

**PART II**

**THE QUESTION PAPER**

**Questions are printed in numerical order**

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

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 13 OCTOBER 1976

FROM 10 AUGUST 1976

1197 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

1. As at 30 June 1975 and 1976, how many members were physically attached to the CIB Inquiry Section at -
  - (a) Darwin
  - (b) Alice Springs
  - (c) Katherine
  - (d) Tennant Creek, and
  - (e) Nhulunbuy?
2. What support sections are available to the CIB, such as breaking, consorting and drug squads and how many members does each of these squads have?
3. Are any of these squads in the CIB to be expanded in the coming six months and, if so, by how many additional members and what new positions are proposed?

1199 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Is the Stock Squad of the NT Police presently functional?

How many members are there in the squad?

What vehicles are attached to the squad?

How many horses are attached to the squad?

How many cases has the squad investigated in the period 1 January 1976 to 30 June 1976?

How many kilometres has the squad travelled in the same period?

How many nights have members of the squad spent away from home on duty in the same period?

How many pastoral properties in the:

- (a) Darwin Gulf District;
- (b) Victoria River District;
- (c) Barkly District; and
- (d) Alice Springs District

has the squad visited in the past 12 months?

1375 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

1. What is the cost of supplying and installing a water meter on a residential block in Darwin and how much has been spent for this purpose in the last eighteen months?
2. What is spent annually on the maintenance of water meters in Darwin?
3. How many water meter readers are employed in Darwin and what are their total annual wages and allowances?
4. What are the other annual administrative costs to the Government for the collection of excess water charges?

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 13 OCTOBER 1976

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5. What revenue is derived annually from excess water charges in Darwin on -
  - (a) residential blocks; and
  - (b) parks and recreation areas under the control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin?
6. What proportion of the total revenue from the supply of water is represented by the amount collected for excess water charges?

1376 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING -

1. Has the attention of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission been drawn to any instances of "jerry-building", in particular the structure in the course of erection on block 2911 Fannie Bay?
2. Was a "stop work" notice issued by the building Board in respect of the structure on block 2911?
3. Has the connection of water, installation of a toilet and shower room and the connection of electricity to the block been carried out since the issue of the "stop work" notice?
4. Were these services provided in conformity with the relevant regulations and the work carried out by licensed tradesmen?
5. Is it the intention of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to prosecute the owner of the block for any violations of the Building Code perpetrated in the last three months?

1377 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

1. How many T.B. tests were performed in the Northern Territory by private veterinarians and how many by Government veterinarians during the last three financial years?
2. How many brucellosis tests were performed by the A.I. & A. Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory during the same period?
3. What are the per kilometre running costs for vehicles of the A.I. & A. Branch?
4. What was the salary allocation of the Branch for eradication programmes for each of the last three financial years?

FROM 12 OCTOBER 1976

1481 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

1. What is the role of the Community Adviser in Aboriginal Communities?
2. What qualifications and experience are looked for in those seeking appointments to these positions?
3. What guidelines have been laid down by the Department for Community Advisers in the discharge of their duties?
4. Are regular assessments made of the effectiveness of the work of Community Advisers?

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 13 OCTOBER 1976

5. What criteria are used in making these assessments and by whom are they made?
6. Could an overall assessment be provided of the work of Community Advisers since 1973?

1482 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Are there any figures available for the number of vehicles which have traversed the following roads during the past three years and, if so, what are they?

- (a) Yuendumu Road from the Stuart Highway turnoff to Yuendumu;
- (b) Ayers Rock Road from the Erldunda turnoff;
- (c) Plenty River Highway;
- (d) Sandover Highway.

1483 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

1. What was the cost of sealing each of the stages of the Stuart Highway from Alice Springs to the South Australian border (excluding bridgeworks), and the mileage of each stage?
2. What is the name and location of each of the bridges, and what was the cost of each?
3. Has there been a contract let - or estimate completed - for the sealing of the Stuart Highway south of the South Australian border to Pimba, and does it include the bridgeworks in that section?
4. Has there been any traffic count between Port Augusta and Alice Springs; if so, with what results?

1484 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

What was the total quantity, and the value, of liquor sold -

- (a) in the Alice Springs district; and
  - (b) in the Tennant Creek district,
- during the last three financial years?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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822 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

When will the rehabilitation of Administration Block 3, Mitchell Street, Darwin be completed and when and by whom will it be occupied?

ANSWER

Rehabilitation of Block 3 is completed and occupation by the Public Service Inspectors Office and the Attorney-General's Department commenced in June 1976.

1194 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

1. When will the children's creche be ready for occupancy at Gove hospital?
2. Will this centre be staffed and, if so, will the staff be employed full time?

ANSWER

Although the building is now ready for occupancy its use has been reviewed. The nursing situation at Gove Hospital has improved and the commercially-operated Kiddie Kare Creche has extended its hours and this is expected to meet the need from prospective nursing staff. The building can be used for storage of drugs and other medical supplies and so provide improved warehousing and stores accounting for this particular range.

1198 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING -

How many square miles of the Territory are taken up by -

- (a) wildlife sanctuaries;
- (b) unalienated Crown land;
- (c) commonages;
- (d) national parks; and
- (e) fauna reserves?

