

## **PART II**

### **THE QUESTION PAPER**

**Questions are printed in numerical order**

**An index to questions appears at the end of Part II**

FROM 21 DECEMBER 1976

1628 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Could he please advise the following in respect of -

- (1) Central Australian Aboriginal Medical Service;
- (2) Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service;
- (3) Central Australian Aborigines Congress;
- (4) Aboriginal Hostels Ltd, Alice Springs -
  - (a) The number of persons employed ?
  - (b) Titles and remuneration received, and other employment benefits ?
  - (c) Who is responsible for the hiring and firing of their employees ?
  - (d) Are the organisations' financial records and expenditure subject to any audit requirements, if so what ?
  - (e) Are vehicle records and logbooks kept ?

FROM 1 MARCH 1977

1722 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW

How many persons were breathalyser tested in the Territory in 1976 and what was the blood alcohol concentration reading in each case?

FROM 3 MAY 1977

1895 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Would the Honourable Member arrange for the tabling in this Assembly of an audited set of accounts for the Aborigines Benefit Trust Fund, established under the Northern Territory (Administration) Act, for the years from the year ended June 1973 to June 1977, or such of these accounts as are available at the time of tabling?

1898 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

As from the start of 1977 school year, how many students have been -

- (a) suspended;
- (b) recommended for expulsion;
- (c) recommended for permission to leave school before the required age, at:
  - (i) Darwin High;
  - (ii) Nightcliff High; and
  - (iii) Casuarina High?

1899 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

1. How many students at Darwin High School -
  - (a) sat for matriculation; and
  - (b) passed that examination in the following years: 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976?
2. How many students at Nightcliff High School -
  - (a) sat for matriculation; and
  - (b) passed that examination in the following years: 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976?
3. How many students at Casuarina High School -
  - (a) sat for matriculation; and
  - (b) passed that examination in the following years: 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976?

1550 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS

Has there been a feasibility study made in the Northern Territory for the use of the Northern Territory rivers to load and transport live cattle for export?

ANSWER

The following information has been supplied in answer to the Honourable Member's question:

"Yes. A feasibility study into the use of the Victoria River to transport live cattle was carried out in 1951. The outcome of the study was not encouraging in terms of the economics of such a transport system, although it was established that the river was navigable, albeit with some difficulty, to shallow draught vessels as far upstream as Victoria River Depot. Some ten years later when the proposal was revived the earlier navigational aspects were confirmed by a further survey of the river but this review also did not include an economic evaluation of such a form of transport.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics undertook a survey in 1961 into the physical and economic practicability of moving cattle by water from the Cape York Peninsula and Gulf region to abattoirs on the east Queensland coast. That survey was extended to include contiguous areas of the Territory (Wearyan, McArthur and Roper Rivers). In summary, the report found that existing methods of transport were inadequate and suggested that by using water transport the cattle industry in the survey area would benefit.

In the same year, and for several years following, the then Department of Territories, through the medium of the Port Superintendent, carried out navigational/hydrographic surveys of the major rivers. The main purpose of these surveys was to determine which rivers could be used to promote the development of local industries including beef cattle. Generally these rivers presented some navigational difficulties; deep inland penetration was poor other than to specially designed shallow draught vessels; construction of holding and loading facilities were required; and frequent maintenance of channel marker buoys would be necessary,

It is considered that the implementation of the Beef Roads Program has considerably alleviated the earlier need for an alternative method of transport to overcome the shortcomings in the cattle movement systems.

1626 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

1. Has a water filter been fitted at the departmental residence of the Director of Health in Darwin and, if so, was the filter installed at departmental expense and how much did it cost?

ANSWER

Experimental work has been carried out with water filters at a departmental residence which at present is temporarily occupied by the Director of Health.

The first filter was connected at the water meter and this trial confirmed that the particular type was not suitable. An alternative was then arranged to serve the house only, and as this trial filter

was only installed on 2 December, results are not yet available.

The possibility of installing filters has been under consideration for areas giving particular trouble and little reliable local information is available on performance. The experimental work now in progress required a reliable observer and the residence selected will enable an expert opinion to be obtained. Information gained from this installation will be of assistance not only in relation to Government residences but also to privately owned residences.

The cost of the project, including the filter and associated installation costs, was approximately \$190.00.

1629 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

1. Can he advise the name of the contractor company in charge of the construction of the timber Creek Police Station?
2. Is it true that this company is having financial difficulties?
3. Is the construction of the Timber Creek Police Station on schedule in keeping with the requirements of the Department of Construction?

If not, what are the problems and why the delays?

ANSWER

The following information has been supplied in answer to the Honourable Member's question:

1. The company in charge of construction of the Timber Creek Police Station is Gateway Constructions Pty Ltd.
2. The department is not aware that the company is experiencing undue financial problems in conducting their general business activities.
3. The contract is 35% complete and it is anticipated that the contractor will complete all the work by August 1977 which is the current completion date for the contract.

1720 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

1. Is there an emergency power supply provided for the ABC television transmitter in Darwin?
2. If so, what is the nature of the emergency supply?
3. Is the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club situated adjacent to the ABC television transmitter in Darwin?
4. Who or what is the registered lessee of the land on which the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club is situated?
5. Is the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club provided with an alternative supply of electric power to the normal Darwin reticulated power supply?
6. If so, what is the source of the alternative power supply?

7. If the alternative power supply is not provided by the club itself was its provision to the club authorised by the supplier?
8. If not, what then is the basis of the supply? If so, what charges are levied for the supply?
9. Was there on 5 January 1977 a strike by public servants which necessitated the shut down of the normal Darwin power supply?
10. Was on 5 January 1977 the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club supplied with power from an alternative source?
11. If so, who authorised the supply of power on that day?
12. What charges were made for the supply of power on that day, if the supply was authorised?
13. Is it the policy of the Australian Broadcasting Commission or the Post Master General's Department to permit use of their emergency power supply by outside bodies?
14. If not, why was this exception made?

ANSWER

The following information is provided for the Honourable Member:

1. Yes.
2. There is an emergency power plant at the Telecom Australia Radio complex at Blake Street, Darwin. If commercial power fails facilities at the site are automatically supplied with power from this emergency power source. At the present stage of development, the emergency power plant has sufficient capacity to feed all facilities on the site and the adjacent studio of the commercial television station, whose transmitter is located within the Telecom Australia Radio complex.
3. The Post-Tel Institute is located on the same site as the Telecom Australia Radio communications terminal and the national and commercial television transmitters.
4. The area of land on which the Post-Tel Institute activities are situated is not leased. It is land reserved for PMG (now Telecom Australia) purposes. Reserve No 993 refers.
5. Yes.
6. The power supply for Post-Tel Institute activities is via the radio Communications building and, if the commercial power fails, power feed is maintained from the emergency power plant referred to in 2 above.
7. In the sense that power is automatically supplied from the emergency Telecom Australia source when normal commercial power fails, it was authorised by Telecom.
8. No charges are levied.
9. Industrial action did disrupt normal power supply.

10. Yes.
11. See answer to 7.
12. See answer to 8.
13. So far as Telecom Australia is concerned, it is regarded as appropriate to supply emergency power to facilities on an establishment where the emergency power source is located, up to the normal limit of capacity of the generating plant.
14. Not exceptional. See answers to 3 and 13.

1723 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

I refer to the 1,500 sheets of high quality teak plywood given to the people of Darwin from the Government and people of Burma and ask:

- (a) how many of these ply wood sheets have been distributed;
- (b) by whom were they distributed;
- (c) to whom were they distributed;
- (d) when were they distributed;
- (e) how many remain in stock;
- (f) where are the remaining sheets being held; and
- (g) to what purpose is it intended to put the remaining sheets?

ANSWER

The following information has been supplied in answer to the Honourable Member's question:

(a)	191 sheets	
(b)	The Department of Northern Australia	8 sheets
	The Corporation of the City of Darwin	183 sheets
(c)	The German Club	36 sheets
	Private citizens with special needs	68 sheets
	Corporation projects	87 sheets
	TOTAL	191 sheets

- (d) From August 1975 to the present.
- (e) 760 sheets.
- (f) Under cover at the Corporation's municipal depot.
- (g) The organisations listed below have plywood reserved for them of which they have not yet taken delivery. The remainder is available on application to the City Corporation by any voluntary organisation, service club or sporting body that can use it in a reconstruction project. Because of the small quantity available the Corporation does not issue the plywood to

private citizens unless there are special circumstances.

Brown's Mart	177 sheets
Museums and Art Galleries Board	40 sheets
Nightcliff Sports Centre	30 sheets
Darwin Sailing Club	Amount not specified
Boy Scouts Association	Amount not specified

There is a discrepancy of 549 sheets between the original consignment which was received by the Department of Construction and the quantity issued and on hand in the Corporation's Municipal depot. The organisations concerned are investigating this discrepancy.

1724 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

I refer to the Aboriginal Development Foundation and ask -

1. (a) how many members does it have;
  - (b) do members of this foundation meet and, if so, how often;
  - (c) are elections held and, if so, when; and
  - (d) are financial statements issued and, if so, to whom?
2. Is this foundation holding \$100,000 received from various sources since Cyclone Tracy and, if so, what audit checks are made on the funds received?

ANSWER

The following information is supplied in answer to the Honourable Member's question:

1. (a) Clause 4 of the foundation's constitution reads:

"The Association's Executive Committee may admit to membership any Aboriginal who agrees to accept the rules of the Association".

It has at present approximately 50 financial members but it should be borne in mind that the services of the foundation are directed mainly towards unsophisticated Aborigines who do not seek formal membership. The number of Aborigines therefore dependent on the foundation is considerably in excess of the above figure.

- (b) Clause 11 of its constitution reads:

"General meetings shall be held monthly."

Monthly meetings are held by the foundation and the proceedings appropriately recorded.

- (c) An annual general meeting is held for the election of the Executive Committee in accordance with the provisions of its constitution.
- (d) Under the Grants in Aid Scheme, funds are provided by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to Aboriginal organisations



subject to certain conditions which are repeated below:

"An organisation receiving funds shall, at the end of every quarter and not later than one month after the end of that quarter, furnish to the Department a certified statement of income and expenditure to the end of the quarter, comparing it with the approved budget. This statement shall be certified by the book keeper or accountant to be correct and shall be countersigned by the President.

