

VERIFIED VERSION

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Inquiry into 2013–14 and 2014–15 Financial and Performance Outcomes

Melbourne — 17 February 2016

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Witnesses

Mr Greg Wilson, Secretary,
Mr Shaun Condron, Chief Finance Officer,
Mr Graham Ashton, Chief Commissioner of Police,
Mr Neil Robertson, Deputy Secretary, Emergency Management Victoria, and
Ms Jan Shuard, Commissioner, Corrections Victoria,
Mr Simon Cohen, deputy Secretary, Regulation and Director, Consumer Affairs Victoria, and
Ms Cate Carr, executive Director, Liquor, Gaming and Racing, Department of Justice and Regulation.

The CHAIR — I declare open the public hearings for the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearing into the 2014–15 financial and performance outcomes. I would like to welcome Mr Greg Wilson, Secretary of the Department of Justice and Regulation; Mr Shaun Condon, chief finance officer; Mr Graham Ashton, Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police; Mr Neil Robertson, deputy secretary, Emergency Management Victoria; and Ms Jan Shuard, commissioner, Corrections Victoria.

I would also like to welcome all witnesses sitting in the gallery. Any witness who is called from the gallery during this hearing must clearly state their name, position and relevant department for the record.

All evidence is taken by this committee under the provisions of the Parliamentary Committees Act, attracts parliamentary privilege and is protected from judicial review. Any comments made outside the hearing, including on social media, are not afforded such privilege. The committee does not require witnesses to be sworn, but questions must be answered fully, accurately and truthfully. Witnesses found to be giving false or misleading evidence may be in contempt of Parliament and subject to penalty. All evidence given today is being recorded by Hansard. You will be provided with proof versions of the transcript for verification as soon as available. Verified transcripts, any PowerPoint presentations and handouts will be placed on the committee's website as soon as possible.

Witness advisers may approach the table during the hearing to provide information to the witnesses if requested by leave of myself; however, written communication to witnesses can only be provided by officers of the PAEC secretariat. Members of the public gallery cannot participate in the committee's proceedings in any way.

I now give the witness the opportunity to make a very brief opening statement of no more than 10 minutes. This will be followed by questions from the committee.

Visual presentation.

Mr WILSON — Thank you, Chair. I have a brief presentation. I thought it might be helpful to present the structure of our outputs as they relate to both the budget and performance measures and then a brief overview of how we have performed both against that budget and those measures.

If we go to slide 3, you see there we have 11 outcome areas for the department, which is down from 16 with the movement of Court Services Victoria and the various integrity bodies that went to DPC, so 13–14 has 16, 14–15 and beyond, 11. The pie chart shows the breakdown by budget of each of those groups. You will see from that the largest slice of the budget belongs to police followed by emergency management capability, and of that 950 million or so there, around 850 flows straight through to the CFA, MFB and other emergency services agencies. The biggest one for the department itself is the prisoner supervision and support outcome of around \$900 million.

I have provided a handout which describes the various agencies and functions that sit under those output areas, which I thought might be useful for the committee. If I just quickly go through that, obviously police are self-explanatory; enhancing community safety, that includes the working-with-children check, the community crime prevention program and our Koori justice work; infringement and orders management — management of traffic and other infringement notices, the sheriff and so on; access to justice and support services, that includes our legal and law reform advice, native title work, things like legal aid, forensic medical and scientific services, victim support and dispute resolution services; public prosecutions is self-explanatory, the OPP; protecting community rights, that is the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, Office of the Public Advocate and the registry of births, deaths and marriages.

The next two: community-based offender supervision and prisoner supervision and support are the two corrections functions — so those outside of prison on parole and orders and those within prison. Then, as I mentioned, the emergency management capability is our own Emergency Management Victoria, but most of those funds flow through to us to the emergency service organisations.

Promoting and protecting consumer interests, that is consumer affairs, gambling and liquor regulation and racing industry development. It is pretty self-explanatory as well.

If I turn to the output performance structure, having gone through the budget structure, the objectives, indicators and outputs for 14–15 were developed back in 2012, so this is the first year that they have been reported. Our

objectives describe the results that we aim to achieve, and the indicators you see on the slide have been selected to provide an indication of how we are progressing towards the achievement of those objectives. I will not go through all of them; I will just leave those there for the committee for information.

If we skip through to slide 7, in terms of the various measures, both budget and performance, we have 112 measures, all in all; 101 relate to measures of quality, quantity and timeliness, with the remaining 11 being measures of cost performance for each of our outputs.

You see on the cost side of things that seven of the outcomes or output areas were either met or were within 5 per cent of the budget. Those that were not, if I quickly go through them: protecting community rights, 35.9 million against a target of 34.1, with a variance of just over 5 per cent; that is due to some additional costs with website development at the Office of the Public Advocate and some initial works towards upgrades in the registry of births, deaths and marriages.

The next one is infringements and orders management, with an actual of 191.1 million against a target of 221.4 million, a variance of 13.7 per cent. The actual expenditure is lower than target due to rephasing of funds into future years to align with milestones for the camera replacement programs, the Peninsula Link fixed digital road safety cameras and the automatic numberplate recognition project.

The community-based offender supervision has an actual there of 127.5 million against a target of 153.3 million and a variance of 16.8 per cent. When we received new money for the parole reforms, all of it was put into that output area, when in fact a range of the parole reforms related to work and initiatives in prison itself, so we basically transferred some funding out of that output and put it into the prisoner supervision and support output, to reflect the division of those initiatives between the two outputs. The final one, 'Enhancing community safety', 44.2 million against a target of 38.1; that is a variance of 16 per cent. That relates to greater-than-expected demand for working with children check applications.

The next slide gives you a summary of how we have gone against the performance measures on quantity, quality and timeliness. You will see there performance against 90 measures was either met or exceeded or was within 5 per cent of the target. That left 11 measures that did not meet the target of being within 5 per cent. I am not going to go through all of them — there are explanations, obviously, in our annual report and what have you — but some of the things like, say, the prisoner supervision, like the impact of parole; cracking down on that meant a lot more prisoners returning than expected, so there are variations for that reason. Some of the consumer affairs-related variances relate to moving onto online and away from phone calls. So there are those sorts of things that impact on how we have gone there. But, as I say, in the main — 90 of the 101 we have either met or got within 5 per cent.

That is really all I wanted to say, Chair. I guess if I look back on 13–14 and 14–15, obviously corrections is a big part of the department, so I think 13–14 in particular — with 938 new prison beds, we recruited 650-plus prison officers and did a whole lot of parole reform with the Callinan review — has been a dominant part of the justice portfolio over the last couple of years. But I did not really want to add any more than that, and I am happy to take questions.

The CHAIR — Thank you, Secretary. I might commence. Just in relation to the crime statistics for the 14–15 financial year, what contribution did family violence make in relation to those figures?

Mr WILSON — I might ask the Chief Commissioner to respond to that. But I certainly know it is quite high and, if I recall, Chief Commissioner, we have separated out that from what were assaults or other measures. But I might hand to you to talk about that.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes, in relation to family violence we know, over the last six years in fact, we have had year-on-year increases in family violence reporting, which have appeared in the statistics. Over the last 12 months we have continued to see an increase, although that rate of increase is slowing slightly, which was different to the other five years. So this year we are interested to see whether that rate increases again or whether that rate of increase diminishes further.

We have seen just in the recent period an increase in crime rates generally, and this has been felt across the country, but particularly here in Victoria we know areas associated away from family violence are big contributors into the more recent increases. Those areas are theft of motor car, theft from motor car, residential

burglary and aggravated burglary, but the areas before that were largely and almost exclusively family violence or family violence-related statistics, such as justice procedures, where we are involved in process serving and making sure orders are enforced, and offences related to that are also included in those. So to answer your question in that general context, over the last five years a lot of the increases have been in family violence in relation to crime statistics, apart from this current year in which we are starting to see an influx of other types of crime into those statistics.

The CHAIR — Thank you.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Chair, do you mind if I have a quick follow-up? Chief Commissioner, you said, or through the secretary, that police procedure offences were part of the increase. I note in your annual report that they constitute over 12 per cent of the increase?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — What is that actually? Can you explain: what are they? What are these procedures that have the statistics going up?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes, well justice procedures as they relate to family violence — I guess that is the context in the question — relate to, for example, court orders around IVOs that are not adhered to. So what normally would appear in the family violence statistics is what we call an L17, which is the form that is filled out at the time of the offence. That is what goes into our crime reporting for family violence. But, for example, they then go to court; they get an intervention order. If the intervention order is not adhered to, that is a justice procedure offence. So any of the court orders that are made by tribunal magistrates, if they are not obeyed, constitute justice procedures offences.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Do you have a sense of why that cohort has increased?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Well because of the increase in the family violence reporting — —

Mr DIMOPOULOS — So it is just along with everything else?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes, it is associated with that. Along with the increased reporting comes an increase in the number of court cases, an increase in the number of orders, and therefore an increase in non-compliance with the orders.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Thanks for your indulgence.

Mr MORRIS — Good afternoon, Mr Wilson. Nice to see you again.

Mr WILSON — Yes.

Mr MORRIS — Could I ask a question about police resourcing, and I am addressing it to the secretary rather than the chief? Can I say by way of preface — and I do not wish to inflame the other side, so I will choose my words carefully — but in what some might call the absence of a clear policy direction towards the growth of sworn police officers, in contrast to the 1900 extra police, 950 PSOs, that the former government had in place for that term, the present government, apart from the custody officers, has largely left that space vacant. While of course acknowledging and respecting the independence of the chief commissioner, can I ask you to advise the committee the extent of the oversight or checks and balances that are available to the department regarding Victoria Police expenditure. How do we determine value for money for the taxpayer and what sort of a say do you have in shaping the priorities of police expenditure?

Mr WILSON — First and foremost there are the requirements of the act, which you have noted, in terms of police independence around deployment of resources, and then over and above that there are government decisions made to provide, I guess, initiative funding or funding for particular things to be achieved, added to, delivered. We have had over those last two years a set of arrangements where the chief commissioner would provide regular reports through to the minister. So that would outline how those things are going as well as other matters. And then our own finance people would work with Victoria Police on tracking progress of budget initiatives and things like that as well.

Mr MORRIS — By way of a supplementary, Chair, I understand that Victoria Police has a police station priority list, both in terms of rebuilds and new stations, and I am wondering whether you can make that list available to the committee.

Mr WILSON — From 13–14 to 14–15? Yes, I would have to — —

Mr MORRIS — For the appropriate period, yes.

Mr WILSON — If it is spelt out in the budget and it is funded, I would have thought we could do that, Deputy Chair.

Mr MORRIS — Thank you.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — On page 37 of your annual report I see the target for benchmark measures in prison services was 90 per cent in the reporting period, but what was achieved was 84.8 — obviously a variance of just under 6 per cent. There are a couple of questions in relation to that: what does that mean in a way that is intelligible to normal people; and, number two, did the rapid expansion of the prison population in that period contribute to that lower than expected performance?

Mr WILSON — I might get the commissioner of corrections to provide some detail on that. My understanding is every prison has a series of service delivery obligations — so-called SDOs. We track both public and private across that range, and this is an aggregation of the performance against those measures. I think it is fair to say, as I have mentioned in the introductory comments, that for most of that year, with the expansion of prison numbers and our efforts to invest in additional beds, it is fair to say that some, I guess, of the more qualitative, programmatic measures may have slipped a little bit behind, but I might ask the commissioner of corrections to comment on the detail behind that.

Ms SHUARD — Yes, certainly. When we talk about that measure it is made up of the 25 service delivery outcomes that are supplied across the prison system, both public and private prisons, and each of those prisons against those service delivery outcomes will have a benchmark set based on historical performance, and also those benchmarks are set in some areas with the intention of improving performance. So in areas where we would say we want to focus, we would set the benchmark a little higher so that we can improve performance across the system in those areas where you can truly change what you are doing to be able to do that. The 25 service delivery outcomes range from the things that measure the security of your system, such as escapes, assaults and out-of-cell hours for prisoners, and it goes down to things such as disability training for staff in the system, to make sure that everybody is getting what they should get in terms of managing people with a disability.