ANSWER

(a) wildlife sanctuaries	-	18,967 sq. miles
(b) unalienated Crown land	-	97,300 sq. miles (approx.)
(c) commonages	-	510 sq. miles
(d) national parks	-	818 sq. miles
(e) fauna reserves	-	176 sq. miles

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117,771 sq. miles

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1281 Mr WITHNALL to Mr PERRON

1. Can he confirm that the sewer line in Doctors Gully is, and has been for some time, broken just beyond the low tide mark and at low tide raw sewage is discharged a matter of feet from the edge of the water?
2. What steps have been and will be taken to avert the threat to health posed by the sewage?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

1372 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

How many juveniles in the age groups and for the periods shown were committed to the Alice Springs gaol during the years 1973, 1974, 1975 and in the period 1 January to 30 June 1976?

<u>Age groups</u>	<u>Periods</u>
under 12 years	less than 1 month
12 - 13 years	1 to 6 months
13 - 14 years	1 to 12 months
14 - 15 years	1 to 2 years
15 - 16 years	2 to 5 years
16 - 17 years	

How were the offences for which the juveniles were gaoled categorized?

ANSWER

In order to prevent duplication the data has been supplied for the following periods.

Less than one month  
One month to six months  
Six months to twelve months  
Twelve months to two years

During the 1973 Year

Under 12 years		Nil
12 to 13 years		Nil
13 to 14 years	less than one month	3
14 to 15 years	less than one month	5
	one to six months	3
	two to five years	1
15 to 16 years	less than one month	16
	one to six months	6
16 to 17 years	less than one month	1
	six to twelve months	1

During the 1974 Year

Under 12 years		Nil
12 to 13 years		Nil
13 to 14 years	less than one month	2
14 to 15 years	less than one month	7
	one to six months	2
	six to twelve months	1
15 to 16 years	less than one month	11
	one to six months	4
	two to five years	1
16 to 17 years	less than one month	5
	one to six months	2

During the 1975 Year

Under 12 years	less than one month	1
12 to 13 years	less than one month	5
	one to six months	2
13 to 14 years	less than one month	6
	one to six months	7

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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15 to 16 years	less than one month	10
	one to six months	7
	six to twelve months	1
16 to 17 years	less than one month	7
	one to six months	8
	two to five years	1

During the 1976 Year

Under 12 years		Nil
12 to 13 years		Nil
13 to 14 years	less than one month	7
	one to six months	1
14 to 15 years	one to six months	1
15 to 16 years	less than one month	2
	one to six months	3
16 to 17 years	less than one month	6
	one to six months	5
	six to twelve months	1

However, it should be noted many of the juveniles were convicted of multiple offences and thus a distribution of the offence categories would be relatively meaningless without considering each individual's conviction record.

The categories or types of offences for which juveniles were imprisoned are listed as follows:-

- Use Motor Vehicle Without Consent
- Drive Without Licence
- Drive Under Influence
- Illegal Use of Motor Vehicle
- Interfere with Motor Vehicle
- Drive in Dangerous Manner
- Rape
- Carnal Knowledge
- Carnal Knowledge of Female Mental Defective
- Aid and Abet Carnal Knowledge
- Aid and Abet Rape
- Attempt Sexual Intercourse Without Consent
- Aid and Abet Sexual Intercourse Without Consent
- Indecent Assault on a Female
- Aid and Abet Indecent Assault on a Female
- Malicious Damage
- Break and Enter and Steal
- Attempt Break and Enter
- Stealing
- Unlawful Possession
- Indecent Language
- Assault Police
- Resist Police
- Escape Custody
- Found on Premises Without Lawful Excuse
- Breach of Bond
- Give False Name to Police
- Break and Enter with Intent to Steal
- Aggravated Assault
- Unlawfully Use a Horse
- Fail to Give Name and Address to Police
- Murder
- Arson
- Forge and Utter
- Forge with Intent to Defraud
- Fight in a Public Place

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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ANSWER

1. Yes.
2. Restoration of the Doctors Gully Outfall is included in the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's 1976/77 Works Program. An amount of \$400,000 has been authorised. The project is to replace sections of the Outfall damaged by ships' anchors during Cyclone Tracy.

1282 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Are police trackers to be issued with replacement uniforms as required?

If so, (a) When were they last issued?

(b) When will they be next issued?

ANSWER

1. Police trackers are not issued with uniforms.

1282 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

(a) When is the next intake of NT Police recruits?

(b) What number of recruits is expected?

ANSWER

(a) 13 September 1976

(b) A maximum of 40

1284 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

How many people, not residents of Darwin at the 24th December 1974, have received the Home Finance Trustee 6% loan?

ANSWER

No loans have been made to persons who were not permanent residents of Darwin at 24 December, 1974.

1371 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

1. What progress has the Stock Squad made in its investigation of alleged branding of Finniss River and the Waugait Reserve cattle?
2. Is the squad currently carrying out any other investigations and, if so, what results have been achieved?

ANSWER

1. The investigation has been completed. On 13 August, 1976 a meeting was attended by all interested parties and the Government Departments involved and an agreement was reached. This agreement is now being implemented.

2. Yes. No results at this stage as inquiries are continuing.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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1373 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Is any attempt being made to introduce apprenticeships for boners and butchers in the meatworks and abattoirs of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

A 4 year apprenticeship is available for Butcher/Slaughterman which includes such skills as boning. Related apprenticeships available are Butcher/Smallgoods (4 years) and Butcher/Shopman (3 years).

1374 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

What are the criteria for the distribution, and who determines the amounts of money allocated to racing clubs in the Northern Territory from the revenue of the Betting Control Board?

ANSWER

Distribution of such moneys is determined by the Administrator's Council after considering Betting Control Board recommendations, pursuant to Section 94 KD of the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance.