"At the end of each financial year and not later than two months after its close, the organisation shall furnish to the Department -

- (a) a certificate under the signature of the President to the effect that the funds have been used only for the purpose for which they were provided and that the conditions stipulated have been complied with;
- (b) an Auditor's report with an audited statement of income and expenditure for the financial year in question, comparing it with the approved budget, and a balance sheet showing assets and liabilities at the close of the financial year; and
- (c) a certified inventory of assets together with explanations of any missing items."

These requirements are being observed by the foundation.

2. This presumbaly refers to a grant of \$40,361.76 (not \$100,000) made to the foundation by the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust and representing part of a donation made to the trust by the government of Papua New Guinea. The purpose of the grant was to construct a brick and mortar community facility at Knuckeyes Lagoon. The construction of this community centre has been delayed pending the grant of legal land title to the Foundation at Knuckeyes Lagoon and it is hoped that this will be finalised with a few months. When received on 1 August 1975, the grant was placed in a separate trust account where it is still held and there has been no expenditure.

1810 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

1. From whom or where did the Department of Aboriginal Affairs obtain or purchase the galvanised iron with which they built the shed on the Maranboy commonage near the creek adjacent to Bamyili Settlement?
2. Can he confirm that this iron was removed from a number of buildings on mining leases at Maranboy?
3. In view of the answer given by a Mr Lovegrove on 25 July 1974 to the effect that road building material possibly came from an area of land over which there were mineral leases, authorising the mining of tin, will the Department of Aboriginal Affairs undertake the expense of cleaning out the shaft since, as a result of the removal of this gravel from the collar, there has been dumped into the shaft, a large quantity of gravel which makes it necessary for considerable work to be done before the shaft can be worked again?.

ANSWER

The following information has been supplied in answer to the Honourable Member's question:

1. All new galvanised iron was used which was supplied by Cyclone - K. M. Products, Order No. B5033/72, dated 8 June 1973.
2. No.
3. A certain amount of material was used to surface a short tract into the shed area. The place from which the material was removed was not near any mine or shaft and its removal would not have caused the dumping of gravel in a mining shaft. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs does not accept a responsibility of having any mining shafts on the Maranboy Tin Fields cleaned out.

1896 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING

1. Has the tender for the construction of a bridge over the Todd River been advertised?
2. When will the tender close?
3. When is construction planned to commence?
4. What is the proposed completion date?

ANSWER

1. Yes on 8 March 1977.
2. Tenders closed on 23 March 1977.
3. On present indications late May 1977 depending on availability of increased funds.
4. Period of contract is 52 weeks from date of acceptance.

1897 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

1. Has the Department of Northern Territory decided that the present Stokes Hill Power Station and subsequent extensions will adequately supply Darwin's power requirements for the next seven years?
2. Has the Department of Northern Territory suspended work on the Environmental Impact Study for Darwin's second power station?
3. Has the Department of Northern Territory shelved plans for a submission to Cabinet so that funds could be made available to allow preliminary design work on Darwin's second power station to proceed?

ANSWER

1. No.
2. Yes, pending receipt of the Final Report of the Inquiry into Public Electricity Supply, Northern Territory.

3. Any such decision will be taken following the receipt and evaluation of the Final Report of the Inquiry into Public Electricity Supply, Northern Territory.

1900 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

How many applications for the 6% concessional loan have yet to be approved by the HFT? What is the total value of these outstanding applications?

ANSWER

The information sought by the honourable member is similar to information that I sought of the Minister for the Northern Territory on 20 April. I have not yet received that information. As soon as I have it, I will make it available to honourable members.

1901 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS

I refer to an article which appeared in the Bulletin on 23 April written by Richard Hall. Is there any accuracy in this statement: "Already there have been a good number of unreported incidents of mass killing of expensive stud cattle on at least one property?"

ANSWER

I have seen the article to which the honourable member refers. The whole article is composed of inaccuracies, not the least of which is that particular paragraph mentioned in the question. The inference from a previous sentence in the article is that, because of the build-up of racial tensions in the Northern Territory following activities by this Assembly, Aborigines are shooting stud cattle belonging to station owners. The incident to which he refers is quite the reverse situation. It refers to a case which has not been kept in the dark as Mr Hall suggested. It has been public knowledge for some time. Officers of the Wildlife Branch in pursuit of their duty to destroy feral cattle on a piece of Aboriginal land which is also a wildlife sanctuary, inadvertently shot some branded and ear-marked cattle on a neighbouring pastoral lease and on an area where the Aboriginal cattle company is running cattle. It is a case of government officers taking action to the detriment of Aborigines and also of the station owner rather than the suggestion which has been made by Mr Hall. I notice that his articles from time to time on the Northern Territory bear little resemblance whatever to the facts of life up here. I suggest that the gentleman might pay us a visit so that he can get things in better perspective.

1902 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

What steps have been taken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to provide a suitable site and funding for a Darwin Museum?

I would prefer a statement from a responsible member of the Commission rather than relying on press reports or off-the-cuff statements by the chairman.

ANSWER

I will have a statement prepared that lists the actions that have been taken over a long period.

1903 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

Has the Counter Disaster Ordinance passed by this Assembly- in December 1976 yet been assented to?

ANSWER

No.

1904 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

Following the cattle industry conference held in Alice Springs on 23 and 24 April, has an application by the Alice Springs abattoir to participate in current beef quotas been granted?

ANSWER

The matter is still under consideration by the Meat Board which meets this week. We will be making recommendations to the Minister in relation to the matter. It is hoped that the situation was spelt out fairly clearly to the Meat Board representative who was at the conference and also to the Minister. It is quite important to the cattle industry in Central Australia that a quota be made available to the Alice Springs abattoir when it opens in about July.

1905 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

If the Counter Disaster Ordinances 1976 has not been assented to, under what authority were emergency services proposing to operate had cyclone Verna struck Darwin as it appeared likely yesterday?

ANSWER

I understand that the basis was a letter from the Minister for the Northern Territory to the Administrator that authorised the exercise of all powers and functions of the Administrator as deemed under the ordinance and these were to be exercised as though the ordinance was passed. It was a letter of instruction.

1906 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Is he aware that money allocated for repair work on the Sandower Highway was recently reallocated to repair work on the Plenty River Road? If not, would he undertake to investigate the reason why that money was reallocated and would he also undertake to have the Department of Construction contact pastoralists in the Plenty River area to find out what sections of the road are most urgent in need of repair?

ANSWER

I will take the matter up with the Department of Construction and advise the Assembly later.

1907 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

Has the Education Department any plans to upgrade the grounds of the Casuarina High School by top dressing the grounds and oval and installing a water reticulation system? That high school is the host school this year for the inter high school sports.

ANSWER

I will undertake to have the question answered later during these sittings.

1908 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Is it his intention, within the life of this Assembly, to introduce legislation to license or regulate in some other manner secondhand car dealers?

ANSWER

This particular legislation would come under the control of the Cabinet Member for Community Affairs.

1909 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

When are tenders to be called for construction of the Dripstone High School? Does he expect any further delays in the original intention of the Minister for Education to call tenders by March 1977?

ANSWER

The saga of the tenders for the Dripstone High School has been going on for some time and certainly there is quite a history of this in the question papers of this House. I undertook before the sittings to find out again exactly what the latest situation was because it was obvious that it was going to come up as it has at every sitting ever since the matter was raised some 12 months ago or more ago. At this stage, because of the unavailability of certain people in the Education Department, I have not got an answer for today. However, I do hope to have an answer by tomorrow.

1910 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

Is it his intention to legislate to license or regulate secondhand car dealers in some manner within the life of this Assembly?

ANSWER

The member who had the portfolio before me has done a great deal of work on this and I have followed on in his steps. It is anticipated that we could have drafting instructions ready later this year for the introduction of legislation to control used car operations in the Territory, but it is a matter of physical ability as to whether we can get this through before the end of this Assembly.

1911 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS

Can he advise me of the present estimated cattle numbers in the Central Australian region and do these numbers represent a real threat to land and soil conservation in that area? If in fact a threat does exist, what steps to control this situation currently apply?

ANSWER

I did not have forewarning of this question and I would normally ask for the question to be placed on notice. However, a week or so ago, I was present at the Cattle Industry Conference in Alice Springs where some figures were provided by the Animal Industry and Agricultural Branch which illustrated the extent of overstocking throughout the whole of the Northern Territory. Every pastoral district at present is regarded as being overstocked to a greater or lesser extent. The problem is probably potentially more serious in the Alice Springs district than

elsewhere because it is a truly arid area and more susceptible to the affects of periodic drought. As I understand at the moment, the number of cattle in Alice Springs, based on stock returns and statistics held by the branch and the Commonwealth Statistition is over half a million head which is approximately twice the safe stocking rate estimated for that district by the New South Wales Conservation Authority some years ago. The only reason that there is not a disaster on our hands at the moment is because of the succession of abnormally good seasons, including this recent summer, in Alice Springs.

It is true to say that unless something is done to lighten the stocking that the next drought spell - which is certainly overdue statistically to come upon that district, possibly even next summer - could produce a major catastrophe of a type in which the Commonwealth Government no doubt would be forced to provide aid either in the form of drought relief subsidies or the shooting of cattle as we have seen in other parts of Australia. What we are attempting to do, as you will hear later I think, is to impress upon the Commonwealth Government the need to provide some short term assistance to the industry which will bring about the lightening of the stocking burden in the district. This can be done by measures such as freight assistance, a scheme which applied last year and needs to be reactivated this year, and probably in a way which will give even greater encouragement to turnoff, and also through moves to support the opening and throughput of the Alice Springs abattoir, which an early question referred to, so that they may obtain a maximum throughput there. This, combined with a stock will be transported interstate will at least help to alleviate this very serious problem.

1912 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS

I direct this question without notice to the Majority Leader in his capacity as a delegate to the Beef Industry Conference held in Alice Springs recently. Has the Majority Party considered the formation of a Meat Marketing Authority and, also, have discussions taken place with Government to provide freight assistance to beef producers?