So there are those 25. That is averaged out, and each prison is monitored in terms of that performance against those service delivery outcomes. So in 2013–14 the combined result was 82.4 per cent, which is well below the 90 per cent that we set our target at, and we would say that that is very much about the rapid expansion and overcrowding of the prison system during that period, as the secretary said. It was also a time when we introduced a number of temporary accommodations, so a lot of double bunking. One of our prisons went to as high as 59 per cent of the prisoners sharing a cell, so in that regard that will affect some of those things that measure the safety of a prison by having too many people in a particular area that was designed for a certain number, and then you double that number of those people in that area. So during that time it was the rapid expansion, the introduction of temporary beds and bringing people through the system very quickly so that we could reduce the numbers in police cells.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — So almost 60 per cent of prisoners were forced — —

Ms SHUARD — At one prison we had as many as 59 per cent of the prisoners in double-bunked cells, so cells built for one and a bunk added after the prison was built.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — This is the last follow-up. Thank you. That was a very comprehensive answer. The nature of the reporting — I know the 25 wrapped up into 1 measure makes it hard for people to see what the most salient parts of that are. Maybe 20 measures stay the same and 5 actually have contributed to the result, but do any of those capture assaults on prison staff? I think you mentioned escapes.

Ms SHUARD — Yes, they do.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Yes.

Ms SHUARD — So our service delivery outcome no. 2 is a measure of assaults on staff or other persons.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Okay.

Ms SHUARD — And then we have another service delivery outcome — no. 6 — which is assaults on prisoners by other prisoners. And then we have a service delivery outcome 7, which is assaults on prisoners by staff. Remember, these are also the service delivery outcome measures that are applied to private prisons, and the achievement of these in the private prisons will then determine what their performance link fee might be at the end of the year.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Thank you.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — Through the Chair, sorry, can I ask a follow-up question, please, on this topic? My apologies for butting in. I just picked up on your point around disability training, and I am really pleased and I understand that your department makes a lot of effort in that area. Was there an over-representation of people with disabilities within that rapid expansion that you observed?

Ms SHUARD — Not to my knowledge.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — Okay. Thank you.

Ms PENNICUIK — I have a follow-up question too — a very quick one — which you may or may not be able to answer now but might take on notice. Was there any difference in meeting those services re the obligations between the private and the public prisons? And that may be different across each of the measures.

Ms SHUARD — It is different for each prison, but we look at two things: one is the security classification of the prison and compare it to like prisons to see whether they are delivering of a standard service; and then we will look at the individual service delivery outcome and see whether it was across the board that all prisons were having trouble meeting that benchmark or was it just one one-off prison. So the service delivery outcome is measured both by the overall prison performance but then the service delivery outcome: ‘Are assaults going up across the board?’, if you like.

Ms PENNICUIK — Are they?

Ms SHUARD — I would say the impact of the expansion impacted both on the public and the private system. The difference in the private prisons benchmarks, which are not as flexible in changing because of the contract arrangements as within the public system, where we can change the benchmarks to improve performance, is that they are tied to funding in the private system.

Mr D. O’BRIEN — Mr Wilson, I just want to go to the Court of Appeal decision in Boulton in December 2014, which as you know extended community correction orders to a range of offences that would traditionally have attracted jail time. Were there any budgetary steps taken after that to deal with an anticipated increase in the management of CCOs?

Mr WILSON — I am just trying to cast my memory back. There were certainly many budget provisions made for Corrections and the expansion of prison beds, and then anticipation of the abolition of suspended sentences, and I am pretty sure what you have just pointed out, the community correction orders, but I might just ask the commissioner if she could confirm that or not.

Ms SHUARD — The first injection of funding was with sentencing reform. That was funded in that regard. And then we have had a second lot of funding that was in regard to the growth in the community correction orders.

Mr D. O’BRIEN — In 14–15, so this is subsequent to Boulton in December 2014?

Ms SHUARD — Yes, just let me look at the date, and I will come back to you.

Mr D. O’BRIEN — Yes, sure. And while you are doing that, the supplementary would be: was there anything further done in 15–16 to address these issues, and if so, the quantum would be useful if we can — —

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Scope creep.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Sorry?

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Scope creep. In fact, Secretary, can I just say just while you are looking for it, this is the most pinpointed and relevant introduction I have seen. You have stuck to 14–15, the reporting period, talked about output measures. Well done. Others have not, so a good job.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — I think Steve's thanking his former employer actually.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — No, it is relevant. It is actually very, very relevant.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — I am happy for you to look, Ms Shuard, if you would like, and come back to us during the — —

Ms SHUARD — No, I have it now.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — You have got it?

Ms SHUARD — Yes. Since June 2014 we have had a 38 per cent increase in the number of offenders managed by community corrections.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Sorry, 28 per cent?

Ms SHUARD — Thirty-eight per cent. So there are now more than 9800 offenders with supervised court orders and a further 2700 with reparation orders or community work only doing that. This growth has been related to the abolition of suspended sentences. You will know there were 5000 suspended sentences or thereabouts handed down a year in Victoria and they were abolished in the Magistrates Court in September 2015. Of course there was a change to the legislation in September 2014 that allowed the combination of a community correction order and imprisonment, with an imprisonment order of two years, and then we had the guideline judgement in December 2014 that basically the court gave direction around how the community correction order could be used. With that, the additional funding that we got in 15–16 has been for 143 additional staff to be able to manage those additional offenders coming through.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — I guess my follow-up question was really how you are managing that risk, and when I say there is a risk, there are obviously more offenders in the community. Is there anything in addition to the additional staff levels that the department has been doing?

Mr WILSON — I think with additional staff and the growth, as the commissioner pointed out, from the abolition of suspended sentences, a range of factors have led to people on orders or parole going from about 7000 to 12 000 over the last year or so. As the commissioner mentioned, 5000 suspended sentences with that no longer being an option. So for us it is basically people and justice service centres where people can report in and so on, so people, accommodation and the on-costs that go with it, I guess, is the solution to the additional demand on those services.

Ms PENNICUIK — Sorry, just for clarification, if I could, commissioner. You gave a 38 per cent figure. What date was that since — June this year, or June last year?

Ms SHUARD — Since June 2014.

Ms PENNICUIK — 2014. Thank you.

Ms SHING — Thank you, everybody, for the presentation and for attending here to provide evidence and assistance to the committee in relation to the reporting period of 2014–15. I would like to go to a number of comments that have already been made by you, Ms Shuard, in relation to the prison reforms and corrections, and again Greg you had also touched on these, as well as the number of beds that were referred to in response to a question from Mr Dimopoulos and the need for double bunking — I think you indicated that approximately 56 per cent of prisoners were in a double-bunking situation.

Ms SHUARD — At one prison.

Ms SHING — At one prison. I note that there is a significant budgetary investment in the beds that were made available during this reporting period, and to that end I would like to look at the other side of the equation in terms of the recidivism rates, which in fact went up to a record high during that reporting period and actually exceeded 44 per cent. In terms of what that means as part of how we are benchmarked against the national trend and also in terms of the costs associated with recidivism, can you provide a breakdown in terms of the survey responses and indeed what was being addressed through the outputs in this reporting period to counteract the soaring recidivism rate during this time?

Mr WILSON — I would just make perhaps a quick comment before I pass on to the commissioner — —

Ms SHING — Sorry, that is a very, very comprehensive question, so take your time.

Mr WILSON — I guess at the highest level the big step up was due to the parole reforms and, for want of a better description, cracking down on breaches and the two-tiered approach which meant the process to get parole required a lot more effort on our part and prisoners and what have you. So there was an initial step up, and I might ask the commissioner to respond in more detail.

Ms SHUARD — So firstly you wanted the national comparators?

Ms SHING — I would like to look at the economic impact of an increase in the recidivism rate in Victoria during this time. On the one hand we are spending all of this money for the period on beds and on improving operational outputs for a greater prison population. On the other hand we are seeing a climbing rate of people who are returning to the system. What was put in place during this period to address the recidivism trend as it was at that time?

Ms SHUARD — Firstly, as the secretary said, the growth in the recidivism rate, many of those people that returned within the two years were people that came back due to the reforms to the parole system. We all know that the parole system went through a significant transformation, and the number of people on parole that returned to prison in that time made up half of that growth in the recidivism rate in coming back. So the investment of the \$84 million that was given to us to transform the parole system in Victoria set about addressing those things that caused people to come back within that two-year period.

They are counted when they come back whether they come back just for a compliance breach — so they have not abided by the conditions of their parole — or they come back for reoffending. The whole lot of them are there. The investment in the area was around transitional services, so we developed a new model for pre and post-release services so that there is a service where everybody goes through some form of assessment and education about what is required or what they might require when they are going out on parole or getting released, not just to parole. Through that process then, according to a person's risks and needs — so the high-risk, high-needs people — they will get another service that will assist them to address those risks and needs so that they are ready for when they are returning to the community.

Then you go to the third group. When they get out, they get what is a post-release service, so they can then be assisted. We have contracts out there with the non-government sector to be able to assist those prisoners on their return to the community and assist them with finding housing, finding employment and all of the things, the protective factors, that will keep people out.

The investment from the parole system was firstly about ensuring that we are identifying those needs early in their sentence. We also put in place a new risk assessment tool. One of Mr Callinan's recommendations was to have a different risk assessment tool, and we put that in place. That is administered early in the sentence, so therefore we can ensure that the prisoners also can get access to the programs. There was a bigger investment in programs. You will know now that you cannot be released to parole unless you go through a two-tier process at the adult parole board, and there is a requirement that if you are a serious, violent or sexual offender, you must have completed the program that you are assessed as needing before you will be released on parole.

All of that required additional program resources because it was a different threshold for prisoners and ensuring that the system was set up. There was no doubt that for us there was a lag time between the reforms and the people coming in and being able to get the service system resourced to buy the services or to get the staff or design the programs to get them up to get the right service response for the prisoners that needed that through that process. All of those things have been the investment to reduce the impact on the rate of return.

Ms SHING — Just as a follow-up and a supplementary to what you have just indicated as being a lag time to access the facilities and the therapeutic and rehabilitation services that were provided as part of that \$84 million envelope, the lag time must also then have applied to the double-bunking situation and to the bricks-and-mortar facilities that were available to prisons to manage the anticipated influx of prisoners. What work was done to understand what that might look like, given the policy framework that operated during the reporting period?

Ms SHUARD — We have a fairly robust projections model. That has been tested through the Auditor-General — the robustness of that and how we do our projections. And revise those projections each year on what have been the policy changes that have taken place in the year before; what is the natural growth that you will get in a prison population because of general population growth, so there is a small percentage that will come in; and if there are police practice changes, for example. All of those things are considered in doing our projections each year. We did not have enough beds. Our projections did not know that the parole system would change so significantly and so quickly, affecting all of those people that were out there. That was why we did not have enough beds at the time the numbers went up.

Ms SHING — So it may in fact have been worse had you not implemented the measures that you did to understand the projected increases at that time?

Ms SHUARD — Yes. In that two-year period our prison population increased by 9 per cent in 2012-13 and increased by 15 per cent in 2013-14. Then in the first half of 2014-15 we grew by another 400 prisoners. If you look at the previous eight years before that, our normal rate of growth, or average rate of growth, in the corrections system in Victoria was around 3.6 per cent. That is basically what our planning had been based on. Our previous years of around 3 to 4 per cent is what the growth in a prison system is, but a 15 per cent growth in one year — we are talking about in that two and a half year period an additional 1622 prisoners and beds that we required.

It takes time to build them. It is always difficult to build in an operational prison environment, not as quick as doing it outside, and you will know that we brought in some creative measures, I guess, to be able to accommodate those prisoners, including the shipping containers for prisoners. We put bunks in all of the containers because you have the amenity to go with those, or at least some amenity, and they are quick to put in place. So it was bunks, it was the containers for accommodation — 311 beds in the container accommodation — and at the same time we were building big infrastructure within the prisons as well as new prisons; the new annexes out at Loddon and at Marngoneet that have been built. But as well as that we needed to build the commensurate number of management cells, so we still have a build on foot now for a new high-security unit at Barwon for 40 beds, because as your population grows so does your proportion of those people that might have to be in a high-security or a management unit. So yes, all of those things.

Ms SHING — Thank you very much for that very comprehensive answer.

