge implication for all of the local councils around Tasmania and their role in making determinations about developments in their area.

CHAIR - That is a statement, Dr Woodruff. If you don't have any more questions, I will move on to Ms Butler.

Dr WOODRUFF - I do, Chair. I do have one more question following up on the State Policies and Projects Act. Can you rule out introducing amendments to the State Policies and Projects Act or separate legislation to allow for projects of regional significance, such as to facilitate the building of the cable car on kunanyi/Mt Wellington?

Mr JAENSCH - There is already a project of reasonable significance provision which hasn't been used and which has a range of issues which are sufficiently concerning that we intend to replace it with a new major projects' assessment process later this year.

Dr WOODRUFF - Will that facilitate the building of the cable car in particular?

CHAIR - Order, Dr Woodruff. I gave you one more question.

Ms BUTLER - In 2015 this Government removed the power of local councils to refuse to allow development on the site where a minister had been reckless and careless -

Mr JAENSCH - Hang on. Where a minister had been reckless and careless?

Ms BUTLER - Where a developer was reckless and careless. Is that a Freudian slip, I hope not? Would you like me to start again?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes please.

Ms BUTLER - Minister, in 2015 this Government removed the power of local councils to refuse to allow development on the site where a developer had been reckless and careless. The practical effect of this is that a developer who in recent years demolished a house at 55 Mt Stuart Road with no council permission, who let asbestos flood the area and who removed two heritage-listed trees has now been given permission to develop four townhouses on the site. The developer was fined heavily for his reckless and illegal actions and the magistrate said that the developer's actions showed spectacular disregard for planning laws and the safety of his neighbours.

The general manager of Hobart City Council also said the penalty sent a strong warning. Despite his action being widely condemned and the developer showing no remorse the council is hamstrung from being able to stop him developing because your Government removed their ability to do so. Why did your Government do this? Will you consider a reversal of this decision to allow councils the power to determine what happens in cases like this one?

Mr JAENSCH - I am responding as the minister and not as the developer. I am aware that the illegal demolition of a heritage-listed house and trees in Hobart in 2017 that you are referring to generated significant publicity about the current enforcement provisions and the perceptions that they are inadequate. I understand that the current enforcement provisions under LUPAA came into effect on the 1 February 2015 but were passed by parliament in 2013 under the then government and provide councils with more direct powers to address breaches of planning schemes through a range of enforcement tools escalating depending on the nature and seriousness of the problem.

I also understand that the changes at the time had the support of the local government sector who noted that the existing process through Resource Management and Planning Appeal Tribunal was not flexible and reactive enough to deal with identified breaches. Under the current provisions' councils can prosecute an offender by filing a complaint in the magistrate's court. Alternatively, a council may issue an infringement notice, however, the focus of the enforcement provisions is on achieving compliance in the first instance rather than prosecution of offenders.

These enforcements are retained in the new state-wide Tasmanian Planning Scheme. I understand that Hobart City Council successfully prosecuted the Mt Stuart case in the magistrate's court and a substantial fine resulted. I also understand that another action has been initiated by the council in regard to further purported infringement as you are referring to in relation to the demolition. The incident at Mt Stuart prompted some in the community to suggest that a penalty that prohibits further development on the land on which the breach or offences occurred has been lost as part of the new enforcement arrangements, as you are reflecting.

There was no specific reference to a ban on use and development prior to the new enforcement provisions coming into effect but there was, and remains, a capacity for the appeal tribunal to preclude the respondent from carrying out any use or development in relation to the land in respect of which the failure to comply or contravention relates. However, under the current enforcement arrangements this type of limitation is not available where a council takes action and prosecutes the matter in a magistrate's court. I have now asked the Department of Justice to review the provisions in both the Building and the Land Use Planning and Approvals acts and I have asked them to provide advice to the Government on any amendments that might be appropriate.

Ms BUTLER - Do you know when that advice might be forthcoming?

Mr JAENSCH - No I do not have a time frame around that advice but I understand that review is underway.

Ms DOW - Thank you. Could you please explain a council's power to refuse to accept a planning application? What rights does an applicant have if a council refuses to accept an application, even if external professional advice is of the opinion that that the application meets the requirements of the planning scheme?

Mr JAENSCH - That sounds quite specific. I will ask Mr Risby to provide comment.