ANSWER

These matters were raised at the Cattle Industry Conference at Alice Springs. Following on that conference, there was a comment in the newspaper by a spokesman for the Australian Labor Party who said that nothing worth while had been attempted or achieved at that conference, and he referred to his party's policy on freight assistance and a statutory authority for marketing. In fact, I believe that a great deal was achieved at the conference at Alice Springs. I was agreeably surprised at how much useful information came forward, and the useful nature of motions and resolutions which were passed for forwarding to government and appropriate authorities.

The conference did pass a resolution calling for the reactivation of the freight assistance scheme for 1977, and the formula that was adopted in that motion was the formula that I proposed: 60 per cent rebate for females and 40 per cent rebate for other cattle.

The conference passed an additional resolution referring to the adapting of export standards to suit particular markets and to get away from the problem that we have at the moment where all exporters are tied virtually to the American standards which some other countries do not necessarily require.

The conference also passed a motion requesting the Government to give further consideration to a fuel price equalization scheme, and the conference reiterated its support, which also happens to be the policy of the Majority Party, to bring about more orderly marketing and price stabilisation in the beef industry. The exact way in which this is to be done is not yet quite clear.

The conference passed a resolution calling on the Government for clarification of policy regarding Aboriginal land claims outside reserves and also, I understand, raised the question of a marketing authority, although it was raised very late in the conference after most people had gone. An earlier reference to a marketing authority did not attract very much enthusiasm or support from the conference. I recall, Mr Speaker, that it is a matter which you have suggested for examination from time to time.

The conference did set up a committee, a sort of working party, to have a look at the advantages or disadvantages of a Northern Territory statutory beef or meat marketing authority, and it is clearly necessary to do this before one can establish a policy on it. Obviously, the setting up of an authority is going to cost money in administrative costs and the fees of people who will be on the board, and one has to judge what would be the advantages compared with the cost of doing this. What we do know is that more than 90 per cent of Territory beef is suitable and usually destined for the export market, and export markets in Australia are controlled by the Department of Primary Industry at a Commonwealth level, and by the Australian Meat Board. So what the advantages of having a small, Northern Territory Meat Authority at this stage would be, are still not clear and no doubt the working party will throw some more light on it. It is not yet a policy which has been adopted and supported by the beef industry itself.

Finally, in the light of certain criticisms which the ALP has made of our activities in the beef industry, I would just like to advise members of the Assembly that the Cattle Producers Conference, which preceded the Beef Industry Conference, passed a note of appreciation and confidence in members of this Assembly for the work which they have been doing to try and support the beef industry and alleviate the depressed conditions in the industry.

1913 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING

Is the honourable member aware that there are still a large number of street lights in Darwin that have not been restored following the 1974 cyclone? Will he take steps to remedy this situation particularly in the city area where dark streets such as Litchfield Street are becoming a favourite refuge for drunken and unruly persons?

ANSWER

I am aware that there are many street lights still requiring restoration as a result of Cyclone Tracy. There is a program for the repair and, where necessary, reinstallation of lights in the city and it is linked to the Reconstruction Commission's financial program for the coming years. I will seek to have that program detailed and information from it made available to the honourable member.



1914 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

My question relates to congestion on Bagot Road. Is any action likely to be taken in the foreseeable future to provide an alternative access to the city for northern suburbs residents, particularly since it now appears that these silver tails and planners who live in Fannie Bay have managed to torpedo the Palmerston freeway?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Jingili is spot on when he refers to the congestion on Bagot Road. This morning, the traffic was banked up from the Stuart Highway back to McMillans Road, a distance of approximately 2 miles. The DRC are planning to build a road to the back of Ludmilla. This has been brought forward and hopefully will be on next year's program. This will not alleviate the problem completely but it may help to take some of the traffic away from the Stuart Highway Bagot Road intersection. It would have been much more realistic to bring a road from Coconut Grove Road through Kulaluk down to the proposed road. This would have meant that people travelling from Nightcliff would have been able to travel right through without getting onto Bagot Road. However, the decision has been made to put it into the back of Ludmilla I am concerned with the situation that exists right now; even if they started building that road tomorrow, we would expect some delay.

At least once a week, there is a holdup for various reasons on Bagot Road and, between 7.30 and 8.30 in the morning, it can take up as much as half an hour to get from the northern suburbs into town. I intend to take the matter up with the Department of NT which still has the responsibility for control of roads. However, I may be able to get some assistance from the Cabinet Member for Law in that it may be wise to introduce police control of traffic rather than lights. This seems to be a retrograde step but there is only so much that traffic lights can do. In some cities they switch the lights off at peak hours and have traffic police because they are able to see where the problems are.

I would hate to think of the cost to Darwin in man hours of people arriving late for work every morning. The situation going home of an evening is not quite as bad because they are spread out somewhat. I certainly intend to look into the matter and see if we can do something in the short term to improve it.

1915 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise the present waiting time for the allocation of government homes in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I cannot provide that information without reference but I will certainly seek it for the honourable member.

1916 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS

By way of prefatory remarks, Mr Speaker, no doubt you saw newspaper reports of a sensational nature last week pointing out that the salary of the Northern Territory Public Service Commissioner might well exceed the Prime Minister's salary. I believe that Senator Wright, Liberal, Tasmania, was reported as putting these questions at a Parliamentary Estimates Committee hearing. I would like to ask the Majority Leader whether in fact the true position is as put by Senator Wright.

ANSWER

The answer is no; the facts were quite wrong. I do not know whether this was the fault of Senator Wright or in the reporting. Nor is it clear to me why the departmental officers who were present did not correct any misapprehension which the good Senator may have had.

Instead of the fee being, as I think are reported, \$35,000 for a 6 months period of service, it is actually set at the rate I understand of \$33,000 per annum - this is less than half the level suggested in the report - plus \$1,000 per annum allowance. This works out at about deputy secretary level in the department and compares quite reasonably with salaries paid for this level of responsibility in other states.

1917 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

I have asked this question on previous occasions in relation to the Nakara Primary School. Has a decision been made by the Education Department as to the future of the Nakara Primary School? I ask the Cabinet Member that question, Mr Speaker, because I have had information that the Education Department are thinking of using the Nakara Primary School as office accommodation for the Education Department.

ANSWER

I too have heard with some dismay that the Education Department were considering using the Nakara Primary School, or parts of it, for administrative purposes. I was rather horrified at that considering some of the needs around Darwin for more space for educational purposes. I have written to the Minister on this subject and have had some talks with the Department of Education on the matter. I will undertake to find out whether a decision has in actual fact been made, as at this date, and supply the honourable member with that answer.

1918 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN

This question results primarily, Mr Speaker, from statements made by yourself in the media and also discussions I have had with you. Is the honourable member aware of a survey of the highways of the Northern Territory conducted in March 1977? Will a report of that inspection be made public and will the report be acted upon?

ANSWER

Mr RYAN: I am not quite sure what the honourable member is asking about. I am not aware of any report on highways.

Mr ROBERTSON: Are you aware of the survey carried out in March 1977? Is there a report and will you make it public?

Mr RYAN: I am not aware of that particular report. I assume that the question does not relate to the survey done by the Bureau of Transport Economics last year on Territory transport in toto and which is due to be released this month. If it does not refer to that report, I am unaware of any other. However, I will ask the department concerned if there has been one carried out and, if possible, see that it is made available.

1919 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

What is the reason for the delay regarding grading of the Dhupuma

College Road at Gove? Will this horror road be fully graded or partly graded?

ANSWER

Certainly, the honourable member for Nhulunbuy cannot be accused of not keeping the pressure on in this matter. I was under the impression that it had been fixed up. There is a problem of delays with the tenders. I will take the matter up with the Department of Construction.

1920 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

Is this Assembly likely to see tabled at this sittings a copy of an interim or final report of the Enquiry into the Northern Territory Electricity Supply System?

ANSWER

He certainly will not be seeing a copy of the interim report tabled at this sittings or at any future sittings.

However, the Minister has undertaken to make public a copy of the final report which is expected to be completed at the end of this month and tabled in the House.

The honourable member for Jingili asked me a similar question at the last sittings. I advised that the Minister had advised me that as the committee still had to complete its investigation, he felt that the releasing of the interim report might prejudice the final report. He was not prepared to have it released, and he still stands by this conviction. However, the final report will be made public and I will endeavour to obtain copies and table them in the House as soon as they are available.

1921 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Following the closing of tenders for the bridge over the Todd River, have the tenders been examined, when will the successful tenderer be announced and when will work commence on that bridge?

ANSWER

There seems to be a delay in the final letting of the tender. I am not too sure why this is, I will take the matter up with the Department of Construction.

1922 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS

Some time ago, I asked a question of the then Executive Member for Resource Development relating to alleged base camps being set up by foreign fishing companies and vessels on Australian soil. Is he aware of any authenticated reports of any such bases being set up on the mainland of the Northern Territory and, if so, will he make them available?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any authenticated report of any base camps being set up on the mainland of Australia by foreign fishermen. I have always been in some doubt about these reports or rumours because, if this had

happened, it would not take any time at all for the matter to become well known. When Indonesian fishermen land on the coast here, it is not very long before they are discovered and everybody knows about it. I will endeavour to find out more information and advise the honourable member later.

1923 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

When it is now anticipated that tenders will be called for a construction of the Dripstone High School.

ANSWER

That very question was asked of me earlier in these sittings and I undertake to supply an answer as soon as I could, hopefully tomorrow.

1924 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

How much has it cost the Corporation of the City of Darwin to redevelop the park on the corner of Mitchell Street and Bennett Street? I refer to the one next door to the Reserve Bank.

ANSWER

I understand that the park on the corner of Mitchell and Bennett Streets has not been developed by the city corporation. My understanding is, and I stand corrected on this, that that piece of land is not under the care or control of the Darwin City Corporation. If the work on that project has been undertaken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, I will endeavour to obtain a statement with regard to the contract for the landscaping and improvement of that area and the associated area of all the government offices on the adjoining blocks.

1925 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

Is it his intention to allow this year the same disgraceful transient camp at East Point?

ANSWER

It is outside my responsibilities, I believe, to control a camp in that area. The camp that existed last year was conducted by the Darwin City Corporation under a special licence of land given by the Department of the Northern Territory. From discussions I have held with the Mayor and other people, I was of the understanding that there was not to be another camp of that nature this year. However, I will seek confirmation of that and make the information available to the honourable member.