Mr MORRIS — Just sticking with the subject for a second, particularly the aspect of recidivism, I want to refer to the Fulham prison contract which was extended in April 15. I would love to ask about Port Phillip but since that was January 2016 I know I am not allowed to go there. No doubt we will have that conversation next year. But in the context of the Fulham prison, in September 14 the former government signed the PPP for Ravenhall, and of course that is well underway now. In that contract there were a series of new benchmarks set including financial incentives to reduce recidivism, plans for service providers to engage prisoners after release to further reduce the risk of reoffending, sophisticated CCTV intelligence and the capacity to add 300 beds very quickly. My question is: does the deal negotiated by the current government for Fulham prison include these provisions? I am particularly interested in the aspect of recidivism and the capacity to deal with that.

Mr WILSON — Again, I might ask the commissioner to respond, Deputy Chair, but I know there were improvements built into the contract rather than rolling it over, so to speak. But I might ask the commissioner to respond.

Ms SHUARD — In both of those new contracts, with G4S and GEO for Fulham, are I guess all of the improvements in the contract management that we put in the Ravenhall contract. Where we could they were repeated in the new contracts for Fulham. Some things were not. The budget envelope was not for the extra improvements. So you talked about the recidivism rate. You will be aware that there is a payment by results mechanism in the Ravenhall contract whereby if they reduce the risk of recidivism by 10 per cent for

non-Aboriginal prisoners and 14 per cent for Aboriginal prisoners, then there is a payment by result mechanism in there. That has been funded in terms of an area of focus and the services that will be provided to those prisoners is not included in the new contracts. However, the contracts are structured in such a way that it can be included later on if we wanted to.

Ms PENNICUIK — If I could continue on this theme a little in terms of perhaps the numbers of prison beds and the issues of recidivism and parole. Just following on slightly from the issues that were raised by Ms Shing, I have asked some questions about parole and the number of people returning to the prison system due to parole in Parliament. I am pretty sure in 2014 the answer from the previous Minister for Corrections was that the increase in prisoner numbers was around 47 per cent due to breaches of parole. The current minister, in an answer to a similar question last year, gave a figure of around 12 per cent as the return of prisoners due to breaches of parole.

I wonder whether that figure is stabilising. Also, in terms of sort of following on from what Ms Shing was raising in terms of recidivism — and you went towards it a bit — which is that people are not necessarily recidivist in they have been released and are reoffending, but they may be just breaching conditions of parole. So I wonder if you could just go to a bit more definition about the types of breaches of parole that are resulting in people returning to prison and whether those programs you put in place are actually making that difference from 47 to 12. I do not really have any information about how that is working.

Ms SHUARD — The first part of that was about what was causing the breaches of parole. Was it about compliance.

Ms PENNICUIK — The first part was that the increase in prison numbers, 47 per cent of it, was due to people breaching parole and coming back to prison. I understand that fell, and I am asking whether that is stabilising and whether those programs that you were talking about are addressing those minor breaches so that people are not doing it.

Ms SHUARD — There are a couple of things that are happening. There are a lot less people on parole now. There are around 940 prisoners on parole, and that is very different to the number that we had pre the reforms, which was up around 1760 people on parole, so the number is much lower. The number has gone down for a couple of reasons. Obviously there are less people getting a parole sentence. From one to two years you may get a parole period; two years on, you must get a parole period. The one to two years is decreasing in the number of people that are getting a parole sentence.

In terms of people on parole, everybody on parole is subject to case management by a parole officer, so one of the reforms was the change in our community correction supervision. We put into place two streams so that we have parole officers that just deal with prisoners on parole and then we have community correction supervision or case managers who deal with those on a community correction order. That case management now can be much more intensive than it was previously with the mixture of them, and the case loads are much lower than what we had previously.

Regarding the sorts of conditions that people get breached on, conditions can be that they have an abstinence condition on their parole. We know that prisoners can have electronic monitoring now while they are on parole, which previously they could not. There is the use of the alcohol monitoring device that is an electronic monitoring system for people on parole, so it is a stronger detection system, I guess. If somebody has an abstinence condition for alcohol, then it is picked up through that process. They will get breached if they are subject to drug testing and they engage in those risk activities that could lead to further offending, so it is all of those conditions. Any breach of that sort has to be reported to the adult parole board, and then the adult parole board ultimately makes the decision on whether or not to breach or cancel parole.

Also under the system is that the police have powers to breach parole now, as it is an offence to breach parole, as we know. It was not previously; it was just a breach of parole and you would come back inside, but if the police detect a breach of a condition of parole, then they can breach as well.

Ms PENNICUIK — So it is a combination of less people on parole and less breaches of parole by those people that are on parole due to the changes in the supervisory arrangements. In terms of the overcrowding that was due to the jump in breaches of parole, is the overcrowding stabilising as well?

Ms SHUARD — Yes.

Ms PENNICUIK — Because we had a problem in the periods we are talking about of a surge in numbers also in police cells, so just a bit of an update on that — —

Ms SHUARD — Yes. Our numbers, as I said, peaked at 6506 prisoners on 31 January 2015, and since then it has stabilised. We are now at about 6400 prisoners, so it has not gone back up since 31 January 2015. The numbers have stabilised in our system.

Ms PENNICUIK — Chair, with your indulgence, how many beds are there, as opposed to prisoners?

Ms SHUARD — We have got about 600 spare capacity now, which is quite different to previously, when we would have sometimes less than a dozen beds available to us across the system.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — Thank you for coming in this afternoon. I really appreciate your time. Secretary, I just wanted to pick up on a point that you mentioned in your presentation — it was on page 7 — around the variations. I would just like to ask for more detail on some of the more significant variations here. For example, the first one is around infringement and orders management, which I know that you did touch on briefly, as I said, in your presentation. My understanding is that that variation was due to some difficulties with the infringement management and enforcement system, where the initial contractor actually handed back some money, I believe. Our questionnaire says that they handed back about \$9 million after being unable to complete that project. I am just wondering if you can talk to that point on variation and give us an update on this.

Mr WILSON — I might ask my chief finance officer to give you a detailed answer to that question.

Mr CONDRON — Could you just repeat the question again, please?

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — I can give it a go.

Mr WILSON — There is the variation bit, and then there is the 9 million bit.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — It was kind of all over the place here; let me try that again. I am just asking around the variation of 13.7 per cent on infringement and orders management. The information I have from the questionnaire that was received by the committee is that this was around the infringement management and enforcement system, where the initial contractor returned \$9.3 million to the department after being unable to complete the project. I am just wondering, for example, if there is a new tender process that is being finalised, if you could talk to that point.

Mr CONDRON — That is correct; there was \$9 million returned from the contractor who was contracted to build the system. That 9 million is actually a return of some capital funds, so the delay in the build of the system has contributed to the underexpenditure in that output, but that particular 9 million has actually given money back to the project to enable us to retender for a new system development. We also had some funding left over in that project as well, so we had not fully expended it. But in terms of that actual output, the underspend has been due to, really, rephasing some funding that we had for camera replacement programs — the Peninsula Link fixed digital cameras — and also the automatic numberplate recognition program. So we had funding for those programs which we have rephased across future years to align to the expected delivery time frames of those.

We had a delay in the procurement of the new mobile camera program because when we originally put forward the budget program for that there was only one provider of cameras. We have since found at least two other camera providers that would meet the specification requirements that we have for mobile cameras, so that has caused the delay in the procurement process because in order to accept a tender from those providers we have to properly test their cameras and make sure that they do. That testing process has taken a little longer, so therefore what we have done is that we have rephased some of the funds associated with that to enable output — the delivery of that program. We get both capital funding for the purchase of the cameras, but we also get operating funding to roll out those cameras as well, so we have had to move that forward.

We have also had to rephase some of the funding we had for the fines reform project — so reforming legal debt in Victoria. A lot of the changes we are actually looking to implement there are linked to the delivery of that new system. So the delay in the system implementation has caused quite a bit of —

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — Flow-on effect.

Mr CONDRON — flow-on effect to other programs, which is essentially the main reason why that output is under. In addition, we reprioritised some funding from that output where we were able to find some savings in that area to offset some of the — we had a couple of small overexpenditures in some other areas, which was referred to in the secretary's presentation: the working with children check and births, deaths and marriages. We were able to reprioritise a small amount of funding to cover those so that we did not need to get any additional funding for those areas. So that is essentially the reason behind the underspend in infringement management.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — Sure. Thank you very much, Mr Condron; I really appreciate that. Can I just pick up on the reference you made there to the increase in working with children checks? I know that is different from the first question, and I note that the secretary mentioned that as well, of course, in his opening statement. I just wonder if you can speculate on a reason for this increase. Have more organisations been requiring them? Are different organisations requiring them? It is obviously a very good check to have, so what is behind the increase?

Mr WILSON — My understanding is volunteer organisations — organisations generally — are seeking, I guess, assurances by requiring people to have those checks. I could get you the demand growth over time if that would help. It is something that organisations value, and they are more and more insisting on volunteers and employees having them. I do not know if you have anything to add, Shaun.

Mr CONDRON — I think some of the original projections were based on our understanding of which areas would drive demand and which would require checks. As the secretary said, as the check has become more valued, a number of volunteer organisations have made it mandatory for people if you want to be associated with them. Even schools, surf lifesaving organisations, all sporting organisations — they require parents now to have a working with children check, otherwise they cannot participate. I think originally the legislation did not envisage parents needing to get working with children checks to supervise their own children's activities, but in order to have any involvement they must now hold a valid working with children check. I think it is very much a risk-averse approach from those organisations, which is fair enough because once parents have the check, you can then be involved with supervising other children as well. But some of that demand was not necessarily anticipated in the original Estimates.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — Sure. That is fair enough. Thank you very much.

The CHAIR — A question to the chief commissioner. A few years ago there was a fair degree of conflict between the Horn of Africa youth on the Flemington public housing estate and the local police station, or police officers from the Flemington police station. There has been a huge improvement in the nature of the engagement between local officers and particularly a lot of the younger men from the Horn of Africa who live on that estate. Superintendent Mick Hermans has done a fantastic job in relation to building a lot of those relationships. I am just wondering though, from a Victoria Police perspective, what Victoria Police has done to in the course of the 14–15 financial year in relation to tackling inclusiveness within the ranks of your sworn officers as well as the VPS.

Chief. Comm. ASHTON — Certainly. As you have pointed out, we have improved the relationships in and around that area, particularly with the Horn of Africa cohort and the youth cohort, over those two years. We provide as part of not only our core training for recruits an increased emphasis on multicultural training, particularly focusing on social cohesion and developing social cohesion. It is now included as a standard part of the recruit training module, but we also provide in-service workshops for our members as well, particularly those members in police service areas that are heavily exposed to diverse multicultural groups, and you have identified one of those. It certainly is in that area.

We have our multicultural advisory council and also a youth advisory group as well that go on advising and have advised Victoria Police for some time on the development of policy and development of approach. More recently, in response to a review that we did, we introduced a ticketing trial. One of the areas we trialled was in the Flemington area in relation to coming across groups of young people and giving them a ticket that they have had an interaction with police, and we are in the process of re-evaluating that at the moment. I think in the first six months of this year we are expecting to get the review as to how that pilot has gone. So that pilot certainly commenced through that period as well. That was really acting on this review and on the advice of the

community as to what their expectations were like, also picking up on some trends overseas as well where ticketing trials have been commenced.

We have a range of youth pilot programs that we run and participate in as well. You identified Mick Hermans's, but we also have other programs. For example, our Kokoda Track program where police take disadvantaged youth and youth at risk to the Kokoda Track as part of building the relationship between police and youth cohorts, but that also develops the young person themselves in relation to their resilience. As part of that track there are workshops conducted in the field, if you like, in relation to building resilience as part of that program as well. Just as one example, but we have a range of those in place, and I am happy to get you some information if you would like, detail about specific programs.

The CHAIR — And are you also targeting various ethnic cohorts to try and become sworn police officers, just as a way of trying to increase the diversity within the ranks of Victoria Police?

Chief. Comm. ASHTON — Yes, absolutely, and that is a challenge for us. Since we started to introduce the recruiting of PSOs we have had an excellent take-up in terms of cultural diversity of PSOs. We have been really pleased with the level of diversity of the PSO group, with the exception of gender diversity — the PSO gender diversity is way under what we would like. In relation to the sworn police cohort, that is an area where we have been improving gender diversity, but we have not been having a big impact in multicultural diversity and diversity of ethnicity. We have had some recent exceptions to that where we have specifically targeted in our work particularly the African Australian community. In our work there we have identified potential recruits and recently we graduated two recruits, a young man and a young woman. From memory one was an Eritrean. I think the chap was from Eritrea and the young lady was from Nigeria — that is just from my memory. Just as an aside, they got through the course with flying colours. I remember giving the warrant card to the young man, and he had tears streaming down his cheeks. It was a great impact and a great opportunity to welcome him into Victoria Police. It was a great privilege to do that. We are starting to get some good take-up, but we have got a long way to go to properly reflect the cultural diversity in our community amongst our sworn ranks.

