

VERIFIED VERSION

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Inquiry into budget estimates 2014–15

Melbourne — 20 May 2014

Members

Mr N. Angus

Ms J. Garrett

Mr D. Morris

Mr D. R. J. O'Brien

Mr C. Ondarchie

Mr M. Pakula

Mr R. Scott

Chair: Mr D. Morris

Deputy Chair: Mr M. Pakula

Staff

Executive Officer: Ms V. Cheong

Witnesses

Mr M. Guy, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship,

Mr J. Hanney, Deputy Secretary, Intergovernmental Relations and Citizenship Group, and

Mr H. Akyol, Director, Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

**Necessary corrections to be notified to
executive officer of committee**

The CHAIR — We will resume the estimates hearings and move to hearing 30, multicultural affairs and citizenship. I welcome from the Department of Premier and Cabinet the Deputy Secretary, Intergovernmental Relations and Citizenship, Mr Justin Hanney, and the Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Mr Hakan Akyol. The minister now has an opportunity for a brief presentation of no more than 5 minutes on the budget estimates for the multicultural affairs and citizenship portfolio.

Mr GUY — Thank you, Chair. I was tempted to give my presentation in Ukrainian, given that I do this in the upper house chamber and it seems to infuriate — —

Members interjecting.

Mr GUY — I can certainly do the accent if you would like. I have got enough relatives who I can train — I am sure you do too, Mr Pakula — but I will not do that. Instead I will start off — —

The CHAIR — Remember we have an audience on the web.

Mr GUY — Yes, I understand that, so I will instead begin by saying I am very proud to be able to deliver my first estimates report as the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship. This is a wonderful portfolio that really goes to the heart of the diverse multicultural state we are in Victoria.

Overheads shown.

Mr GUY — If I can just go to some slides in the first instance, Chair. As I think all committee members would be aware, our culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse community is one of our defining features as a state, with our citizens originating from more than 200 countries, speaking more than 200 languages and dialects and following more than 130 faiths. More than 26 per cent of Victorians were born overseas, which is quite an astounding fact when you consider that that means, as I said, that one in four people you pass in the street every day was actually not born in Australia. Nearly 47 per cent of Victorians were either overseas born or indeed have a parent who was overseas born and around a quarter of us — 23 per cent of Victorians — speak a language other than English at home. It is important to note these important facts and to note that our diversity as a state is actually increasing.

The table which is now displayed up there shows a significant increase between 2006 and 2011 for each one of the key measures I have outlined, and it is also important to note that the number of Victorians who indicated low English proficiency has also increased between 2006 and 2011 from approximately 187 000 people to 213 000 people.

The government's commitment to multicultural affairs is, I should say from the outset, one that I think the whole Parliament should be very proud to say is a bipartisan one and one which this state has a long history of ensuring is at the core of the fundamental being of all of us as legislators here in Victoria. The government is committed to a whole-of-government approach that supports our culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse communities. Because our diversity delivers social, cultural and economic benefits to all Victorians, a strong and cohesive multicultural society will attract skilled migrants, international students, overseas tourists and of course the relocation of global companies to our great state. In turn this contributes to the economy through job creation, innovation and export activity.

On 3 March this year the Premier and our previous multicultural affairs and citizenship minister, Nick Kotsiras, launched Victoria's new multicultural affairs and citizenship policy, titled *Victoria's Advantage — Unity, Diversity, Opportunity*. The new policy replaces *All of Us*, which was released in 2009. For the first time a multicultural policy in Victoria contains a set of indicators that will be monitored and reported on where appropriate in future for a whole-of-government reporting. The indicators will help provide a more comprehensive picture of progress in multicultural affairs and citizenship and will assist government to better identify trends in emerging issues. The indicators have been developed in consultation with departments and are drawn from existing data sources.

The government is committed to ensuring that all Victorian learning and developing settings equip children and young people with the knowledge and skills to participate in and contribute to our multicultural society — locally, nationally and internationally. The vision builds upon the broader multicultural affairs policy, *Victoria's Advantage — Unity, Diversity, Opportunity*. It is guided by the four following principles: one, participation and

inclusion, two, quality learning environments, three, diversity of educational approaches, and four, collaboration with broader community. Unity through Diversity was launched by the Honourable Martin Dixon, MP, the Minister for Education, on a wonderful birthday that is 6 March 2014 — my birthday!

