

PART II

THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order
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FROM 12 SEPTEMBER 1978

3 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. How many persons are currently employed in the NT Library Service, in which classifications, and in which branches of the library service?
2. How many staff will be required for the new Casuarina Library?
3. When will these staff be employed?
4. When is the new Casuarina Library expected to open?
5. What is the book stock required for the Casuarina library?
6. When is it anticipated that these books will be processed and available for the Casuarina Library?

5 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What is preventing the occupation of transportable units by inmates of the Old Timers Home in Katherine?

FROM 21 NOVEMBER 1978

89 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

What efforts have been made to recruit Aboriginals to the Police Force and the Defence Forces?

90 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Why is the content of fluoride in the water at Katherine higher than that recommended by the Department of Health?

92 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Now that the water resources survey is completed, does he intend to make public the government's intention to provide good quality water in the Katherine area?

94 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

How much beef was imported into the Northern Territory during the years 1973-74, 1974-75, 1975-76, 1976-77?

98 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. How many betting shops were operating in the Northern Territory on 1/10/78?
2. In what localities were these shops operating, and how many were there in each locality?
3. How many full-time employees were working in Northern Territory betting shops on 1/10/78?
4. How many part-time employees were working in Northern Territory betting shops on 1/10/78?

5. How many betting shops are now opening on fewer days and providing fewer services than was the case on 1/6/78?

6. Which services have been reduced since 1/6/78?

103 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is he aware that James Cook University, Townsville, will open a faculty of tropical veterinary science in 1979 in addition to the faculty of tropical medicine opened in 1978?

When he assumes full responsibility for education in the Territory, does he intend establishing a local university college containing faculties of tropical medicine, tropical veterinary science and tropical agricultural science?

105 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Does mail carried by air attract special low charges on a first priority basis, or does it have to compete with air freight at higher charges?

107 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

In view of the sophisticated machinery in the office of the Motor Vehicle Registry and the number of personnel employed there, why is it necessary for a car owner to wait up to 55 minutes to effect a simple, uncomplicated car registration?

110 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

What was the cost of air charter for the Administrator in the financial year 1977-78?

111 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Who owns each taxi licence currently on issue in the Northern Territory?

113 Mr ISAACS to TREASURER

What payments have been made to the Northern Territory Port Authority by way of interest on its investments?

115 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What were the findings of the court in relation to an incident in April of this year involving vehicles driven by Timothy John Stuart MacFarlane and Beetaloo John?

2. What prosecutions resulted from the incident; what time elapsed before each of the defendants was brought before the court and what penalty was imposed on each defendant?

116 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

What were the circumstances which led to the prosecutions of Timothy Hall and David Hanson for an incident which occurred at Mataranka on 9 November 1978?

117 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

What investigations were made by police into clashes between groups of youths in Katherine on Saturday 4 November 1978, what facts were establish-

ed and what action resulted?

118 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I refer to the fire alarm system at the Clyde Fenton School, Katherine, and ask, will it be connected directly to the fire station?

119 Mr MacFARLANE to TREASURER

When is it intended to commit the funds for the development of the industrial sub-division at Katherine?

FROM 28 NOVEMBER 1978

120 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is the occupancy rate of hostels in Katherine low enough to permit accommodation not required for permanent guests to be used by tourists?

149 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will the NT government set up a radio transmitter to augment the ABC coverage of South-east Asia and to provide an emergency service when normal ABC national services are inoperable?

150 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is it a fact that in all Territory pastoral leases and agricultural leases provision is made for resumption of all or part of the lease for use by Aborigines?

151 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Why do public servants get more assistance to establish gardens in Darwin than in other centres?

152 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Is he aware of the concern of railway workers in Alice Springs that public service conditions, including air fares, apply to them and, if so, what does he propose to do about it?
2. Why do permanent NT public servants receive air fares to the cities they left voluntarily to take up permanent positions in the NT public service?

153 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Did the NT Government permit a change in the lease purpose for the Corroboree Motel in Katherine to facilitate its sale to Aboriginal Hostels Limited?
2. If so, and in view of the needs and importance of the tourist industry, why was Aboriginal Hostels Limited not offered land on which to erect its own specially designed accommodation?

154 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is he concerned at the anti uranium mining statements expressed by the government-funded Environment Council (NT) Incorporated and, if so, will he make the NT government's views on uranium mining available to the Council?

199 Mr DOOLAN to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How many public servants are employed in the Public Service Commissioner's Unit in the Northern Territory?
2. How many public servants are employed in the Public Service Commissioner's Units equivalent in each of the State Public Services?

200 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. Why have the Construction Safety Act and Regulations not yet been given a commencing date?
2. When is the Act likely to come into effect?

201 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is causing the delay in the signing of the lease agreement between V.B. Perkins and Company and the Northern Territory Port Authority, a matter which has now been in dispute for exactly six years?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What steps are being taken to improve the water pressure in the Darwin areas?

ANSWER

There are two basic problems associated with the water pressure in the Darwin area.

The first is one of limited transmission capacity which may cause rapid pressure reduction at peak periods. To alleviate this problem my department is proposing a \$25,000,000, ten-year program for the provision of additional mains and pumping stations which will meet the current demand and anticipated future development. Works programmed for this financial year amount to approximately \$9,000,000. However, completion times are such that all low pressures from this cause may not be eliminated until the end of the 1979 dry season.

Constant low pressure, which is the second and more common problem, is caused by corroded water supply connections and blocked meters. These can quickly be cleared by the water supply depot who give prompt attention to all such complaints.

4 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Is there a limit to the role of the Darwin Community College?
2. Who determines this role?
3. Has the Darwin Community College an open-ended function with unlimited funds, or has it to answer to a governing body such as the Education Department?
4. How is the teaching of Singaporean cooking by the Darwin Community College justifiable in these days of economic strictures?
5. Is it a fact that the publication "Farewell to Alms" is being printed at the Darwin Community College?

ANSWER

The Darwin Community College Council has provided me with the following information:

- 1 & 2. The answers to these questions are covered in the Darwin Community College Ordinance No. 42 of 1973, in particular section 5.

"The functions of the College are -

to conduct an institution for the provision for Darwin and such other parts of the Northern Territory as the College considers necessary or desirable of education and training of such kinds, in such fields of science, technology, the arts, administration, commerce and other fields of knowledge or the application of knowledge, as the Council, with the approval of the Minister, determines, or as the Minister requires."

3. The Darwin Community College is answerable to the Commonwealth Minister of State for Education.

It is funded by the Commonwealth as a separate one line item within the Federal Education portfolio.

4. Cooking classes are regarded as Adult Education. All students who attend such courses are required to pay fees. As there is no Singaporean cooking this semester an example is Vietnamese cooking 6 weeks at \$13.50 per course with a material charge of \$7.00. These fees are set to cover the basic costs of providing Adult Education courses.
5. No, this is not a College publication and is not being printed on the College facilities.

6 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware that under Section 12(1) of the Mining (Gove Peninsula Nabalco Agreement) Ordinance, neither the Territory nor the Federal Government are permitted to impose discriminatory rates on the company or its assets?

Is he further aware that the company is charging rates in the order of \$500-\$700 per annum on small businesses, various residences and other properties?

Will he take action to have these excessive rates reduced?

ANSWER

It would seem that the honourable member does not know the difference between a government and a company. Nor does he seem to realise that, at the time of the ordaining of these provisions, there was no Northern Territory government. Nor, it seems, can he distinguish between the sections of an ordinance and the articles of a schedule to an ordinance.

Article 12(1) of the Schedule to the Mining (Gove Peninsula Nabalco Agreement) Ordinance is a statement of agreement that the Federal Government would not impose discriminatory rates on the company or its subsidiaries. There is no provision for the Commonwealth (or Territory government) to intervene on rate charges imposed by the Corporation.

The Nhulunbuy Corporation is a private company set up by the Nabalco Company to operate and manage the affairs of this closed town. The order of the rates charged in Nhulunbuy may appear heavier than those applying to Darwin. However, the services provided are not comparable in that the rates charged at Nhulunbuy include higher standards of services such as a bus service and a television station, not the responsibility of the Local Government Authority in Darwin.

63 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

How many organisations throughout the Northern Territory have applied for incorporation recently, but have been delayed pending the proposed change to the NT Local Government Act and the suspension of the Federal Councils and Associations Act in the Northern Territory?

What are the specific reasons why the incorporations have been delayed?

Was he aware of the delay with the incorporations at any time?

How many organisations will be affected by this delay in respect of their ability to attract government funding?

ANSWER

None.

64 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What are the details of the agreement reached between the NT government, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs concerning the implementation of local government laws covering all aspects of community development and behaviour in Aboriginal community?

Will he table the details of this agreement in the Assembly? If not, why not?

ANSWER

There is no such special agreement. The honourable member for MacDonnell ... should be aware of the amendments to the Local Government Ordinance introduced into this Assembly during the September sittings and will have had the opportunity of referring to the second reading speech. He should also take note of the public statements made by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and myself in reply to the misleading allegations attributed to him in the media recently.

65 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

I refer to the proposal by the North Australian Aboriginal and Islander Medical Service to establish a community-based Aboriginal Medical Service in Darwin, and ask what is the policy of the NT government regarding such medical services and funding support?

Is the NT government in favour of the establishment of Aboriginal medical services controlled and run by Aboriginal people themselves?

What support, if any, will be given by the NT government to assist with the establishment of an Aboriginal and Islander Medical Service in Darwin?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory government is keen to see greater participation of Aboriginals in the administration of their health services and the Department of Health has asked Aboriginal Councils to form their own health committees for direct liaison with their local health team.

However, at the same time, the Northern Territory government wishes to ensure that the Health Department retains responsibility for the overall health status of the Territory to enable it to mount specific health programs such as those introduced in the past few years against venereal disease, leprosy, trachoma etc, and that for nutritional assistance.

The Northern Territory government is also concerned to ensure that any newly introduced Aboriginal health services meet the wishes of the Aboriginal people themselves.

In so far as funding is concerned, the government will view each new project on its own merits and within the funds available, but would be particularly concerned to obviate any major overlap of services, and seek additional funding from the Commonwealth for special projects and concepts as these are identified.

66 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the policy of the NT government in respect of the existence and development of such Aboriginal organisations as the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, Institute for Aboriginal Development and Aboriginal Hostels Limited at Alice Springs?

Does the NT government support the purpose and functions of the above stated organisations?

ANSWER

The NT government recognises the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, Institute for Aboriginal Development and Aboriginal Hostels Limited in much the same way as it recognises the many other organisations which have been set up and developed for various legitimate purposes throughout the Northern Territory.

All organisations except Aboriginal Hostels Limited are on the mailing list for information and other papers which go to Aboriginal organisations in the Northern Territory from time to time. Aboriginal Hostels Limited headquarters in the Northern Territory has now been included in the mailing list.

The policy of the NT government is one in which it seeks to ascertain the views of Aboriginals through the many Aboriginal organisations which appear to represent and have rapport with various groups of Aboriginals as long as these organisations maintain credibility in the eyes of Aboriginals.

Where the purpose and function of an organisation is to provide a service to Aboriginals, facilitate communication, to aid consultation and to generally aim towards the well-being of Aboriginals in the Northern Territory, the NT government does support these purposes and functions. However, in the event of any such organisations using its relationships, resources, funds whether provided by government or not, to foster particular political views without really assisting Aboriginals to understand the options and make their own choice, the NT government does not support that purpose or function. It recognises the right of political organisations to exist and to pursue their aims, but does not accept the right of an organisation set up and funded for other purposes to direct its resources to that end.

The NT government looks to the Northern Territory Branch of the National Aboriginal Conference as democratically elected representatives of Aboriginal opinion to seek the views of Aboriginals throughout the NT on many issues and initiatives which are of importance to the NT Aboriginals. It also expects the members of this conference to bring to its notice the views of Aboriginals on matters which conference members consider are important to their electors.

85 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What were the individual costs of establishing electoral offices for members of the Legislative Assembly?
2. What is the annual rental for each of the electoral offices for members of the Legislative Assembly?

The attached schedule gives details of:

- (a) the individual costs of establishing electorate offices for members of the Legislative Assembly; and
- (b) the annual rental for each of the electorate offices for members of the Legislative Assembly.

Electorate	(a) Cost of establishing office	(b) Annual rental	Remarks
Alice Springs) Gillen) Stuart)	474	5,880	Members share offices and facilities
Casuarina) Jingili)	180	8,800	Members share offices and facilities
Arnhem	212	Nil	Member occupies office in Aboriginal Affairs building free of charge
Barkly	180	Nil	Member occupies office in NTA building free of charge
Elsey	60	1,300	
Fannie Bay	1,564	2,600	
Ludmilla	Nil	Nil	Electorate office not available
MacDonnell	1,016	2,770	
Millner	7,563	6,500	
Nhulunbuy	960	1,275	
Nightcliff	3,375	4,160	
Port Darwin	180	4,160	
Sanderson	180	4,680	
Stuart Park	Nil	Nil	Member intends to share office with member for Port Darwin
Tiwi	Nil	Nil	Member has her office in a caravan in the Howard Springs shopping centre
Victoria River	Nil	2,040	

NOTE: The majority of furniture and various office machines were provided from departmental stock, and therefore have not been included in the above schedule.

86 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Who authorised the fluoridation scheme for Katherine and were the townspeople consulted?

ANSWER

Fluoridation of the Katherine water supply was proposed by the Department of Health and originally put on the draft works program by the Department of the Northern Territory. The project has now been taken

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

over by the Northern Territory government which fully supports it in view of the benefits to health it will bring.

No formal consultations with the townspeople have been held. However, the staff of the Department of Health dental clinic in Katherine are willing to provide information and answer any questions that residents may have on the subject.

87 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

When will holiday pay due to employees at Scott Creek-Willeroo for the four months period when the Primary Producers Board was in control be apid?

Why has the Primary Producers Board furnished group certificates to some former employees at Scott Creek and not others?

ANSWER

NADC (Receiver appointed) have been requested to make payments to employees for holiday pay in respect of the period 3 December 1977 to 30 March 1978, without prejudice to the disputed control of the property at that time. The co-operation of the Receiver has been sought to make the payments from the Scott Creek Farm Account.