Mr T. SMITH — My question is for the secretary, but I think this might go to the chief commissioner as well. From the swearing-in of the Andrews government in December 2014 until 30 June 2015, how many extra sworn police over and above attrition were delivered, and how many additional PSOs were delivered in that time frame?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — I have got some data on that. I have to find it in my folder, so excuse me a moment.

Mr T. SMITH — Not at all.

The CHAIR — Just while the chief is consulting his notes, it might be difficult for the chief to have that information in his hand in terms of that precise notion from 29 November 2014 to 30 June 2015. I am not sure, but it might just be difficult for the chief to have that information readily at hand.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — No, I have got it; you will just have to give me a moment to find it.

Mr T. SMITH — Would it ease proceedings if the chief had a moment to look for it and we moved on and came back to it?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes, that might be good if I could just get a couple of minutes. So the period that you wanted was the 2013 to 2014?

Mr T. SMITH — December 2014 to June 2015.

Mr WILSON — Chair, there is one thing I overlooked to inform the committee at the beginning, and perhaps it is a good time to do that.

The CHAIR — Yes, of course.

Mr WILSON — A couple of errors in the questionnaire. Question 13 on pages 35 and 36: the headings at the top of the page should show 2014–15 instead of 2013–14. We have resubmitted a corrected questionnaire as well, but I just thought I would point these out and apologise for the error. Question 25 on page 52: in

calculating the gross salary cost we have inadvertently included Court Services Victoria, which should be deducted from that; and secondly we have included some on-cost on top of the gross salary. As I say, they have been corrected and a revised version has already been provided to the secretariat, but I just wanted to draw the committee's attention to that.

The CHAIR — Thank you.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Just in terms of the answer to that previous question, I do not have the numbers from December 14, but I have the financial year numbers. As of 30 June 2014 we have the police and recruit numbers at 13 221, then on 30 June 2015 police and recruit numbers were at 13 258. In relation to PSOs, the 30 June 2014 number was 1086, and the 30 June 15 number was 1186.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — The first number was the same, Chief Commissioner? They were both the same figure, is that right?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes, they are both the same figure.

Mr CONDRON — No, one is 1086.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Sorry, 1086 and 1186.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Okay, thank you.

Mr T. SMITH — That is sworn members, not recruits?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — That is sworn members and recruits. They are counted the same.

Mr T. SMITH — Okay, thank you very much.

Ms SHING — That includes attrition, obviously, for that period?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes, that is inclusive of attrition. I can provide the December number on notice, if you like.

Mr T. SMITH — That would be really helpful, thank you very much.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Just turning to the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation, I understand that the budget in 2014 was about \$2 million less than the year before. I may be wrong. It probably related to machinery of government changes, but I was just wanting to see if you could unpack it a bit for us, what that 2 million — I think it was 34.5 to 32.5?

Mr CONDRON — Sorry. Where did you refer that to? You said the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation?

Mr DIMOPOULOS — And liquor regulation, yes.

Mr CONDRON — I am just wondering where you specifically got those budget numbers from.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — You give me your budget numbers and maybe — —

Mr WILSON — There is the commission and then there is the output.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Let me rephrase the question. Was there a reduction in the budget for that authority from 13–14 to 14–15? If so, what did it relate to?

Mr WILSON — I think we will have that.

Mr CONDRON — From 13–14 to 14–15 did you say?

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Yes. I might have it wrong, so you can enlighten me.

Mr CONDRON — No, there has been a small reduction. I will have to come back to you on the exact reasons around that.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — That would be great. Thank you very much.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — I just want to go back to corrections. Referring to the riot at the Metropolitan Remand Centre on 30 June last year, Kieran Walshe found in his report that there were clear warnings given about the impending riot or the risk of a major incident, so I would be interested in your views on who has been held accountable for that. But further, there are other reviews, as I understand it, established by the Office of Correctional Services Review and Corrections Victoria with the department. Have they been completed? If so, are they publicly available or when will they be publicly available?

Mr WILSON — Without commenting on Mr Walshe's report, it is out and it stands as it is. The Office of Correctional Services Review, which produces reports for me as an assurance function, have completed their work and that has been given to me. We have never actually released those reports. I think there may have been one instance through the coroner. There is a long legal defence over the years as to why we do not do that, but I guess a simple answer is that they interview people on the basis that those reports are to me for improvement and so on in the system, and they do so on the basis that it is private, and that means I get frank, candid responses from staff and others that are interviewed. Basically that is the reason that they are kept with me.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — And the Corrections Victoria departmental review, which I think is a separate one again?

Mr WILSON — That is the same. The Office of Correctional Services Review, as I said, provides an assurance function to me as the secretary with ultimate responsibilities under the act, although they are delegated to the commissioner. It is a bit like internal audit. They give me reports on incidents, and do it with a view to actually understanding why these things occurred and how can we improve them. But as I say, they interview people on the basis that their comments are held confidentially, and that is basically why we do not release them publicly.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — If you are not going to release them, are you able to share with us whether they found anything in addition to or different to the Walshe review that is useful for future management?

Mr WILSON — Given that the government commissioned the Walshe review, the focus of that review to me was actually on the implementation of the non-smoking ban — what we did and did not do and how well it went, and compared it to other jurisdictions and so on. There was not anything in addition to what it was asked to do, which was more look at the whole system and what we did. Given that relates to the money we spent in 14 and 15, without going into the details of that report, I can talk about the efforts we went to across the system in terms of Quit programs, Correct Care nurses, nicotine replacement patches and so on from, I think, a good year or so beforehand, but I am happy to ask the commissioner to elaborate on that if you like.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Yes, I would be interested, sort of as a follow up, in what we got wrong compared to New South Wales and other states where it was introduced without the problems, which I think has been addressed partly through the Walshe report, but if the commissioner has some further comments?

Mr WILSON — I think if I make a general comment, when you have got 6500 prisoners in the system, and we ended up with 120 that I understand have been charged in a remand prison which had 1000 prisoners in it, I think you would have to say that the challenges of implementing that in the remand prison were a lot more difficult than in the prison population more generally, where you had people in there for longer — you can establish more trusting relationships, they can go through their programs over a year. But in a remand prison with high turnover, I think it was a higher degree of difficulty. I might ask the commissioner to comment on that.

Ms SHUARD — Perhaps just some comment to start with about Mr Walshe's report and what he found. I think it is important to say that there is no doubt that there were a lot of learnings in that riot for us. Mr Walshe found that there was aspects where we should have been better prepared. But what he did find as well was that there was nothing we knew or should have known that told us that there would be a riot of that size and scale.

In terms of our systems, in terms of monitoring the prison, there were some things that made that riot I guess turn from something small into something big fairly quickly, and that will be addressed with the funding that has been now allocated to strengthen the infrastructure.

Mr Walshe also found that whilst the smoking ban was the catalyst for the unruly behaviour of those prisoners on the day, there were other things that contributed to the riot. This was a prison that was built for 600 prisoners, opened in 2006. It was one of the prisons that expanded the most; it was now a 1006-bed prison. The numbers of admissions in the year before the riot had gone up by about 2000 prisoners through there, and the movements had increased unbelievably, so it was a prison that had a significant amount of bunks put in it. It had been through a couple of years of continual building program. It was in November 2014 I think that the last building was commissioned for prisoners to go in there, so there were some of those things that also I think Mr Walshe rightly pointed out had contributed to why it was that prison out of 14 places where we implemented the smoking ban. We prepared for 18 months in the lead-up to that.

As you all know, the smoking ban was announced in December 2013, and we started our planning then. We very much relied on the work that had been done and the experiences of New Zealand in its implementation of the smoking ban. We had a high-level steering committee overseeing all of the activities that we put into place. Over the time we have spent about \$3.4 million in total on additional things within the system, including increased recreational activity at prisons, Quit programs, education programs — a whole range of activity across the prison system over that 18-month period.

Each prison had its own implementation plan. Those plans identified the risks that they attended to. Those plans were oversighted by the steering committee. We were peer reviewed. We had one of our colleagues from New Zealand come and look at our plans and see: was there anything more that we could do in preparation for the smoking ban? We attended to anything that was raised through that peer review. So there was a lot of preparation. Yes, it is true: smoking has been banned in New South Wales, in Queensland, in Tasmania and in the Northern Territory, and they — —

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Had no issues.

Ms SHUARD — That was without incident. The rest of our prisons accepted the smoking ban; this prison did not.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Just a point of clarification, you mentioned I think with the Walshe report — you said there was no warning. I understood there was some intelligence of threatened action?

Ms SHUARD — No, Mr Walshe said there was nothing we knew or should have known to tell us that a riot of this magnitude would occur. There were two passive protests prior to the riot at the Metropolitan Remand Centre, both of which were very carefully assessed and determined to be passive protests, and nothing more. The second one was half the time and half the number of prisoners, so it was regarded as a de-escalation in prisoner behaviour, not an escalation in prisoner behaviour.

Part of the lead-up to the ban on smoking was a very active intelligence focus on the prisoners talking to their families, talking to each other and talking to staff. So there was increased intelligence across the whole system. The remand centre was not any different to any other prison in terms of the intelligence that we were carefully monitoring across the prison system.

Ms PENNICUIK — Chair, can I just have a quick follow-up?

The CHAIR — A quick point of clarification, Ms Pennicuik.

Ms PENNICUIK — It is a follow-up, actually, to something the secretary said. It is a follow-up to the remarks that you made about the reports from the Office of Correctional Services Review. You may or may not know that this has been an area of interest of mine for a long time. For example, in WA — and I know the Office of Correctional Services Review is a unit of the department of justice, but in WA — there is the independent office of prisons. You were saying that the reports you get are confidential et cetera, whereas in terms of WA, they are on their website; they are all public. My question really is: is that a policy of the department that none of these, or very few of them, are made public — the reports from the office to you?

Mr WILSON — It is, and if I can just explain. Western Australia has a separate authority. We have an Ombudsman. The previous Ombudsman had expressed the view that the government ought to consider the establishment of an independent authority. That was considered and was not taken forward. Say, for example, if we had an independent authority, a correctional services review authority, I would still have my own internal assurance unit. So I do not shy away from the fact that it is not an external independent body; it is actually an internal unit to advise me, as does our internal audit committee. So it is not an external authority; it is a division or a unit within the department to advise me, and even if we had something other than the Ombudsman specific to corrections, I would still want that, as the secretary, frank and fearless advice from such a unit on how we can improve things — and that is what I do. So the Ombudsman has that ability to do what that entity in Western Australia does. But I know the previous Ombudsman has expressed that view, and I was not aware of your interest in it.

Ms PENNICUIK — Yes, I have had a long interest in establishing a similar body here in Victoria as there is in WA. I hear what you are saying about the Ombudsman. They have an Ombudsman in WA as well; they have got both. I understand — —

Mr WILSON — Yes. I think Queensland has an authority as well.

Ms PENNICUIK — Yes, they do.

Mr WILSON — But, I mean, that is a matter for the government.

Ms PENNICUIK — They are two different things — —

The CHAIR — Ding, ding, ding!

Ms PENNICUIK — They are two different things — thank you, Chair — in terms of advice to you and advice to the public.

Mr WILSON — Yes. My only point is that, yes, they are two different things, and it is a matter for the government of the day about an authority. Irrespective of whether they have one or not, I would still have an internal review body for me as the secretary.

The CHAIR — Ms Shing.

Ms SHING — Thank you, Chair. Continuing on from the question which was posed by Mr O'Brien in relation to the riots and following on from the answer that was given around the 120 prisoners who were charged following the incidents, have there been any breakdowns prepared or provided in relation to the number of prisoners charged as a consequence of that riot who were housed in unusual conditions — that is, anything other than a single-bed cell; that might include a container, a shipping container, or a double-bunked arrangement? And has there been any work done for that period and for those prisoners who were charged following the incident, as to the number of people who had previously been in the system and were returning as a consequence of being recharged and reimprisoned?