The 2013–14 financial year has been a busy and productive one for this portfolio. We have continued our support to Victoria's culturally and linguistically diverse communities through the VMC's community grants programs. This has an anticipated outcome of 2300 grants allocated in 2013, as budget paper 3 indicates. The new settlement coordination unit coordinates a whole-of-government response to the needs of new arrivals in policy development and service delivery. In 2013–14 the SCU has facilitated a strategic and coordinated approach across Victorian government, including via the multicultural services interdepartmental group and regional management forums, to support strong engagement with the commonwealth on issues of settlement needs and refugees and asylum seekers, and including my key departments — DEECD, Department of Health and Department of Human Services — and Victoria Police in preparing for cost recovery and memorandum of understanding negotiations with the commonwealth on asylum seeker matters. Further, there is promotion of the community harmony program, delivering a range of initiatives that build intercultural and interfaith understanding, respect and partnerships between diverse faiths and cultural communities. These initiatives also contribute to the capacity for building key multicultural and faith organisations.

The peak multicultural organisations support fund, committed to in the last state budget, provides funding to peak multicultural organisations that play a critical role in assisting CALD communities, especially in regional and rural areas, with the allocated budget of this fund being \$1.5 million over the 2013–14 and 14–15 financial years. Eleven organisations have been awarded funding. The multicultural language service programs aim to increase the supply of interpreters and translators in Victoria and optimise the use of language services by government service providers. This program includes scholarships and training.

The second last slide I think I will do before I wrap up, Chair, because I know I am coming to the end of my allotted time, is in relation to key achievements in the 2013–14 period. The first is Cultural Diversity Week, including the Premier's Gala Dinner, and the Viva Victoria festival in Fed Square. That was held successfully this year, Chair, and I can inform the committee that it was a wonderful event where so many people were represented from different organisations, different faiths and different backgrounds. It was a credit to all those who organised this festival.

The Unity Through Partnerships grants program is providing grants of up to \$100 000 for multicultural festivals and events, including the festival of cultures, organised by Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services in Bendigo, which I recently visited; and the mAll of Us project, organised by the Bell Street mall traders in Heidelberg West to host a community Iftar fest, a multicultural music festival and Lunar New Year celebrations, among others.

The Piers Festival, coordinated by Multicultural Arts Victoria, involved over 30 partners who held multicultural celebrations for Australia Day at Station Pier in Port Melbourne on 25 January. The multicultural awards for excellence recognised achievements and contributions of over 100 individuals, community organisations and service providers who have actively supported cultural diversity and made an impact in promoting harmony throughout our community. The Victorian Refugee Recognition Record pays tribute to those people from a refugee background for their outstanding community work. Finally, throughout the year the Victorian Multicultural Commission has supported the eight regional advisory councils, as well as conducted extensive consultations throughout Victoria.

I am aware of time, Chair, so I will not go on to the final page. As Mr Pakula indicated in relation to my planning submission, no doubt he has that, in case people would like to have a look at my presentation, but I am happy to answer questions from the committee. Thank you for the time.

The CHAIR — Thank you, Minister. We have until 5.30 p.m. for questions, but before I ask the first one, Mr Ondarchie.

Mr ONDARCHIE — In relation to the Premier's announcement of 30 March this year when he announced the new cabinet, he also appointed myself, together with Inga Peulich, the Cabinet Secretary, to assist the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship.

The CHAIR — Minister, could you outline to the committee the budget initiatives in this portfolio which will strengthen Victorian communities, both in the coming year and over the forward estimates period?

Mr GUY — If I could just outline some of those projects to date, what you would be aware of, certainly, is that the multicultural portfolio is about supporting communities in response to their needs for participation in and promotion of the benefits of multiculturalism in Victoria, as you refer to correctly from budget paper 3, pages 217 to 218, for those members of the committee who would like to look at it. There are five examples I would like to quickly highlight for the committee's interest. The first one being the community grants program; two, the refugee support program; three, the peak multicultural organisations funding; four, the Cultural Precincts and Community Infrastructure Fund programs; and programs that support rural and regional multicultural communities.