Group certificates have been forwarded to all employees where addresses were known. The balance has been sent to the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation in accordance with the requirements laid down by the Australian Taxation Office.

88 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has he received any complaint relating to the standard of service since the telephone exchange in Katherine has been moved to Darwin?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any complaints relating to the standard of service since the telephone exchange facilities in Katherine were removed to Darwin.

The Department of Transport and Works Area Manager in Katherine (Mr Kevin Jordon) has advised that the existing service is quite satisfactory with STD facilities available and in discussions he has had with local business people he has not heard of any complaints.

He did mention that there was a minimal delay on the radio/telephone service as this link now requires dialling a certain number through the Darwin exchange but was no cause for real complaint.

91 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is it correct that the recruiting of teaching assistants will be retrained following the Northern Territory government take-over of the Education Department in July 1979?

ANSWER

The NT division of the Department of Education is unaware of any impending restraint on the recruiting of teaching assistants after 1 July 1979 and nor is the Northern Territory government.

93 Mr VALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

(a) What is the current value of library books held?

(b) What is the present pupil enrolment?

In the following schools in Central Australia:

Alice Springs High School	Napperby School
Alice Springs School of Air	Papunya School
Alice Springs Special School	Ross Park Primary School
Amoonguna School	Ti-Tree School
Areyonga School	Traeger Park Primary School
Bradshaw Primary School	Utopia School
Braitling School	Yuendumu School
Docker River School	OLSH College
Gillen Primary School	Hermannsburg School
Haasts Bluff School	Santa Teresa School
Iwuptaka School	Ida Standley Pre-School
Maryvale School	Nathalie Gorey Pre-School
Mbungghara School	Rona Glynn Pre-School
Mt Allen School	Teppa Hill Pre-School
Mt Ebenezer School	

ANSWER

The Commonwealth Department of Education has provided the following information in response to the honourable member's question:

No figures are available regarding the current value of library books held by any school in the Northern Territory.

The only figures held by this department are the amounts given to the schools as specific library grants, and this would give no indication of (a) funds contributed by parents (b) depreciation of individual books (c) book losses, outdated books.

The enrolments (as at the end of September for the schools listed are shown as follows:

Alice Springs High School	946	Napperby	23
Alice Springs School of Air	105	Papunya	161
Alice Springs Special School	10	Ross Park	372
Amoonguna	65	Ti-Tree	107
Areyonga	41	Traeger Park	344
Bradshaw Primary	707	Utopia	35
(inc. 99 pre-)		Yuendumu	193
Braitling	290	OLSH College	474
Docker River	114	Hermannsburg	199
Gillen Primary	623	Santa Teresa	181
(inc. 66 pre-)		Ida Standley Pre-School	52
Haasts Bluff	24	Nathalie Gorey Pre-School	44
Iwupataka	38	Rona Glynn Pre-School	43
Maryvale	37	Teppa Hill Pre-School	71
Mbungghara	20	Mt Allen	16
Mt Ebenezer	21		

95 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Does South Australia impose a levy on Northern Territory cattle entering that state?

ANSWER

The SA Cattle Compensation Act 1939-1974 imposes a stamp duty on all cattle sold in that state. The duty varies according to the sale price, ranging from a minimum of \$0.05 to a maximum of \$0.50 per beast. I understand the duty so collected is used to compensate owners for loss caused through condemnations of cattle suffering specified diseases. Thus Territory cattle transported to that state for sale or slaughter are subject to the duty but not those for agistment.

96 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it a fact that Queensland veterinary requirements are designed to protect Queensland from competition from Northern Territory cattle?

ANSWER

I am aware that there has been some tightening of requirements by Queensland in respect of brucellosis and tuberculosis, but these were inevitable and my officers have told Territory pastoralists of this eventuality.

The general provisions of the Queensland Stock Act 1915-1976 are not inconsistent with those of our Stock Diseases Ordinance or indeed similar enactments in other states. Their basic purpose is to protect the health of stock within their borders.

97 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. How many Housing Commission houses in the Millner electorate have not been upgraded since the cyclone?
2. When will the work commence on each Housing Commission home in the Millner electorate which has not yet been upgraded?

ANSWER

1. A total of 54 Housing Commission houses required restoration and upgrading in the Millner electorate at 8 November 1978.
2. Of these 54 houses not yet restored, 40 are included in current contracts and will be completed by April 1979. The remaining group of 14 will go to tender following this wet season and will be completed by 30 June 1979.

The completion of these groups will mark the end of a total restoration program commenced by the Housing Commission in August 1975, since which time 844 houses will have been restored and upgraded in addition to a vigorous new buildings program in all centres. The management and staff of the Commission deserve commendation on their achievement.

99 Ms D'ROZARIO to CHIEF MINISTER

- (a) Is there a proposal within the Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission to establish a wildlife park at Fogg Dam near Darwin?
- (b) If there is such a proposal, when is the proposal likely to be implemented?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

- (c) If there is such a proposal, is it the intention that the present wildlife collection which is accommodated at Yarrowonga Park be transferred to Fogg Dam?

ANSWER

- (a) The Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission is investigating the suitability of Fogg Dam as well as other areas in the vicinity of Darwin for viewing of native fauna under open range conditions.
- (b) A date for the implementation of the program cannot be given as there is no guarantee that Fogg Dam will be the final area selected and there are other interests to be considered in the Fogg Dam area.
- (c) The present wildlife collection at Yarrowonga Zoo would not necessarily be transferred to Fogg Dam. In fact, many of the exhibits might not survive under open range conditions after being in captivity. Yarrowonga Park has restrictions in so far as development is concerned because of its small area.

100 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

How many of each of the following types of vehicles have been transferred from the Australian government to the Northern Territory government:

- (a) passenger sedans;
- (b) utilities; and
- (c) four-wheel drive vehicles?

ANSWER

I regret that at this stage I can only provide accurate information in respect of the following:

	Passenger Sedans	Utilities Panel Vans	4WD Vehicles Exc. Trucks
Transport and Works	144	280	134
Industrial Development	22	58	81
NT Electricity Commission	54	61	14
Bushfire Council	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
	221	401	233
	=====	=====	=====

Government policy is that all departments and authorities are authorised to control and operate their own vehicle fleets, and in order to provide the full information requested, it will be necessary to seek similar data from other NT government departments and authorities for vehicles operating under their respective control.

101 Ms D'ROZARIO to CHIEF MINISTER

- What factors are taken into consideration in determining which employees of the Northern Territory Public Service are permitted to garage government-owned vehicles at their homes?
- As at 30 September 1978 how many government-owned passenger sedans, utilities and four-wheel drive vehicles were garaged at employee's homes?

3. What methods are used to ensure that government-owned vehicles that are garaged at employees' homes are not used by employees and members of their families for purposes unrelated to the discharge of the employees' duties?

ANSWER

1. On 26 September 1978, I requested the Public Service Commissioner in conjunction with the Acting Secretary of the Department of Transport and Works to review the home garaging of government vehicles to ensure that there is consistency of approach across the service. This review has now been commenced. Current guidelines on home garaging approvals are attached and the appropriateness of these will be examined in the course of the review.
2. Information on the number of approvals given for home garaging of government vehicles is currently being gathered as part of the above-mentioned review.
3. Should the review reveal that current procedures for oversight of home garaging by departmental heads is inadequate, more stringent procedures will be instituted.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS

HOME GARAGING GUIDELINES

1. Home garaging approval will be at the discretion of the Departmental Head for Chief Executive Officers of a prescribed authority.
2. Home garaging is applicable in the following circumstances:
 - (a) Departmental Heads and Chief Executive Officers of prescribed authorities.
 - (b) For those senior staff who by virtue of their duties are required or expected to work considerable periods outside of normal working hours, at which times regular public transport is not available.
 - (c) For those staff employed in an operational capacity who are on call outside of normal working hours, and to whom government transport is essential to respond effectively to the out-of-normal-hours call to duty. (Examples are staff rostered to attend to fault calls; restoration of essential services; etc).
 - (d) For those staff who are called upon to perform duties requiring the use of official transport, and where economics of travelling time and distance are relevant factors. (These approvals would be usually of short term duration).

Examples are:

- (i) Work which commences prior to or after normal office hours (such as supervision of contractors).
- (ii) The need to undertake official business at a location which is significantly closer to the employee's residence than to his normal place of employment, that home garaging achieves definite economics.

3. Drivers of vehicles granted home garaging approval must comply with the following:
 - (a) be NT licensed drivers;
 - (b) be responsible for the safe keeping and security of the vehicle under their control;
 - (c) ensure the vehicle is used only for approved official business in accordance with the purpose for which home garaging is approved, including carriage of only authorised passengers on official business;
 - (d) at all times use the vehicle in his charge in a proper manner expected of an employee of the NT government, and in accordance with NT traffic regulations.
4. Departmental heads should examine requests for home garaging on their merits (as opposed to a "blanket" approval of a class or group of employees), with approvals being limited to a specified period, at the end of which the approval is subject to review. (For permanent home garaging, the suggested period for review would be six or twelve months. For short term approvals, such as those approved under category 2(d) a specific approval period should be stated).
5. Departmental heads should examine the alternative of employees being reimbursed for the cost of using his-her private vehicle for official business, where such an arrangement is appropriate and mutually acceptable to both the department and the employee (e.g. applicable to category 2(d) situations).

102 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. How many and on what occasions has the Town Planning Board considered an application under section 38A of the Town Planning Ordinance to rezone lot 666 Town of Darwin?
2. Has the Town Planning Board or the Planning Unit sought legal advice on the application made pursuant to section 38A of that Ordinance to rezone lot 666 Town of Darwin? If so, on what date was such legal advice sought?
3. Has the Town Planning Board or the Planning Unit received the legal advice referred to above? If so, on what date was such legal advice received?

ANSWER

1. The Northern Territory Town Planning Board has considered applications under section 38A of the Town Planning Act to rezone lot 666 Town of Darwin on four (4) occasions.
2. The Planning Branch has sought legal advice on the application referred to above on one (1) occasion:
 - (a) 18 January 1978.
3. The Planning Branch has received the legal advice referred to above, on 20 June 1978, after the request had been mislaid.

104 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Which heads of departments are residents of houses provided by the Northern Territory government?

ANSWER

M.R. Finger	Director-General
N.J. Campbell	Public Service Commissioner
A. Ashley	Under-Treasurer
R. McHenry	Secretary, Department of Community Development
C. Adams	Secretary, Department of Industrial Development
M. Dryer	Commissioner, Electricity Commission
R. McAulay	Commissioner of Police.

106 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

What were the circumstances surrounding the refusal or inability of the Bush Fires Council to assist Mr Ken Hammer of Bauhinia Downs Station, Borroloola, in his request for help early in October 1978?

ANSWER

All possible assistance to Mr Hammer was given. On Monday evening of 9 October 1978 the Fire Control Officer of the Northern Region, W. Luff, was advised that Bauhinia Station had requested assistance for a fire. The Fire Control Officer normally responsible was attending a fire on Waterloo Station. Mr Luff then:

- (a) contacted Mr Hammer and asked him to check with Tanumbirini for grader assistance at the Bush Fire Council's expense;
- (b) arranged for Hayfield Station's fire trailer to be sent. The trailer was at Daly Waters and the Daly Water policeman offered to leave with it at 6 am Tuesday, 10 October. Mr Hammer refused this offer saying the fire could not be controlled with water;
- (c) found that the nearest available Katherine area grader was on the Borroloola road - the exact position could not be ascertained until Tuesday morning (10 October).

The only available aircraft came from Katherine at 9.30 next morning, collected Mr Luff and a mechanic, refuelled at Katherine and arrived at Bauhinia at midday. Mr Hammer stated his only concern was the 35 square km area between Bauhinia and Tawallah Creeks.

After landing the situation was discussed. In the presence of the mechanic Mr Luff asked Mr Hammer what the outcome of his request for grader assistance from Tanumbirini was. Mr Hammer replied that he hadn't bothered.

Mr Luff contacted the McArthur River Mines and was told their grader and low loader were out of commission. Their offer of manpower and vehicle assistance was refused by Mr Hammer.

The only choice then was the grader on the Borroloola road. This was between Daly Waters and Cooee Hills. It would have to be carried by low loader to within 80 km of the fire. Because of a brake problem, the low loader could not leave until 11 am on Wednesday (11 October). It could not travel at night and therefore the grader could not be delivered at the Balbirini Work Camp until Thursday (12 October).

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The grader would have had to travel under its own power the remaining 80 km and as it also could not travel at night, it would not arrive until late Friday morning at the fire.

The total cost of the grader operation would have been about \$8,000 and as, with the prevailing weather conditions, it was extremely unlikely that they would be in time to save any of the country Mr Hammer wished to preserve, the attempt was abandoned and Mr Hammer was with regret advised accordingly.

108 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Since its inception, how much has the Northern Territory Electricity Commission spent on advertising for positions in the Commission?

ANSWER

Since its inception on 1 July 1978, the NTEC has spent a sum of \$1,881.56 on advertising positions. Accounts for a further \$542.46 have been received but not yet paid. Taken altogether, this amounts to an expenditure of \$2,424.02.

109 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

What was the expenditure by the Northern Territory government on the official opening of the Legislative Assembly and functions and incidental matters related to it?

ANSWER

The direct expenditure incurred by the Department of the Chief Minister on the official opening of the Legislative Assembly was as follows:

Official Car Hire	\$ 4,112.63
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Dinner	\$ 3,785.20
Governor General and Official Party excursion on the Adelaide River	\$ 700.00
Governor General and Official Party attendance at the YWCA International Night	\$ 150.00
Accommodation Expenses Bamyili Dancers	\$ 120.96
Overtime Payment to government employees	\$ 2,381.65
TOTAL	\$ 11,250.44
	=====

112 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

- Has the position of Chief Inspector of Scaffolding for the Northern Territory been recently advertised?
- When did applications close?
- Has an appointment been made?
- What are the qualifications of the appointee?

ANSWER

- There is no position of Chief Inspector but only one of Senior Inspector of Scaffolding. That position has been advertised.
- 7 October 1978.

(c) A selection has been made.