1378 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

There was a recent public announcement to the effect that the Queensland Government had approved a plan for a national scheme to fix a minimum price for beef. Can the Majority Leader inform the Assembly what effect this will have on Northern Territory beef producers?

ANSWER

I cannot at this time indicate to the Assembly or to the cattle industry of the Northern Territory what effect this scheme will have on our producers. Honourable members will be aware that for some time, over the past 12 or 18 months, a number of efforts have been made around Australia to produce price support schemes for beef. Western Australia has a localised scheme which only relates to domestic production; so does Tasmania; and this Assembly some time ago passed a Beef Price Stabilisation Bill which has not received assent. The Queensland Government set up a special committee, I think about 5 or 6 months ago, to look at something which might have national application. That committee has reported to the Queensland Government and the Queensland Government has accepted the plan put forward. I have received advice from the Queensland Minister for Agriculture that the plan has been submitted to the Australian Agricultural Council which is the Commonwealth-State ministers' body and which would need to agree on any uniform or standard plan for the whole of Australia. A special meeting of the Australian Agricultural Council has been called for Friday of this week; I have been invited to attend and hope to do so.

I have seen a copy of the Queensland plan and it deals mainly with the principles. A copy was available to a meeting of the Cattle Producers Council in Darwin last weekend which I attended and that council came to the conclusion that there was insufficient detailed information to enable them to understand just how it would affect producers in various parts of the Northern Territory and they are seeking more information. I believe that this is probably what the Australian Agricultural Council will do also, try to seek some more information on this matter before making a decision on it. At the same time the Cattle Producers Council is writing to the Commonwealth Government indicating that if there is going to be any delay or doubt about the implementation of a national scheme the Minister for the Northern Territory be asked to re-examine the question of activating the Territory scheme which we processed in legislation some 8 or 9 months ago.

1379 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Has his executive assumed responsibility for the Housing Commission? Can he yet indicate if, when and how the sale of Housing Commission homes is to recommence in the Darwin area; and can he also indicate the terms and conditions for the sale of Government homes in the same area?

ANSWER

The honourable member will recall that at the last meeting of the Assembly I indicated that the Majority Party had under consideration draft proposals for the reintroduction of a homes sales scheme for the Northern Territory Housing Commission. I have, in the intervening period, pursued the necessary policy discussions with Government with relation to the terms and conditions of this particular scheme

and I hope at this session to be able to introduce that legislation. The original proposals in draft form do require amendment and will require additional effort in the next 2 weeks, but hopefully next week I will be in a position to take that one step further.

With regard to the reintroduction of Government employee homes, I am aware that a report has been submitted through the Department of the Northern Territory to the Minister, but I am not yet aware of any of the details or when the implementation will take place.

1380 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS -

Will he make a statement in the Assembly on the proposed transfer of executive functions to amplify the earlier press releases and answer some of the queries raised by the media and the public?

ANSWER

Yes, it is my intention to make such a statement and I hope to be able to do so tomorrow or Thursday. This will provide an opportunity for further discussion in the Assembly should members so desire.

On a couple of particular matters, it has been drawn to my attention that rumours have been circulating among some levels of the public service that personnel involved in the transfers will be dispossessed of their departmental housing and forced to go on a Housing Commission waiting list. This is quite untrue. Transfers will have no affect on their current housing situation or entitlements.

I would also briefly like to refer to an editorial yesterday in the Northern Territory News, a portion of which read as follows: "Dr Letts would have been advised to seriously discuss a new Northern Territory Public Service Ordinance with the public service unions before it was drafted". Drafting of the new Northern Territory Public Service Ordinance has not yet commenced. Discussions have been held with the public service unions. Last week with the Minister, representatives of the 3 unions, the ACOA, The Fourth Division Officers Association, and the POA, we sat down and discussed some of the principles which would need to be included in any rewrite of the ordinance. Subsequently I had quite lengthy discussions with the secretary of the ACOA and I provided him with all the information which I have had up till now from the Public Service Board adviser on re-drafting of the ordinance. So the ACOA secretary at this stage knows as much about the intentions as I do. It is intended, through the cooperation and courtesy of the Attorney-General that special draftsmen will arrive in Darwin next weekend and will be put solely onto the job of getting out the first redraft of the Northern Territory Public Service Ordinance and when that is available it will be discussed with the unions in depth before we proceed to final drafting and before we have a bill for introduction in this Assembly.

1381 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

It has been announced, I believe with his consent, that Commonwealth public servants transferring to the new Northern Territory Public Service will retain their right of advancement through the Commonwealth Public Service. If that information is correct and if that is the intention of the proposed legislation, will the same right of promotion within the Commonwealth Public Service be extended to people who are already in the Northern Territory Public Service?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to answer any detailed questions on the form of the Public Service Ordinance and the rights entailed therein at this stage nor will I be able to do so until I have at least a preliminary drafting. Questions on particular aspects remain to be answered but will be fully considered before anything is finalised here. The models which we have looked at with the unions for the preservation of entitlements are already with us. The changes in the Postmaster General's Department when the postal service was set up, the changes when the Australian Electoral Office was set up, provide models for the retention of the rights of Australian Public Servants when they move to a new authority, such as the one which is proposed for the Northern Territory.

1382 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he aware that at the public auction for land in Alice Springs last week, the shopping complex designed to service the new Racecourse West subdivision was turned in through lack of bids. Could he advise how the reserve price was determined, if it was a fair price and, if not, will some review be made to re-offer this block again so that the development of the block can take place at an early date?