Ms SHUARD — We have certainly done some profiling to understand. So obviously those that are charged is a matter for Victoria Police, not for us —

Ms SHING — Absolutely.

Ms SHUARD — and there has been a very thorough, lengthy investigation into this matter. But once we had the names of who was charged I asked for some profiling to be done on them to better understand the group that were at the heart of this. There is some part of that profiling that I cannot speak about because these people are unconvicted and they have to go before the courts, and things about their history and the like may be prejudicial to that, so I cannot talk about that. Some things I can, such as, for instance, how long they had been with us. I do not have the data actually in front of me, but the majority as I recall had been with us less than 50 days. So confirming, the secretary has said these were a group of people that had not gone the journey with us over an 18-month period in terms of what were the health benefits and the safety benefits of banning smoking in a prison system. I think people forget the safety benefits, because people are locked in a cell at night-time, and whilst for a very long time we have said prisoners are not allowed to smoke inside, neither can you search

6500 prisoners each night when you put them in their cell — and, believe it or not, some of them do not abide by the rules.

Ms SHING — It is a bit like PAEC — and I am not talking about the witnesses!

Ms SHUARD — That was one feature for me, and the other feature was age — the majority of them being in a younger group, and the like. The other features, I am not able to speak about.

Ms SHING — Could I ask perhaps if there is any capacity for you to provide a thematic breakdown of any profiling arrangements on accommodation of those particular people — without obviously any identifying factors, without obviously anything prejudicial, but to take that under advisement and if it is possible to provide the committee with any of the metrics that you may have been able to — —

Ms SHUARD — I will get advice on that.

Ms SHING — Alright, thank you — obviously taken according to your advice.

Ms SHUARD — And remember — they are charged.

Ms SHING — Absolutely.

Ms SHUARD — They have to go through a court process.

Ms SHING — It is a good point, and it is well made. I would also like to ask: in relation to the Coroners Court and the funding that was provided for domestic violence deaths and for that research for an earlier period, which was then I think wrapped up into the general funding for the Coroners Court during that period — that is part of the broader coronial court functions, which were set at — —

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Is this a supplementary question?

Ms SHING — No, I was having a follow-on to Sue's question. So we are playing tick-tack, and now I will just get to my substantive question, if that is all right.

Mr T. SMITH — And remote?

Ms SHING — Yes, it is remote. In relation, though, to that funding and to the roll-up of Coroners Court funding, which included assessment and research of domestic violence deaths and homicides, what were the measures, if any, that were used to assess the output of the Coroners Court during the reporting period — which, as I understand it, included that period for which funding was not available?

Mr WILSON — I might have to take that on notice because I think it may be Court Services Victoria; the budget for courts is now outside of the budget for the department.

Ms SHING — I thought that might well be the case.

Mr WILSON — But I am happy to take it on notice and get back to you. If it was in the 13–14 year, it would have come through us. If it was in 14–15, it would have been — —

Ms SHING — It ceased in the 13–14 year, as I understand it. Again this is one of those questions which may well span different portfolios to the extent that the reporting period covers off on various parts of who was doing what from a departmental perspective, so perhaps just putting that to you.

Mr WILSON — I might get an answer during the hearing and get back to you with one of our people here today.

Ms SHING — Fantastic. Thank you very much for that.

Mr T. SMITH — In October 2014 the office of the Chief Commissioner of Police provided a proposed deployment timetable for the remaining 46 railway stations yet to receive PSOs, 31 of which were to receive PSOs by the end of June 2015. During all of 2015 the government deployed PSOs to only seven extra stations, at barely one every two months, as opposed to the rate of one a week between 2012 and 2014. Why has the

timetable as outlined by the then chief commissioner's office not been met, and what direction from government was received to stop this rollout?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — I have just got to work my way through the PSO data, and then whether we identify the specific issue that you want press into.

Mr T. SMITH — Yes.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — With the 1036 PSOs the recruitment and deployment of them of commenced in November 2010 — with the recruitment completed in November 2014 and with deployment completed by 15 April. The total number of PSOs trained was 1026, which included the 940 PSOs and an additional 86 PSOs to cover forecast attrition. Funding for an additional 96 PSOs was approved in the 2014 pre-election budget update, with those PSOs to be on track by 30 June 2016. A further 109 PSOs and 62 transit police more recently have also been deployed as part of the 12-month night network trial, providing public transport all night on weekends during 2016.

In relation to the funding history, as we know, in the 11–12 budget there was 212.3 million and 17.9 million over four years for the recruitment, training and deployment of the 940 PSOs, and that included the upgrade of the Victoria Police Academy infrastructure. In 12–13, there was 48.7 million over four years — they were asset only — to upgrade police stations to support the deployment of the 1700 police and the 940 PSOs. That is basically putting in place the lockers and supporting infrastructure in those stations. A 2014 pre-election budget update provided 58.6 million over five years for the deployment of an additional 96 PSOs, which includes \$500 000 for further station upgrades. That is in the 2014 pre-election budget update. In the 14–15 budget there was also money allocated in relation to PSOs, but this money was allocated to cover radio black spots on the rail network so they can do their job properly.

I have got numbers of those recruited against the targets. In relation to 30 June 2012, the transit PSOs deployed target number was 88. These are phased to get to the top total figure: 30 June 2013, 396; 30 June 2014, 778; 30 June 2015, 994. To date the number is 1097. That includes 109 for the night network trial.

In relation to the second part of your question, which was in relation to why the current deployment is not at its full capacity — —

Mr T. SMITH — Yes, so there were 46 stations that did not have PSOs, 31 were promised, and only 7 stations received PSOs last year. I am just wondering why that was the case.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — The only delays that I am aware of in relation to PSOs were through the addition of the night network more recently, and that meant we had to recruit more PSOs to meet the night network commitment. I am not aware of us having not met any other targets, so I will have to get information on that.

Mr T. SMITH — Can you come back to me with that then?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes, I will take that on notice.

Mr T. SMITH — That would be really good.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — I am not aware of us having missed a target.

Mr T. SMITH — I would appreciate that. Thank you.

The CHAIR — We might take this opportunity to have a quick break.

Ms PENNICUIK — My question follows on slightly from the question from Mr Smith earlier regarding protective services officers and follows on from the information the commissioner was able to give us on PSOs. If I could just confirm the numbers before I ask the question, there are 1036 PSOs now, is that correct?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — We are working towards the rollout of the 1036 by 30 June of this year.

Ms PENNICUIK — There are two parts to my question: does that include PSOs that are deployed at the courts and Parliament, or is that just the PSOs that are deployed on railway stations? An answer on page 4 of the questionnaire in terms of expected outcomes states:

The PSOs will provide an initial response to crime and anti-social behaviour occurring in and around railway stations.

I just wonder whether VicPol has done an evaluation of the extent to which that is or is not the case and whether that varies across the railway network. Just by way of background, regarding the introduction of PSOs, the Greens expressed some concern that there were about a dozen stations on the network where it was identified that perhaps an increase of police or transit officer presence was required and that a lot of other stations had a very, very low incidence of reporting of any crimes or antisocial behaviour. I am interested in what evaluation the police have done in that regard.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Our focus initially has obviously been on the recruitment and deployment because of the time frames in which we have had to get these people deployed. The operating environment, as you point out, is around the platform and picking up that sort of car park fringe precinct so people can get off the train and get to their cars safely. That is really what that PSO deployment policy concept was really about.

Currently we have ticked off a review, which was ticked off just recently. It has not yet been completed, but the review is looking at the effectiveness of the program and also looking at the policy around the deployment model that we have got in place and making sure that it is an effective deployment model. As part of that effectiveness we are looking at whether we need to introduce performance measures around the service that they provide in addition to what we are currently looking at, which is around confidence in the community, feeling some safety on public transport predominantly. Most of that data is collected through the ROGS process, so at the moment we are utilising that. We are having a look at whether, if the PSOs now become more a permanent part of the Victoria Police presence, we develop more formal measures to deal with their effectiveness. That is currently part of that review as well. The review is being done by former South Australian commissioner Mal Hyde, so that is underway at the moment.

Ms PENNICUIK — A supplementary, chief commissioner: when is that due to be finished and can you just give some detail as to the methodology? Are there submissions or is it just public feedback? What type of information will be included?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Sure. The review is being jointly conducted by the department and Victoria Police and arises from the Auditor-General's review, part of the Auditor-General's recommendation being around the need for DJR and Victoria Police to jointly evaluate the effectiveness. Mal Hyde's engagement was done by the department and the terms of reference have been set around that. Did you have anything on that?

Mr WILSON — I think it is June that he is due to report back, but we can confirm that.

Ms PENNICUIK — Chair, with your indulgence, just one of my other questions is with regard to the PSOs in the courts and Parliament and whether there is any movement around that. Do people get redeployed to different areas?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Within the court precinct, yes, certainly there is movement around.

Ms PENNICUIK — Between working on the railway stations and in the courts, or is it very demarcated?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Only occasionally. Most of the PSOs that are deployed for the rail network are working on the rail network, but occasionally you will get some in order for us to meet certain numbers. You might find some transferring going on. But in the main those PSOs recruited for railway platforms are the ones working on the railway platforms.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — I am going to ask just a general question around performance measures, which I have been asking all of the departments. The committee has been concerned with various performance measures across departments. We feel that they lack clarity, some lack meaningfulness, some lack robustness. There are actually two specific examples that I could draw your attention to within your department: one is around the proportion of eligible prisoners in employment, and one is around the rate of prisoner participation in education.

My understanding from the explanations given of these measures is that these targets are based on national averages, which could well lead to factors that affect other states changing the targets for Victoria, and I wonder if that undermines the meaningfulness of those performance measures, especially in light of some of the conversations we have had here this afternoon around the unique factors that have been at play here in Victoria which have impacted on prison populations and which are not necessarily being faced in other states. I just wonder if the department could address whether it has considered reviewing this and other performance measures to increase the issues around the clarity, meaningfulness and robustness of those measures.

Mr WILSON — We certainly review all of our measures, and I might get our CFO perhaps to talk about that, and regarding your specific questions about the two you raised, perhaps the commissioner has a comment.

Ms SHUARD — Firstly, you are absolutely right that historically the target was the national average, and then we would aim for that target, but in Victoria our performance against that has been above that target for the last three years, so the method for setting the target was changed due to that — so it has actually changed so that we can improve on those outcomes. The 2015–16 target has been increased, so we are no longer going to use the national average but are asking, ‘What does our performance mean?’, and then you set your target a bit higher than that so that it drives performance and drives people’s focus on education and the like. That is in employment.

Remember the measure is the number of prisoners actively engaged in employment as a percentage of those eligible for employment on a particular day; that is how it is undertaken. That is the employment one, and there are ineligible prisoners in that of course — those that are ill, or if you are over 65 you do not have to participate in employment, like you would not in the community, or if you are in full-time education — so there are some ineligible prisoners. On the day you arrive you are not counted in it, because people have to settle in and get themselves a job and the like.

Education is the same. Historically the target was the national average as reported in the Productivity Commission’s report on government services, and this was changed as well. We changed that due to us consistently again being above that national average, so the 2015–16 target has been increased in education. Again that is also the percentage of prisoners actively engaged. What ‘actively engaged’ means is about how many hours they participate in education, and it is measured, again, on a single day.

Mr WILSON — In terms of the overall budget paper 3 measures, each year we do do a review of that. We produce what is called a trending report, where business units go through the trends over the last five years and assess whether the measures are relevant, and then through this committee we end up with discontinued measures or amendments and so on, so there is that process each year where we try to make sure they are relevant and measurable and relate back to outputs.

The CHAIR — Coming back to the issue around protective services officers, this was originally a promise of the former government in relation to having two PSOs on every railway station platform from, I think, 6.00 p.m. until the last service, and you have previously advised the committee there has been an increase in those numbers to deal with the rollout of the Night Network. I am just wondering, though — because I think in answer to Mr Smith’s question they are not rolled out at every single railway station across the network — whether you can maybe flesh that out in a little bit more detail to the committee as to why that is the case.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes. That is for a range of reasons. One of the significant issues we have is around making sure that the railway platform and station precinct has the right infrastructure to support PSOs. That is one of the major reasons why they are not at some stations. I am not sure, and I said I would take it on notice, about that previous commitment. The commitment that I am working to at the moment is that they are delivered by 30 June this year. That is the target that I have been working to, and I have got still 39 stations to get PSOs at by 30 June. That is what we are working to at the moment, and a lot of those 39 stations are still the subject of those infrastructure upgrades.