1926 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Can he advise of the outcome of discussions be held last week in Canberra with the Federal Minister for Transport pertaining to the sealing or upgrading of the Stuart Highway south of the Northern Territory border?

ANSWER

Among other items, I did discuss with the Minister for Transport the question of the sealing of the South Road through from the border of the NT to Port Augusta. I think we are all aware that the upgrading of that

highway is the responsibility of the South Australian government. Funds for the national highways, of which that route is one, are made available by the Federal Government through the Department of Transport to each of the states. South Australia have said that insufficient funds are being made available next year to start work on that highway. I have asked the Minister for Transport if it is possible for him to do anything about it and he has agreed to see if anything can be done.

1927 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

What is the status of the land on the Rapid Creek side of the Lakeside Drive? This includes the Alawa sporting complex and the toilet block.

ANSWER

I would ask the honourable member for Nightcliff to place the question on notice.

1928 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Is there any truth in the rumour that Alice Springs telephone subscribers will be offered STD facilities within the next 3 months?

ANSWER

I will check with Telecom and advise the House later.

1929 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Has the Department of NT given any indication as to when a decision will be made to allow the Hooker Corporation to develop the Brinken subdivision?

ANSWER

I will seek the information.

1930 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Would he be willing to make representations to the South Australian Minister for Transport to lift the road tax charges levied against freight haulers for unsealed sections of the Stuart Highway in South Australia?

ANSWER

I find it difficult to believe that the Transport Minister would in fact wish to do that unless he really had pressure put on him from the Federal Government. I am not too sure whether I would like the idea because it would obviously be reflected in higher freight rates for the Northern Territory. I would much prefer to sit quietly to see if the Federal Minister can do something about it.

1931 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

When are reflectorised licence plates going to be introduced into the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I would say that we will be introducing reflectorised plates next year; they have been under test for some time. One of the biggest things we have to decide - and this could also take some time - is the colours which we would have on number plates in the Northern Territory. I know that the honourable member for Alice Springs would like number plates to match the cars he has and as he changes cars very regularly this could mean that we would have to have a fairly wide spectrum of colours. I do not necessarily agree with that and because of this I would assume that the party discussions could take some time.

1932 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

My question relates to a block of flats on the corner of Cavenagh Street and Daly Street which I have noticed has been unoccupied since prior to Cyclone Tracy. I believe that these flats are owned by the Commonwealth Government or the Australian Atomic Energy Commission. Is it proposed to sell off these flats or let them be occupied rather than stand idle at a time when accommodation is badly required in this city?

ANSWER

The honourable member did give me some advice of the question and I made some representations to the appropriate federal department. They have advised me that the then Commonwealth Department of Services and Property purchased the flats from Qantas on behalf of the Australian Atomic Energy Commission on 17 July 1975. The flats were required to house Darwin based members and families of the commission's uranium exploration division. The flats suffered considerable damage as a result of Cyclone Tracy and were virtually uninhabitable when acquired. They were repaired and renovated by the commission as quickly as possible after possession was granted in July 1975 and were occupied by commission staff as they became available.

With the change of government and the change of policy in relation to uranium exploration, the commission was requested to wind down its exploration activities and withdraw from the field by the end of 1976. This was done although approval was subsequently granted to carry out a limited drilling program on the commission's Number 1 prospect. The flats in question were, however, all vacated by late December 1976. They were offered to the Housing Commission of the Northern Territory on a temporary lease basis until approximately July 1977 but the offer was declined. They are now in the hands of the Department of Administrative Services which is arranging for the Department of Northern Territory to lease them on behalf of the commission.

1933 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

On what basis did the Motor Vehicle Register consider change of colour for the registration plates to be attached to motor vehicles in the Northern Territory? If in fact a colour change is being contemplated, will the plates be reflectorised as he has described? Is it not a fact that the reflectorised plates have nowhere near the long life of the current plates? If in fact the reflectorised plates are not as durable as the conventional plates we now have, is it expected that the registrar will continue to own the plates as opposed to the motor vehicle owner?

ANSWER

The selection of the colour will be, I imagine, a decision for the Majority Party. That is why I mentioned it in answer to the previous question. It may take some time to arrive at a decision. I would be quite happy to accept the responsibility to pick the colour. In the test they did on reflectivity and longevity, the green reflectorised plate did perform quite well. However, I think there are other colours that would be more suitable for the Northern Territory. I do not think that the registrar will have much say in the colour of the plates. He will advise us of the tests carried out on various colours. I would prefer the plates to be reflectorised, whether or not the life of the plate is affected, I would assume that the plates would still belong to the registrar.

1934 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Has any investigation been made by him or members of his department as to whether the existing microwave towers between Mt. Isa and Darwin and those supposed to be installed between Tennant Creek and Alice Springs could be used for medium wave broadcast bands by the installation of low power transmitters on those powers? This would give people travelling within the Northern Territory along the Barkly and Stuart Highways the opportunity of utilising medium wave broadcasts.

ANSWER

It is not within the capabilities of my Department to investigate that particular matter. However, I will write to the Minister for Post and Telecommunications to ask if such a proposal is practical.

1935 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

When will the next industrial land auction be held in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

Twenty five lots will be available for auction at the next industrial land sale to be held in Darwin on 23 June 1977. Details of the lots in question will appear in the Government Gazette on 13 May 1977.

1936 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

When will the next residential land auction be held in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

A further residential land auction is planned for Darwin in August provided full details can be assembled at an early date on the locality of serviced lots which will be available. This auction will follow the release of 50 lots on 21 April and the industrial auction which is timed for 23 June.

1937 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise when the next auction of government caravans through the Darwin Reconstruction Commission will take place? Also, has he any further advice as to the manner of distribution or auction of demountables?

ANSWER

I am not able to provide the information sought by the honourable member with regard to caravans or demountables. I am aware that a study is being undertaken with regard to the distribution of a number of the demountable and mobile type of units and that this should be available shortly for consideration by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the Minister. I will seek further information with regard to caravans from the Department of the Northern Territory who have responsibility in this regard.

1938 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

How many applications for loans received in 1976 by the Home Finance Trustee have been held over or are for some reason not yet finalised?



ANSWER

As I indicated in reply to a question yesterday, I have repeatedly sought from the Minister for the Northern Territory over the last several weeks detailed statistical information with regard to the operations of the Home Finance Trustee. This information has not been forthcoming despite further representations I made yesterday and last night to the Minister. I hope that information will be available at some stage today. When I have it I will make it available to honourable members.

1939 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Is it his intention to introduce legislation within the life of this Assembly dealing with certificates of roadworthiness for motor vehicles?

ANSWER

I am not quite sure what the honourable member for Nightcliff means by certificates of roadworthiness. I want some clarification on that.

1939A Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Legislation along these lines was introduced by myself in the dying stages of the Legislative Council. It dealt with such things as the sale of secondhand vehicles which should have a certificate of roadworthiness or not so that the purchaser knew the condition of the motor vehicle. In some states there is provision for checks by police and a motor vehicle can be put off the road until it has obtained such a certificate.

ANSWER

There will be, as far as I know, no legislation introduced on that matter in the life of this Assembly. At the moment, vehicles must undergo a test to be registered. There is no intention at this stage of extending that any further. However, if legislation is introduced concerning the licensing of secondhand car dealers, there may be some complementary legislation that is necessary, but I have not got anything on the move at the moment.

1940 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

Can the cabinet member provide any information on when the proposed farmers' market will be operational in Darwin?

ANSWER

I understand that negotiations are moving fairly favourably with the City Council and the Department of the Northern Territory to secure a site for the market. When this is finalised in the next few weeks, I understand the council will take appropriate steps to finance the improvements which will be required for that land. However, it must be in the next financial year as the council advise that there are no funds in the current financial year. It looks as if it will be a few months before anything positive will firm up. This is perhaps a little disappointing in view of the earlier enthusiasm but I am assured that the council is taking every step possible to implement the proposal with the least possible delay.

1941 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Why is government house number 112 in Woods Terrace, on which construction was completed over 12 months ago, still vacant?

ANSWER

I will seek an answer to that for the honourable member.

1942 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN

Is he aware that many guide posts are missing from the causeway on the east side of the Adelaide River, Arnhem Highway? Is he aware of the length of underfined road that is involved in this area and what proposals are there for replacing the posts?

ANSWER

I was not aware that there are guide posts missing. I will ask the Department of Construction what is being done.

1943 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

I asked this question yesterday but I believe he misunderstood it. Would he make representations to the South Australian Minister for Transport to have road tax on the unsealed section of the Stuart Highway in South Australia removed?

ANSWER

I was confused; I thought lifted meant increased. I could undertake to ask the South Australian Minister to reduce the road tax on that piece of road but I feel that this would be a waste of time. However, it may add some strength to our argument to get the road upgraded. I will discuss the matter further with the member for Stuart and possibly follow it up with a telegram to the minister in South Australia. I would not hold out too much hope of being successful.

1944 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

How many Housing Commission homes which suffered damage in Cyclone Tracy have still to have repairs effected to them and how much is this likely to cost? How much money was allocated for this purpose in 1966-1967, and how much money has been sought for this purpose in 1977-78?

ANSWER

Relating to Housing Commission homes only, not flats, at the time of the cyclone, the Housing Commission had 1,154 homes tenanted, and 318 under construction. Of the tenanted houses, there are still 653 houses left to be repaired. Of course, these will be repaired and restored to the cyclone code. With regard to the money that it will cost to continue work on the 653 houses, it is estimated that the cost will exceed some \$11m.

The latter part of the honourable member's question related to the money sought both in the current financial year and the coming financial year. It is difficult to provide a precise answer to this question. In 1976-77, the total Northern Territory Housing Commission program was of

the order of \$21m, possibly - and I can only guess at this stage - well in excess of half of that figure would have been for cyclone restoration work in Darwin.

With regard to the coming year probably a figure of the same order will have to be included in the budget estimates for the Housing Commissions restoration program. At the time of assessing the original damage of the Housing Commission as a result of cyclone Tracy, it was estimated that they would require approximately \$40m over a period of some 3 or 4 years to repair the damaged housing in Darwin.