ANSWER

I have been informed of the auction last week in Alice Springs but I ask that the question be placed on notice.

1383 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

What arrangements have the DRC made for the make-safe program in the coming wet?

ANSWER

A program for the clean-up and making safe of domestic and commercial buildings is currently being arranged jointly between the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the Corporation of the City of Darwin. Details of this program will be announced in the very near future.

1384 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

In discussions with the Commonwealth Government as to the new Commonwealth-Northern Territory relationship, would he press to have accepted by the Commonwealth a convention that at least such ordinances as those related to the activities to be controlled by the local Executive would receive assent according to the recommendation of the Northern Territory Executive Council without the intervention of the Department of the Northern Territory, the Minister or the Governor-General and, if he did have such discussions and make such points, what was the answer made by the Commonwealth Government?

ANSWER

I have not specifically pressed this particular point in recent discussions with representatives of the Commonwealth Government. It is a point which is made in the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report on the Northern Territory and there is a general acceptance of that report by the Government although it will be necessary at times to receive specific decisions on certain aspects of that report.

1385 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it true that the DRC have aborted their plans to install a temporary caravan park on Tiwi oval?

ANSWER

A special caravan park committee was set up by the Chairman of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. It has consulted and received representations from the community on the proposal to establish a temporary caravan park on the Tiwi oval. The deliberation of that committee was that the proposal for the Tiwi oval be abandoned and, at the last meeting of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, this recommendation was endorsed by the commission.

1386 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON -

Can he advise me whether high tension wires are to be strung down the centre of Rothdale Road between Jingili and Moil using existing concrete power pylons and new iron power pylons to replace those blown away in Cyclone Tracy?

ANSWER

It is proposed to proceed with a new lattice steel narrow based tower system for all except two concrete power poles which are still existing and undamaged near one of the sub-stations.

1387 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

As the benevolent Australian Government has in its wisdom decided to delay the building of Dripstone High School for a year, could she advise how the overcrowding in high schools is to be met in the 1977 year? Is it to be done by way of zoning or, if not, what system will be introduced?

ANSWER

The subject of overcrowding in secondary schools in Darwin is currently under review by the Department of Education both locally and in Canberra and I hope to be able to advise the honourable member for Nightcliff later in this sittings as to developments.

1388 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

My question concerns the Department of Construction's 2 year time limit to rectify temporary internal falling tiles at the Bradshaw School in Alice Springs. After a 2 year wait, what steps will be taken and when by the department to effect permanent repairs?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get the information from the Department of Construction and pass that on to him in these sittings.

1389 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

The honourable member may be aware of recent census figures which indicated that Darwin's population as at 30 June 1976 was very close to pre-cyclone levels. He may also be aware of statements by the Chief Town Planner of the Department of the Northern Territory, Mr

Terry Brooks, to a Public Works Committee hearing on the Sanderson subdivision in 1973 that blocks would be required at Darwin East for sale to persons wishing to build homes in the Darwin area by 1977. Are there now plans to proceed with the development of Darwin East?

ANSWER

I have seen the census figures referred to by the honourable member. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has not taken any action with regard to the subdivisional activities to be pursued in the Darwin East area. However, consideration is being given to necessary extension in the Sanderson area and I would hope that that would form part of the civil works program for the 1977/78 year. I will keep the honourable member informed of these developments.

1390 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

I refer the executive member to an advertisement published in the NT News of 23 September 1976 by the Department of Construction. The tender closed on 19 October 1976 and the tender number was TD 703 for the supply of 3 only 4-berth sleeping caravans in Darwin and Alice Springs. Why is there this waste of taxpayers' money in view of the vast number of caravans that are available at the two-and-a-half mile depot?

ANSWER

My attention has been drawn to the calling of tenders for the supply of 3 caravans by the Department of Construction. I am informed that these are special vans used in construction and road work camps throughout the Northern Territory. They are frequently towed over very rough terrain and this includes deeply corrugated surfaces. These vans must be as robust as possible and have high ground clearance. They will have a welded steel frame, aluminium external cladding and heavy duty cross brace chassis etc.

1391 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he provide any information about the construction activities of the Northern Territory Housing Commission in Darwin since Cyclone Tracy? Is any information available with regard to the tender prices now being received for new homes?

ANSWER

The latest information that I have been supplied by the Northern Territory Housing Commission is very pleasing with regard to damaged homes. Contracts have been let for some 266 houses and of these 108 have been completely restored and handed over. With regard to new housing, contracts have been let for 661 houses of which 282 have been handed over to date. The Housing Commission has also informed me of an interesting development with regard to the tendering - homes are now costing some \$5,000 to \$7,000 less than the initial tenders that were received in the hectic period following the cyclone.

1392 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise me when an ordinance for the control of electrical contracts to bring them into line or into closer uniformity with southern states is likely to be brought into this chamber?

ANSWER

The proposals for this legislation are being considered by the Majority Party at the moment. I am not too sure when it is likely to be presented in the House, but as soon as I get this information, or as soon as I am able to get the necessary approval through from the party, this legislation will proceed. I would anticipate it to be early next year.

1393 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN -

Could he advise me the situation that Connair presents at the moment?