The CHAIR — But the intent from your perspective is that, once those infrastructure investments have been made, they will be rolled out across every station.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — That is still the plan, yes.

Mr MORRIS — Mr Wilson, I just want to ask about reprioritisations, and I think question 21 has given us some good information at a relatively high level, but I am wondering: could I ask you — this is obviously on notice, not right now — to provide us with a little more detail in terms of the 2014–15 estimates and the forward estimates from the budget at an initiative or line item level? What reprioritisations have occurred, what is the value of the reprioritisations and where has the money been reallocated to, at that initiative or line item level?

Mr WILSON — On notice.

Mr MORRIS — Absolutely on notice, yes.

Mr WILSON — Yes, we are happy to do that, Deputy Chair.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — My question is about ice. I know that the previous government referred an inquiry to a parliamentary committee in relation to not specifically only ice, but a big part of it was ice, and I suppose my question is: in terms of the department in the reporting period of 14–15, what new money was given and what new activities were undertaken in that period? It was a period characterised by a significant increase in ice usage that played out in family violence situations, in aggression towards ambulance officers and police officers, in hospital wards, in emergency wards and a whole range of other areas. While that was going on the parliamentary committee started its deliberations, but were there any new funds or any new activities?

Mr WILSON — I would need to take that on notice, I think, just to check, because there are certainly things that we have been funded for whereby ice is a contributing factor to demand, particularly, say, for example, in Koori communities and so on, but I would not mind the opportunity to go back and check ice-specific funding, if that is okay.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Yes, of course, because that is the period with ice where I think we all became a bit more conscious of the impact and the rising levels of usage.

Mr WILSON — We have certainly in regional Victoria conducted forums on it. It is a big issue, as I mentioned, for our Aboriginal Justice Forum and I know for police and so on in terms of the complexities and demands that it creates. I will be happy to come back to you on notice on that one.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — I just want to go to some gaming regulation issues for a moment. In the department's annual report that talks about voluntary precommitment — the work that was done for 14–15 to prepare for the introduction of that. I was wondering whether you are able to give us an update of how that has gone in the rollout and how many people have signed up for it.

Mr WILSON — I might ask the executive director for that area, Ms Cate Carr, if she could come to the table, perhaps in place of Mr Robertson, if that is okay, Chair.

The CHAIR — Of course.

Ms CARR — Good afternoon. Just in relation to precommitment, you are aware that the precommitment system called YourPlay went live in all Victorian gaming venues on 1 December this year. It was the end of quite a long and complex project that involved the department, the pubs and clubs sector and the Melbourne casino. So as from 1 December YourPlay is available in every club hotel in Victoria and the casino, and what it does is it enables a player, if they choose to do so, to obtain a card that they insert into a gaming machine. That card then enables them to set a time or a loss limit if they choose to do so, and it also enables them to track their play across every gaming machine in Victoria. So a player can play a gaming machine in the Darebin RSL, they can also play a gaming machine in the Melbourne casino or play a gaming machine in a hotel in Mildura, and the system — so long as they are playing with their card — will recognise them and will continuously track their play. Players can do that even if they choose not to set a time or loss limit.

The system will send them messages when they are at a machine so they can tell how they are tracking against a time or a loss limit. It will send them periodic reminders at the machine as to how much of the limit they have reached. Once they reach a limit, the machine will shut down. The player can then decide to take the card out and go home or they can decide to continue playing, and the system will continue to remind them that they are playing over the limit.

The system has only been in operation since 1 December. We are conducting an independent evaluation; so, we have engaged the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies to do an evaluation for us. We collected some baseline data before the system commenced operation, which included questioning people around their gambling behaviour and their attitude to precommitment — whether or not they set themselves a limit, whether they spend more than they intended. We will then go back and resurvey people to see whether they have used the system and whether it has altered their behaviour.

In terms of your specific question about sign-up numbers, I do not have that data here. It is something that will be assessed as part of the evaluation, so it is a work in progress at this point. Obviously there has been a lot of effort put into encouraging people to use the system, but, I think, it is a new system; it will take some time for it to become, hopefully, part of the gambling experience for people who choose to play gaming machines.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Would you be able to give us that data on notice if you do have it?

Ms CARR — I will take that on notice to see whether that is possible.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — As a supplementary question on a related issue, again, page 46 of the annual report talks about the Responsive Gamblers Help service. I just wanted to know if we could get details on the number of treatment services over that budget period — how many services were actually offered. The data provides a percentage of clients who are treated within five days, but if we can actually get a number of how many were actually treated in 14–15, that would be fantastic.

Ms CARR — You are looking for counselling sessions, client numbers — —

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Client numbers.

Ms CARR — Client numbers. Yes, I can take that on notice.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Okay. Thank you.

Ms SHING — I would like to ask some questions about the composition of sworn and unsworn officers across the force in relation to gender, as well as the number of officers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the number of Indigenous staff for the reporting period. I know that that may be something you have a partial answer to, or perhaps a full answer to, but otherwise I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Chief. Comm. ASHTON — I will just check whether I have got the specific numbers or whether I will have to get those for you. Just bear with me a moment.

Ms SHING — Yes, of course, Commissioner. No worries.

Chief. Comm. ASHTON — I do not think I have the actual gender breakdowns, but I will — —

Ms SHING — That is okay. I am very happy for that to be taken on notice.

Chief. Comm. ASHTON — We certainly have the data. I will get it for you.

Ms SHING — Fantastic; I thought you might. In terms of that data and in providing an answer to that question and that breakdown, if that could also be divided into metropolitan and regional home station allocations for the reporting period, that would be very helpful as well.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — So in terms of regional, you mean rural?

Ms SHING — Yes, so metropolitan being the metropolitan, suburban and peri-urban areas, and then regional being regional and rural.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Certainly.

Ms SHING — Thank you very much. The follow-up supplementary, I suppose, to that is the extent to which the job satisfaction of staff is assessed or has been assessed throughout the reporting period — what the key

issues, challenges or opportunities were for improvement and the extent to which operational resources were allocated to manage staff and employee satisfaction or feedback.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — There have been two key elements to that, I suppose, in the last period, which has been our annual contribution to the ‘People matter’ survey, which is done across government, including Victoria Police. Our response to that has traditionally shaped our HR strategies in relation to staff satisfaction and wellbeing in the workplace. We have a workplace wellbeing unit that identifies and leads that work, although it is dispersed out from there into our police service areas.

This year we had in the last 12 months — a bit more than that now — a far more significant issue about wellbeing in the workplace, and that has been around sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, identifying (a) from the ‘People matter’ survey but (b) from increasing allegations that we were getting around predominantly male staff sexually harassing and sometimes more serious harassment into criminal offending against female officers. We proactively went to VEOHRC and engaged VEOHRC to do a review of sexual harassment and sexual discrimination in Victoria Police. That report has got a number of recommendations in it and creates a pathway for us to improve the issues of Victoria Police.

In terms of resources, we have created a unit that deals specifically with the VEOHRC response, and I have appointed an assistant commissioner with the sole responsibility for leading the recommendations in relation to the VEOHRC report. We have since December of 2015 commenced a large expenditure against workforce wellbeing which has been focused on the VEOHRC recommendations.

Ms SHING — So you have looked at the period since December 2015, but in the period of the reporting period that we are dealing with today, what allocation of resources went into that particular issue in terms of workplace wellbeing, health and safety, and including but not limited to allegations of bullying and sexual harassment?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — I do not have the exact numbers, but I can certainly say — and I can get those if you wish — that we have a human resources area, and generally that looks at these issues. Within that we have the police psychology and wellbeing area unit, which looks after critical incidents and also mental health wellbeing as part of that. We also have a medical aspect to that as well in relation to our police medical officers and doing medical assessments of staff in addition to that. We also have within our professional standards command a unit in there that also looks at organisational health as well as part of its investigation to improve corruption prevention work. We have within the organisation a number of areas that do specifically look at organisational wellbeing, organisational health.

Ms SHING — Finally, is there any view that you have in relation to the timing of the way in which this issue has come up at the end of last year and the responses that have been developed following the referral to VEOHRC and the implementation of those cultural and organisational changes that you have made? If all of those resources are going into assisting with understanding wellbeing and workplace culture and practice for the reporting period, what was it in your view — and I am aware that you are offering an opinion and so therefore obviously we have to place only the relevant amount of weight on that — in your opinion why was that perhaps not something that came out earlier?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — I think it was something that came out earlier in relation to specific allegations, which we would then investigate. Being police, we like to have a solution focus to things, so if we get an allegation, we want to investigate it or look at it in isolation. I think traditionally that is what we have done, but in 2014 we thought that we were continually getting these events and we were not having a more holistic overview of what is causing it.

Ms SHING — So systemic issues you are talking about?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes, so we are trying to treat it in individual cases but not looking at overall causation. It had to change, and it was clear to us that we needed cultural change. That was the catalyst to us making the decision to go external to Victoria Police and engage VEOHRC for that report. I think we are the only government agency that has undertaken that sort of initiative.

Ms SHING — Thank you. If you could provide that additional information in relation to resources and operational allocations for the reporting period around those programs and around ways to assist to identify those concerns, issues and opportunities, that would be very helpful.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Okay.

Ms PENNICUIK — Thank you, Chief Commissioner. You mentioned that how you dealt with the sexual harassment issues before was sort of case by case. We know that the issues of bullying now are becoming ones that are exercising your mind — how that was dealt with as well and whether you were at the same time identifying that you were not dealing with that with sexual harassment systemically and whether you were recognising the same with the bullying allegations.

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Bullying has been a consistent issue for us, and the important thing for us around bullying — we are dealing with aspects of bullying as part of the VEOHRC response. The cultural change program that we are now leading under the guidance of an external advisory committee is also looking at that cultural change impacting on bullying. The bullying bits for us — previous to that we have undertaken a range of reforms to try and deal with bullying in different ways. Whereas in the sexual harassment space it was more of a traditional sort of investigation, we have over that period of time adopted a range of different approaches to bullying. We have had of course that investigative model, which is appropriate in certain circumstances, but what we have adopted as well are programs where we do more early intervention — where we get evidence of bullying so that it does not become a really entrenched adversarial process. Sometimes we can sometimes achieve reconciliation and deal with matters earlier. We have not really been stagnant on the bullying as we were with the sexual harassment — we had had a range of responses and escalating responses through that time.

Mr T. SMITH — Secretary, in relation to training at the Victorian Emergency Management Training Centre in Craigieburn, I have got a couple of questions. They are all related to a number of individuals who trained at the facility. I am happy to either table it and you can take it on notice, or I will read them out as I go along.

Mr WILSON — Either way.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — I think you need to read them out.

Mr T. SMITH — I will read them out if you like.

The CHAIR — Yes, that might be easier.

Mr T. SMITH — How many volunteer firefighters trained at the facility between 1 July 2014 and 26 March 2015? How many CFA firefighters trained at the facility between 1 July 2014 and 26 March 2015? How many MFB firefighters trained at the facility between 1 July 2014 and 26 March 2015? How many SES volunteers and staff have trained at the facility during the reporting period?

Mr WILSON — Unless Mr Robertson here has that on hand —

Mr T. SMITH — I assumed that he did not. That is why I am more than happy for this to be taken on notice.

Mr WILSON — we will take that on notice, and happy to provide it back to the committee.

Mr T. SMITH — Thank you very much.

Ms PENNICUIK — If I could turn now to a different issue, which is the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation and the answers to the questionnaire, pages 4 and 5 with regard to that. It talks about the establishment of that and how it has been used in the particular racing industries and reported outcomes as listed in the fourth column. For example, for thoroughbred racing one of the dot points says 'improved participant safety and welfare', and for Greyhound Racing Victoria it is reported:

... that VRIF ensured its capacity to deliver on strategic objectives, including improvements to the quality and safety of greyhound racing tracks that have reduced injuries to greyhounds ...

and also in terms of harness racing it says that the VRIF program:

... has enabled Victoria to become the national market leader with regard to horse population welfare ...

amongst other things. What I am interested in is the evidence that leads or is behind these statements in the questionnaire?

Mr WILSON — Again, Chair, I might ask Ms Cate Carr to replace Mr Robertson for response to that. I should mention you would be aware of the changes at Greyhound Racing Victoria that occurred recently in terms of board, governance, CEO, but I might ask Cate to respond to this question of evidence behind those outcomes and what we may be able to provide the committee.