The community grants program provides critical support to culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse organisations. It does strengthen the capacity to address the specific needs of communities, and of course it promotes community cohesion and harmony between communities within our broader public. In the 2013–14 budget the program budget is around \$6 million. That incorporates \$5.6 million from the community grants program and \$400 000 from multifaith and interfaith grants drawn from the Promoting Harmony program. There are presently six categories of funding: organisational support; strengthening multicultural communities; community language programs; promoting harmony; facilities improvements; and multicultural festivals and events. They are all very important.

The second one of those, the refugee support program, provides essential support to newly arrived refugee and humanitarian communities living in the Victorian community via the refugee action program and asylum seeker support program. The state budget allocated ongoing funding of \$1.3 million per annum to maintain the refugee action program and asylum seeker support program. The 2011–12 state budget allocated funding of 800 000 over four years for the Rights and Responsibilities seminar program, now delivered through the refugee action program. The refugee action program supports local community-based partnerships between service agencies, for instance, to ensure that new arrivals can more fully participate and engage in local communities, can identify local issues, can enhance local capacity in improvement of settlement outcomes and of course can inform communities through tailored Rights and Responsibilities seminars. The asylum seekers support program offers vulnerable individuals across Melbourne access to essential services, including casework, for instance; housing; employment; and essential aid and food programs.

The peak multicultural organisations funding, which is no. 3 on that list, provides critical support to peak multicultural organisations, called PMOs, across Victoria. They are the first port of call for many culturally and linguistically diverse Victorians, and they play an important role in assisting CALD communities, particularly in rural and regional Victoria. The 2013–14 budget allocated \$1.5 million over two years — 13–14 to 14–15. Our eight regional and rural ethnic communities councils all receive funding through the program. Since 2007, \$22 million has been allocated to enhance cultural precincts and build upon existing community infrastructure facilities.

I also refer to the Cultural Precincts and Community Infrastructure Fund programs. That comprises \$8 million for a precinct enhancement fund; \$2 million under the CPEF to fit out the Antipodes Centre for Greek Culture, Heritage and Language; and \$12 million for cultural precincts and community infrastructure. So there is quite a bit of funding going in there under those five programs. I think they are very important for building cultural and linguistic communities up to the standards we need them to be to fully participate in our integrated society in Victoria, and I think they have all been very well received. I believe they certainly will be well received throughout the entirety of the Victorian community.

Mr PAKULA — Minister, I can let you know that I have now put 6 March in the contacts, so I will not have any excuse for not bringing you a piece of yabluchnyk or something.

Mr GUY — Thank you. You will note that it is also the Premier's birthday too, Mr Pakula.

Mr PAKULA — Why did you have to spoil it? Minister, I just want to take you to a program called Stronger Futures for Refugee Youth, which was funded in the 2010–11 budget. It was a very modest program of 3.8 million over four years and in a funding sense it expires on 30 June this year. I have seen nothing in this budget or in any previous budget of this government that renews or extend that funding. It is a program which

was talked about in the *Victorian Government Initiatives and Reporting in Multicultural Affairs* document of 2011–12. I am wondering whether the program will be ongoing, despite the funding that was made in 10–11 expiring, and if so, how it will be funded or whether it will alternatively cease.

Mr GUY — I thank the Deputy Chair for the question. Refugee and asylum seeker support, of which that would be part, is around a \$1.3 million per annum line item in the 2014–15 budget. You will be aware that over the financial year period the multicultural affairs and citizenship portfolio is allocated around \$24.5 million, compared to around \$14 million or so three or four years ago — 14.3 million actually in the 2010–11 revised budget documents. The Refugee Action program, again for refugee support, does support local community-based partnerships between service agencies and communities from a refugee background obviously to ensure that new arrivals can more fully participate in and engage with their local communities and access existing services to identify with local issues, concerns they have and planned tailored community-owned responses to enhance local capacity and improve settlement outcomes and of course to inform local communities through tailored rights and responsibilities seminars.

The asylum seekers support program supports vulnerable individuals across Melbourne to access essential services, including casework, housing, employment, material aid and food programs, as I read before. What I would say, Mr Pakula, is that a number of those areas are certainly picked up in the funding that is continued in this budget.

Mr PAKULA — Minister, I am happy if you want to take this on notice, but can you provide the committee with some information about whether that specific program, Stronger Futures for Refugee Youth, will continue in some form or whether it will be replaced by something else?