Mr RISBY - If you could repeat the beginning for me, Ms Dow, that might be useful.

Ms DOW - Can you explain a council's power to refuse to accept a planning application before the assessment process, and what rights does an applicant have if a council refuses to accept an application, even if external professional advice is of the opinion that that the application meets the requirements of the planning scheme?

Mr RISBY - The first part is that the planning scheme and the legislation specifies what constitutes a legitimate or appropriate application, but the council is the planning authority so is the determinant of that. It is really a legal issue. If someone feels that a council is not applying that appropriately they would have to look at some legal action around that. There is no appeal process provided there because it is not deemed to be an application. We have been pretty careful in the state planning provisions to specify what constitutes a full application. There was some concern of

different planning schemes and the legislation being a little vague around that, so we have tried to be really careful about specifying what that is. There is a separate capacity for additional information of course once the application has been accepted. There is a threshold you need to get in, which is that you must address what the planning scheme says you need to address, and then there is a capacity for further information after that, but there is no appeal right against the first issue.

Ms DOW - Minister, wouldn't you agree, though, that sometimes there are different interpretations of the scheme by different planning professionals around the state and being involved with councils and the like. What is your Government doing to address that?

Mr JAENSCH - What we are doing to address that is to introduce a statewide planning scheme with -

Ms DOW - I will stop you there because my question was about individual interpretation.

Mr JAENSCH - That's right. What happens at the moment is that the situation you are referring to is compounded by local authorities having unique planning schemes and qualified people in their planning departments who also apply their interpretation of a unique scheme or an element of a scheme. One of the practical benefits of a statewide planning scheme with common provisions across the state is for the power of precedent for interpretation of the intent of the planning provisions and the treatment of certain types of cases to build up over time, which makes it less a matter for individual interpretation on a case-by-case basis and might also mean that planning professionals are able to move more freely across the sector dealing with the same planning tools wherever they land. That should offer greater flexibility for local government in how it seeks appropriate advice from people who are familiar with how the whole scheme works across the state. This is an area where there are very practical benefits to be had through adoption of a statewide planning scheme.

Ms DOW - You referred before to the increase in numbers within the PPU and those two new positions being around communications and stakeholder engagement. Would you envisage that there will be the ability for the provision of more professional development for Planning staff around the state as part of that, and will they work with the likes of LGAT and others around trying to put greater support around councils as they make planning decisions?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, there is more scope for it and we will be bringing in new planning tools. We have been working very closely with planners individually and in groups in terms of loading the LPSs and that process will need to continue. There will be a transition period as we learn how to drive the new Tasmanian Planning Scheme. As we are sharing information and educating and inducting people to the operation of the new scheme, I think it would make sense to maintain that contact and that interaction over time to ensure it is being consistently as well as being a consistent product.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, in 2003 the Clarence City Council wrote to the then premier and minister for parks asking that the reserve status of Rosny Hill nature recreation area be revoked and the premier made a commitment that the reserve status of Rosny Hill would remain the same. Then in 2009 the management of Rosny Hill from the Parks and Wildlife Service was transferred to the Clarence City Council and in the same year that council resolved that some development could occur on Rosny Hill nature reserve. My question to you relates to your role as Minister for Planning regarding the processes around the planning and changes. There is this grey area where councils

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manage publicly owned land - conservation recreation area crown lands - and that council in 2009, without consultation with the local Rosny and Montagu Bay communities, made some substantial changes to what developments could occur on the top of the hill. These were not properly checked.

The current Hunter Hill development proposal that was in place has been withdrawn and part of that reason was it is manifestly inappropriate for the site but also that the state Government and the Clarence City Council seemed to be having an argument who would sign off the development application. My question is about who finally has responsibility and I would like you to provide some clarity. What the community wants is for the state Government will take carriage of ensuring that public lands must be maintained with the integrity they were reserved for in the first place, so that regardless of what councils do, ultimately it is the Crown that takes responsibility for ensuring that recreation conservation areas are properly managed. I am asking you to look into this as a case and look at tightening things up to protect the integrity of conservation recreation areas, nature recreation areas and crown lands that council has within its management so that inappropriate developments like this don't end up coming in the first place.