ANSWER

That could be answered very simply in one word - hopeless. There does not appear to be any satisfactory action taking place with regard to the Connair dispute. I have spoken to the Minister's office this morning. Mr Peter Nixon met with the pilots on the weekend in an attempt to try to solve the problem of the national airlines overflying Alice Springs. I do not believe it was all that fruitful; it still seems to be a standoff situation. The Minister is in a position where he cannot intervene terribly strongly at the moment. The situation with Connair itself I believe that it is a perfect example of people going to extremes to get a result, with the result that nothing is happening. In fact from day to day it is getting worse.

I will be trying to talk to the Minister again today to find out what the Government intends to do regarding Connair, because it is quite obvious to everybody who lives in the Northern Territory, and particularly to those people who are serviced by that airline, that we just cannot afford to sit back and see the airline go out of business even though there has been some suggestion in some quarters that other airlines can possibly handle the job. I think Connair is something that has been with the Territory a long time and I would certainly be loath to see the organisation and the service which that airline has given to the Territory disappear for good. Hopefully, the Federal Government can intervene and take action which will either support the airline or certainly make it satisfactory for somebody else to give the same sort of service.

1393 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

Why was the Darwin Regional Council van impounded and by whom?

ANSWER

I understand the van owned by the Darwin Regional Council for Social Development was seized by customs officers. I am not acquainted with the full reasons because that is a matter within their hands and I think it improper to discuss the matter here.

1394 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

Does the Health Department maintain figures of the incidence of venereal disease in the various Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory? Are these figures at such a level as to be a concern to the department? Could the department provide a table showing the location, number and ages of those suffering from VD together with figures of the incidence over the past 2 years and what special means have been taken and are being developed by the department to reduce the incidence of VD in these communities?

ANSWER

I will answer one part of that question now and the other parts later. The spread of the disease is a matter of concern to the department, and anyone involved in the community. This legislature has tried to assist by passing legislation in recent months. With regard to the other parts of the question, I will endeavour to have the information later in this sittings.

1395 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he aware of a recent TV program in Alice Springs in which a doctor of the Centralian Aboriginal Congress claimed that the Department of Health did not employ any Aboriginals in providing health care. Is this in fact the case?

ANSWER

I am aware of the television program which was shown in Alice Springs the other week and I believe it was shown here in Darwin last week. I was quite disturbed by some of the statements which were made by a doctor employed by the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress. His statement that the Department of Health does not employ any Aboriginal persons is a complete misrepresentation of facts. In the community health services in central Australia, in the areas apart from the town itself, some 39 Aboriginal persons and some 27 European persons are employed in providing health care in rural areas of central Australia. Aboriginal persons are employed as health workers, hospital assistants, traditional healers and there is a fully trained Aboriginal nursing sister. In fact, there are more Aboriginal persons employed in providing health services to the rural community in central Australia than Europeans. Other statements in that program were also inaccurate.

1396 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Is he aware that the operator of the Mataranka telephone exchange with 15 subscribers receives \$43 each week for 60 hours work?

ANSWER

I am aware that the operator receives that remuneration because I heard on a news item yesterday that the gentleman said that he was going on strike.

1397 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

I asked question 1159 on 2 June 1976. This referred to the commercial development proposals by the DRC for the Casuarina area. The executive member stated that a paper on this subject would be coming up at the next meeting of the DRC. Was the subject discussed and, if so, what are the proposals?

ANSWER

The town planning aspects of commercial development in the Casuarina area have been considered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and are still under consideration.

1398 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Has any decision yet been made concerning a financial grant to the Northern Territory Arts Council?

ANSWER

In spite of assurances by the Minister for the Northern Territory that a decision would be reached as soon as possible, I understand that no announcement has yet been made. I called the Minister for the Northern Territory and his permanent head this morning but I was unable to contact either of them and no-one in their office seemed to have any answers.

1399 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

In relation to a newspaper report that I read recently regarding the sale of the Taiwanese fishing boat by the Commonwealth Government for \$6,000 and its catch for \$1,000, can she inform me whether the Attorney-General's Department handled that sale?

ANSWER

No.

1400 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

I refer to a question I have asked on notice, number 1375, which appears on today's Question Paper. I would like to see if I can hurry this information along as I am very interested in speaking to it in the adjournment of this Assembly sittings.

ANSWER

The question from the honourable member for Casuarina is obviously asking for some quite detailed information and involves a considerable amount of research. I have had a talk with the department about when the answer will be forthcoming; it involves some research in the Department of Construction and in the Finance and Personnel Branches of the Department of the Northern Territory as well and I am informed that the complete information will not be available until about 22 October. However, I hope to conduct some research of my own during these sittings and make a statement on the water situation in Darwin later on during the sittings.

1401 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

I seem to recall 6 weeks or 2 months ago some statement being made by either the Federal Minister for Transport or the honourable Executive Member to the effect that a departmental inquiry or committee of inquiry would be set up to investigate all aspects of Northern Territory transport. What has happened to this committee?

ANSWER

The people that will be conducting the inquiry will be arriving in Darwin within the next couple of days. They will be in the Territory for several weeks. Initially, I believe, they felt that a quick trip to Darwin would provide them with the information necessary to come up with the answers to all our transport problems. I only have that information second-hand but I believe that, after some ex-

planation was given to them by an officer of the Department of the NT, the message came across loud and clear that they are going to have to spend more than just a few days in Darwin. They have responded by advising that they will be visiting all the major centres in the Northern Territory. I have been working closely with the Transport Planning Branch of the Department of the NT who are co-ordinating the exercise and I have passed on the names of organisations and individuals which have been given to me by groups and members of the Assembly. These names have been forwarded by the department to the Bureau of Transport Economics and I believe letters should now have been sent out to all the people who are interested throughout the Northern Territory and hopefully the bureau will speak to all these people. I have asked that, wherever possible, people submit a written submission so that the bureau can take this with them to make sure that their memories stay fresh. Hopefully, with the right information fed to it, the bureau can come up with the proper answers that are going to solve our problems. I anticipate, from the discussions that I have had and the information that has been passed on to me that the report should be completed around about the end of the year.