Mr GUY — I am more than happy to take that on notice to give you a proper breakdown of some of the support services, particularly the one you raised but also others which operate in a similar field and the budgetary allocation of \$1.5 million over the next 12 months — where that would be spent, how that might apply and the substantive of what you have asked about.

Mr PAKULA — Thank you.

Mr ANGUS — Minister, I refer you to budget paper 3, page 217, and I note that it says that Victoria supports a whole-of-government approach to multicultural affairs, which is detailed on the page I referred to. What has the government done to protect our communities from racial discrimination?

Mr GUY — On the whole I think it is fair to say that our community here in Victoria is a very harmonious one. The vast majority of Victorians agree that the multicultural composition of our society is not only a great thing but it is one that has led to the vastly improved livability of Melbourne as a city and Victoria as a state — that so many of us are from so many different places and we can live together harmoniously in such a wonderful society.

The government is committed to implementing strong and balanced multicultural policies that, alongside Australian citizenship, lay the foundation for a strong and unified society. Mr Angus would certainly be aware of the release of our multicultural affairs and citizenship policy which, as I said before, is entitled *Victoria's Advantage — Unity, Diversity, Opportunity*. That sets the policy framework for this vision. There is a strong legislative framework, including the Multicultural Victoria Act 2011. I think the previous minister, Mr Kotsiras, had made plenty of references to that being a similar level of recognition to a federal multicultural act. I also support that and believe it would be a sensible way forward for Australia to operate in recognising multiculturalism and the benefits it has certainly brought to our country, not just postwar and with recent arrivals but also recognising the contribution made by those Australians who either arrived from the late 1700s or the Indigenous Australians who have been here for tens of thousands of years. We are all Australians and we are all here together and it would be a great effort to have that recognised in a federal act as well.

As you know, the government has made significant investment to ensure the vision of multiculturalism is realigned with programs such as Unity Through Partnerships grants, which is 4.4 million over four years, building intercultural understanding, respect and partnerships between diverse communities and the wider community. We renewed funding to the Promoting Harmony program in 2011 — 2 million per annum. In April 2014, consistent with Victoria's longstanding leadership in promoting multiculturalism and opposing racism, the Victorian government, as you would be aware, did make a submission to the commonwealth opposing

proposed amendments to the Racial Discrimination Act. The submission defended the significant role that the Racial Discrimination Act had played in fostering harmony and social cohesion, and we consider it vital that the commonwealth does not weaken the protections in place against race hate and continues to demonstrate leadership in promoting and encouraging social harmony.

We as a government, and I would go further and say we as a state for many decades, have been at the forefront of advancing a socially cohesive and multicultural community. It is something that should be a great positive for our country. We believe it certainly is in Victoria. As a consequence we have, certainly over the last 12 months, through a number of initiatives in this budget and also through a number of policy initiatives, demonstrated that the government is prepared to stand up for the recognition of our multicultural society when it is needed and put money towards programs to assist those who are either new arrivals or who have difficulty with communicating in English that might impede their ability to have a good way of life here in Australia.

Mr SCOTT — I will resist the temptation to inflict my limited Mandarin on the committee.

The CHAIR — I am sure Hansard appreciates that.

Mr SCOTT — Minister, I would just like to take you to page 217 of budget paper 3. There is a performance measure, ‘Proportion of grants approved which are provided to organisations in regional/rural areas’ and a note there that says:

... expected outcome is lower than ... target as fewer than anticipated applications were received.

I would really like to drill into that particular issue relating to the underperformance where there is a 12.5 per cent expected outcome with a target of 15 per cent and then a subsequent target of 15 per cent for this financial year. Why was it that fewer applications were received, particularly in the context where I understand at a previous PAEC hearing the target had been increased in the context of increased support, the minister said, for the VMC? So I would be keen to understand what reasons there are for that underperformance.

Mr GUY — It is a good question, Mr Scott. The government believes over the forward estimates period that the figures we have put in place will not only be met but eventually exceeded. While the previous year-to-year figures obviously, as you say, as a target were not met to the extent that they could have been, we believe that difference, if you like, will be made up over the next financial year period and beyond in the financial year period again. So we have looked at it across a forward estimate period rather than just a period of a financial year—financial year. It should, of course, note that our total 2013–14 budget program is around 6 million. As I said before, that incorporates 5.6 million from community grants programs and 400 000 from multi-faith, interfaith grants.