(d) Technical Qualifications are:

- Trade Certificate in Joinery and Cabinet making
- Two years City and Guild Building Trade Certificates
- Occupational Safety Certificate
- Welding Certificate, WA Institute of Technology
- WA Shot fire Certificate
- Compressed Air Division Certificate to 200 ft
- Rescue Instructors Certificate of Emergency Services

Experience

- 14 years experience in the construction industry
- 6 years Construction Safety Inspector in WA.

114 Mr ISAACS to TREASURER

- (a) Has a statement of receipts and expenditure in respect of the public accounts during the September 1978 quarter been published in the Gazette?
- (b) If so, on what date?
- (c) If not, when does the Treasurer expect to so publish?

ANSWER

- (a) A statement of receipts and expenditure in respect of the public accounts during the September 1978 quarter has not yet been published in the Gazette.
- (b) Answer to (a) applies.
- (c) The statement is to be published in the Government Gazette on 1 December 1978.

121 Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

I would like to know, why tenders were not called for the purchase of a shark cat for the Northern Territory Emergency Services by the Northern Territory government?

ANSWER

I noticed a part in the Darwin Star last week about the Northern Territory Government Emergency Services not purchasing this shark cat through local suppliers or not calling tenders for which local suppliers could have put in a bid. I caused inquiries to be made within my department and as a result within a day or so of the article appearing in the paper, I wrote this letter to Mr John Atkinson who, the Darwin Star claimed, was the aggrieved party.

I refer to my letter of 7 November in which I advised you that I would ascertain the reasons why the shark cat vessel for Emergency Services was purchased direct from the manufacturer. The decision to purchase the shark cat type vessel was based on advice from sea rescue organisations in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, as well as local boat dealers and enthusiasts who generally agreed that the shark cat was the most suitable vessel within its price range for the required purposes although naturally it did have some limitations.

The shark cat organisation at Labrador, Queensland was contacted and they indicated that there was no shark cat agency in the Northern Territory. Some preliminary arrangements were then made for the purchase of the vessel from the shark cat organisation in Queensland. Advice was then received that a local dealer was acting on behalf of the Western Australian agent. This aspect was raised with the headquarters of the shark cat organisation who indicated that any arrangement of this nature was improper as far as they were concerned and that the Western Australian agency was limited to activities in Western Australia. They further indicated that they proposed in the future to take steps to establish an agency in the Northern Territory. Thus our decision to purchase direct from the shark cat organisation in Queensland was based on official advice that there was no accredited agent for shark cat in the Northern Territory.

I am advised that it is only in the last few weeks that you have made representations to the shark cat organisation to obtain an agency for the Northern Territory. I can give you every assurance that it is the policy of my government to buy locally if at all possible but I am sure you will also appreciate that, as a responsible government, we must negotiate with accredited agencies, particularly where no local agency exists. I must add that I was disappointed to read in the Star of 16 November a reference to the fact that you had referred the matter to Creed Lovegrove and Martyn Finger and that your inquiries had been ignored. Martyn Finger informs me that he rang you on Tuesday 14 November when he received a report on the matter and explained the above position to you and you indicated your appreciation of this.

122 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he aware that King Ranch is selling all its Australian properties and has recently sold Brunette Downs Station on the Barkly to Tancred, the owners of the Mount Isa Meatworks. If he is so aware, can he explain to the Assembly the impact that this sale will have on the supply of late cattle to the Katherine Meatworks? If he is not aware of this sale, will he make investigations and report back to the Assembly?

ANSWER

The Leader of the Opposition has been misinformed. The sale has not taken place. I understand that last week, representatives of Tancred were at Brunette Downs. In fact, the manager of Brunette Downs was in Darwin last week and told me that he was expecting the Tancred people up there. If there was a sale it would be detrimental to the Northern Territory and certainly detrimental to the plans of this government to support industry, particularly in Tennant Creek. There would be no flow of cattle coming to Katherine abattoirs or to the proposed Tennant Creek abattoirs. We would view it with extreme disfavour if this sale took place. I have not yet consulted my colleagues as to what we may do but certainly we will be taking strong action to avoid that sort of a sale.

123 Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

At the moment charitable organisations are forced to pay commercial rates for electricity consumption. Will any arrangements be made to allow them some kind of concession?

ANSWER

This is a fairly difficult proposition. As you know, the Electricity Commission is running at a \$24m loss and we are trying to see if we can help associations. If a subsidy is granted to associations, that would be a form of tax on the public at large. There is only one state in Australia that provides a subsidy. Victoria provides a 15% subsidy to approved associations. These associations are approved by either a community or welfare body in Victoria. The government has not yet decided what it is likely to do but I think it is not in my bag to decide which associations should get a subsidy. We are certainly looking at the matter because the electricity charges have been increased and this matter has been of some concern.

124 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

In line with his determination to promote local employment will the Chief Minister take steps to ensure that, as far as possible, liquidations of Territory companies are done by Territory liquidators?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would suggest that the Leader of the Opposition might more properly take this matter up with the Chief Judge of the Northern Territory Supreme Court. The Northern Territory Supreme Court is constituted under a federal act and the judiciary is independent. Liquidators of companies are appointed by the Supreme Court. They are firstly appointed as company liquidators and then, for each particular liquidation, the judge who makes the liquidation or receivership order as the case may be, appoints a specific liquidator who is on a list approved by the Supreme Court. It is not a matter in which the Executive can interfere. Solicitors involved in the liquidations generally select the liquidator and nominate him to the Supreme Court. I suggest perhaps that the solicitors might perhaps take the attitude that they should employ Northern Territory liquidators. It is certainly not something on which the government can direct them.

125 Mrs PADCHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has he given consideration to the reintroduction of the bus service from Darwin to Humpty Doo?

ANSWER

Consideration has been given to the reintroduction of this service. It was very unprofitable in the past. To reintroduce this service would cost \$120,000 per annum. The matter is under investigation by an officer from the Victorian Transport Regulation Board who is advising me on bus services at this time. The matter will go before Cabinet in the next couple of months.

126 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has the proposed Coconut Grove-Ludmilla-Fannie Bay connector road yet been surveyed? If not, can the Minister explain why \$1.5m was allocated for a road in 1978/1979 public works budget which has not yet been surveyed and which is unlikely to be commenced this financial year. If it has been surveyed, can he explain why plans have not been displayed for the benefit of the public when the plans for roadworks not provided for in the budget have been displayed?

ANSWER

Surveys have been carried out from aerial photographs but the on-ground survey investigation has not taken place yet. We are currently dealing with the people in that area who have some objections to the road and those discussions are continuing. Obviously, if a budget item was included it would be on the expectation of the work being carried out and the money being spent.

127 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

What will be the Northern Territory government's attitude towards problems associated with alcoholism once it takes over the Department of Health in January?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Department of Health, as it will be after 1 January, will be taking a much more active role in the alcohol education and treatment field. As honourable members would be aware, the Commonwealth and the states have a financial agreement whereby the Commonwealth contributes to the states for alcohol education programs and rehabilitation. Unfortunately, the Northern Territory has never been included in these grants and the first exercise that we have ever gone into between ourselves and the Commonwealth is to seek funds from the Commonwealth on the same basis as they are granted to the states. Having got the funds, I believe the department will then become more heavily involved in roles that state health departments now play in the states in providing services relating to alcohol education and rehabilitation.

128 Mr ISAACS to the TREASURER

What reasons did the government have for leasing computer equipment when it is cheaper these days to purchase such equipment?

ANSWER

The Leader of the Opposition has made somewhat of an overstatement to say blatantly that it is cheaper to purchase computer equipment than it is to lease it. That depends on the computer equipment that you are talking about. It might be a desk model or a model that fits into a house. It depends on the brand and where they are made and whether you buy new

computers or, as is often the case these days, secondhand computers which can be purchased very economically. I just do not accept the statement by the Leader of the Opposition as being rational.

129 Mrs LAWRIE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

In November 1974, an ordinance was passed which would have given relief to people insured with a company such as Northumberland which went bankrupt. Although it was approved by the federal government, the legislation has not received assent. When is it likely that similar legislation will be reintroduced to this House to afford relief to these people who have been awarded damages and cannot receive any compensation?

ANSWER

I sponsored the bill that was passed through the House in 1974. My estimate at the time was that it would take a quarter of a million dollars to indemnify the people affected by the collapse of the Northumberland Insurance Company and one other company concerned.

The problem is being looked at by the Department of Law at the moment. It is a problem because the Northern Territory government was not created at the time these insurance companies collapsed. I have asked the department to advise me whether firstly we can indemnify people in respect of an occurrence that happened before the government was even in existence and secondly - and this may be of interest to the Leader of the Opposition who is often making profound statements on the matter of insurance - the responsibility for insurance has not been delegated to the Northern Territory government under the regulations made pursuant to section 35 of the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act. I am personally of the opinion that, as this is third-party insurance, and that is an adjunct to the field of transport, we should be able to do something about it. But it is a question for legal interpretation, Mr Speaker, and when these two questions have been considered by the Department of Law, I have asked it, in consultation with the Department of Transport and Works, to prepare a submission to the Northern Territory Cabinet making recommendations as to the various options that would be available to us if we can first surmount those two hurdles.

At the same time, Mr Speaker, I have been corresponding with the Prime Minister and the Treasurer seeking the delegation to the Northern Territory government of powers, normal state-like powers, in respect of the insurance and banking fields, and I will continue to maintain pressure on the federal government in that regard.

130 Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

How many local professional fishermen have accepted an NT Fisheries Department's invitation to attend a three-day course on the use of technologies, such as echo-sounding and radar? I believe the course started today.

ANSWER

I understand the course was to accommodate 30 people; just exactly how many attended I could not be sure. I think the course was almost fully subscribed. I can find out and report back to him later.

131 Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

Has any decision yet been made as to the sites in Darwin and Alice Springs in respect to which it is proposed to issue casino licences?

ANSWER

In regard to this matter, as this House has been advised before, the negotiations with various applicants for casino licences in Darwin and Alice Springs have been kept on the strictest confidentiality and this will remain so until such time as public announcements are made, hopefully in the near future, outlining the entire proposals. Until such time as that is made, I am not prepared to answer questions on the subject.

132 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

At this stage is there any indication as to what attitude will be taken by the Northern Territory government towards vocational training when education becomes a responsibility of the Northern Territory government in July?

ANSWER

The present position is that there are two separate areas of vocational training in the Northern Territory. Firstly, there is vocational training for Aboriginal students and of course, secondly, vocational training is being provided for the community at large. Certainly, it is an area that this government is very keen to get itself involved in in a much more active way than is perhaps being done at the moment.

In respect of Aboriginal students, Mr Speaker, the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations has primary responsibility under the federal government for the provision of vocational training for Aboriginal children - dealing with that one first. Of course it would be well known that the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations is not in the business of employing teachers. Therefore it uses the Darwin Community College as an agent to carry out its programs. The Darwin Community College, of course, is also very heavily involved at the moment - within the limits of its resources - in vocational training for the community at large in Darwin and around the Northern Territory generally.

The Department of Education also has, within its schools, quite sophisticated equipment which can be well used in the field of vocational training, by way of its workshops, wood-working rooms, metal shops and so on. So the whole area needs to be examined, I think, in light of the resources available to the Department of Education and the Darwin Community College. I might also add that the annexe to that is of course the Alice Springs Community College which is also involved in the training of young people in vocational areas.

In addition, Mr Speaker, I have recently approved on behalf of the Northern Territory government the establishment of a vocational training centre at Borroloola, the first of its type in the Northern Territory and one which we hope will be in operation by mid next year, to tie in with the Borroloola community, particularly young Aboriginal people and the hopeful expectation of the MacArthur River mining project getting off the ground. It is the first of its kind. It is a departmentally-based exercise. It is amazing how cheaply it looks like it can be done by the use of demountables and with a minimum number of staff.

You, Mr Speaker, would be very well aware of the requirement in Katherine for a rural training college, or what was previously referred to as a rural training college. I have requested the Director of Education to refer to it in future, rather than a college, as a rural education centre for Katherine. Mr Speaker, you will be pleased to know that that will be operational by the beginning of the school year in 1979. The final plans have been put into operation. I am informed there is sufficient funds within the Department of Education to get that off the ground and get it operational early next year and, of course, the Northern Territory government upon the assumption of responsibility for education will be pursuing that particular rural education resource centre, if you like, and of course will be pursuing further the subject of vocational training generally.

133 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he explain to the Assembly what has happened to the moneys allocated this year for purchases of ADP equipment by open tender? Has the tender been let? If not, why not?

ANSWER

I am not fully briefed on the subject matter. I will find an answer and provide him with it later in the day.

134 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has the final decision been made as to the custody of the remains of the Kookaburra aircraft and, if so, has the minister approved the allocation of funds to allow for the preservation and display of those remains in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

By Northern Territory statute, the remains of the Kookaburra - and by golly they are only remains, that is all they are - are vested in the Museums and Art Galleries Board with the Northern Territory. It is proposed at this stage that a diorama depicting the site at which the Kookaburra was discovered, 70 years after the tragedy, will be set up by the Museums and Art Galleries Board of the Northern Territory and in the interim that that will be displayed on their behalf by the Central Australian Aviation Museum Incorporated.

Let me say, Mr Speaker, and put to rest the nonsense which has been spoken about the restoration of the Kookaburra and the suggestions by Mr Smith - and, incidentally, I would like to put on public record the thanks of the Northern Territory for that man going to all the trouble and expense he did to relocate the remains of the Kookaburra and his contribution, so that this part of Northern Territory history be properly recognised. However, Mr Speaker, let us not dismiss from our minds any question that the propellor was eaten by white ants. Let us dismiss from our minds, Mr Speaker, any question of the restoration of what was once an aircraft. If we were to embark upon a program of restoration in inverted commas, Mr Speaker, of course all we would be doing is building a replica of a Westland Widgeon aircraft. You would have nothing of the original Kookaburra left, other than some engine cowlings, a little bit of aluminium aileron, some very rusted, burnt-out wire and swivel joints and a very rusted-out engine block, and I think you would be doing a disservice to history if in fact a replica of the Westland Widgeon type aircraft was built and these bits and pieces installed in it. I think it is a far more fitting memorial to those brave men who lost their lives in search of other brave men for a properly constructed diorama depicting the exact way

in which this aircraft's remains were found out in the Tanami Desert to be displayed for people who have an interest in history.