Mr JAENSCH - I accept the case there and you have asked that we look into it. I note that there is a jurisdictional matter there, not so much a planning policy matter, rather a Parks or crown land consent issue, but still within government. I am happy to hear your call that something needs to be done to make these processes clearer in the future.

Dr WOODRUFF - I am asking essentially that you as Planning minister undertake to clarify this grey area which led to an inappropriate development being presented and submitted to council and going through a process. It did not proceed. It fell over for lots of reason, but one was definitely because the community rightly put up strong resistance to the inappropriate development in a nature conservation area. It should never have happened in the first place.

Mr JAENSCH - The advice I am taking is this is not within the Planning jurisdiction.

Dr WOODRUFF - Of course not. Lots of things that are hard aren't.

Mr JAENSCH - I hear the issue as you raise it but it needs to be addressed to the minister responsible for Crown lands.

Dr WOODRUFF - I am asking if you can work with the minister responsible for Crown lands in furthering this issue?

Mr JAENSCH - I am not going to undertake to resolve that matter for you. I am happy to hear out -

Dr WOODRUFF - It is actually not for me. It is for so many properties that you have a responsibility to take carriage for.

Mr JAENSCH - I am happy to note the issue that you have raised.

Dr WOODRUFF - But you do not want to solve it.

Mr JAENSCH - It is not something that is within my jurisdiction as Planning minister to solve.

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Dr WOODRUFF - It has nothing to do with planning. Is that what you are saying? This is to do with major planning developments coming in conflict with -

Mr JAENSCH - It is not a live issue.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is a live issue because the Hunter Developments has said that they are going to put another application back in. That was their intention when they withdrew it.

Mr JAENSCH - It is not principally my area of jurisdiction, the Crown land matter, and second, as Planning minister I do not interfere in development assessment processes.

Dr WOODRUFF - This is so weak. This is a huge developer that put a lot of money into this and a council that went through two years of aggravation. You are just going to let it go through again just like you are following Lake Malbena through in law.

Mr JAENSCH - Different answer.

CHAIR - Order, Dr Woodruff. Ms Dow has the call.

Ms DOW - Minister, the policy that was announced during the Premier's Address which was around infill and medium density and looking at more from the point of view of a housing strategy, was that based on Labor's policy around inclusionary zoning?

Mr JAENSCH - No.

Ms DOW - Can you please provide me with an update on how that process - some time frames for that - and the legislative process that will follow that and the community consultation that will be undertaken along the way?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, definitely. The reference that the Premier made his address was that the Government will for the first time develop new planning rules that focus on medium rise developments and infill projects that provide options for people looking to live close to work and in the city areas.

We are working on a set of standards for our cities and long transit corridors that can provide a permitted pathway for apartment-style developments, not skyscrapers but medium density four to five storey type developments. Currently, there is no explicit provision for these in the planning system. Whilst there is demand and interest in it - and we have talked about it in terms of transit corridors and such, and there are examples and proposals turning up - there is no provision in the planning schemes which says that they are welcome and makes it easy for them to proceed. Often there is complex rezoning and other hurdles to overcome before those projects get up. When you referred back to the -was this a relation to which policy? It links to policy objectives of the Hobart City Deal, in particular, regarding activation of transit corridors and the future densification of population mass that will use those and/or make viable some of those aspirations around those transit corridors.

As with all new planning rules, the new standards will be developed in consultation with the public and subject to independent assessment by the Tasmanian Planning Commission. I do not think that this is a legislative process but rather a development of a new planning provision with the normal public consultative and representation process embedded in it.

Ms DOW - Minister, I was aware that this was closely related, there was a review undertaken of the residential standards. There had been some concern about that in the interim scheme. Where is that at? How will the changes that have been implemented through that, or you have been made aware of, would be important I would have thought to any changes around density in residential areas or new residential areas that have not typically been used for that purpose?

Mr JAENSCH - The difference is that the earlier discussions around re-examining aspects of planning directive 4.1 were looking at infill development into established residential zones and neighbourhoods and the perceived impacts of new different types of developments into established neighbourhoods and how they were to be resolved.

This is different in some ways in that it is talking about the introduction of residential development into previously non-residential areas, commercial and other zone types. To some extent this discussion has almost overtaken the PD4.11 in that the current drive and demand is for the development of new types of housing in new areas that haven't had housing before as a bigger solution that we need to get to more quickly.