1945 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Has the Northern Territory Housing Commission made a decision to allow tenants to purchase their cyclone damaged houses?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Housing Commission Board has considered this matter and has taken the decision not to sell homes in a substandard or damaged state, even though a number of the tenants may well be eligible under the terms and conditions of sale. This was before the Australian Government reintroduced its home sale scheme for public servants where the Minister did allow the Australian Government to sell homes in a substandard state, so possibly the Housing Commission may well review their earlier decision. The commission did accept that there was a need for certain options to be made available to people who were eligible to purchase but could not buy the actual house they were living in and the Commission has resolved to make other houses available, either new homes or restored homes in the same suburban area as the applicants currently live.

1946 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Will the honourable member ask the Administrator this morning the following two questions and today report to this Assembly the Administrator's answers? Has the Administrator received from the Minister any general instructions as to the reservation for the Governor-General's assent of ordinances made by this Assembly and, if any such instructions have been received by the Administrator, what is the text of those instructions? Was any instruction received by the Administrator from the Minister which required the reservation of the Northern Territory Disasters Ordinance for the Governor-General's assent and, if so, what were the terms of any such instruction? I also direct the following question to the honourable member on the same subject. Since in every other parliament under the Westminster system, a fully elected legislature has a complete and regularly exercised oversight by persons responsible to that parliament of the matter of assent or non-assent to laws made by that parliament, will the honourable member set in train a vigorous campaign to ensure that the matter of assent to ordinances of this Assembly should be determined by the only executive body responsible to this Assembly - that is, by the Administrator in Council?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Part Darwin did give me some forwarding of these questions and I have already had a discussion with the Administrator regarding the questions asked by the honourable member. The advice I have received from His Honour is that communications from

the Government through the Minister to the Administrator and vice versa are regarded as the property of the two parties concerned; in other words, that such communications are confidential and the text and terms will not be made available to me or to this Assembly. I think that also takes care of the second part of the question in relation to the Disasters Territory ordinance.

The honourable member's further question deals with the campaign on the matter of assent to ordinances. I have already raised this matter with the Minister for the Northern Territory following the transfer of 24 functions on 1 January. When he visited the Territory shortly after the transfer occurred, I made very strong representations that it was entirely within the terms of the Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report on Constitutional Development for the Northern Territory that legislation in respect of transferred functions and the assent to that legislation should become the business of this Assembly and its Executive and there should be no question of reservation of such legislation. I further pointed out to the Minister that, in relation to powers still exercised and retained by the Australian Government, the joint committee had recommended that any question of assent, reservation or non-assent should only be exercised after fullest consultation and discussion with the Territory Executive and that this did not appear to be being carried out as a matter of policy. The Minister undertook to examine the points that I made to him. I still have not received any further advice from the Minister on this matter.

1947 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

I asked the Majority Leader to ask the Administrator the following 2 follow-up questions: Has the Administrator received from the Minister any general instructions as to the reservation for the Governor-General's assent of ordinances made by this Assembly? That question could be answered yes or no; it does not involve the disclosure of any text. Secondly, was any instruction received by the Administrator from the Minister which required the reservation of the Northern Territory Disasters Ordinance for the Governor-General's assent? That question could also be answered yes or no.

ANSWER

I will undertake to convey the questions to the Administrator.

1948 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

When is it expected that tenders will be called and let for the first stage of the new Darwin gaol?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has given a very high priority in its proposed 1977-78 civil works program to the tenders for a new Darwin gaol. In fact I was of the opinion that it was to be let as early as possible, probably in July of the next financial year. However, this matter is subject to budget consideration and until such time as the Federal Cabinet has determined its budget strategies and policies, I do not believe a firm answer can be given.

1949 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING

Has the Alice Springs municipal council in this financial year experienced a shortfall in its fund for road reconstruction, that shortfall being represented by a difference between appropriation and allocation? Is the shortfall creating any embarrassment to that municipal council? If embarrassment is being experienced, what measures are being taken by the Department of the Northern Territory or the Minister for the Northern Territory to offset that embarrassment?

ANSWER

I am sure the honourable member for Alice Springs is aware that local government was a transferred function on the 1st January and therefore any changes or alterations to the financial situation for this year has to be done in consultation with myself and the Minister. However, in answer to the general question, in the agreement between the Commonwealth and the people of Alice Springs on acceptance of the offer of local government, the Commonwealth agreed to start work on certain roads to bring those roads to an acceptable standard. The allocation for 1976-77 included a transfer from other votes of \$748,000. The actual cost incurred by the corporation exceeded this amount by approximately \$182,000. As there was no possibility of additional funds being provided by Treasury nor any means by which savings of this amount in other votes could be found, the corporation was advised to obtain a bank overdraft for the short term loan. The corporation was also advised to seek reimbursement in the next financial year for the interest charges involved. However, we did not guarantee this reimbursement. The corporation has since resolved that the shortfall will be covered by Commonwealth Bank overdraft.

1950 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS

In light of the fact that the Land Councils in the Territory seems to have unlimited legal resources paid for by the taxpayer of Australia, will similar legal aid be granted to people whose land is the subject of a land claim by Aborigines through the various Land Councils?

ANSWER

It has become evident in the administration of the Commonwealth Act that the resources that the Land Councils, acting on behalf of Aboriginal claimants, are able to muster are quite considerable and fairly effective in presenting claims to land commissioners. We have already seen in respect of the claims in the Alligator River area that the Land Council, with the assistance of senior legal advice, anthropologists and consultants from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, mounted a fairly formidable and, I suspect, fairly expensive team to support such claims. On the other hand, people who consider that they have an interest in the area under claim, apparently have to do their own thing, appear on their own account and support their own case. In fact, in some cases, they have had difficulty in being able to obtain an audience in order to do so. These matters have been brought to the attention of the Attorney-General and to the Prime Minister. I am sure that the Government is anxious to see equitable arrangements made, and that there is no discrimination in the community as regards the opportunity to deal with claims and is anxious to preserve the harmony on which Judge Woodward placed such heavy emphasis in his report. I have made representation that other interests in the community should be able to receive assistance as required, whether it is from the Australian Legal

Aid Office or some other kind of expert assistance. These matters are under consideration and I have not had any final response to them as yet.

1951 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM

I appreciate the tabling of the 3 reports in the Assembly yesterday relating to the operations of the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund but I would ask him if he could advise if any subsequent reports will be made available to this Assembly and to the Corporation of the City of Darwin?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would answer the question of the honourable member for Nightcliff pursuant to Standing Order 91 which I think covers the situation. I can do no better than quote from a letter that I received this morning from the Minister for the Northern Territory replying to a telex from me of 21 April:

*In your telex message of 21 April 1977, you sought information regarding the presentation of further financial statements of the Darwin Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund. As you are aware, the trustees moved to wind up the fund on 30 September 1976, but the disbursement of funds which was made as a consequence of that decision was subsequently required by me to be re-paid following advice from the Commonwealth Solicitor General. Finalisation of the Trust Fund Reports had progressed to the stage where the final report had been compiled and was to be submitted to the Auditor-General for his certification. The subsequent events have changed the situation and the normal monthly reports have been resumed from October 1976. Reports up to the end of April 1977 should be presented during the first week in May 1977.*

I would hope to have reports to present either tomorrow or probably next week. If not then, I will have them at the next sitting of this Assembly.

1952 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TUXWORTH

I refer to a question I asked at the last sittings with reference to the unlawful occupation of Fire Brigade flats in Mitchell Street. I received an answer that action to evict people from the building was then under way. In view of the fact that no action has been taken since that date, in view of the fact that hepatitis has been diagnosed in persons from those premises and in view of the fact that the Department of Health now will not accept the building and that the Department of the Northern Territory disclaimed responsibility even for cleaning up the place and that, when the city council proposed to clean the place up, the Department of Health warned the corporation that the corporation's responsibility ceased at the front gate, will the honourable member for God's sake do something urgently to sort out this incredible bungle?

ANSWER

I am well aware of the honourable member's concern over this matter. As I indicated in my last reply to his question, the Department of Health advised me that the Department of the Northern Territory had taken steps to have the occupants of the building evicted. As the honourable member points out, very little appears to have been done. I had a personal

head count this morning and there were no fewer than 35 people after 6 had gone to work while I was watching them. This morning the Department of the Northern Territory advised me that Crown Law has been given instructions to have the building cleaned out.

Mr Withnall: That is a nice way of telling a lie. They have not been given full instructions.

Mr Tuxworth: All right. They have further intimated that they will do everything in their power to have the persons removed from the building today,

I would just like to add my support to the honourable member's concern in the sense that it is now a very serious health hazard. There are far too many people living in the building without adequate sanitation. I will be putting it to the Department of the Northern Territory, that they board the building up in such a manner that it cannot be used for habitation or that it be pulled down.

1953 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

Will she personally investigate the problems in the supply of office supplies and equipment to police stations in outlying areas of Central Australia? Will she also seek to have airconditioning fitted in the police station office at Hart's Range and the police station residence?

ANSWER

I shall make some enquiries regarding the supplies to police stations in the centralian area. However, it is very difficult to know exactly what the honourable member for Stuart means when he just says "supplies to police stations" because it is my understanding that any supplies not available at the moment are on order and if the officers in these one and two-man stations mention the fact to their sergeant, I am sure their needs will be met.

1954 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

What action is proposed to review city council bylaws to ensure that the problems that occurred several months ago in Darwin and Alice Springs will not return?

ANSWER

The general powers and bylaws aspects of the Local Government Ordinance have been reviewed by my department and the Cabinet has issued drafting instructions with high priority for new legislation in this regard.

1955 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

Has the honourable Cabinet Member been consulted in relation to the proposed widening of Trower Road in two stages rather than in one stage? If so, can he tell me what the reasons are for the widening taking place in two stages?

ANSWER

No, I have not been consulted at all with regard to the widening of Trower Road. I am not aware of the reasons for the splitting of the contract. I will make inquiries and advise the Assembly.

1956 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

Could he explain the purpose of the steel work structure being erected on the Fort Hill Wharf?