135 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Might I ask a supplementary question. I think the minister was carried away by his own eloquence and perhaps neglected to answer the second part of the question: has the minister approved the allocation of funds for the preservation and display of the remains?

ANSWER

The honourable member is quite right. I overlooked to answer that part of the question. The provision of funds for the preparation of the diorama to display the remains of the Kookaburra is the responsibility of the Northern Territory Museums and Art Galleries Board from within its own budget. It has money set aside for the purpose of acquisition, for the purpose of research and for other purposes quite akin to this particular proposal. I would think that, because it is an unexpected expenditure which the Museum and Art Galleries Board will be faced with - and I really cannot give an estimate but I will try to; I would think probably in the order of \$20,000 to do it properly because setting up a diorama can be expensive - it is normal government practice that when an organisation runs into unexpected expenditure of this type, it is open to it to come back at supplementary estimates time and make a bid for further funds if this interferes with its normal program of acquisitions.

136 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

When will stage 2 of the Howard Springs school be finished and when will it be ready to take in pupils?

ANSWER

I am informed by the Department of Education and the Department of Construction that the building is presently 45% complete, that it has fallen slightly behind the original schedule - it was supposed to be ready for occupation by the students at Howard Springs School at the beginning of the school year. It now looks as if the completion date will be some time in February. However, I am also informed by the Department of Construction that they are happy with progress on the building having regard to the particular circumstances which have arisen.

137 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Can he tell us what the estimated cost of remodelling Lyons Cottage for use by the National Trust and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects?

ANSWER

No. I cannot give a precise answer to that question. I believe I have a paper from Mr Forrester, the director, on my desk at the moment. I have not had a chance to look at it. I would hope to be able to get that information back to the honourable member late in the day.

138 Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Can the minister inform the House of the progress in preparation for the transfer of health powers to the Northern Territory government on 1 January?

ANSWER

I can inform the honourable member - he gave me notice of this question because there is a bit of detail involved in it - and I will be pleased to advise the House of the work that is being done.

The transfer of health to the Northern Territory government on 1 January involves seven major tasks. I will mention each of these tasks in turn and then briefly indicate the progress that has been made in each area.

The first section is the change in legislation. The necessary amendments to legislation have been isolated and it is hoped that this will be put through this session of the Assembly.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): A point of order, Mr Speaker. The minister is clearly abusing question time. If he wishes to make a ministerial statement - and I believe one is timely - then he certainly should do so and we will grant him leave. But question time is not the appropriate time for him to deliver such a statement.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, the second point relates to the reorganisation of the departmental structure and briefly this has been very nearly completed in conjunction with the Northern Territory Public Service Commissioner. The definition of the residual Commonwealth units to deal with Commonwealth health matters such as quarantine, the National Acoustics Laboratory and immunisations and the residual Commonwealth unit has been agreed and the appointment of a new Commonwealth Director of Health has been initiated.

The fourth area of concern is for information to staff whether they are to transfer to the Northern Territory Public Service or to remain with the Commonwealth residual unit. Letters have been prepared for some 2,500 staff members and are about to be posted.

The fifth task to be undertaken was the reorganisation of the accounting system to match the new system of funding. The accounting system has been modified to suit future funding requirements.

The sixth point concerns negotiations with the Commonwealth with respect to future funding. The National Health Act has been amended to allow the hospital cost-sharing to apply to the Northern Territory. A draft agreement between the Northern Territory government and the Commonwealth for hospital cost-sharing has been agreed at officer level. Copies of the final draft have been sent to myself and the Treasurer for final agreement. Talks relating to actual cost-sharing are to take place later this month to be followed by discussions concerning community health service grants and that for the school dental service. Talks have already been held with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in connection with the level of funding to be expected from that department.

Finally, a case to obtain funds from the Federal Grants Commission and a paper addressed to the Grants Commission is in the process of preparation. It has been agreed with Mr Justice Else-Mitchell that the paper should be ready for presentation to the commission by the end of February 1979.

139 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can the Minister tell the Assembly whether or not a lease agreement has yet been signed between the Northern Territory Port Authority and V.B. Perkins?

ANSWER

No.

140 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

At the previous session of the Assembly, he indicated that the Juvenile Detention Centre at Berrimah would not be used for that purpose. Could he now indicate the purpose to which it will be put?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Youth Hostels organisation has made an application through the Chief Minister to myself for the use of the area. This application is being examined at the moment and I believe it will be viewed favourably by the government.

141 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

On 2 March this year, I asked question 292 regarding the future of the cafeteria in Block 8. Now that the Northern Territory government is in occupation of Block 8, what is the future of the now disused cafeteria?

ANSWER

This is "Big Al's" cafeteria and I am used to the honourable member for Casuarina asking this question rather than the honourable member for Tiwi. Whilst the Northern Territory government has taken up occupation of part of Block 8 at the present time, the building is still in the hands of the contractors A.V. Jennings. I understand the ground floor which contains the cafeteria area will be refurbished as a cafeteria in part. There is also a theatrette or something down there that will be turned into a library for all members of the Assembly. I am not sure but I think it is a library. When it is rebuilt as a cafeteria, presumably it will be turned out for tender. I should imagine that, within the next 6 months or so, the place known as "Big Al's" should be back in business.

142 Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What progress has been made by Nabalco in its smelter feasibility study? Could he also inform us of the nature, quantity and quality of the Gove coal deposits?

ANSWER

On the first question, I would point out that a feasibility study on the siting of a refinery in the Northern Territory is still underway. My understanding is that Nabalco will not have a final report until March next year. In discussions that I have had with the company, they have indicated that the most important criterion for the provision of a smelter anywhere is the cost of electricity. They had selected 4 or 5 sites, Mr Speaker. There were several on the east coast of Australia, one at Gove, one in South-east Asia and one in Scandinavia. For convenience and simplicity, the company would very much like to have the smelter in the Northern Territory. However, for cost reasons and because we do not have a natural electricity resource as is commonplace on the east coast, the company may be forced to consider placing the smelter on the east coast. I would point out that there are always ways of encouraging people to establish an industry within a territory or state that has a particular interest in the industry but, with an exercise such as this, it could be that the company would prefer not to do anything at all rather than be forced into building in the Northern Territory and having to put up with an electricity cost that would make the whole project uneconomic.

The honourable member also asked a question relating to the coal deposits on the Gove Peninsula. Coal was discovered many years ago in various geophysical and drilling exercises that were conducted by private companies, by the government and the DMR. There was not a great deal of attention paid to the coal at the time because it was not an economic prospect from the point of view of either local consumption or of export. Similar indications of coal were found in the Port Keats area and that is another story.

The establishment of coal reserves at the Gove Peninsula would be most important in the assessment of a smelter refinery being established in the Northern Territory. I do not think it is a matter of saying that the refinery should go on the Gove Peninsula because that is where the coal is; it is very simply a fact that we have two established coal deposits. The value and the worth of the deposits in terms of generating power has not yet been established and a great deal of work has to be done before any further announcement or an assessment can be made on these particular deposits.

143 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it compulsory for taxis in the Northern Territory to have comprehensive insurance and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

I am not too sure whether it is compulsory or not. I would have to find out and let the honourable member know later.

144 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When the barytes mine at Dorisvale is in full production and the loaded trucks are travelling on the Stuart Highway, will the minister give consideration to making or planning a lay-by at the dangerous 14 mile hill so that ordinary traffic at peak periods can bypass the slow moving trucks?

ANSWER

This section of the road will be advertised for tender in February and there will be a lot of realigning and levelling off at that time. Certainly, we will take into account the needs of a slow moving traffic lane. I understand that some twelve trucks daily will be operating on that stretch when the barytes mine is in full operation. Until these studies are further undergone, of course, we cannot be too sure whether a slow moving lane will be needed in that section or not.

145 Ms D'ROZARIO to CHIEF MINISTER

When is it expected that the Public Service Commissioner will release details of the new scheme for allocation of housing to public servants?

ANSWER

I assume that the honourable member for Sanderson's question really relates to the new "Public Service Housing Policy". I have been pressing the Public Service Commissioner to give me this policy. I was first promised that I would have it in October, I think, but I still do not have it. I understand that it is something that has been discussed by the Public Service Commissioner and the consultative council of union representatives and departmental representatives, and I believe the Public Service

Commissioner is now working on it with the chairman of the Housing Commission. It is certainly something that I attach a degree of priority to and I remind the Public Service Commissioner about it at least fortnightly, so he is having the spurs applied to him.

146 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Will the minister confirm that the foreshore study of the Darwin harbour area which was commissioned by his department has now been completed? As a result, does he anticipate that the Darwin Trailer Boat Club and the Darwin Sailing Club will be granted leases for larger areas of land at Vestey's Beach?

ANSWER

The foreshore management study has been completed, I understand, although I have not received the report. Personally, I propose to submit such a report along with its recommendations to Cabinet. Until such time as that is done, I cannot provide any information as to the future of additional land applications for the existing establishments on foreshores.

147 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

In the capital works program for 1978-1979 regarding the item of a \$33,000 shed for the Coastal Plains Research Station, can the honourable minister tell me if this shed will be used by the Coastal Plains Research Station staff or by Professor Harry Messell?

ANSWER

The shed will be for the use of the Coastal Plains Research Station staff.

148 Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

It is in reference to the findings of the Jackson Committee that industrial morale in Australia is adversely affected by poor industrial safety records and by inadequate services for migrant workers. The question is, does the Department of Industrial Development have any means of compiling statistics which show time lost as a result of industrial accidents and time lost as a result of the contraction of industrial diseases in the Territory? If so, are these statistics compiled on a regular basis? If not, will he arrange for his department to compile those statistics and, in either case, have them presented to the Assembly?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as you know and the Assembly knows, industrial relations matters and industrial safety matters are split up into three portfolio areas. At this stage, I would assume that somebody else has got the problem. Certainly, any suggestions that the honourable member cares to make are worthy of consideration. I do not know if any exact statistics are being taken at this time through the department but we will have a look at it for him.

155 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Will the Chief Minister make a statement during these sittings about the transfer of the Australian Legal Aid Office to the Northern Territory government?

ANSWER

I see no reason to make a statement during this sittings on the proposed transfer of the Australian Legal Aid Office to the Northern Territory government. The Australian government has made certain proposals to the Northern Territory government that it should establish a legal aid commission and the Northern Territory government has considered these proposals and has made certain other suggestions to the Australian government. One of the Territory government's concerns is continued funding levels for the Australian Legal Aid Office. The Northern Territory government is not terribly concerned that the provision of legal aid in the Northern Territory is the responsibility of the Australian government. Whilst we see legal aid handled by the Territory government as the optimum, we certainly want to establish quite clearly before any transfer of responsibility is accepted that we will not be left holding the baby on this particular matter.

156 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Grants have now been announced for the family support scheme. Could he indicate the reason for the delay in the processing of applications for this scheme?

ANSWER

The responsibility for these grants rests with the federal Minister for Social Security. There is a committee of Northern Territorians, including officers of my department, officers of the Department of Social Security and people from the voluntary section who assess the merits of each individual application. The recommendations of that committee are forwarded through the Minister for Community Development of the Northern Territory government who has the task of making final recommendations to the federal minister. The recommendations from my office then go back through the office of child care etc and finally get to the Minister for Social Security who makes up her own mind anyway. I think the whole set of circumstances is most unsatisfactory to say the least. I expressed very clearly at the ministers' conference in Canberra last Friday that I believe that these functions should properly rest squarely with the governments of the states or territories. We are people on the ground and in the best position to make assessments of needs in our own communities. It would see to me that, if the Commonwealth got out of the business of direct approval of grants and got into the business of providing lump sum payments to the state departments and to the Northern Territory departments, then the whole process of grants and aid in this area would be speeded up quite considerably. Needless to say, the Commonwealth say that they are providing the funds; therefore they want an overview. It is quite competent for the Commonwealth to set guidelines and to seek undertakings from the states and the Territory that we would comply with those guidelines. If we did not, they have the ultimate threat of cutting off the water or, as happened to me the other night, the electricity. The negotiations between the state and Territory ministers and the Commonwealth in this area are proceeding. There is one final observation: it is really the states' money that the Commonwealth is spending in the first place anyway.

ago and, since then, litigation has been instituted. For reasons known only to itself, the Commonwealth government persists in retaining control of this particular matter and it has dragged on through the Deputy Crown Solicitor's office. It has dragged on despite numerous attempts on my part to speed it up. I have had officers ringing almost daily and certainly weekly. It has now got to the stage where it is in the call-over list of the Supreme Court for a hearing date. I have asked the Solicitor-General, whose services I volunteered to the Commonwealth government, to attend the call-over of the Supreme Court which is to be held on 13 December to ask for a date for a speedy trial.

This matter is nothing short of a scandal. It has taken months for various people to file affidavits and as far as I am concerned, there is absolutely no excuse. In fact, I have given consideration to legislating to cure the anomalous situation but, on reflection, I believe that would be too arbitrary an act. It might leave some people feeling dissatisfied. The matter is in the hands of the court but I am not imputing any delay to the court; I am imputing delay to the parties concerned in the matter. The reports will be tabled during this sittings as is prescribed.

165 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

The open, unlined storm-water drain in Alice Springs which runs between Lindsay Street and Ross Park School has become silted up and has caused water to become trapped upstream of Undoolya Road. This water has become stagnant and is a health hazard. The drain was constructed years ago as part of the early Eastside subdivisional development. Can the minister please investigate this and advise what action can be taken to rectify the problem.

ANSWER

I understand that normally problems of this kind are within the province of the local city council but I am advised that, because of sewerage works in the area, the area manager of the Department of Transport and Works is quite prepared to assist the council in this matter.

166 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is the minister aware that 1979 school term dates announced recently by the school authorities in various parts of Australia show that children in Northern Territory schools will receive two weeks less schooling in 1979 than children in most parts of Australia? Is the minister aware of any evidence to suggest that Northern Territory children are less in need of schooling now than other Australian children? Will he investigate the matter and attempt to have term dates adjusted in the Northern Territory so that our children receive the benefit of the extra week or two school each year.

ANSWER

I think I would need about 20 minutes to answer that question, Mr Speaker, even if it does call for an opinion or a series of opinions. Firstly, no, I have not been made aware of this by the Department of Education - and I assume the honourable member means that by averaging out the states' periods of schooling, we would be two weeks shorter than the states. I have no direct knowledge of this but it will certainly be looked into.