1402 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise whether it is the Minister's intention to delay any decision on the Darwin Trader until that particular committee has presented a report to him or will the decision be made, as was originally planned, by his own departmental committee; which I understand has recently reported to him?

ANSWER

I have spoken to the Minister on half a dozen occasions regarding the possible withdrawal of the Darwin Trader from the run. Quite obviously the ANL line has not been operating satisfactorily and I believe the Minister has made it clear that he wants them to reduce the loss. I cannot understand the honourable member for Nightcliff's comment about his department but I guess she means that the shipping line has requested that the Darwin Trader be taken off the run. So far as I know, there has not been any recommendation to the Minister to take the Darwin Trader off the run. The Minister has advised me that the Darwin Trader will be retained and that any decision relating to its withdrawal, or anything to do with transport in the Northern Territory whereby the Federal Government has to make a decision, will be after the inquiry. I do not necessarily see that as meaning that immediately the report is brought down the Minister is going to say, "All right we will now take the Darwin Trader off," I do not feel that that is the attitude that he has. I certainly made it quite clear to him that if he takes the Darwin Trader off he is going to have a fight on his hands. I think the Minister appreciates the fact that we need the Darwin Trader; however, he is reserving any judgments that he has or directions that he is going to make until he has a look at the inquiry report.

1403 Mr WITHNALL to Mr POLLOCK -

From what places in Doctors Gully are samples of sea water drawn for the purpose of assessing the degree of pollution of the harbour by raw sewage discharged in the vicinity?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to find out at what exact localities these measurements are taken and advise the honourable member.

1404 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

Have the law enforcement authorities been able to locate or name the organisation in Darwin which assists in illegal radio operation with communist Fretilin forces in East Timor? If so, what is the organisation concerned?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to advise the honourable member later in the sittings.

1405 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Further to my question of the honourable Executive Member for Education and Law a short time ago regarding the Taiwanese fishing boat, can he advise me whether any department or branch which liaises with him handled the sale of that vessel?

ANSWER

To my knowledge, the Navy, the Department of Customs, the Attorney-General's Department, the Department of the Northern Territory, the Department of Transport and the Department of Primary Industry all had a vested interest in this operation. Which minister actually was responsible for effecting the sale I do not know, but I will endeavour to find out and clear up the mystery.

1406 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN -

Has he any plans or any talks going with the Minister for Transport concerning the rolling stock at the railway and the sheds? Are there any plans to lease them out to sporting bodies or what plans are available for people to find out about?

ANSWER

I have not had any discussions with the Minister concerning the Darwin facilities that belong to the railways. I have written to the Minister, but I have not received an answer as yet, concerning problems that exist in Katherine and we have asked that some of the facilities down there be used. I have not made any approaches in Darwin at this stage because I am waiting until the run-down has been completed. Then, an approach could be made through the Department of the NT to the Railways as to whether or not the facilities could be made available. I certainly expect that if the Railways are not going to use them, they would want to make sure that they are made available to the rest of the community.

1407 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

A week or so ago I was held up for 10 minutes at the Salonika crossing whilst shunting went on. I would like to ask the honourable Executive member if perhaps the railway is not going into mothballs after all?

ANSWER

I would like to ask the honourable member to let me forget about the North Australia Railways. That particular comment does concern me because one of the bright things that came out of this whole operation was that I was attending a function one night and I was getting a bit of treatment from the compere about the problems I had with the North Australia Railways and some kind soul in the audience called out, "He is all right, he is the man who made Salonika crossing safe". That has not even come to fruition as yet.

1408 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Does he have the current statistics for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's rebuilding program and is he also able to tell me how many of the new houses are waiting electricity connections?

ANSWER

I do have the latest statistics of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's housing program and they are as follows: 2,060 houses have been authorised of which 1,922 have commenced. These are of the order of 1,635 new homes, 121 rebuilds and 166 repairs. Of the 1,922 commenced, 830 have been completed and, as the honourable member asked, 109 are still awaiting power connection. With regard to flats under construction by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, authorisation has been issued for 179 of which 93 are to be new flats and 86 repairs. Of these, the entire 179 have commenced and at this stage 51 have been completed.

1409 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise me if she has any knowledge of arrangements for increased housing for school teaching staff at Alyangula, Groot Eylandt?

ANSWER

No, I have no knowledge of the houses approved for Alyangula. However, I will endeavour to inform the honourable member later in the day.

1410 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it a fact that patients evacuated from isolated areas by the Royal Flying Doctor Service have to pay for this cost themselves and are not covered by the Medibank levy? If this is in fact the case, will some decision be taken to review it?

ANSWER

Evacuations which are made by the Aerial Medical Service in the Northern Territory or the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Alice Springs are, as I understand it, basically free, except where claims are made against workers compensation or third party insurance, if there is a recoverable claim then the organisation makes a claim against the insurance companies. Persons who use the service are otherwise at liberty to contribute towards the cost if they wish to as a gesture or otherwise, but the services are generally funded from Commonwealth funds and contributions made by the public and I don't see really how Medibank gets into the evacuation side of it. If the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Alice Springs had its own medical officer who travelled around the countryside and consulted, then that medical officer would be able to claim for those consultations under Medibank.