ANSWER

The steelwork which is being erected on Fort Hill Wharf is for the loading of cattle. Some \$26,000 is being spent by the Port Authority on the wharf to enable the loading of live cattle to be handled more easily. At the same time, they are also spending \$10,000 on the wharf canteen and facilities for the wharfies. This may erase some of the criticism that I sometimes get that we do not do much for the wharfies. We are spending \$26,000 on cattle and \$10,000 on wharfies - I reckon that is a pretty good comparison Mr Speaker.

1957 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

The Minister for the Northern Territory has recently announced that Government housing has been made available to certain industrial employees of the Australian Public Service. Can the Cabinet Member advise me what similar arrangements have been made for employees of the NT Public Service?

ANSWER

Identical arrangements are being made for industrial employees of the Northern Territory Public Service. As a result of the transfers powers on 1 January, a number of employees of the Northern Territory Public Service came under our control and are possibly not eligible for housing under the terms that the Minister announced for Australian Government employees. However, I have taken the opportunity to discuss the matter personally with the Minister for the Northern Territory and he has informed me that the employees will be treated on the same basis as if they were eligible employees under any Australian Government Department.

1958 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

In the last month or two, my inquiries as to delays in granting Home Finance Trustee loans has led me to believe that there could be some problems in relation to delegation of functions by the Home Finance Trustee himself. I ask whether the Home Finance Trustee has in fact the power to delegate his functions and, if not, will anything be done to give him such power?

ANSWER

This matter has been brought to my attention as a result of some claims that progress payments and the initial applications for approval were delayed because these matters had to receive the endorsement of the Home Finance Trustee personally. I have asked officers of my department to look at this matter and, if any action can be taken by way of legislative amendment, it will be presented to this Assembly as soon as possible.



1959 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Several months ago, a press release was issued through the NT News that the Tracy Village complex was going to go partly to the Northern Territory Housing Commission, partly to the Corporation of the City of Darwin, and partly to the Youth Hostels Association of Australia. When will a decision be made regarding the future of the Tracy Village complex for those applicants?

ANSWER

The commission's proposals for the future use of the area now occupied by Tracy Village have been put before the Department of Defence which has control over the land in question. Discussions have been held with the department, and the commissions is aware of the need to reach an early decision on the future use of the Tracy Village site. However, at this stage, the Defence Department is still considering the matter and has made no commitment to relinquish control over the area.

1960 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS

I refer to an ABC broadcast news item this morning in which was stated that the Majority Leader, Dr Letts, has been accused of "running with the hare and hunting with the hounds in his statements on Aboriginal land rights". I ask the Majority Leader if he could either run with the hare or with the hounds and give us the facts.

ANSWER

I am not aware which are the hounds and which are the hare in this case to be quite honest, so it makes it a bit difficult to give a precise answer. I am aware that the person to whom the statement was attributed, Mr Neville Perkins, has not been present at any of the discussions I have had with the Northern Land Council, the Central Land Council, Cattle industry representatives, or in fact any of the parties with whom I have discussed this matter at all. So how he can purport to be an authority on the attitude I take in those discussions, I am not sure.

In relation to the particular matter that I was suggesting to pastoralists that Aborigines might be able to seize their land either now or when leases expired, I do not believe that I have ever made suggestions in those terms. I have pointed out some of the problems which exist in the administration of the Act as it is affecting and may affect pastoral land in the future. As to the pastoral leases which have been acquired for Aboriginal use such as Wave Hill, Kildurk, Willowra, Mount Allen, Chilla Well - there may be others but those are some of them - I understand that people acting on behalf of the Aboriginal people are putting forward submissions and claims to have this land converted to Aboriginal freehold title. I have made the point that, should this be done, it will have an effect on the pastoral industry. The northern part of the Territory, the Kimberleys of Western Australia and the gulf country of Queensland are going to be faced with grave difficulties within the next 6 or 7 years in trying to carry out a cattle disease control program to keep pace with the rest of Australia. Should it not be successful in doing this, the future of the cattle industry in the northern part of the Territory will be greatly

jeopardised. It could be that within 6 or 7 years export markets will be completely denied to the area and also the marketing of cattle from that area to other parts of Australia. The only way to avoid this is to have a properly coordinated and thorough going disease control program on cattle properties. In order to do this, it is not sufficient just to have the Stock Diseases Ordinance, one has to have the resources with which to carry out the terms of that ordinance. In other words, you must have yards, fences, paddocks watering points and all those other things. If the present pastoral leases which have been acquired by the Aborigines are converted to freehold title, there will be no way to ensure that proper disease control occurs. It will be entirely optional to the owners under that form of title as to whether they will do anything. This does represent a serious problem for the cattle industry. I have made that point. I have made the point that the granting of claims over the recent crown land areas could cut across land use developments programs which have been established in the last 15 years or so and could have a detrimental effect on pastoral productions there.

It is also true to say that, where a claim has been registered over a pastoral lease, even though it does not take effect in any way, the fact that some people representing Aborigines have said that if the lease should come on the market for sale the Aborigines will move to acquire it, this in itself has an effect on the negotiability of lease instruments and an effect on the pastoral industry. I have said all these things and I am prepared to stand by them.

Members: Hear, hear.



1961 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

I understand that the Minister for the Environment has announced a housing cost inquiry, Will this inquiry effect the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Approximately one month ago, Mr Newman did announce that the Government was proposing a wide ranging inquiry into escalating land and housing costs in Australia. Following his statement, I advised him that the Northern Territory Cabinet would be keen to have details of this inquiry and to participate in it. At the Housing Minister's Conference last week in Melbourne, the matter was again raised with the state ministers, terms of reference have now been established and the details forwarded to the Prime Minister. I hope that this inquiry will get underway in the near future. I have indicated to Mr Newman that the resources of the Northern Territory Housing Commission will be made available to such an inquiry for any hearings that they might like to hold in the Northern Territory. There is a very strong need for the Northern Territory to participate in any inquiry that is looking at reducing housing costs,

1962 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

Has she yet reached a decision on whether the police will be identified either by name or number? If not, when is such a decision likely to be made.

ANSWER

This matter is still under consideration by the Party.

1963 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Has he had expressed to him any concern about drunkenness on the streets of Alice Springs or other Territory centres having a detrimental effect on tourist numbers in the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

During the recent visit that I made to the centre, concern expressed that this was causing a detrimental effect on the tourist industry in Alice Springs. I do not have any figures to support this but it seems to be the opinion of quite a few people in Alice Springs.

1964 Mr DONDAS to Mr SPEAKER

Has there been any development in implementing a retirement benefit and pensions scheme for members of this Assembly?

ANSWER

I have a statement on this matter. After a long period during which was thought that an officer of the Treasury was preparing a retirement benefit scheme for the consideration of members, the responsibility of preparing a proposal was returned to the Assembly. Accordingly, in November 1976, I sent to the Minister for the Northern Territory, a proposal for Parliamentary Retiring Allowances (Northern Territory Legislative Assembly) Act together with a detailed explanation. The draft Act was virtually a copy of the Act giving a contributory pension scheme to members of the Federal Parliament. I asked that this matter

should be on of the references to the Remuneration Tribunal in the hope that it could be dealt with in the tribunal's next review and enacted and implemented before the end of the first Assembly. The Minister for Administrative Services made a formal reference to the Remuneration Tribunal on the 3 March 1977. The honourable Cabinet Member for Resources and I appeared before the tribunal on 4 April 1977 on behalf of all members and the Majority Leader and his deputy represented the Cabinet Members at a hearing on 26 April 1977. The tribunal has the pension scheme before it and it has the services of an expert in this field to assist in its consideration,

1965 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS

You may have heard several editions recently of an ABC program called "Broadband".

In the last 6 weeks, I have noticed that certain segments of the program seem to present only one particular point of view and there does not seem to be any attempt at an even-handed presentation of points of view. Last night's "Broadband" program was nothing but a full-scale, blatant, political attack. Did he hear last night's program regarding Aboriginal land rights and, if so, what action does he propose to take?

ANSWER

I did hear last night's "Broadband" program. I say quite frankly that I was disgusted that a responsible organisation such as the Australian Broadcasting Commission funded by taxpayers' money could present a program in this way. I believe that the ABC has a responsibility to report newsworthy items and controversial issues but it would be expected by the taxpayers that a balanced viewpoint would be presented if there are 2 sides to an argument and that the facts should be kept under control and the hour not devoted largely to the realms of fantasy. Because of the biased nature of the program and certain allegations which were made against individual members of this legislature and the Assembly generally, I am sending a message of protest to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Post and Telecommunications and to the Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. I am awaiting a transcript of the program which is being prepared. I believe, sir, that I will be speaking to you later in this House on possible questions of privilege raised by this broadcast.

1966 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

I refer to a question I placed on notice on December 21 last year and as of May 3 this year it is unanswered. The question sought certain information about appointments to the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Medical Service and Legal Aid. I ask the Cabinet Member Why are those questions still unanswered?

ANSWER

I am unable to say at this stage exactly why they are unanswered but I would tend to consider that the department and possibly the Minister are having some difficulty in being able to furnish all the information required to answer the honourable member's question. Some of the organisations concerned, despite the fact that they are funded principally and primarily by public moneys, have refused to provide certain information to the Minister and to myself in answer to questions raised about them on previous occasions. I dare say that the department is having similar problems in getting all the information to answer the

see questions which are quite reasonable. I will take the matter up again with the department and see if something can be done to pull them into line.

1967 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

How many bailiffs are presently carrying out service and execution of process from the Darwin Court and what delay is there being experienced in having a warrant of execution levied?

ANSWER

This work is still the responsibility of the Commonwealth Police Force and there is presently one senior constable on full time duty. However, local provision has been made for assistance to be given from time to time by one clerical assistant and, additionally, 2 other clerical assistants on occasions. All personnel can give assistance sometime to serve process although they are not designated as bailiffs, and in addition to that, two private firms operate in Darwin doing work which includes service of process. I am sorry I am unable to answer the second part of that question but I will get information and convey it later in the day.

1968 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

Is the coastline of the Northern Territory patrolled proportionately with that of the Queensland and Western Australia coastline?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

1969 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Who owns the land where the Alawa Oval complex is situated?