I have indicated on a number of occasions my concern about the compression of time available to students in formal classroom environment for core subjects, having regard to all of the electives and non-core subjects which seem to be taking up the school day. By that, Mr Speaker, I mean

that the school day itself has not been lengthened and yet the number of subject matters being taught in schools has increased. That is bad enough but, if we are actually eroding the amount of time available in the classroom, then I as minister would be very, very concerned about it indeed and I will be discussing the matter with officers of the Department of Education forthwith.

167 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

In light of the life of the Dhupuma College being extended for another year, for the 1979 school year, has he any indication whether the situation of the college will be completely reviewed and a positive decision made on its future?

ANSWER

The federal Minister for Education's agreeing - and that is exactly what he did - to extend the life of the Dhupuma College by at least another year was as a result of approaches by this government to allow more time to properly consider the future of that institution. We do not believe that sufficient examination has been made of the options which may be available to us in education in the Gove Peninsula or the eastern Arnhem Land area. Certainly, a detailed examination will be made of the future of Dhupuma and I would hope to see a firm decision made some time during the course of next school year to remove once and for all the uncertainty with which the people of that area now exist.

168 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

This question follows a question I asked of the Minister for Transport and Works in the last Assembly.

Having regard to the fact that the Minister for Community Development has a sum of over \$200,000 for pensioners' assistance, would he pay early attention to assistance for pensioners in the field of motor vehicle registration and compulsory third party insurance, as it is causing extreme hardship and some pensioners are facing the prospect of having to sell their cars?

ANSWER

The \$208,000 which this government set aside for pensioner assistance was primarily designed and is being used for the purpose of relieving hardship on pensioners in the provision of essential services, principally the services provided by government. The arrangement is this - and it is throughout the departments and statutory authorities which are responsible for the delivery of essential services for the maintenance of homes and flats and so on, such as electricity, water, sewerage - where a pensioner makes it known to the officers of those various authorities and departments that he is firstly a pensioner and secondly in a state of hardship as a result of having to pay essential services accounts, he is not to have his services interfered with or cut off or altered, nor is he to be threatened in any way until such time as he has had a chance to consult with the Department of Community Development. Where it is found that there is a genuine case of hardship, and there are some of them, the Department of Community Development steps in and makes sure that these accounts are paid and the people do not suffer hardship, as a result.

If we get ourselves into the area of non-essential services - while I fully recognise the difficulties that pensioners would face in this area - we are certainly going to have to look at a vastly increased sum above the amount of \$208,000 which we have been able to make available

this year. There is a limit to what any government can do, particularly a government of this size, in the provision of these types of subsidies, when in fact the primary responsibility for income maintenance for pensioners is that of the federal government. We do, however, believe that we have a responsibility to pensioners where they find themselves in difficulties as a result of government charges for essential services and this government will always seek to assist them or attempt to assist them.

169 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise why the Construction Safety Act and the regulations to that act have not come into effect, given that royal assent has now been given? Can he give an indication to the Assembly when the act and regulations may come into effect?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable gentleman to place his question on notice.

170 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Will it be the policy of the government to allow the use of demountables by youth groups and other organisations within the municipality of Darwin?

ANSWER

The short answer is yes. We will allow the use of demountables on these blocks for sporting organisations. However, the use of demountables for normal residential accommodation will be discouraged and the government hopes to work continuously towards removing those demountables that are currently used by the government for residential accommodation at this time.

171 Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Could the minister advise the House of the current status of the Rum Jungle restoration work?

ANSWER

Yes, Mr Speaker, I can give the honourable member an indication and I thank him for foreshadowing his question yesterday which helped me to get the information that I need.

At this stage, some \$300,000 has been spent by the Commonwealth government in preliminary cleaning up at the mill site at Rum Jungle. A working group involving some 20 people, representing the former Department of the Northern Territory, the Department of Construction, the Atomic Energy Commission and Conzinc-Riotinto of Australia, has made an indepth study of the methods of rehabilitation of the whole area and has presented a comprehensive report detailing several options. The report has been under study by Commonwealth officials and I understand it is to be presented to the Commonwealth government in the very near future. Until the government has decided on the appropriate information, Mr Speaker, that I have not received in writing from the Commonwealth, to the effect that they are considering an additional sum, very close to the previous amount, to be spent in the next 12 months on further rehabilitation work on the Rum Jungle site. As soon as I have some written confirmation of that, I will let the honourable member know.

171A Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What are the requirements for obtaining a driving instructor's licence?
Is there any restriction on the number of passengers that may be carried
in cars driven by students drivers?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place the questions on notice.

172 Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Will he table during the course of this sittings the recent report of the
Advisory Committee on Education?

ANSWER

I will most certainly table that report in this Chamber. I apologise to
honourable members for not having done so already. It was an oversight
on my part.

173 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

When will he make available to members of the Assembly the Auditor-
General's report on the Primary Producers Board for the 1977-78
financial year?

ANSWER

I am unaware that such a report exists and I understand that, under the
provisions of the previous Primary Producers Board legislation, there was
no requirement to table such reports in this House.

174 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he inform the Assembly whether or not the Northern Territory government officially sponsored the Northern Australian Development Seminar? If not, can he explain why I and many other people received press releases on North Australian Development Seminar letterhead, emanating from the Chief Minister's Department?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory government, so far as I am aware, did not officially sponsor the Northern Australian Development Seminar although it certainly supports such seminars. In fact, the opposition spokesman on the Northern Territory in the federal parliament, Dr Doug Everingham, asked me whether I supported the concept of a northern development seminar that he was responsible for organising some time ago. I agreed that the concept was a very good one and would lend it all support that I possibly could. However, I received no further request for support from Dr Everingham. The Northern Australian Development Seminar, which was organised by the member for Stuart in Alice Springs recently, was a most worthwhile effort. Certainly, I have given every support that I could. Should any press releases supporting it have come from my office, then I am not ashamed that they did. It is a very worthwhile concept.

175 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

I have a supplementary question; perhaps the Chief Minister did not hear me correctly. Can he explain to the Assembly why press releases on Northern Australian Development Seminar letterhead, not his own letterhead, emanated from the Chief Minister's office?

ANSWER

I was not aware that press releases on Northern Australian Development Seminar letterhead emanated from my office. In the event that they did, I can see absolutely no harm in it because the seminar was supported by me. Any such support that my staff could give, I would welcome.

176 Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he inform the House whether a drilling rig brought into the Northern Territory by Beach Petroleum has yet begun operation?

ANSWER

The Beach drilling rig came into the southern end of the Territory about a week ago. It spudded in on the midnight of the 19th and by the morning of the 20th it had completed 100 metres of drilling. The rig will probably be in the region for about 6 weeks. Whether any further drilling is done depends on the result of the first hole.

177 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In the past the annual reports of the Northern Territory Library Service were available to the public. However, they have not been available since 1973-74. Will the minister, in the interest of open government and for the information of library users, recommence this admirable practice by making the 1977-78 annual report of the Northern Territory Library Service available to the people?

ANSWER

I would certainly undertake to discuss the matter with the authors of those documents and determine their attitude. Where people believe they are making a report to a minister, they need not necessarily have the same attitude to their report as when they believe it will become a public document. I would certainly undertake to discuss it with that branch whether they are happy to continue to make their annual reports through the department to me on the basis that they become public documents. I do not have any objection to it.

Mr Speaker, I apologise to the House but I think I may have been under a misapprehension about the question from the honourable member for Fannie Bay. If I was, I gave her a completely wrong answer. The question was in relation to reports on libraries. I took her reference to be to the Libraries Association as opposed to the Northern Territory Library Service. Could she clarify that please?

Mrs O'NEIL: I was referring to the Northern Territory Library Service.

ANSWER

I apologise to the honourable member. That is a totally different thing to what I had in mind. I thought she was talking about submissions made by way of a report from the Northern Territory Libraries Association. The Northern Territory Library Service is a division of my department which is a completely different thing altogether. This is a report direct to a minister. The reports made by the library service previously would have been through official members in this Chamber when it was a Legislative Council. That would have been under quite different circumstances from what applies under self-government. What I would be prepared to do is to examine the possibility of discussing with the honourable member recommendations in a joint approach to the extremely difficult problem of trying to put together the existing shambles of library services in the Northern Territory. I would like to repeat that there is a great deal of difference between what I thought the question was and what in fact it turned out to be.

178 Mr DONDAS to CHIEF MINISTER

Is it a fact that the Northern Territory government has requested building societies in the Northern Territory to reduce their interest rates on home loans?

ANSWER

It is a fact that the Northern Territory government has been negotiating since about March of this year with the one building society in the Northern Territory, the Home Building Society, regarding the reduction of its interest rates. We have requested the building society to lower its interest rates. However, it was pointed out to us by the general manager and the chairman of the board of the building society that any reduction of interest rates on home loans themselves would necessarily be followed by a reduction in interest rates on deposits. The building society felt that such a reduction would virtually send money on deposit out of the Territory. It felt it would be unwise to reduce rates until complementary reductions had occurred elsewhere. Now that building societies' interest rates throughout Australia are on the way down, I have reason to believe there will very shortly be a reduction in the building society's interest rates. I might add that it is the government's policy to do all it can to reduce interest rates on moneys available

for lending overall. Certainly, I do not think that Northern Territorians would want to be disadvantaged by having less money to borrow. After all, you only can borrow money if someone is prepared to lend it and people will not lend money if they are not able to get the optimum interest rate on that money.

179 Mrs LAWRIE to TREASURER

Can he advise the present status of the Carpentaria College, what its present administration is and, hopefully, given an indication of its future use?

ANSWER

While I have a recent report from my department on this matter, it is not at all satisfactory. We have been trying to get the federal government to formally transfer responsibility for the mortgage for Carpentaria College to the Northern Territory government ever since 1 July. There has been a series of letters on this matter. The situation at the present time is that the Carpentaria College has gone into receivership and the liquidator has re-raised certain questions as to the amount of outstanding loans and valuations. This is being looked into by various people at the present time. Until we can get the federal Department of Administrative Services to formally vest the responsibility for this mortgage in the Northern Territory government, we cannot do very much about expediting the matter by dropping the axe and saying "That's enough. This is the decision". While this is not a very satisfactory answer, I felt that the honourable member would be pleased to know at least that much.

180 Mr BALLANTYNE to CHIEF MINISTER

Recently, the Chief Minister made public announcements regarding improvement programs for parks in urban areas. Can he inform the House of the type of work that is planned for the next 12 months?

ANSWER

There are numerous details in relation to urban beautification which I could give this House and I am certainly prepared to furnish them to any honourable member who is interested. In Alice Springs, numerous streets and parks are to be landscaped during the next 12 months by the Forestry Branch. Various school grounds and, in the northern region, places such as Howard Springs and Berry Springs are to have beautification and landscaping work done to them. Mindil and Casuarina beaches will have further work done on them. Most of the major roads will have some beautification work carried out on them and also the road to Yarrowonga. Work will be done on places further afield such as Tumbling Waters and McMinn's Lagoon. I understand also that places such as the Coomalie Creek and Leaning Tree Lagoon picnic areas will be cleaned up and beautified.

Generally, the Forestry Branch of the Parks and Wildlife Commission will be carrying out a great deal of urban beautification in the 2 major Territory centres. I understand that work will also be done in Katherine and Tennant Creek. Seedling trees have been supplied to the Elliott Progress Association which is very interested in doing work in its own small centre. As well, places such as Ti Tree are having work carried out. All in all, the Forestry Branch has quite an ambitious year ahead of it. I think we can look forward to some improvement in the approach to this matter in Darwin and the other centres.

181 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Did the minister recently accept a present of furniture from persons from Southeast Asia? If so, was that furniture a personal gift to him or was it a gift to the Northern Territory government?

ANSWER

This matter was brought up in debate here many months ago. The present referred to by the honourable member was made to myself. It was a personal gift from Datuk Harris Sellah, the Chief Minister of Sabah.

182 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Continual comment is being made about the street lights remaining on during daylight hours. Could he please inform us as to the reason why this is so?

ANSWER

I have a comment from the Electricity Commission about this problem. Since the rehabilitation work commenced a series of time clocks have been installed throughout the Darwin area. A surprisingly high rate of failures has resulted in lights being on at odd hours and, in some cases, not on when required. Some 2 weeks ago the commission commenced a complete check and test of all clocks throughout the Darwin area. Whilst the clock is absent from the control box, a by-pass switch is engaged which puts the lights on at all times. The fact that lights are on during the day at the present time and for the next week will indicate that the time clock has been removed and is under test.

183 Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

My question refers to the meeting held last December by the Premiums Advisory Committee to review the rates of workmen's compensation insurance premiums charged in the Northern Territory. Is the minister aware that the rates in the Territory are way above those applicable in the states. In particular in the case of fishermen in the Northern Territory the rate is \$35 for each \$100 of earnings, while in Queensland it is \$4 for each \$100 of earnings. In the case of Northern Territory building workers, it is \$22 for each \$100, as against \$5 per \$100 in Queensland. In view of the seriousness of this situation, will he inform the Assembly of the progress made by this committee and when we may expect to see a significant reduction in Northern Territory workmen's compensation insurance premiums?

ANSWER

If the honourable gentlemen will recall previous debates, mention was made of the high rates for fishermen and in the construction industry. This is no secret. We are well aware of it. How you get the rates down, of course, is another tack to the problem. The question of the difference between Northern Territory and Queensland rates is well recognised. The fact that there is a state government insurance office over there does have some effect on the case because there is cross subsidisation and people who pay premiums on their homes and on the contents of their homes are subsidising workmen's compensation. The whole question of insurance is being considered by the government at the present time.

184 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Can he explain to me the new Commonwealth scheme to assist patients who live in isolated areas and require transport and accommodation to seek further treatment elsewhere? And does this service or scheme cover orthodontic treatment?