1411 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS -

Federal Parliament has appointed David Hay to report on all the money spent on Aboriginal Affairs. Could the Majority Leader advise me when this report will be made available?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to advise the honourable member for Tiwi when, or even if, this report will be made available publicly, I did see an answer to a question in the Federal Hansard recently, a question of a similar type directed to Senator Webster. In his answer Senator Webster pointed out that the investigation and the report is an internal intradepartmental one and there is no commitment to make the report public. That would be a decision by the Prime Minister in Cabinet and, as far as I am aware, no such decision has been made.

1412 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it a fact that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission ordered the construction of 200 concrete and steel air-raid cyclone shelters from the manufacturers in Darwin and that they were made, and presumably paid for, at about a cost of \$700 each and all except 8 are now to be scrapped?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission did purchase a number of cyclone shelters which have been made available for some considerable time to the public if they wish to purchase them. I believe that only 2 such shelters have been purchased, I am not aware of the statistical information or the financial considerations of this particular contract but I will obtain it for the honourable member.

1413 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Recently in the Gove Peninsula there was a rescue of 2 Aboriginal children. During that rescue by the police, it was found that they needed a police boat. Has any further attempt been made to purchase a boat so urgently needed in this area for the Nhulunbuy police?

ANSWER

Further attempts have been made. I have had discussions personally with the Minister for the Northern Territory, Mr Adermann, and with the permanent head, Mr Livingston, and have just completed a submission on the provision of a boat suitable for the waters around Nhulunbuy.

1414 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

There was a meeting of the CPC in Darwin last weekend and the question was asked whether cattlemen were happy with the Government's attitude towards the industry generally, towards education, communication, employment opportunities for Aboriginals, rural reconstruction etc.

ANSWER

I find the question somewhat naive. I wonder whether the person sponsoring the question and the person presenting the question have ever

found a primary industry organisation that has been happy with the Government. Certainly in my 40-odd years of association with primary industry and its organisation I have never found a state of happiness in relation to the government of the day. A number of matters were considered. I do not remember all the points offhand that the honourable member mentioned, but in relation to education, the cattle producers of the Northern Territory are extremely unhappy about the inadequate allowance for isolated children to attend schools and to have the same benefits as people who live in town or urban areas in the Northern Territory and the rest of Australia. And they are unhappy about certain discriminatory aspects of isolated children assistance. As far as rural reconstruction is concerned, they are still unhappy about that. As I have reported in this Assembly before, the funds provided for rural reconstruction during the past 18 months, both during the life of this Government and the previous government, are quite inadequate, something like 10 per cent of the need, and further representations have been made on that. I think that probably on all the points the honourable member mentioned representations are going forward to the Federal Government to indicate a continuing degree of dissatisfaction with the way that the Territory is being assisted and helped through its critical time. If the honourable member will give me the details of his question I will try to provide him with a more specific answer.

1415 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise me when it is hoped to issue a developmental plan for the Darwin district as far down as Noonamah?

ANSWER

There has been considerable work by the planning section of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in conjunction with the Department of the Northern Territory for an implementation of a new Darwin town plan and for the rural area adjacent. This matter however is frustrated by the lack of suitable legislation and it is the Majority Party's intention to work towards a new planning and development ordinance. This is a detailed and comprehensive task but it has been given high priority by the Majority Party and I hope, either later this year or early next year, to introduce that new ordinance. At that time I would see the implementation of a suitable plan in the area adjacent to Darwin.

1416 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

Does the Darwin Reconstruction Commission have any attitude on the involvement with the Reconstruction Commission or the Department of the Northern Territory with private developers in the development of the 32 square mile acquisition area?

ANSWER

As I mentioned earlier, there are no current proposals for development in the Darwin East area specifically. With regard to the utilization of private developers for subdivision work in Darwin, members will be aware that the Hooker group of companies do hold a development lease over the Brinkin area adjacent to Darwin and in the area further out from the Darwin East area, land holding is to a large extent freehold and will require development by private developers. It would be my hope that, once the new planning and development ordinance is implemented, we will see considerable development by

private developers in that area and certainly they will be given encouragement by the Majority Party.

1417 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING -

My question concerns the proposed Araluen subdivision, I again remind the honourable gentleman that there are over 1,300 objections to that proposal lodged by the people of Alice Springs. What is the present position regarding the proposed subdivision?

ANSWER

The consideration of the Araluen town planning issue is currently before the Administrator's Council, and will be resolved by that council in due course. The Administrator's Council is considering holding a meeting in Alice Springs in the near future and I would anticipate that such a meeting would certainly give the council the opportunity to look further at the proposal.

1418 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

On 12 August, I asked the honourable executive member: "Because of the shortage of police in the Territory, has a motor vehicle registration branch been considered for the area of Nhulunbuy". I ask again whether a registration branch will be set up at Nhulunbuy police station?

ANSWER

I believe that I gave him an answer to this although I cannot recall the actual details of the answer. However, I will have a talk with the honourable member and see if I can recall the information that I supplied him.

1419 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he make any further statement on the commencement of the strata titles or unit titles legislation? I understand that we are waiting for regulations to be drafted.

ANSWER

I hope later this day to be able to inform the honourable member for Nightcliff of the stage which the preparation of regulations has reached. The legislative officer advising the Executive is at this moment attending a meeting about the matter.