Ms PENNICUIK — Yes, Secretary, I am aware of those changes, but this is a bit more historical I suppose.

Mr WILSON — Yes.

Ms CARR — If I might just respond to that question, I will just give you a bit of background into the Victorian racing industry grants scheme that sits behind those statements in the outcomes.

The Victorian Racing Industry Fund is funded from unclaimed wagering dividends and oncourse wagering taxes, which all go back to the racing industry via this fund. In 2014–15 it returned approximately 23.8 million to 153 projects. Those projects range from the development of infrastructure on racetracks, so both racing infrastructure, works to racetracks, works to stabling facilities for horses, kennelling facilities for greyhounds through to facilities for those that attend racing meetings both as a racing industry participant but also as a spectator or a punter.

The references there to improved safety and welfare, some of the things that have been funded through VRIF include things like plastic running rails at racetracks. Previously the rails that went around the racetrack were not plastic — I think they were made of metal. If a horse had an accident during the running of a race and came into contact with the rails, or indeed if a jockey came into contact with rails, it posed a considerable safety risk to both the jockey and the horse. Through the VRIF fund many of those running rails at racetracks have been replaced with plastic rails that when there is contact made come away easily.

There has also been funded from VRIF research projects relating to track surface and the influence of the different tracks on the welfare of both horses and greyhounds, so do tracks of particular hardness have different animal welfare outcomes? That research project has been funded through VRIF. VRIF funds a huge range of projects, some of which have a welfare focus, some of which do not.

Ms PENNICUIK — Thank you, Chair, and thank you for that comprehensive answer. I hear everything you have said there. If I could particularly focus in on the greyhound and harness racing comments that are made there about those two, rather than the thoroughbred racing, just for the purposes of this question. With regard to greyhound racing, it says:

... including improvements to the quality and safety of greyhound racing tracks that have reduced injuries to greyhounds ...

My question is: what evidence is there that they have? Do you have that evidence, that it has reduced injuries, and what is that evidence? The other one is the claim that harness racing is the market leader with regard to horse population and welfare, and what is the evidence of that?

Ms CARR — I am happy to take those on notice and provide that to you.

Ms PENNICUIK — Yes. I would be interested in the details about the injuries that have gone away or been reduced due to these changes.

Ms CARR — I am happy to take that on notice.

Ms PENNICUIK — Thank you.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — I would just like to ask a question around court security, and I understand that court services has been transferred so you may be unable to answer this fully. However, I think you could at least make some initial comments on this. In the 2014 pre-election budget update approximately 2.8 million was available for improvements to court security, so I wondered if you could speak to this issue — specifically, how this funding has been dispersed, if it has been exhausted. I understand, of course, there is always a qualification

around here that there will be confidential security matters which cannot be shared in an open forum, so what you can share, I would appreciate.

Mr WILSON — Yes, I would be again happy to take that on notice and talk to the courts and get an update of where that money went. I know through the Chief Commissioner and myself there is regular dialogue with heads of jurisdiction at the courts on these matters, but I happy to come back to the committee with an update on that question.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — Thank you, Secretary. I appreciate that.

The CHAIR — I was going to ask a question to the Chief Commissioner in relation to the establishment of a dedicated family violence command. Could you inform the committee just in a little bit more detail about that and its remit and what its achievements in the 14–15 financial year were?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Certainly. The creation of the family violence command was done in the period which is the subject of these hearings. The catalyst for it was pretty clear evidence to us that we had inconsistency in service delivery across the state, and we wanted to get a deeper level of expertise at the central level in terms of what best practice policy looked like. This of course pre-empted the royal commission and that work. For us it was about getting better consistency through our specialist family violence units that we have positioned around the state. So in addition to the turnout that police do every day to family violence units, we have recidivist victims and recidivist offenders, and we rank that cohort in terms of risk. We also have other risk ratings as well for non-recidivist categories. They are identified through the completion of the L17s and the attendance, and then those high-risk candidates go through to our family violence specialist units that we had already established before the centralised command.

Now we were not satisfied that we were getting a consistent level of service delivery through that process, so having a central command — and we appointed an assistant commissioner in charge of that command, who was Assistant Commissioner Dean McWhirter — that was all about getting best practice across the state, having one point of contact for what is a very diverse services sector and quite a disaggregated services sector around the state as well and having one recognised person as having the public confidence, public face, of family violence and policing and Victoria Police as well, so there was that community confidence piece. But for us it was very much about — at the point that we created that command — having a higher level of specialised consistency across the state.

Then following that of course the royal commission commenced, and the current work around that command is positioning itself in advance of the royal commission report. So it contributed an enormous amount of material to the royal commission in relation to the different service delivery models — the participation that we undertake with other agencies around risk assessment and around identification, particularly in conjunction with DHHS. But the work that that command was doing was really also about supporting the royal commission and the inquiries that came from the royal commission. Assistant Commissioner McWhirter appeared as a witness at that commission, as did I, and a lot of his time is now taken up with the work involved in supporting the royal commission but also preparing the ground for the recommendations, which we are expecting to get next month, in fact.

So we think it was a good idea to establish it when we established it because we are now well positioned to do the implementation phase of the royal commission, and we have been able to already identify best practice in terms of our submissions to the royal commission, and we have already made great inroads in terms of raising the level of expertise in those family violence units.

The CHAIR — Just out of curiosity, you mentioned the phrase or used the phrase ‘recidivist victim’. Can you perhaps elaborate on that term in a bit more detail?

Chief Comm. ASHTON — Yes, it is not a term relating to what you might be thinking of in that corrections space. This relates to victims that are repeat victims. We have repeat victims who are constantly the subject of family violence offending. So they are the victims of offending, and we work with those victims to try and help them through the system. We have been able to provide them with support and advice but also to add additional protection around those people, those victims, while we are trying to deal with the offender side of it as well. So it is trying to, again, add depth to the service delivery in this area.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — I just want to go to consumer affairs for a moment, myCAV. How much did the introduction of myCAV cost, and was it on time and on budget?

Mr WILSON — Again I might ask the director of consumer affairs, Mr Cohen, to take Mr Robertson's place, Chair, if that is okay.

Mr COHEN — I would have to take the question on notice in terms of the full cost of myCAV. I note it is the first part of the broader implementation of a new operating system within Consumer Affairs Victoria. We started with our permission registrations but proposed that system would be extended to include licensing, and it also is a system that will enable us to implement case management across our inquiries and investigations areas, so a single system that will provide the basic services for Consumer Affairs Victoria.

At the moment the project has been operational since May last year. There are still some areas of it that we are seeking to refine in the context of incorporated associations, and we would look to sorting those matters out prior to further rollout of the system.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Okay. A supplementary: we had, I know, a number of complaints and teething issues at the time. When you are getting the other data if you could give us an idea of the number of complaints that were lodged about myCAV as well, that would be wonderful.

Mr COHEN — Certainly.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Can I just bring your attention to page 9 of the questionnaire, 'State coronial services redevelopment', and also page 19, 'State coronial services redevelopment' — the different sort of aspects. Can you explain a bit about what is going on there? It is a bit unclear. I think the one on page 9 is pretty clear, but I just wanted to know what impact that had on the donor recipients. Also on page 19 it seems to be \$8 million more — is that right? — than estimated spent for commercial settlement. Can you explain that a bit more?

Mr WILSON — Yes. There were issues with the contract changeover to a different builder, as I understand it, and there was a negotiated outcome there that we thought was in the best interests of the state. There was significant debate over cost-time variations and what have you and claims and counterclaims, so that is where we got to with the negotiated settlement, which we thought was in the best interests of the taxpayer basically, so that is the additional money there.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Just by way of background, was the commitment initially 12.6 for the entire redevelopment? No?

Mr CONDRON — No. I do not have the entire thing in front of me here, but from memory it was around about 100 million. The development comprised a number of different initiatives funded over multiple budgets. The donor tissue bank is but one of them, which was actually funded by the commonwealth, but there was also the Coroners Court upgrade. There were a number of different components. There was modernising coronial services, there was then the mortuary services and then the donor tissue bank on top of that, and so what we actually sought to do was rather than delivering each of these as individual projects we sought approval to bring it together as one project.

But the fact that we were dealing with multiple different elements there and the commonwealth funding as well and then we had some site contamination issues down at Southbank as well to deal with meant the overall program was delayed a little bit in terms of some of the works that were being done. So we were required to reallocate some additional funding into the project at a few different points: one to handle the land contamination issue and then the settlement at the end of the project, which was claimed by the builder at the time for additional scope of works that were to be done. There were some differences of opinion between the department and the contractor as to what was additional scope or what was caused by delays by the builder, so there was a negotiated settlement within that to which that additional amount referred to in the questionnaire refers. So that was the amount that was additional, over and above the project. We could provide a full reconciliation of that project overall, but there were multiple elements that made it up.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — I understand. I take the secretary's comments about the best interests of the taxpayer. I am sure that was done. I want to just understand: what was the 12.66 for? Do you know exactly what that figure was for in terms of those components you mentioned?

Mr CONDRON — The 12.66 that is referred to in the questionnaire was really just the amount of money phased in that particular year of the overall program. It was not specifically for the donor tissue bank. The program had an original phasing, it got adjusted over time as we were going through the process of the build, and the 12.66 referred to there was the estimated expenditure for that particular year at the time before we were going into that budget year.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Is that project now completed?

Mr CONDRON — The project is now completed.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — So can you tell me how much more money was paid than was originally intended for the whole project, including the settlement with the builder? Because, to be frank, it looks like a project that has run grossly over time and over budget.

Mr CONDRON — It did go over time and over budget. There were a number of reasons surrounding that, though. Some of the land contamination issues were not known at the time when the original funding was provided, so we got additional funding through the project to do that, and then due to some of the delays that were caused by a number of different reasons at the time the contractor had to do additional works, and for that we had to seek a negotiated settlement. So the department provide a further 11.7 million over and above the approved funding, and we took that to government and we got that approved. So in terms of the final cost — —

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Around 100 million initially et cetera. Is that right?

Mr CONDRON — Yes, the final cost was 111.8 million.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — It was meant to be around 100 million first?

Mr CONDRON — Around about 100 million.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — So it was 11 million over budget. Thank you.

Mr WILSON — Sorry, there was one builder, but it was the scope changes that we negotiated with Holland, I think.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — With?

Mr WILSON — John Holland.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — John Holland?

Mr WILSON — Yes.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Okay.

Mr T. SMITH — In relation to major outputs and deliverables in the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board annual report 2014–2015, I ask: what were the emergency response times for structural fires credited to each brigade; what were the emergency response times for road accident rescue response of each MFB brigade; and what were the emergency response times for emergency medical response of each MFB brigade? I am happy for this to be taken on notice.

Mr WILSON — Again, unless Mr Robertson has it at hand, having resumed his seat, which I assume is not the case — —

Ms SHING — You are creating a lot of work.

Unless you have any general comments just to get your voice onto the record and show that you were here for the purposes of the transcript.

Mr T. SMITH — I have got another eight questions. I am happy to simply table this document and give it to you and await the response.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Mr Smith, there is something called FOI that you can use as well.

Mr T. SMITH — Thanks, Dimo, I know that. I thought I would take the opportunity — —

Mr ROBERTSON — I have just a couple of general comments. There are 47 stations within the metropolitan fire district, so if you multiply that across that question, that is quite a lot of data, which we can get for you.

I also note that the government has introduced some legislation which is currently before the Parliament called the Transparency in Government Bill, which will deal with both the MFB and the CFA response times issues — at the 50th and 90th percentile — and reported by local government area rather than by necessarily station catchments, if you like; and the regulations which will be made under that Act will prescribe the incident types, and there is a fair bit of work going on around that at the moment.

So that is a bit of a forward look, but outside your period; but it will give you the sort of granularity you are asking for into the future.

Mr T. SMITH — That is it. I will table this and we will go from there.

Mr ROBERTSON — Sure.

Ms SHING — Do not go anywhere, Mr Robertson, because I do actually have a question which you may be in a position to assist with by way of an answer.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — He can just take it on notice.

Ms SHING — No, please do not take it on notice. I mean, you can if you want to — no pressure. I am after the operational costs for the CFA in the 2014–2015 reporting period and the portion of this that was allocated to Fiskville and the extent to which that represents an increase or not from the previous reporting period.