ANSWER

The area of land bounded by Trower Road, Lakeside Drive, the Darwin Community College and Rapid Creek is shown as vacant crown land on the Darwin Town Plan and is designated as open town space. Action is being taken to reserve for recreation and amusement of the public the area which includes the three playing ovals and the toilet block. The reserve is to be vested in the corporation. These lakeside ovals are already maintained by the Darwin City Corporation.

1970 Mr TUNGATULUM to Mr PERRON

Has the DRC resumed land at the Humpty Doo tip? If so, what is its proposed use and will the DRC provide an area for a tip?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Tiwi asked this question of me several sittings ago and I asked that it be placed on notice. I do not recall what the answer was. However, I will undertake to find out what the answer was and relay it to the honourable member.

1971 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS

Has the Majority Party any intention of accepting ethnic affairs as a responsibility of this Assembly in the new NT Government.

ANSWER

The answer generally is yes. The arrangements now being made between state governments and the Commonwealth in respect of sharing responsibility for migrants and ethnic affairs only came to my notice recently. The Department of Immigration is still responsible for the migration program. When they arrive here, some of the difficulties which are faced by migrants have been taken care of in the past by the Department of Social Security. To a greater extent in the last couple of years, by agreement between the Commonwealth and the states, the state governments have been establishing agencies to look after migrant problems in the community. In all the other states, branches now exist for this purpose and resources are provided by the state government. In Sydney, in the last 6 months, something like 4 new migrant aid centres have been opened by the state government there. At the moment, there are a few staff in Darwin who are working in the migrant aid area advising migrants where to obtain legal advice, where to find interpreters, organising English classes etc. These people at the moment are working for the Department of Social Security. I have already made contact with the Minister for Immigration and I intend to follow this up with the Minister for Social Security indicating our interest in this area. I will be making representations to have this considered, in part at least, as a state-type function so that we may plan to assist the very large migrant community in the Northern Territory in the best possible way.

1972 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Why does the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau no longer service people wishing to travel overseas? I have had many complaints about this issue.

ANSWER

It was a decision of the board that they no longer carry out this function. The function of the board, is to promote tourism within the Northern Territory. There are quite a number of privately operated tourist organisations which cater for this type of business and it was felt that the board should concentrate on the promotion of the Northern Territory.

1973 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

Has the allocation of funds for the creches and child-minding centres in the Northern Territory in the current financial year, 1976-77, been sufficient, or are children being turned away from these centres?

ANSWER

The funding of creches and child-minding centres, particularly those run by community organisations is conducted by the Department of Social Security. My understanding is that it would not matter how much money the department poured into this area, the community could absorb it. Throughout the year, I have had the opportunity of supporting several creche organisations in their efforts to get more federal funding to

enable them to conduct their activities. I believe that some community creches are constrained by their financial resources. One of the problems is tied up with the fact that the consumer is not always able to pay the difference between the cost paid by the Commonwealth and the cost is incurred by the creche organisation and creches, rather than put their fees up and have a selective clientele, keep their fees down and prefer to take as many people as they can. In doing so, they will always be turning people away.

1974 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Has the policy by the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau not to take overseas bookings resulted in loss in revenue? If he does not have the information, would he undertake to provide it later this sitting day?

ANSWER

Quite obviously, if you give away some of the business, you lose some of the money that comes in. The purpose of the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau is to promote tourism in the Northern Territory not to run at a profit. My policy will be that the board shall concentrate on the promotion of tourism in the Territory and the selling of tickets is a secondary interest within the Territory. However, I would say that we were able to have a federal Cabinet decision reversed. They had intended to close the interstate offices because they thought that they were not necessary. Obviously, these offices do sell tickets for various tours in the Northern Territory. Many of the smaller tourist operators within the Territory rely very heavily on the interstate office. Once again, I point out that the job of the Tourist Bureau is not to make money but to get tourists into the Northern Territory. Subsequently, those tourists will spend money and this will benefit the Territory.

1975 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

Is it a fact that the Northern Territory Government Tourist Bureau was not an IATA accredited tourist bureau and therefore all overseas travel being sold by it was at no commission at all until it received its IATA accreditation?

ANSWER

I will have to find out the information.

1976 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

What progress is being made in the government sponsored tourism study of the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

The study is in progress at the moment. Two officers in the tourism section of my department are spending quite a lot of time on the project as are some members of the Department of NT. It will be an ongoing study and will take some time before the results are known.

1977 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

Can he advise when parks and playing fields will be provided for the Braitling School in central Australia?



ANSWER

I have sought this information for the honourable member but have not yet received an answer.

1978 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

What steps have been taken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to provide both finance and a site for a new museum in Darwin?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Nightcliff asked a similar question several days ago. The question on that occasion asked for the details since some period in 1974. I have several pages of detailed notes in that regard and I will make it available to the honourable member. This sets out the consequential studies, arrangements and decisions of the Reconstruction Commission. In March 1977, the Department of the Northern Territory took over the investigation for a site for a museum. With regard to the funding, it has been accepted for a long time that an amount of approximately \$1m will be required from the Government as an insurance replacement for the building that was destroyed in the cyclone. If the building does not commence by December this year when the Darwin Reconstruction Commission ceases to exist, and I doubt that it will, then the appropriate sponsor for that building will be the Northern Territory Cabinet. The Northern Territory Cabinet has already put forward preliminary suggestions to the Commonwealth Government, as part of its forward estimates, that it would like a museum to be established.

1979 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

Is he aware that an application by the Top End Junior Motorcycle Club for a special purposes lease over an area of land where it has been operating now for some years has been rejected after a prolonged series of negotiations, as usual by the Department of the Northern Territory? If the honourable Cabinet Member is aware of this, can he tell me the reasons for the rejection and whether the department is prepared to reconsider the matter?

ANSWER

I was not aware that the application the honourable member referred to has been rejected by the Department of the Northern Territory. However, I will be happy to liaise with him and the people who made the application and see if we cannot get some review of the decision from the department.

1980 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN

What is the current position regarding reported negotiations between transport owner-drivers and the major hauling companies? Can he advise what effect the successful bid by the owner drivers would have on the cost of goods in the Northern Territory or, alternatively, what would be the effect of the continuity of transport in the Northern Territory if those present negotiations break down?

ANSWER

No negotiations have taken place between the transport operators themselves: the owner-drivers and the transport companies, the freight forwarders, and thus is of course the reason for the dispute. The subcontractors believe that they are being unfairly treated and they have asked to meet with the freight forwarders, or the major transport companies, to discuss the situation and to arrive at a better price per tonne on the goods that they are carrying. This has been going on for some months.

A meeting was arranged initially by the Minister for Transport, Mr Nixon, at which departmental people were present, plus the owner drivers, but the transport companies did not turn up. Subsequently, there has been the threat by the owner-drivers from both South Australia and Queensland that, if Mr Nixon does not organise a meeting by 15 May, then they will cease to deliver goods to the Northern Territory. I have spoken to Mr Nixon on this point several times and he has made it quite clear that the area is not within his control; it is a dispute concerning prices between two companies, you could say - the owner-drivers, who are an industry of individual operators, and the companies themselves. It is out of his jurisdiction. He is concerned about the situation, and I believe that one of the owner-driver organisers rang him yesterday and was keeping him fully informed.

I myself feel that the transport companies should meet with the owner-drivers to see if some arrangement can be made. Of course, if this does not happen, and if the strike goes ahead, we will possibly see disruptions. Whether or not they will be able to fill in with other drivers, I do not know. An increase in subcontract rates, according to the subcontractors, should not effect the cost in Darwin because they claim that the major companies do have enough margin to cover a higher subcontract rate. I believe, however, that if an increased rate was forced upon the major companies, we would see an increase in freight costs into the Northern Territory.

1981 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

Is she aware that delays of up to 12 months are being experienced in Darwin in the finalisation of coronial inquiries? Can she inform me when the coronial inquiry into the unfortunate death of the lad Beutel who died recently as a result, we hear, of not receiving treatment from the Darwin Hospital, is to be set down and completed?

ANSWER

I understand on the morning of 13 May.

1982 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

This question is asked on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Community Affairs. When will the motor registry function be removed from the police station in Tennant Creek and established in the district office?

ANSWER

As a result of Cabinet Decision, I have asked my department to look at the rearranging of motor registry procedures in both Tennant Creek and Katherine.

Mr Ballantyne: What about Nhulunbuy?

Mr Ryan: We are not considering Nhulunbuy at this stage although in the future this matter will be taken up. At the moment we are only considering Katherine and Tennant Creek.

When the Motor Registration Branch was under the Department of Northern Territory, it was the intention of the Government to build motor vehicle test sheds at Katherine and Tennant Creek. Our party has decided against this. We feel that it is a waste of money to spend a large amount in erecting a test shed. We feel that this could be more aptly handled by a sub-contractor to let to a local garage to test vehicles. This would be on the basis that tenders would be called for the testing of vehicles for registration purpose and the lowest tender obviously would get the business. People would then attend that particular garage and have their vehicle tested free, the payment being made to the garage by my department. This then brings the other centres into line with Darwin and Alice Springs, where the facilities are now available and we cannot do much about them but they get free testing.

In addition to this, the facility will most probably enable, as in Darwin, other garages to test vehicles. If people cannot get into the official one, they could still go to another garage, the same as they can in Darwin, and pay for the test.

With regard to the payment of moneys, we are hoping to get this function right away from the police and possibly into the district office through the good offices of my colleague, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Local Government.

1983 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

What progress has been made in regard to the completion of the Casuarina Hospital, and would it be possible for members of this Assembly to make an inspection?

ANSWER

I understand that the construction state of the Casuarina Hospital is in the middle of the concrete pour on the seventh floor. I would think that the workmen, the companies and the department concerned with the erection of the hospital would be delighted at any interest shown by members of this Assembly. If they should like to have a look around, I will ask the Director of Health to organise an inspection tour.

1984 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr PERRON

Are there any plans available for the proposed extensions to pre school at Nhulunbuy and if so, will they be available to the public? Has the contract been let for the extensions? If so, when will the building commence. Is there an estimated finishing date for that building?