ANSWER

I can, Mr Speaker, and I thank the honourable member for an hour's notice this morning so that I could get the information he was seeking. Perhaps I should say first that the IPTAA scheme, the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance scheme does not apply to orthodontic or other dental services. The new scheme provides travel and accommodation benefits to those people living more than 200 kilometres from the nearest appropriate specialist. In special circumstances, places less than 200 kilometres may be included in the scheme and an application has recently been made to the Director-General of Health in Canberra to include in the scheme Bathurst, Melville, Groote and Elcho Islands and Lake Evella. A reply to this application is awaited.

The scheme is initiated by a general practitioner and the application has to be approved by the Northern Territory Commonwealth Director of Health. The scheme covers surface economy travel, less the first \$20. However, air travel is allowed if this is necessary and will largely apply in the Territory. An accommodation benefit of up to \$15 per night is payable where an overnight stay is necessary for the appropriate treatment to take place. The scheme does not cover travel outside Australia, cost of ambulance or emergency transport or inter-hospital transfer. The patient is required to pay for the transportation and accommodation charges in the first instance and then claim repayment from the Commonwealth Department of Health when the documentation is completed.

185 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

My question relates again to his gift of furniture. Was the furniture which was given to the minister given an import clearance off the Darwin wharf by customs officers and was import duty and sales tax paid on it?

ANSWER

It is a fair while ago. I am sure the normal procedures were undertaken because I asked the shipping agent to deliver it to my house and I think some dues were paid. But for the exact, fine detail, he will have to put the question on notice.

186 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Previously, I asked a question of the honourable Minister for Lands who then had responsibility for water rates about the subject of bulk water rates for market gardeners. I am unaware of any optimistic results. So now, as it is in the honourable minister's portfolio, I ask him could we expect some consideration to be given to this subject?

ANSWER

The cost of providing water to market gardeners and other primary producers for irrigation purposes from the normal town water supply has been looked at from time to time. Because of limitations and the capacity of the reticulation systems themselves and in some areas, for example Tennant Creek and Alice Springs, the limited water available from the source providing the town supplies, the policy has been to limit bulk use of water

from these sources to ensure that sufficient water would be made available for domestic purposes. The government has given considerable assistance to primary producers, including market gardeners, to develop their own supplies and this will continue. Current indications are that the town water supplies are becoming increasingly strained in meeting normal domestic and town needs and therefore there is little likelihood of the present policy changing in the near future.

187 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

My question follows on from a question I asked of the honourable Minister for Community Development yesterday, in answer to which I was advised that there is not likely to be a concession offered to pensioners for motor vehicle registration from his department. My question to the honourable minister now is, will he consider a concessional rate for pensioners for motor vehicle registration and compulsory third party insurance, having regard to the relatively poor public transport system and the extremes of climate?

ANSWER

In the case of any sort of subsidy it is not just for one minister to say that he would consider it or otherwise, except that it would have to go before Cabinet, if a decision was to be taken. I indicated earlier that there are something like 1,876 pensioners who drive vehicles - that was on a formula basis - and that some subsidies do apply in the states. Whether the Northern Territory government is to subsidise pensioners for their registration charges has yet to be determined. Certainly, I think third party insurance comes into another category.

188 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he tell us by what provision of the Electricity Commission Act is the commission empowered to disconnect the supply of electricity to various premises for non-payment of accounts? By way of explanation, Mr Speaker, perhaps I can just say that under the old Supply of Services Ordinance specific powers to disconnect supply for that reason did exist.

ANSWER

I will examine the act and report back to the member later on.

189 Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

This question is asked on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Can he advise what advantages would a meat marketing authority have for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I am not so sure that a meat marketing authority would do a lot of good at this time because of the fact that we are tied very closely to the federal people in respect of quotas and of course other marketing arrangements, most of them undertaken down south. We have commenced a study and are currently looking at New South Wales and Queensland marketing authority legislation. There may be some benefits to be gained from that. As you are aware, Sir, we have looked at various schemes throughout the years. In fact, a beef cattle stabilisation scheme was introduced in this House and disallowed on Tuesday; I think it was introduced in 1975.

We will strive wherever possible to assist the beef cattle producers. That is our charter and, if marketing legislation is one way of doing that and we can convince the producers that that is what they need or if that is what they want, we will produce that sort of result for them.

190 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has the minister received complaints from residents in Bagot Road regarding vehicles crashing into power poles which results in the power being cut off? Will the Northern Territory Electricity Commission start suing for the recovery of these costs?

ANSWER

I understand the commission is suing motorists for the damage they cause to poles. There is no way that the motorist can be sued for the inconvenience to the consumer. However, I understand the Electricity Commissioner is currently protecting some of the most favoured poles so that there will be less inconvenience to consumers.

191 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Has the government subcommittee on the reform of land legislation reported to the government yet? If so, is he in a position to give this Assembly a report on the progress of the work of this subcommittee?

ANSWER

I am not in a position at this stage to give the House a report on progress in this matter. The government does regard the total review of land laws in the Northern Territory as of the highest priority and we will be seeking in the very near future to engage some additional assistance on this very large task, with a view to having consolidated legislation in this House at the earliest possible date next year.

192 Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can the minister inform the House of progress to date in the organisation of a mining technology training course?

ANSWER

The answer is yes. The honourable member has asked this question in the House once before and on the last occasion that I answered the question there had not been a great deal of activity. I am pleased to report that since April 1978 when the Chamber of Mines first sponsored the educational forum to determine the training that was needed in the mining and quarrying industries in the Northern Territory, a recommendation from this forum was that a steering committee be formed to work out the curricula and organisational details to get a training program under way. The committee set up at the moment which consists of members of the Chamber of Mines, the Institute of Quarrying, the Department of Mines and Energy, the Darwin Community College, the National Training Council and the Trades and Labour Council had its first meeting in the middle of this year. Consequent to the meetings of the steering committee, the manpower development officer from the Master Builders Association has been seconded to the Chamber of Mines to research the training requirements of the industry. A preliminary report presented by him to the steering committee generally endorsed the need for training courses at the operator and supervisor levels.

Complementary to the steering committee's activities, the Darwin Community College has advertised for a lecturer in mining education. The duties of this lecturer will include a comprehensive survey of the mining industry's training needs. The manpower development officer's report will be utilised here, assessing existing courses and developing new programs along with conducting some courses in specific training areas and making recommendations for future policy on mining education in the Northern Territory.

Recommendations relating to the appointment of a formal mining training committee to replace the steering committee and some specific proposals for training courses and arrangements for liaison with the Darwin Community College, the Department of Mines and Energy and the Department of Education have been prepared by the committee and presented to the Chamber of Mines. Responses to the recommendations and to the advertisement for a mining lecturer are expected to be made available shortly.

193 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Can he inform the Assembly when Mr Jack Taylor, the proprietor of the Bloodwood Caravan Park, is likely to receive advice from either the minister or his department on the numerous submissions which have been made regarding the future use of his caravan park?

ANSWER

I can say that Mr Taylor has received, in response to his submissions, numerous replies, correspondence and interviews with me personally and other officers of both the Lands and Housing Department and the Housing Commission on the subject of the future of his park which is part of the 32-square-mile acquisition area. A decision was made a few weeks ago that a fixed period of tenancy would be offered to Mr Taylor. The period will be aligned to the time it takes to decide finally on the future use of the area for the town plan that is being worked on for the 32-square-mile area. It is hoped to give Mr Taylor about 3 years of fixed term tenancy at this stage. As soon as the future of the 32-square-mile area is determined, the agreements for occupancy in the area will be reviewed and renewed in the light of that information from the town plan.

194 Mr DONDAS to CHIEF MINISTER

Is it a fact that he is going to attend a federal and state ministers' conference on employment in Canberra tomorrow? If so, what is the purpose of his attendance at that meeting?

ANSWER

I will be attending a conference of federal and state labour ministers in Canberra tomorrow on the problems of technology and employment. I understand the conference will be commencing at about 10 am and, for that reason, I have to leave Darwin this afternoon and I crave your indulgence in that regard, Mr Speaker. I will be accompanied by the Public Service Commissioner, Mr Norm Campbell. I understand that, amongst the papers to be considered by the conference which will also be attended by the federal Minister for Productivity, Mr MacPhee, and Mr Ray Groom, the Minister for Environment, Housing and Community Development, will be one on the problems of unemployment. Since that has received some attention already at this sittings, I think it is not inappropriate that I do attend this conference. I hope to report to the Assembly during the course of next week whether it appeared to me to bear any fruit.

I might mention that there is a further conference being arranged by the Victorian premier in Melbourne some time during December. I have received an invitation for the Northern Territory to send 2 senior officials to this conference. It has been pointed out that politicians are not being asked as it is intended that it not be a platform for putting forward political views but for putting forward, they hope, more objective points of views and getting down to business with technocrats, officials and people interested in labour relations. I am nominating 2 senior officials to attend and one of them will be the Public Service Commissioner. In due course, probably at our first sittings next year, I will also report to the Assembly on what benefits, if any, for the Northern Territory will come out of that conference. I note some recent news reports that the president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions has been throwing cold water over the concept of the conference but I do hear that lately he has relented and has decided to attend.

195 Mr DOOLAN to CHIEF MINISTER

What are the guidelines used for deciding whether information will or will not be given to the parliament? I preface my question by stating that the Chief Minister is aware that, on 13 October this year, the minister assisting the federal treasurer issued a special Gazette prohibiting the sale of Willeroo under section 22 of the Foreign Takeover Act. I ask the Chief Minister to categorically deny that he or his ministers, or someone acting on his or their behalf, intervened with the federal government to ensure that the sale was blocked? If he will not make such a denial, I ask why he or others took that action?

ANSWER

The guidelines for the giving of information to the parliament are simply whatever information ministers of the Crown consider should be reported to the parliament in the course of their ministerial duties. It is obvious that this cannot include everything they do because many matters are of a confidential nature. On matters of topical public interest and matters of government policy where appropriate, I believe they should from time to time make ministerial statements. I might add that question time is available every day for use by all honourable members, to elicit information from the government and the honourable member for Victoria River is availing himself of this opportunity at the present time.

I have not seen the Commonwealth government Gazette which apparently precludes the purchase of Willeroo pursuant to the foreign takeover legislation. I certainly was told that the Foreign Takeovers Committee had intervened and I can assure you that the intervention was not at the instigation of the Northern Territory government. In fact, the proposed purchaser of Willeroo, a Mr Wise, sought to clarify through the Lands Branch whether the Northern Territory government had any opposition to his purchase of Willeroo. It was indicated that we had no opposition because he already owned one property in the Northern Territory, Benmara Station, which I understand he operates efficiently and well. These are the sort of people that we want to encourage to take up land in the Northern Territory.

196 Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is the minister able to say whether the Bureau of Mineral Resources intends to reduce its Darwin staff?

ANSWER

The Bureau of Mineral Resources is a federal department. I am aware that since the transfer of the Department of the Northern Territory to this

government in July, the Bureau of Mineral Resources has been phasing out some of its activities in the Northern Territory. Two local officers that I know of have been seeking employment with the Mines Branch. Both of these gentlemen are professionals in their field and would be well valued by the Department of Mines and Energy if they came. As to whether the Bureau of Mineral Resources is phasing out on a permanent basis, I do not know. I would have to get further information.

197 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER f8r COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Will he confirm that the central reference library of the former Department of the Northern Territory is still located in Canberra because adequate accommodation is not available in Darwin? When does he anticipate that this library will be transferred to the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Not only is the central reference library a question but there are about 10,000 articles of archival nature which need to be located in the Northern Territory. We are in quite some difficulty in coming to grips with the enormous expense in correcting the run-down state of library services in the Northern Territory. This government has a whole series of priorities. One of the priorities is the establishment of a proper public lending library service in the Northern Territory, including reference libraries and archives. This is not a problem which we will solve overnight unless we can find ourselves a printing press and some people can wave magic wands and create buildings overnight. It is a difficult task. The government is trying to tackle it.

198 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he give the Assembly an assurance that the Nhulunbuy airport road to Yirrkala community will be sealed in the next year's program?

ANSWER

I would like to give that assurance. If it were not for some difficulties being experienced with the alignment, I would be able to give that assurance. The government has the money programmed. There is some difficulty in getting the alignment because of the bauxite reserve. I think those problems will be remedied in a very short time.

206 Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is it the intention of the Northern Territory government or any of its departments or instrumentalities to print and send Christmas cards this year?

ANSWER

No, it is not the intention of the Northern Territory government to send out Christmas cards this year. The view taken is that the cost far exceeds any benefit, especially these days with the volume of Christmas cards that seem to float around and, of course, the postage rates being as high as they are. For each government department and instrumentality to be sending out Christmas cards, the postage bill would no doubt run to an astronomical figure. However, members can be assured that the Northern Territory government does wish all citizens of the Northern Territory a merry and happy Christmas and a prosperous and successful New Year.

207 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

What is his government's policy with respect to the retention of unsolicited gifts presented either to himself or to his ministers? Can he also advise whether he has given consideration to implementing the Prime Minister's policy on this issue, which briefly is that, if ministers receive unsolicited gifts from business to the value of over \$100, they pay the value of that gift to the receiver of public moneys at the Prime Minister's Department and, if it is a gift from an overseas government, that value instead of being \$100 is \$250?

ANSWER

My government has never had to formulate a policy in relation to unsolicited gifts because none of my ministers has ever received a gift of sufficient worth to make it worth formulating such a policy. I understand that whilst the honourable Minister for Transport and Works was a back bench member of this House in the First Assembly, he received a cane lounge suite from the Chief Minister of Sabah, Datuk Harris Sellab, in appreciation of many gestures of hospitality from the whip, as he then was, to Datuk Harris during a visit to the Northern Territory. But this was a personal gesture that the honourable Leader of the Opposition has seen fit to dredge up out of the past over the last couple of sitting days, probably to try to throw a smoke screen around the machinations of the honourable member for MacDonnell in the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress where he uses public and taxpayers' funds to run election campaigns.

But there is no doubt that if substantial gifts were offered to ministers of this Assembly, those gifts would be returned. I am not talking about small gifts, such as a bottle of whisky, although I can recall that last Christmas the receiver of Willeroo, Mr Quinton, was so kind as to send me an unsolicited bottle of Black Label whisky and I thought then that this was perhaps not the best of moves on his part, in view of the fact that negotiations were outstanding and I sent him a cheque for the value of that bottle of whisky because of the particular circumstances. I think, Mr Speaker, that ministers have to be trusted to have the discretion in various circumstances to act as honest men and men of integrity. But as a general rule, certainly, I would return gifts that were of any substantial value unless there were particularly mitigating circumstances around the donation of the gift.