Mr ROBERTSON — I am stretching my memory on the exact amount, but from memory for 14–15 I think the CFA's budget was \$457 million. I will test how good my memory is on that one.

Are you asking about the operating costs for Fiskville itself, or are you asking about the remediation costs?

Ms SHING — In the first instance, the operating costs; and in the second instance, the capital works during that period for 14–15. There was an allocation for remediation in the previous reporting period, I think, of around \$16 million?

Mr ROBERTSON — Yes, 16.8.

Ms SHING — Yes. So what I would like to understand is the extent to which that changed during the reporting period that we are talking about today, so 14–15; and whether the new accommodation buildings and ablution blocks were completed during the 14–15 period as well.

Mr ROBERTSON — I will double-check that. I recall that they were funded through some money that was reallocated from Bangholme, but as to the precise timing of that and the delivery, I will need to just double-check.

Ms SHING — Yes. That may have been earlier. So if you are in a position to check and come back to us in relation to operational costs, capital works — obviously both of those for the reporting period — and whether the completion of the accommodation and ablution blocks occurred in that reporting period, that would be very helpful.

Mr ROBERTSON — Sure, certainly.

Ms SHING — Thank you very much for that.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Just back on consumer affairs — sorry if I stuff the chairs up again — there was a review announced last year into the Residential Tenancies Act, and before you get up and change places, this may need to be taken on notice as well. I am chasing, if I can, in addition to that a list of any reviews being undertaken by the department in the consumer affairs, liquor and gaming portfolios and the total anticipated costs of those reviews. Unless you are able to give it to me off the top of your head, I am happy to have that taken on notice.

Mr WILSON — We can take that on notice, I think — happy to do that.

Ms PENNICUIK — This question is not about a very big program. It is just a question with regard to the cashflow statement in the annual report ending June 2015. It is on page 148 of that. It has got a line item that says 'Net loans to other parties' and shows \$1.7 million actual in 2014–15 which was not budgeted for. That just sort of raised my curiosity. What was that? And is it usual to have that sort of line item?

Mr CONDRON — Yes, so that relates to a loan that the department has provided to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade under a proposal they put forward for greener government buildings. The government has a Greener Government Buildings program, and you are able to borrow money. Any agency can put forward a proposal to borrow money and that enables them to do the works, and then they can repay the loan through the savings they make on the efficiencies they have put in.

Ms PENNICUIK — I have a supplementary. I am glad I asked it because you would never have made that connection by reading this. Does the 1.7 — —

Mr CONDRON — Repaid over seven years.

Ms PENNICUIK — Is it just the one loan?

Mr CONDRON — It is just the one loan, yes.

Ms PENNICUIK — But it says 'Net loans', but it is just the one?

Mr CONDRON — That particular one is just the one loan.

Dr CARLING-JENKINS — I just want to refer back to a couple of questions that my colleagues have asked around cultural and gender diversity. I appreciate the effort that your department is putting into those areas. Parallel to that is disability inclusion and disability inclusion programs. I understand some of the on-the-ground work may not be able to be performed by some people with disabilities, but there are a lot of opportunities, obviously, within the breadth of your department to include this diverse group. I wonder if you could just speak to that issue of how you may be addressing disability inclusion through your department.

Mr WILSON — There is inclusion more broadly in terms of gender equity, Koori inclusion, LGBTI et cetera and then disability. We have a diversity issues unit in the department that coordinates annual activities to make our system more accessible to people with a disability and people from multicultural backgrounds. Each year I present annual awards — disability scholarships — to people to support them to study about and work in the justice system. It is an area that we are committed to. I think from memory those scholarships started with a disability inclusion action plan maybe four or five years ago. It is an important part of the department, and I am happy to come back to you with more on that plan and other information to show you what we are doing.

The CHAIR — In relation to the Victorian Property Fund, in the 14–15 financial year, are you able to advise the committee what grant payments were made from the fund to support affordable housing?

Mr WILSON — Yes. I might ask Simon Cohen to come to the table again.

Mr COHEN — There was \$22 million of fund grants approved in 2014–15; \$15 million dollars of those grants were to the Director of Housing for urgent maintenance and upgrades in public housing, \$1 350 000 was to Housing Choices Australia for veterans accommodation, \$1 618 000 was to the Victorian Women's Housing Association for affordable housing for low-income women in Coburg, \$2.7 million was to Common Equity Housing Limited for the acquisition of affordable housing units at Harmony Village Dandenong for low-income tenants, \$550 000 to Community Housing (Victoria) for the purchase of two units in Doncaster for young

persons with intellectual disabilities, and then two grants were made for professional development — one to the Real Estate Institute of Victoria for \$535 726 and one to the Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association for \$183 945.

The CHAIR — So in relation to the payment to the director of the Office of Housing, how does that quantum compare to previous years? Was that a standard average payment made payable from the Victorian Property Fund, was that on the low side, or was that on the high side?

Mr COHEN — Each year there are a range of housing providers that apply to the Victorian Property Fund for grants for housing. Depending on the grants applications that are received and recommendations that are made by the Estate Agents Council, the Minister then is able to make decisions in relation to those applications. So for example in the 2012–13 year a grant to the Director of Housing of \$18 million in relation to accommodation options for families was approved, but in the following year there was no specific approved grant to the Director of Housing. But I am unable to inform the committee as to whether an application was made in that year.

Mr T. SMITH — Secretary, table 2.14 of this year's budget provides a nominal increase of only 0.5 per cent for the output class which covers legal aid funding and related assistance funding. With indexation factored in that suggests a real decline in funding for this year. Can you tell the committee what specific legal assistance programs from 2014–15 were cut to accommodate that decline?

Mr WILSON — We will just chase up the numbers for you.

Mr CONDRON — Sorry, which year are you referring to?

Mr T. SMITH — This year's budget.

Mr CONDRON — 15–16?

Mr T. SMITH — Yes.

The CHAIR — That is out of scope, Mr Smith. If you want to look at the budget papers for 14–15 and quote the actuals — —

Mr T. SMITH — Two seconds.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Can we perhaps come back to that one, Chair?

Mr T. SMITH — We might come back to that.

The CHAIR — Okay.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — I have an alternative, though.

The CHAIR — Mr O'Brien, go right ahead.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — I am going to go back to community correction orders. I am wondering whether you can provide data on how many offenders were on a CCO and on parole at 30 June 2015 who were also subject to electronic monitoring. I think the secretary gave some figures before about parole, but at that date would be helpful. Do you have that with you?

Mr WILSON — I think we do.

Ms SHUARD — I do have it here somewhere. I do not have it for that date, 30 June. I can tell you for 10 February this year.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — This year?

Ms SHUARD — Yes.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Lovely. That will do.

Ms SHUARD — If you are talking about how many people in Victoria were on the electronic monitoring program, we had 79 prisoners on parole who were subject to the electronic monitoring program, and we had 73 serious sex offenders on the post-sentence supervision scheme subject to electronic monitoring. No offenders on a community correction order had electronic monitoring.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — A supplementary question: it has been put to us, and I just want to know whether you are able to confirm or not, whether there was a homicide committed by an offender on a CCO any time during 2015?

Ms SHUARD — I cannot answer that question.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Not aware?

Ms SHUARD — No.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Okay. No problem, thank you.

Ms SHUARD — There are nearly 13 000 people on community correction orders.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — It has not been brought to your attention, though, obviously.

Ms SHUARD — Pardon?

Mr D. O'BRIEN — It has not been brought to your attention.

Ms SHUARD — It would have, I do not know. I cannot answer that now.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Secretary, I draw your attention to the questionnaire, page 54, 'Government decisions impacting on the finances'. It talks about MOG changes for 2014–15. It has got zero for any costs associated with those categories — consultants, relocation, blah, blah, blah. I just want to understand how the separation of the courts from Justice impacts at all on this part of the questionnaire, or is there another part? So, did it cost money?

Mr WILSON — There was certainly a lot of effort gone to by the department and the courts to make it happen, but my recollection was that it was to be a zero sum game, so there was no additional funding provided. It was a lot of work to get that entity up and running in terms of establishing MOUs around information sharing and IT service provision. So there was a lot of activity. As my CFO points out, most of that happened in 13–14.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Okay.

Mr WILSON — The live date was 1 July 14. So that would have been activity in 13–14 for a live date of 1 July 2014.

Mr T. SMITH — I will re-ask that question. I erred in describing the last sentence correctly, so I will have another go. Forgive me, it has been a long afternoon. With regard to this year's budget providing a nominal increase of only 0.5 per cent for the output class which covers legal aid funding and related assistance funding, with indexation factored in that suggests a real decline in funding for this year. Can you tell the committee what specific legal assistance programs from the 2014–15 budget were cut to accommodate that decline?

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Chair, I think that is actually just a clever way of asking about the 15–16 budget and I think you need to wait until next year. You are talking about the proposed cuts to the 15–16 budget, are you not?

Mr T. SMITH — No.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — No, programs that were funded in 14–15.

The CHAIR — I am happy for the secretary to answer the question in the context of the 14–15 year and in relation to whether there were any cuts to legal aid by either the state government or, for that matter, the commonwealth government in the 14–15 financial year.

Mr WILSON — Again, as it relates to the 15–16 budget I would have to take that on notice and check. There are none to my knowledge, but I would want to check what happened to the commonwealth NPA and the funding outcomes of that. But I am happy to take that on notice and come back to you.

Mr T. SMITH — Thanks very much.

The CHAIR — The fabulous Ms Shing to take us home.

Ms SHING — I cannot underscore just how underwhelming I may in fact be with my last question.

Mr D. O'BRIEN — It better be good.

Ms SHING — Again, no pressure. I would in fact like to ask about liquor and gaming regulation. I will give you an opportunity to play musical chairs at the end of the table again, and thank you for being so accommodating given the number of witnesses who have attended here this afternoon. This is something which you may want to combine in an answer with Secretary Wilson or otherwise take on notice. I would like to know how many regional inspections were conducted during the reporting period and how that compared to earlier outputs of those regional inspections following the establishment of the commission for gambling and liquor regulation in 2011.

Ms CARR — Yes, I can assist you with that data.

Ms SHING — Great, thank you.

Ms CARR — In 2013–14, and we are talking liquor inspections here — —

Ms SHING — Yes.

Ms CARR — I do not have disaggregated data for regional gaming inspections; this is just liquor data. In 2014 there were 5843 liquor inspections in the metropolitan area and 1603 in regional Victoria.

Ms SHING — Is that the 13–14 year or the 14–15 year?

Ms CARR — That is the 13–14 year. In 2014–15 liquor inspections in the metropolitan area were 9545, and for regional Victoria they were 2124, so there was a total in 2013 of 7452 and a total in 14–15 of 11 669.

Ms SHING — To that end, in relation to the measure around the clarification of inspections rather than compliance activities, how has that been distinguished for the purposes of reporting on the outputs?

Ms CARR — The reporting measures for the VCGLR have changed over time, and the reason for the change was to try to make them more appropriate and meaningful. For instance, in 2013–14 we had a quantity measure for liquor and gaming compliance activities of 25 000. It was somewhat unclear as to what that captured, and it depended on what was counted, so for the 2015–16 measure that has been changed to a more meaningful measure to require the commission to report on inspections rather than compliance activities, so it is a narrower category. Compliance activities included a whole range of things other than inspections — for instance, writing a letter, seeking an explanation for non-compliance, a desktop audit.

The new measure focuses specifically on inspections, and it has two targets for metropolitan and regional inspections. It makes the measure much more meaningful and much more focused on those areas of activity that are a priority for government, so getting inspectors out into the venues and making sure that they are complying, for instance, with obligations around not serving alcohol to people who are intoxicated or to minors or allowing minors into the gaming area of a venue. It is a much more targeted and focused measure than the previous measure, which was just compliance activities.

Ms SHING — Just for the avoidance of any doubt, the earlier figures that you quoted were for liquor inspections.

Ms CARR — They were for inspections, yes.

Ms SHING — Thank you very much. That is very helpful.

The CHAIR — I would like to thank the witnesses for their attendance. Thank you, Mr Wilson, Mr Condon, Mr Ashton, Mr Robertson and Ms Shuard. The committee will follow up on any questions taken on notice in writing. A written response should be provided within 21 days of that request. Thank you for your time.

Committee adjourned.