That is fine. As you say correctly, there is some issue with whether or not they have come from regional Victoria or indeed metropolitan Melbourne. A lot of it will depend on where those grants and applications have come in at a point in time, if they have been made from certain areas. As I said, we do believe that if there is a balance or a shortfall on the targets that the government had set for the previous financial year they can be not only met but exceeded over the forward estimate period so that we would have over that forward estimate period the amount and the level that we expected to be serviced by that grants program to be met as a four-year block rather than on a year to year. But I do understand the rationale for your question.

Mr SCOTT — Just to follow up, the minister previously had outlined that the increase in the target in relation to regional and rural areas reflected increased support for the VMC. If you could outline what that increased support was?

Mr GUY — For the VMC?

Mr SCOTT — Yes.

Mr GUY — I will allow the head of OMAC, who is very keen, to answer.

Mr AKYOL — The measure previously had been changed. It used to be a raw number of how many applications were funded in regional locations. It was then changed to a percentage figure, so it is not quite comparable. Overall, if you look at the budget paper outputs, there were 2400 grants provided, as opposed to

2300 as a target. The total amount allocated in terms of grants has remained the same, but the average amount has increased slightly.

Mr O'BRIEN — Hogy vagy? I have just inflicted you with my very limited Hungarian.

Members interjecting.

Mr O'BRIEN — No, I know, and I know the history of the Hungarians. They are related to the Finnish, the Magyar.

The CHAIR — Could we get to the question?

Mr O'BRIEN — Yes, I will.

Mr GUY — They are, and Korean, actually — Korean as well.

Mr O'BRIEN — I know a little bit about the history of Ukraine, but nothing like the minister. But I will ask you, Minister: what has the government done in coordinating the monitoring of government departments' responsiveness to Victorians from culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse backgrounds, as outlined in budget paper 3, page 217?

Mr GUY — Chair, I am really tempted, given I am getting Hungarian and the threats of Mandarin, but of course I will not. I will answer it straightforwardly for you.

Members interjecting.

Mr GUY — I do thank Mr O'Brien for his question. I appreciate his interest in this matter because it is very, very important and it is one to which I believe there is a good story that as a state we should be telling. On 3 March this year, the Premier and Minister Kotsiras did launch, as I said, *Victoria's Advantage — Unity, Diversity, Opportunity*. That new policy of the government has a vision for harnessing the many benefits of our increasing cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. That is so important, as I said, to being proud of the state we are and the multicultural state that we are.

The policy is organised under three key themes: firstly, maximising the benefits of our diversity, which includes our enhanced capacity to engage internationally through our diverse communities; secondly, citizenship and participation and social cohesion; and thirdly, responsive and accessible services. So for the first time we have a set of indicators that are included, such as labour force and school retention rates to measure the progress of our culturally diverse communities. The indicators will be monitored and reported where appropriate in future whole-of-government reporting. These indicators will help provide a more comprehensive picture of progress in multicultural affairs and citizenship and will certainly assist the government to better identify trends and emerging issues.

As required by the Multicultural Victoria Act 2011, departments will continue to report annually on their activities in supporting our multicultural communities. The next annual report, 2012–13, will be tabled in Parliament next month and will include the indicators, for the first time. These indicators are not intended to measure the performance of a particular government service or programs and they should not be read as indicators of program performance. Rather they will be analysed over time to help identify trends, and I think that is very important.

Those indicators have been developed in consultation with departments and are drawn from existing data sources. The policy has been received favourably by the multicultural sector and in the media as a whole. I believe these indicators will be very well received. I believe they are essential to actually identifying where we do as a state need to engage and support certain communities in certain locations. I do believe, particularly when we are looking at school retention rates, they are important areas of consideration and focus as a state where we need to possibly put further resources or indeed look at providing future support to people from overseas who do choose Victoria as their home, or indeed are the sons and daughters of people who are not from an English-speaking background. If we need to provide that support, whether it is personnel or whether it is a policy in some degree, then at least we have those indicators to ensure that we can provide that support to those Victorians who we want to be able to do well in the long term while they have chosen to be here as their home.