Whilst there is some parallel between the PD4.1 review it might inform what we do next with the medium density work is likely to impact on and inform the next steps of work on PD4.1 not the other way around.

Ms DOW - With regard to that being a new development and in areas that typically haven't been places where people live, how does that link to your housing strategy? Is that predominantly around the provision of affordable housing or will it be mixed use housing? Will you be examining all of the important things like public transport, transport networks and road corridors?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, definitely all those linkages and this is where some of the precinct planning work that we have recently been discussing and proposing with the Hobart City Council and in the context of the city deal, really comes to the fore.

Planning for urban density, the transport systems and things like also where the University of Tasmania will change the traffic and the character of the city as well as its plans to relocate to the city centre come to fruition.

In terms of inclusive zoning and who lives in these buildings, the intention is to make the provision so this sort of residential development can be done. Within that context, it is open to the same options for who does it and for which audiences, which markets, as we have now in things like the homes act work that Housing Tasmania is doing.

It is quite possible, and likely, that within the next few years, there will be residential developments specifically targeting affordable housing clients in these CBD areas and there will be mixed developments in the same context.

Ms DOW - Part of my question was around the time frames as well. Are you able to give us an indication of when this will be happening?

Mr JAENSCH - The intent would be with the infill development provisions to be developing, consulting and working them up during this calendar year and then into the Planning Commission's assessment process, including public submission processes, hearings et cetera into the new year.

Ms DOW - My final question is around a recent call from the Property Council calling for the introduction of development assessment panels for key precincts, which is what we have been talking about now.

Is the State Government and are you, as Minister for Planning, supportive of this?

Mr JAENSCH - There are a few conversations going around like that about who makes planning decisions for different types of developments. We have mentioned before the projects of regional significance and the proposed major projects legislation that we would be bringing in. That has an element of that sort of technical panel approach to it.

You also touched on it before in your question of the role of the future of local governments in planning. There is no firm plan or agenda around introduction of development assessment panels into the mix at this stage. We will work with what we have. The most important thing is that we establish the right planning rules. As to who applies them, I am happy for the conversation to happen, but our priority is to get the planning system in place. If others want to discuss who should be making the decisions and what the roles of different groups should be, I am happy for that to happen and I will listen to what people have to say, but my priority has to be to get the planning machinery right.

Ms DOW - Are you concerned, as Planning minister, that the role of planning authorities has not been examined as part of the review of the local government legislation in Tasmania, and are you working with the steering committee around any issues that might arise around the role of councils in planning?

Mr JAENSCH - As I've said, I have been really grateful for the way local government has responded to my call to action around getting the planning reforms we have underway now to conclusion. That's the absolute priority. Building some of these other capabilities into the planning system around things that we need to do urgently and strategic growth and development of Tasmania are other priorities. I am aware of these discussions about the future role of councils in planning, but as Planning minister I am not driving that. I have other priorities and I need to be able to work with local government to get them done. That is where I remain focused.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, the Cambria Green development on the east coast is massive and highly controversial, with expected huge local economic impacts of a negative sort as well as social and environment impacts. It is subject to a rezoning application amendment at the moment. My question is in relation to this specific area plan that would provide the company with a whole range of things that would be undertaken within the master plan concept that are really extraordinary. I won't go into them now, but my concern is that if it is approved, the council will have little control or right to require that the developers stick to the outlined project. It is essentially a concept plan and the concepts are mind-boggling, including airstrips, palliative care units, massive hotels, and golf courses. It leaves the door open for subdivision and buildings that could be quite substantially changed, as well as heights. This is a problem. Are you going to look into plugging that loophole?

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, I'm sorry to interrupt, and I'm sure everybody is disappointed in this, but the time has concluded for deliberation.

Dr WOODRUFF - I think we all would have waited for the minister's response, so maybe you can give him the indulgence of answering, Chair, since it was my last question that you -

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CHAIR - No. As Chair, I need to be able to stick to the timetable and that is what I have been doing all day. Minister, I will give you the opportunity to thank the officers you have at the table and your staff.

Mr JAENSCH - I thank the secretary, the acting executive commissioner and Mr Risby for their attendance today, the answers they have given, and their excellent work throughout the year.

CHAIR - Thank you, minister.

The committee adjourned at 4.05 p.m.