ANSWER

I have been advised that the extensions have been designed for some time and that when the first designs were completed, the proposal was sent to Nhulunbuy for comment, in about February of 1975. However, further copies of the plans could be made available immediately for interested residents of Nhulunbuy to view. As far as tenders are concerned, it is expected that a contract will be let in the immediate future for this project. The contract completion time is 28 weeks.

1985 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise formally the current statistical position of the cyclone reconstruction loans of the Home Finance Trustee?

ANSWER

In the debate yesterday afternoon on the Home Finance Trustee, I did make certain broad information available. I will provide now the detailed statistical information. This is up to the end of the week ending 29 April 1977 for the 6% concessional loan scheme for the reconstruction of private homes in Darwin. The number of loans approved since the inception of the scheme are 928 with a total value of \$28,235,427. Applications not yet approved total 637. It is anticipated that there will be some wastage in this figure as some people will not want to take up the loan for various reasons; for example, if they should leave the Northern Territory. The Minister has announced that the scheme is a commitment of the Government and the people have the right to take them up any time between now and 1980.

The value of progress payments made since the inception of the scheme up to 29 April is \$23,966,754.

1986 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

You may have noticed that the city council has been tree planting along the Stuart Highway approaches to Darwin. What steps has the Department of Transport, which owns the railway land adjacent to the highway out as far as Berrimah, taken to co-operate with the city council on tree planting and beautification of the land along the approaches to Darwin?

ANSWER

The DRC are the people responsible for the tree planting. I think the Railways would be doing nothing. Whilst I do not agree with this, I find it fairly difficult to believe that we would be able to induce the Railways to spend money on planting trees along the railway line when in fact they closed the railway line down because of financial difficulties.

1987 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

What state has the program for a recreation lake in central Australia reached?

ANSWER

My understanding is that government departments and organisations in Alice Springs have been looking at the prospect of having a recreation lake in one of 4 sites. I am not aware of any decision that has been taken or any commitments that have been made by government. I will endeavour to get the information for the honourable member later.

1988 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS

I have received this morning a report from the Department of Northern Territory Animal Industry and Agricultural Branch. I would draw his attention to page 4 and I would ask if he would request that turnoff figures be provided for the years 1975-76 back to 1967-68. I notice that the populations are listed and there would be some interesting contrasts gained by looking at the turnoff figures.

ANSWER

The honourable member's question should have been directed to the Cabinet Member for Resources. I am sure that honourable gentlemen will endeavour to provide the figures for the member for Alice Springs.

1989 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

I refer to my last question to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Industry. I was rather disappointed with the negative answer but I was interested to hear that the DRC was responsible for planting the palms trees. Will he induce the DRC to plant palms on the railway land as well?

ANSWER

I am sure that the honourable member for Jingili's intentions are well founded but there is a problem of funds in relation to the beautifying and planting of trees. I have no objections to asking the DRC if they could plant trees along the railway line and I undertake to do so. Once again, I am being a little bit negative and I am sorry if that offends the honourable member for Jingili but I thought he possibly would want straight answers.

1990 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise the cost of the landscaping the park on the corner of Bennet and Mitchell Street which I understand was undertaken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission?

ANSWER

A similar question was asked by the honourable member for Casuarina and I have not yet been supplied with details for formal reply. I understand that the contract is part of a park for the entire block which surrounds blocks 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. It was originally let as a tender in 1974 as part of the construction programs that were going on for office blocks in that area. As such, it represented a very small percentage of the Government's construction program in that area. I do not have this authenticated, but I understand the figure is of the order of \$110,000.

1991 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Has land been applied for in Central Australia, in both the northern and southern approaches of Alice Springs, to provide parking bays and an information centre for tourists?

ANSWER

Up to the present, nothing has been done to get hold of land. This situation has been discussed by the Tourist Board. I also discussed it with the Tourist Promotion Association in Alice Springs last week and we intend to try to acquire land so that there is a tourist information bay in Alice Springs. Whether there will be one at both the southern and northern ends of the town, I would not like to say at this stage. I was hoping that we could establish one single centre.

1992 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Has a site for the new Casuarina Library been selected and, if so, where?

ANSWER

The siting of the Casuarina Library is very important, because it is one of the major projects being looked at in the coming financial year. A number of sites were looked at in the areas adjacent to the Casuarina Shopping Centre and my understanding is that the site in Bradshaw Terrace, where the current demountables are situated, will be the one that will be approved.

1993 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Has he any information on the question I asked yesterday concerning 112 Woods Terrace in Alice Springs? If that house is not to be occupied in the near future, will the owner clear the grass which is a fire danger?

ANSWER

I do not usually attend to domestic matters such as grass clearing. The honourable member for Stuart is well capable of ringing up any maintenance officer in Alice Springs and having that matter attended to.

However, with regard to the questions that were asked in the last couple of days with regard to waiting time for government homes in Alice Springs, I do have information now available. The waiting time for government homes in Alice Springs is 10 months. With regard to the government home at lot number 112 in Woods Terrace, I am advised that this is an executive style house which has been built to house the medical specialist for the Alice Springs Hospital. Health have been attempting to recruit such a person.

1994 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

Has any further action been taken to have the port facilities of Darwin upgraded?

ANSWER

An inquiry was undertaken last year by the Bureau of Transport Economics. The latest advice I have from the Department of Transport is that that report should be available this month. This will affect some of the decisions that are to be made but I also believe that the Department of Northern Territory have a proposal to go to Cabinet regarding the upgrading of the port.

1995 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

How many residences owned by the Commonwealth of Australia damaged by cyclone Tracy still have to be repaired.

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission's housing program is now estimated to be 73% complete. Work in hand or programmed at this stage involves 2745 dwellings. Completions to date total 2,025. I will make the detailed information available to the honourable member. On work still

to be done, proposals have been considered for work on a further 405 blocks for the Department of the Northern Territory and 340 for defence services.

1996 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr PERRON

In the light of the recent problems with the toilet blocks at the school at Elcho Island can he tell me if the toilet blocks have been operating effectively since? Has he any indication of the cost of transporting the demountables to Elcho Island?

ANSWER

I am not quite sure whether the ablution block problems Elcho Island have been corrected. I understand that there has been a contract let for the transport and installation of two demountable ablution blocks from Kormilda College to Elcho Island. I am not sure at what stage the transportation and installation has reached. However, the contract price for the transportation and installation was \$53,000. The price included provision of power and water to the block and the provision of septic tanks.

1997 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked two questions:

*"Has the Administrator received from the Minister any general instructions as to the reservation for the Governor-General's assent of ordinances made by this Assembly?" and, secondly, "Was any instruction received by the Administrator from the Minister which requires the reservation of the Northern Territory Disasters Ordinance for the Governor-General's assent?"*

I have been in touch with the Administrator and the information he has provided to me is in the same general terms as the answer which I gave to the honourable member for Port Darwin yesterday, that instructions given by the Minister to the Administrator are regarded as the province and property of the parties concerned and the Administrator is not prepared to provide the details of them unilaterally in the way in which this question has sought. I am certain that the honourable member will not be very happy with this answer and I am certain that the Administrator does not have any wish to be obstructive to the business of this Assembly. As the question relates to an instruction from the Minister to the Administrator in both cases, we may find it more productive to direct this inquiry to the Minister himself. The source of any instruction of this nature has been given and, should the honourable member so desire, I am quite happy to redirect this question to the Minister.

1998 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The member for Ludmilla asked a question with regard to the temporary camp at East Point. I have sought information from the Corporation of the City of Darwin which has advised that at its April general meeting a recommendation was accepted that no one be allowed to camp at East Point this year. One caretaker is resident in the area.

1999 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked what action had been taken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to replace and upgrade street lighting in Darwin, in particular in Litchfield Street. I am advised by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission that a program has been initiated of expenditure totalling \$1.4m over a two and a half year period to restore street lighting throughout Darwin. The current program for 1976/77 covers lighting at the following locations: Rothdale Road, Nightcliff Road, Progress Drive, various bus stops and telephone booths, and at intersections involving high mast lighting at Daly and McMinn Streets, Stuart Highway-Bagot Road, Stuart Highway-Goyder Road, Stuart Highway-Ross Smith Avenue, Goyder Road-East Point Road, Bagot Road-McMillans Road, Bagot Road-Trower Road-Nightcliff Road, Trower Road-Rothdale Roads, Trower Road-Vanderline Drive, Lee Point Road-McMillans Road, Rothdale-McMillans Road and at various dangerous intersections and pedestrian crossings, I would advise the honourable member that a temporary light has been erected in Litchfield Street pending the commencement of the next stage of under-grounding power in the city area.

2000 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Arnhem asked about guide posts missing on the approach to the Adelaide River on the Arnhem Highway. The Department of Construction are presently using their resources to repair pavement surfaces and will replace these guide posts as resources become available. This is not expected to eventuate until the next financial year.

2001 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Gillen, asked me a question concerning a possible report on the state of the highways in the Northern Territory. I have chased this up myself and so far as I can establish from officers of the Department of Construction, there is no official report. I believe several senior engineers did drive down the highway and inspected it. This does happen quite regularly, but there is no official report on the state of the highways and roads in the Northern Territory.

2002 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Alice Springs asked about a rumour concerning STD facilities for Alice Springs. The answer that we have received from Telecom is that Alice Springs cannot be provided with STD until facilities are provided between Tennant Creek and Alice Springs and these are expected to be completed in 1978/79.

2003 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Nhulunbuy asked about the Dhupuma Road. Apparently quotes were called to grade the road and there was some dispute over the granting of the contract to the lowest tenders which resulted in some queries back through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Subsequently, the grading of about 1 or 2 kilometres of the road was awarded to the lowest tenderer. There are still 3 or 4 kilometres to complete. The Department of Construction is presently looking at getting quotes for the rest of the work. There was some serious damage done recently during the heavy rains they had over at Gove and



the Department have asked that these be graded forthwith to solve that problem. I would ask that the honourable member for Nhulumbuy contact me if they are not getting a satisfactory result and I will follow it up with the Department of Construction to see if we can get over the problem he continually has over there.

2004 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member from Jingili asked a question concerning the breaking into 2 contracts of the repairs to Trower Road. I have not been able as yet to get confirmation from the DRC on the reasons. I believe that it has been something to do with the money situation. When I get the answer I will pass it in to the honourable member for Jingili.

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