Mr SCOTT — Minister, I would refer you to two things. One is pages 217 to 218 of budget paper 3, which deal with multicultural affairs and citizenship output, and the second is the questionnaire that was provided by the department to the committee. In the questionnaire, question 12 makes reference — and you may require to take some of this information on notice, because it is quite a technical question — to the impact of previous efficiencies and savings measures. We obviously might use another term, but let us not get into a semantics argument. I would just be interested to know if there is any impact of those decisions of savings and efficiencies on the budget for multicultural affairs and citizenship for 2013–14.

Mr GUY — No, I do not believe there is any direct impact. As I said, I will not go through them for the case of brevity, but there are a number of programs in which we have invested in the budget. As I said, there is certainly no direct impact in terms of the question you are asking, but if there is any further information on that that you need, Mr Scott, I am happy to take that on notice or receive a letter from the committee to provide a further breakdown for you should you require it.

Mr ANGUS — Minister, I refer you to budget paper 3, page 217, and I ask: has the commitment to fund peak multicultural organisations that was made in 2013–14 in the state budget been rolled out?

Mr GUY — Thanks, Mr Angus, for that question. As I mentioned before, what is called PMO, the peak multicultural organisations grant program, is providing that critical support to these organisations across the state, which I think we all agree is very important. In the 2013–14 state budget the allocated funding of \$1.5 million over two years — that is, 2013–14 and 14–15 — was made, and Victoria's eight regional and rural ethnic communities councils will all receive funding through that program as a result.

The peak multicultural organisations are the first port of call for many culturally and linguistically diverse Victorians. They play a very important role in assisting CALD communities, especially in rural and regional areas. The funding is supporting peak multicultural organisations with core operations, strategic planning and program development and implementation. I would just say, importantly, the funding will enable these organisations to increase the scope and reach of their services, improve the quality of service provision to their constituencies, improve settlement outcomes, provide more relevant and timely advice to government and of course increase their ability to seek supplementary funding through alternative sources, which I think is going to be increasingly important.

Successful agencies funded in 2013–14 and 14–15 include the North East Multicultural Association, which is obviously in north-east Victoria — it received \$150 000; Diversitat, which is Barwon South West, received \$150 000; Gippsland Ethnic Communities Council received \$125 000; \$150 000 went to Ballarat; Wodonga City Council received \$137 000; and the Refugee Council of Australia received \$120 000. There are a number of them, which I am happy to make available to the committee in terms of details, and I am more than happy to make that data available if the committee should ask.

Mr PAKULA — Minister, I just want to talk about the output expenditure for the multicultural affairs budget, which is in budget paper 3, page 218. It shows that in relation to the total output cost, for 13–14 the target was 25.9 and the 14–15 target is 24.4. This is interesting to me, and perhaps the VMC might be in a better position to just sort of explain this. It seems that each of the last three years we have had a similar situation in regard to the multicultural affairs budget. We have had a budget and an expected outcome above the budgeted amount, but then an actual which comes in significantly under. In 11–12 it was 19.6 million, the expected outcome was 21.8 and the actual was 17.4. In 12–13 the budget was 21.4 — so the budget went up — and the expected outcome went up, but the actual was only 18.04. In 13–14 the budget went up again to 25.9, but the expected outcome was 22; we do not yet know the actual.

This year, for the first time in a few years, the budget has actually gone down, by \$1.5 million. In the notes it says that the lower 2014–15 target output cost is due to a reduction in carryover in comparison to the previous year, but if you look at the expected outcome as against the budget, the budget was 25.9 and the expected outcome is only 22, which would suggest a carryover of 3.9 into 14–15. Can you just explain how these discrepancies have occurred, or how it has occurred certainly for this year, and whether there is actually a reduction in carryover or whether there has been a conscious decision to reduce the budget?

Mr GUY — Fair question. I would say to the Deputy Chair that there are a couple of key points which are difficult to report but account for that reasoning. Of course the first one is that the grants relied upon the groups

to spend them within that financial year, which would then account for their expenditure as one key factor; also the timing of those grants and the capital works expenditure associated with those grants. All of those three instances do have an impact upon, as you say correctly, the carryover and the expenditure in those years, and so those three issues have accounted for, as you say, the carryover and the expenditure amounts about which you are inquiring. I accept that is a fair point.

The CHAIR — Thank you, Minister. That concludes the hearing. There were a couple of questions on notice, and we will of course write to you regarding those and again we would appreciate a response within 21 days. I thank the minister and departmental staff for their attendance. That concludes the hearing.

Committee adjourned.