208 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When did he receive the gift of furniture from the Chief Minister of Sabah and could he place a value on that gift?

ANSWER

I ask him to place his question on notice.

209 Mr HARRIS to TREASURER

Could he please inform this House when the new Darwin Town Plan will be adopted?

ANSWER

The Darwin Town Plan 1978 that went on display on 1 January this year has gone through a long and rather tedious process of display and the hearing of objections. The Town Planning Board has completed its deliberations and handed the plan across to me within the past couple of weeks. I have sought a number of changes to it before presenting it to the Executive Council with a view to having it adopted. I expect that the formalities of drawing up the paperwork required for submission to the Executive Council will be completed this week. I would envisage that the plan will be adopted at the earliest Executive Council meeting after the end of this week.

210 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What is the policy of his government on the future development of Alice Springs Community College?

ANSWER

I would ask him to place the question on notice.

211 Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Has the minister or his department paid any attention to the provision of areas specifically for fossickers and does the minister agree that such a plan would be of assistance to tourist operators in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Currently there is no provision under the ordinance to enable people to fossick in the Northern Territory. I think this is of detriment to ourselves more than to the people that are coming here to fossick. We are making provisions in the new mining legislation to cover areas for people to fossick - not particularly for people with miners' rights but just for the average tourist who may have an interest in gemstones. I am particularly aware of this because of a recent visit to the vermiculite operation just northeast of Alice Springs and the Harts Range area. There were 3 bus tours of people who had camped out and had been there for several days fossicking. It is a part of their routine to stop off in this area every year. The people who were there raised with us the problem that they do not know beforehand whether they will be allowed to operate in an area. In fact, these particular people had been advised by Queenslanders that, if you go to the gemstone fields in Central Australia, the Mines Department people will chase you off with a gun. I believe it is unfortunate that this sort of word should travel through the travel industry. I believe one of the best ways that we could over-

come this information being spread about is to set aside in the legislation special areas for fossickers, make the rules known and make the areas known so that the whole of the travel industry in Australia can be aware of them.

212 Ms D'ROZARIO to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the progress of the implementation of an ADP-based land administration and information system?

ANSWER

I would ask the honourable member to place the question on notice as I do not have any detailed answer that I can provide for her this morning.

Perhaps, if I might suggest a procedure, Mr Speaker, and it is entirely up to honourable members whether they wish to adopt this procedure or not, but it is obvious that ministers cannot carry all the information pertaining to their departments around in their heads for question time and, when a question of a technical nature such as that just asked by the honourable member for Sanderson is to be asked, perhaps if members gave the minister concerned 24 hours' notice, he would be ready with the answer which they may want for some other purpose in the House at the time.

213 Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can the minister inform the House when the Beach Petroleum drilling program in the Simpson desert will be completed?

ANSWER

The short answer, Mr Speaker, is no. I announced to the House the other day that the Beach Petroleum drilling program had just started. I have seen a report in the last 24 hours to say that Beach are down to a depth of 1,353 metres and they are setting their casing. I would expect this hole to take another 4 to 5 weeks. Whether there are any more holes in this program and whether the program will continue will depend on what comes out of this particular drilling.

214 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Has the Minister for Lands and Housing made a firm decision to give Mr Taylor of the Bloodwood Caravan Park a 3-year lease only? If so, has he or his department informed Mr Taylor of the decision?

ANSWER

I informed the House the other day that I had given instructions that Mr Taylor was to be given a fixed-term tenure - I do not think I used the word "lease" - over the premises that he is renting from the government in the 32-square-mile acquisition area for a period of 3 years. On subsequent checking with the Housing Commission who at the present time has the responsibility for administering these agreements, it is thought that there may be a possibility of extending that period of fixed-term tenure beyond a 3-year period and this is being looked at at the present time. As to whether or not Mr Taylor has been directly informed by myself, I have had a number of discussions with him on this matter in the past. I do specifically recall saying to him that he would be given a term of undisturbed occupancy under his existing agreement. It is now thought better to redraw the agreement to be rid of some anomalies that are in the existing agreement but I believe the honourable member for Tiwi has had words with him after she raised these questions with me and I advised her

within the past few weeks that she could certainly inform him, in response to his queries to her, that he would be receiving a fixed-term tenancy.

215 Mrs PADGHAM-PRUICH to TREASURER

What increase has occurred in the Lands Department establishment since self-government, what areas are these increases in and what additional services are being offered to justify these increases?

ANSWER

I have had some forewarning of this question. The Department of Lands and Housing had a total staffing establishment of 290 on 1 July and 317 on 22 November. All but one of these positions have been created in the executive and management services area. The management services functions such as personnel, recruitment, finance, office services and registry were carried out prior to 1 July by a large centralised area for all branches of the Department of the Northern Territory. Each department now has to provide staff to perform these duties within its own department. An organisation proposal is currently under consideration to improve the service to the public within the Department of Lands and Housing and this will probably result in additional positions being created. Steps have already been taken in some areas to reduce delays and it is confidently expected that, as new proposals are progressively implemented, the service to the public will improve.

216 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has he given a direction of his office barring other government departments from tendering for contracts let by the Department of Transport and Works. If so, can he explain why?

ANSWER

I cannot remember just what directions I might have given to the department. Certainly, it is a government policy that departments would be unable to tender against private enterprise in normal situations. I do recall writing to the Electricity Commission in this regard and directing the commission not to contract against the private sector.

217 Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Is he aware of concern being expressed by licensed charter airlines about illegal charter operators?

ANSWER

This has been a problem for some time. Approaches have been made to the federal Minister for Transport to transfer the functions that look after charter operations in the Northern Territory government. At present, we have a consultant from the Western Australia government, Mr Frank Gallagher, who is currently working on our air policies to assist us in the future. We will be ready for some transfer of these functions possibly towards the middle of next year. The whole question of regional management of this aspect of government from South Australia has proved a dismal failure over a long period. I have pleaded with the federal minister to get some enforcement in this area so that the illegal charter operators would not be able to operate.

218 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Firstly, when will regulations be made concerning the fees to be paid for licences by electrical contractors? Secondly, why are electrical contractors being asked to pay specific licence fees when these fees have not yet been prescribed by regulations as required by the act?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to find out the information for the honourable member and report back to her later in the day.

219 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

About 18 months ago, interest was generated in land on the Marrakai Plains which was supposed to be released for miscellaneous leases. Many months have passed since the survey of these areas has been completed but the land has still not been released. What is the delay and when will the land be released?

ANSWER

Five blocks were tentatively designed for release under miscellaneous lease tenure some time ago. Two blocks were actually brought to the stage of being surveyed but, whilst that survey was being undertaken, an interim investigation was commenced into the possibility of subdividing the blocks further because at that time they were about 50 square miles each. It was proposed to relook at the question of bringing them into smaller blocks to allow more people to participate in this type of activity, seeing the blocks concerned were adjacent to the Arnhem Highway and had reasonable access. The investigations included looking into the question of the availability of electricity which is certainly a very important consideration in the viability of these types of concerns when they are operated in a fairly small way. The land conservation unit of the Department of Lands and Housing is currently finalising a soil survey over this particular area and I hope that information is with me very shortly, recommending a release of 4 blocks in the area in question as it is my belief and my government's belief that we must put as many of these blocks out to the public as is possible in the shortest time to allow more people than at present to get on with the job of developing a viable miscellaneous lease-type primary production enterprise in the Northern Territory.

220 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

My question is in regard to the proposal to establish the museum and art gallery on Bullocky Point. Is it the government's intention to proceed with the original design or are new plans to be developed? If so, will local architects be commissioned for that purpose?

ANSWER

I think I have already indicated to the House that the original plans as envisaged from the Canberra-based architects will not be used. The reason, of course, is that the cost was well out of proportion to what the Northern Territory could reasonably afford. The target that the government had set for the building was in the order of \$5m and the costing came out ranging between \$10m and \$12m, and indeed rise and fall would have caused it probably to go more like \$14m by the time it was complete. That was quite beyond our resources. The Museums and Art Galleries Board, through its chairman, has been requested to involve

the Department of Transport and Works in the commissioning of local architects or whatever form of tendering is considered by that department as being the most efficient and equitable. The concern of this government is, of course, to see that the maximum degree of local expertise is used. That would include local architects, engineers and, hopefully, providing they can tender satisfactorily, local builders.

221 Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can the minister inform the House of progress to date in the review or initiation of legislation under his control?

ANSWER

I can advise the honourable member - and it follows in from a question asked the other day by the honourable Leader of the Opposition who asked why is the Construction Safety Ordinance not in effect now that royal assent has been given and when will it be implemented. I believe the honourable member directed it to my colleague, the Minister for Transport and Works, who fielded the question and ultimately handed it over to me.

The answer to the question is that the Construction Safety Act has not yet commenced as the rules and regulations which are necessary to enable the act to be brought into operation are yet to be approved by the Executive Council. The drafting of the rules and regulations has been completed and it is expected these will be considered by the Executive Council early in December. I am sure the honourable member will get great solace from that; he has pursued it vigorously.

Relating to other acts that are now in the pipeline, proposals for an entirely new Mining Act to replace the existing rather outdated legislation have been under consideration for some time. The new draft act has been circulated to companies and other interested parties, such as the Chamber of Mines and other organisations. Various responses are being considered at the moment.

Concerning the Mines Regulation Act, following an agreement between the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory government, provision for enforcement of environmental conditions recommended by the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry's second report is being made in the Northern Territory Mines Regulation Act. A draft of the necessary regulations has been received and is being reviewed by the Mines and Energy Department. Comments will be provided to the chief draftsman for the preparation of a final draft after consultation with the appropriate Commonwealth departments. So far as the Petroleum (Prospecting and Mining) Act is concerned, the department is in the process of forwarding instructions to the legislative draftsmen for amendments to bring this act into line with the Aboriginal Land Rights Act and to extend the maximum term of a permit. In so far as the Mines Safety Control Act is concerned, Cabinet approval has been obtained for a complete drafting of the regulations as a matter of priority. No date for the likely completion of this work can be indicated. The act itself has been passed and it cannot be brought into operation until the regulations are complete.

222 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What steps is his department taking to upgrade its ADP facilities to cope with the transfer of Department of Health functions on 1 January next year and also to cope with the Treasury functions which are currently being carried on an agency basis by the Commonwealth?

ANSWER

I thought I answered a question last week that dealt with ADP. I recall that we let contracts for \$70,000 and there was another contract for \$350,000 to go. I should imagine that, with this money being spent on those facilities, it would involve the transferred functions. However, I will seek further information for the honourable gentleman and let him know.

223 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Litter still remains one of the major problems in the Northern Territory today. Has there been an increase in the number of people who have had on-the-spot litter fines imposed on them? I would also like to know when the Northern Territory government will be introducing initiatives to help solve our growing litter problem?

ANSWER

There is absolutely no doubt that the present provisions for the control of litter and the prevention of the littering of our streets and countryside is a miserable failure. You could not describe it as anything else. We thought that we would go a long way towards solving the problem with the on-the-spot litter fines. That just has not worked. On my understanding, no more than about 11 on-the-spot notices have been issued to date and only 3 fines have been collected. When the remaining 8 fines were not paid, officers of the Darwin city council - I am referring only to Darwin at the moment - found that they had been given false names and addresses. Clearly, the present system is not working and we will have to take a long hard look at it. Officers of my department in conjunction with the city councils and other interested people will be exploring the matter with great vigour. Cabinet is at this stage anticipating a submission for its consideration which is being prepared by the National Parks and Wildlife Commission with the idea of taking up some of the matters mentioned by His Honour the Administrator during his speech to the Assembly. It is a very difficult problem. I have mentioned in this place various methods used to try to counter it including one from New Zealand which attracts me greatly. It is something that is being pursued by officers of the department and by the National Parks and Wildlife Commission. I would hope that we will be able to come up with some solution but, quite clearly, we have been unable to do so to date.

224 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has the allocation of grants to community organisations from the 1978-79 budget been completed? If so, have all organisations who applied for grants been notified?

ANSWER

All grants have not yet been finalised. All of those of a recurrent nature would have been and advice would have been given to most of those at this stage as to their success or otherwise. It adds up to

something like \$330,000 worth of community grants both in the general community grants field and in the grants to welfare organisations field. I hope to be in a position to give more detailed information tomorrow.

225 Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it the intention of the government to release Banteng cattle to private enterprise for experimentation?

ANSWER

It is not the intention of the government to farm out Banteng cattle. However, we would be interested in hearing any propositions from private pastoralists who may have some ideas that might be useful in animal production. We would certainly want to hear those ideas before we even thought about farming those animals out privately.

226 Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

Is he in a position to inform the Assembly of the site of the proposed casino in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

The site for the proposed hotel-casino development in Alice Springs will be what is called the old inner farms area on the town side of the Gap over the other side of the Todd River from the main centre of Alice Springs itself. The company that the Northern Territory government proposes to continue to negotiate an agreement with owns a 20-acre site. I met most members of the Alice Springs city corporation yesterday evening to discuss this matter before public announcements were made. The members present very enthusiastically received the announcement of the development and the details of the development and foresaw no particular problems with the siting of the development. I would like to inform honourable members that drawings of the Darwin development and the Alice Springs development will be on display in the committee room for members who wish to look at them today.

227 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

In view of the damage to the telecom installation at Cox Peninsula and knowing that Telecom own the towers and lines through Palmerston Park and these are used at about half capacity now, what will the Northern Territory government do to remove these unsightly erections and have a more aesthetically pleasing public service facility before negotiations are completed between the Northern Territory government, the Commonwealth and Telecom regarding the future of Cox Peninsula and power reticulation across the harbour?

ANSWER

It is true that the Commonwealth owns the 66KV transmission lines between Stokes Hill power station and the installation on Cox Peninsula. There are no plans to remove or modify the line where it crosses Palmerston Park. However, it is proposed to remove the section of overhead line between Stokes Hill power station and the city zone sub-station in McMinn Street within the next year as this will be redundant. The commission uses one circuit of the line between the city zone sub-station and Mindil Beach as a feeder to Darwin Hospital. This feeder operates at 11KV although the line is rated as 66KV. The commission has no control over the future of the equipment owned by the Commonwealth. However, it is understood that the Commonwealth intends to restore the supply to Cox Peninsula substantially as it was before the cyclone.

229 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is he aware of speculation that the Corporation of the City of Darwin will establish a caravan park on or near the old golf course at Fannie Bay to replace the Mindil Beach caravan park? Does he intend to make land available in that area for the purpose of a caravan park?

ANSWER

In discussions with the city corporation on an alternative site for the Mindil Beach caravan park, an area on the old golf course was discussed along with others but no decision has been made on the site for the new council caravan park. I will be seeking from the corporation, as soon as possible, its decision as to where such a park should go. Action will then have to be taken under the Town Planning Act to publicly display those areas if they require changes to the plan.

230 Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

When will the vacant crown land at Marrara be vested in the city council for sport and recreation purposes?

ANSWER

A draft plan of the area has been drawn up in consultation with the city corporation and the planning unit of the Department of Lands and Housing. At present, the site is being surveyed. I would hope that the site will formally be vested in the corporation later in December but, knowing how things tend to slow down somewhat near Christmas, it would be early January. I have given instructions to the department that this matter is to receive continuous urgent attention because we would like to see this land vested in the various sporting organisations as soon as possible.

231 Mr VALE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is he aware that the New South Wales government has announced that it will licence 6 casinos? If so, what effect does he think this will have on the Northern Territory proposals?

ANSWER

I am aware of press reports that the New South Wales government has decided to license 6 casinos in New South Wales. I do not believe that this is a matter for concern by the Northern Territory government in relation to its own recent announcement. The New South Wales government is obviously taking steps to legalise an existing situation. In New South Wales, they have a number of illegal casinos and it is speculated that quite a amount of undesirable activity is associated with illegal gambling in that state. I understand further that the New South Wales casino proposal is that they should operate under an English club system whereby persons have to be financial members of a club for a certain minimum period before they can actually gain entry to a casino. I do not see that the decision in New South Wales will significantly affect the situation that they already have other than that the casinos will be controlled and the government will obtain revenue from them. They do exist there today and I do not see it making much difference to the Northern Territory situation.

232 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Can he recall if the furniture which was given to him as a present by the Chief Minister from Sabah was inspected, cleared and fumigated by plant quarantine officers in Darwin?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable gentleman to place his question on notice.

233 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the definition of a "local contractor" - one outside the Northern Territory or one 200 miles from the next township? This is in reference to the 5% preference for local contractors.

ANSWER

As members know, the government has decided to give a preference to local contractors and I think I might have indicated earlier that the whole question of preferences will be reviewed in March 1979. At this stage, there is no differential between towns in the Northern Territory. All Northern Territory contractors are treated the same but we will be looking at the whole question again in March 1979.

234 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

What arrangements have been made for the Northern Territory Department of Health to establish a specialist unit to monitor the health aspects of uranium mining?

ANSWER

My understanding is - and I cannot give an assurance at this stage because I need to get it in writing from the Department of National Resources, the Department of Mines and Energy and the Department of Health - there is an agreement between the 3 departments about what roles will be played by what people over the monitoring of certain functions within the uranium province. I do not have that particular information in my head. I will endeavour to get it but I would advise the honourable member that she is likely to get it in about a week.

235 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Mr D. McKay, who has an agricultural lease near Batchelor, applied for a grazing licence over adjacent vacant crown land in 1977. He was refused on the grounds that the land was to be advertised for public competition. This land has not been advertised and there is no indication when it will be. What is the delay and when will the land be released?

ANSWER

The government is not generally in favour of ad hoc land release and firmly believes that land should be released in an orderly form in the best interests of all concerned. So that land may be released under miscellaneous lease tenure, the area in question near Batchelor, along with other land in the locality has in part been assessed and evaluated for agricultural and mixed farming pursuits. Delays have occurred in releasing this land due to a number of competing applications for the land. When all the necessary data has been compiled, the land will be released for public competition and this will enable all interested

persons, including adjacent land holders such as the one the honourable member mentions, to apply for the land and the relative merits of each application will be determined by the Land Board. I expect that this land will be advertised for release early in 1979.

236 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware that the New South Wales government recently announced a \$15 bonus to all New South Wales pensioners? Has the government given consideration to a similar bonus to Northern Territory pensioners for Christmas?

ANSWER

The short answer is no. This government has made a large provision for pensioners, some \$208,000, in its budget for this financial year. If it were to take on such an exercise, we would have none of that \$208,000 left. It was rather interesting that when Mr Jackson, the minister in New South Wales, made the announcement of the grant of \$15, he was treated rather miserably by the pensioners' association. In fact, the pensioners' association spokesman came out with a statement something like, "I guess it is better than a kick in the teeth, but it should have been \$25 or \$30". You just cannot win in this game at all and I express my sympathy to a colleague even if he is on the other side of the fence. I think it is something perhaps that state governments and the Territory government could examine in the future. Quite contrary to what the pensioners' association spokesman said, I thought it was a first class gesture. I would imagine, to many people, the sum of \$15 just before Christmas would be very useful indeed.

237 Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Can he advise what is the average price paid for a bull and ox weighing between 400 and 450 pounds and 450 and 500 pounds at Katherine in 1978?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker that information is bulls 400 to 450 pounds 18c and ox 19c; bulls 450 to 500 pounds 20.5c and ox 21.5c.

238 Mr PERKINS to TREASURER

Will he advise when the Borroloola town plan will be competed and adopted?

ANSWER

A draft town plan has been drawn up for Borroloola which takes into account land releases in the event of the relocation of existing facilities at Borroloola onto higher ground out of the flood zone. Recently, in consultation with the member for Elsey, I approved a draft plan and referred it back to the department for final work. I would expect that a plan could be approved and land released in the area early in the new year.

-239 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Mr Roy Tyler conducts the RR Ranch on a part of the 32 square mile acquisition area without secure tenure of the land. It is now over 2 years since Mr Tyler applied for tenure over the land and I believe has

had investigations by the field staff and the lands department. Is the administrative bureaucracy delaying the release of suitable land for Mr Tyler and, if so, when will suitable land be released to him?

ANSWER

No permanent release of land in the 32 square mile acquisition area is proposed until such time as a development plan has been drawn up and approved over the area. This plan is presently being prepared and will go on display at the earliest possible date. Possible sites for commercial riding schools such as this gentleman is seeking are being considered in other areas in the vicinity of Darwin, with a view to making a suitable lease available for public offer as soon as the relevant information can be put together. It seems there is some competition in the demand for a commercial riding school lease.

240 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

This question is asked on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Has the Northern Territory government adopted the practice of splitting tenders into portions for the supply of material and labour to assist local contractors?

ANSWER

It is usual policy that contracts are let in toto to incorporate all the features of the particular work that is required. However, a housing contract might have some splitting with the fire extinguishers or the solar hotwater heaters as a separate contract. Major contracts are sometimes split and in this regard I can provide some information. I can mention 2 exceptions to the policy. One was to fit in with the BHP rolling steel plate; the department has placed an order on BHP for the supply of steel plate to be rolled into pile for the Darwin wharf project. We are also calling tenders for the supply of pipe - \$1.1m for the Karama to Casuarina pipeline. There are some exceptions but, generally, the policy is not to split the contracts.

241 Mrs O'NEIL to CHIEF MINISTER

My question relates to the Law Review Committee to which he referred extensively during the Police Administration Bill last night. Can the minister advise the Assembly of the status of that committee and of its membership?

ANSWER

The Law Review Committee is constituted under a document which it has adopted as a constitution. I am not sure of the exact numbers of its membership but it is chaired by a supreme court judge; there is at least one magistrate as a member of it and a considerable number of barristers and solicitors. One person who practises solely as a barrister is a member. The rest of the members, as far as I am aware, are solicitors. From time to time when it requires advice outside this field, I understand it co-ops people for discussion. I cannot give the exact number on the committee.

I have given consideration to establishing it under statute but I rather feel that that would leave it in a less flexible state than it is at present. Its members are now paid an honorarium by the Northern Territory government for their services; it is certainly not a very significant amount of money. There is a member from Alice Springs now; there was not

previously under the Commonwealth administration, and the government pays this member's fares - I just forget exactly how many fares per year - to enable him to attend meetings in Darwin.

The work of the committee has been very satisfactory and of a high order and I certainly have no criticism of the committee. Indeed, I believe that the prime mover, Mr Justice Muirhead, who organised the establishment of the committee several years ago, and all members of the committee are to be congratulated for devoting so much time to the matter of law reform and law review. I believe the Territory is very well off to have this body of people who make their services available.

242 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Does the Northern Territory government have demountable units for disposal and, if so, can he give me an indication of their value?

ANSWER

There are demountable units in store and on housing lots under the control of the Housing Commission. It would be very difficult for me to establish a price. No doubt some of them would have deteriorated somewhat over the last couple of years. The government is developing a policy to get rid of the units. In this regard, we are encouraging tourist developers to make use of the units to provide themselves with better accommodation and this would be undertaken through the Territory Development Corporation. I understand that other departments are currently looking at their requirements. It may be that, towards the tail end, there will be some sales made to the general public. The policy has been not to disadvantage local retailers of caravans and demountables. It is not envisaged that our actions would cause them concern in any way.

243 Mr COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Does the government intend to ensure that the work on the use of sewage effluent on forestry programs by CSIRO adjacent to Leanyer swamp will be continued?

ANSWER

Obviously, what the CSIRO does is not a matter for this government. We are very pleased to see them doing this work but they are a Commonwealth instrumentality and this government can have no direction or guidance over such a body. However, I understand that this government is carrying on work in relation to the use of sewage effluent for irrigation purposes. I believe that such a scheme is likely to be established first in Alice Springs. I am subject to correction on this because I have had no prior notice of this question whatsoever but I believe it is likely that the funding for the scheme will be contained in next year's budget.

244 Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Has he received any state-type delegation from the federal government pertaining to the Petroleum (Submerged Land) Act 1967?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory government is about to receive from the Commonwealth authority to issue offshore titles for exploration of oil and gas.

There is an arrangement between the states whereby the federal minister delegates to the state ministers for mines and energy power to issue licences off state coasts. The Northern Territory previously has not had a need for this delegation because the authority has been issued by the Minister for the Northern Territory who was a federal minister. I received a notification the other day from the Minister for National Development, Mr Newman, who said that, with the consent of the Chief Minister and the consent of the Prime Minister, he proposed to have this delegation transferred to me early in the new year so that licences could be issued off the Northern Territory coast by the Northern Territory government.

245 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Notwithstanding the answers he gave me previously this session, I draw his attention to a news report that pensioners in New South Wales only have to pay half the normal fee when obtaining or renewing driving licences, and this is apparently the first move towards total abolition of licence fees for pensioners. Could he indicate whether he will direct his department, as a matter of urgency and high priority, to investigate whether or not a reduced fee for motor vehicle registration could be offered to pensioners in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I do not want to appear a knocker in this particular area because it is of concern and the concern is that there are many types of pensioners that we have to examine. It is not as if it were the old-age pensioners or the war pensioners; there are 5 or 6 different categories. It is a fairly difficult question to come to grips with and there is a lot of money involved. I said the other day there was something like 1,876 people with driver's licences out of the total number of pensioners in the Northern Territory. A decision has not been taken yet but the matter is still under consideration.

246 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

In the light of the future roadworks on the Gove Peninsula, has any study been made on the availability of road-making materials, such as laterite, on the peninsula?

ANSWER

Those studies have been made. I understand that you cannot walk over a yard of Nhulunbuy without walking over some substance known as bauxite and there is some difficulty in sorting out where to get the laterite from because it looks very much like bauxite. Those studies have been going on for some time and we will be using local materials when we do that job.

247 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is it a practice of the Housing Commission to perform post-vacation inspections of its premises in the presence of the ex-tenant and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

I do not have specific details of the procedures of the Housing Commission in regard to tenants moving out of houses. However, I will endeavour to obtain the information for the honourable member, with a view to supplying it to the House on the next sitting day.

248 Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Does the Minister intend to issue an information booklet concerning the mining industry in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The short answer is that we would wish to continue a tradition that was set up in about 1960 with the Mines Branch, as it was then known, printing its first book on mining in the Northern Territory. I believe that Minister Patterson, under the Labor government, also authorised a reprint and an update of that book. Since we have come to office, it is our intention that this book be updated and printed annually for the benefit of the mining industry generally throughout the country so that we can present the most current information we have concerning our industry and exploration potential and that industry for future development.

249 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is the site for the proposed casino at Mindil Beach in Darwin within the primary or secondary surge zones and, if so, has the developer been informed of the government's current policy for construction of new buildings within those zones?

ANSWER

The answer to both those questions is yes.

250 Mr COLLINS to TREASURER

Has the Treasurer been advised that a petition with around 1,500 signatures on it, from one third of the residents of Alice Springs, has been collected in reference to a referendum being held before the construction of a casino and that this petition is continuing to collect further signatures?

ANSWER

The answer is yes; I have had a telegram from the organisers of a petition in Alice Springs.

251 Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will the customs hall at Darwin Airport be upgraded in 1979?

ANSWER

Knowing the federal government, it might take them until 1989. I understand that they will do something to Brisbane in 1986 so when it will be Darwin's turn is anybody's guess. The place is in a shambles out there. You cannot park a motor car; it is extremely difficult to get on and off international aircraft. Something needs to be done fairly soon. We have made plenty of representations to the federal people even in respect of the Alice Springs airport where you cannot even have a drink. If you go to Port Hedland in Western Australia, you can step off the plane into the bar and have a cold drink. Even Tennant Creek is in a shambles. You cannot even get a block of land alongside the reserve; a fellow has been trying to get a block of land there for ages. We will give him the block of land, but it is the access to the main reserve that he is concerned about. Our whole

relationship with the federal department is pretty shaky.

252 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

Does the Northern Territory government intend to review the existing Northern Territory Aerial Medical Service arrangements, whereby TAA supplies staff to the Health Department for that service after 1 January 1979?

ANSWER

TAA has conducted a service of providing aircraft maintenance crews for the Northern Territory Aerial Medical Service for many years now. It is the intention of the Northern Territory government to continue this in the new year.

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