1420 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN -

I refer the honourable member to the dirt heaps out at the two-and-a-half mile depot. We have been promised for many months that these dirt heaps will be removed. Will the dirt heaps be removed and when?

ANSWER

You may recall that this question has been asked previously. I made approaches to the DRC and was advised that it was the intention of the department to discontinue the use of the depot as a storage area for various kinds of road making material. Nothing took place and in fact the situation seemed to continue pretty much as normal. I have been in touch with the associate director of the Department of Construction who has responsibility for these dumps and he has advised me that the Department of Construction has made a decision not to utilise this area any further. However, it will be some time before the dirt heaps that are there are depleted. They have no intention of bringing in any new material so the residents of Ludmilla can expect to have this problem alleviated.

1421 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

I remind her that a bill was passed as a matter of urgency to allow insurance payments to people who were due these payments by companies which had become insolvent. The legislation passed unanimously and was never assented to. I have asked about it at every sittings and I ask if she can advise as to whether other legislation is to be introduced as this matter is causing great hardship to a number of people?

ANSWER

The matter is now under review.

1422 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

An additional \$25m is to be allocated to Aboriginal affairs. Can he advise in which areas this money will be spent.

ANSWER

I did note the announcement made yesterday in parliament by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Viner, that an additional \$25m has been allocated for Aboriginal spending in Australia. I contacted his office last evening but unfortunately he is unable to give a breakup of that amount of money or say how much will be coming to the Northern Territory and on what the money will be spent. However, he was able to tell me that the money will be spent in 3 areas: Aboriginal housing, Aboriginal employment and Aboriginal enterprises. I would

hope a good deal of it will come to the Northern Territory to continue the many housing projects and block developments which have been initiated over recent years.

1423 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

Does any table under Medibank provide for dental benefits and do private health funds provide for dental coverage?

ANSWER

At this stage, no table under Medibank private or any of the Medibank schemes provides for dental coverage. There are some private funds which do provide for dental coverage. However, members of the public should be warned that this applies to dental treatment by private practitioners only. If you take out a medical benefit table including dental coverage you go to a clinic operated by the Department of Health, then you cannot claim that benefit. It is a ridiculous scheme.

1424 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

Last October, he indicated that the delay of 3 weeks in the processing of final payments of carry-on finance to cattlmen was quite unwarranted. Is he aware that, in October 1976, the delay has been extended to between 4 to 5 weeks?

ANSWER

No.

1425 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

What is the situation regarding the new gaol at Berrimah?

ANSWER

I understand that the Minister has given instructions to the Department of Construction to go ahead with detailed planning for the new gaol at Berrimah. An environmental impact statement has been prepared in relation to the site. This has been presented to the DRC and the DRC has referred it to the Department of Environment for necessary processing by that department. I am still quite hopeful that work on the new prison at Berrimah will commence at the beginning of the next financial year at the latest.

1426 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it anticipated that the new gaol at Berrimah will be built with hard labour or union labour?

ANSWER

I think it will be a combination of both. It is hoped that the initial structures of the prison and so forth will be built under contract but as much work as possible, including such items as the perimeter fence and associated light work that will be available in the confines of the prison grounds and perhaps some work in relation to the sewage treatment plant, might be able to be effected by prison labour. This is a matter which is being considered by those responsible for the planning of the new prison.

1427 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr POLLOCK -

When is the report of the committee set up by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs to inquire into the future of the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee expected to be available?

ANSWER

My understanding was that the report of the committee set up to inquire into the NACC was to be available in late August or at the end of September; I am not sure which month. At the moment I do not know what the situation is in relation to the report. However, I will make an inquiry with the Minister's office and endeavour to advise the member later in this sitting.

1428 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

As a result of the resignation of the Mataranka exchange operator, what action has been taken to install an automatic telephone system at Mataranka?

ANSWER

I do not have the information available. I will approach the Telecommunications Department to find out what information they can give me and I will pass it on to the Assembly in these sittings.

1429 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise what plans are in hand for the construction of a pre-school centre in the new Racecourse Subdivision?

ANSWER

No, I cannot advise what plans are under way at the moment. However, I will endeavour to obtain the information for the honourable member today.

1430 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Is she aware that the reply she gave me, I think at the last sittings, concerning the rebuilding of Nightcliff Primary School is no longer valid and that the projected plans for that building have apparently been scrapped because of cost? Can she, as a matter of urgency, discuss with the Education Department and the DRC all moves necessary to ensure that the school is rebuilt on schedule?

ANSWER

Yes, Mr Speaker, I was aware that the plans to rebuild Nightcliff Primary School had been changed somewhere along the line. I had discussed the matter with the Minister for Education, Senator Carrick, who has asked me to prepare a paper for him.

1431 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH -

Who went on a recent tourist promotion trip to the southern states? What was the result of the trip, and who paid for the expenses of the accompanying people?

ANSWER

The recent trip inaugurated by the Tourist Bureau to send Northern Territory tourist industry and Tourist Board representatives to the southern states consisted of the Chairman of the Katherine Tourist Promotion Association, Mrs Sylvia Wolf; a member of the Tourist Board representing Alice Springs region, Mr Len Kelly; the member of the Tourist Board from the Darwin area and representing the Darwin Tourist Promotion Association, Mr Fred McCue; the Darwin Manager of the Northern Territory Government Tourist Bureau Office, Mr Ron Balch, and both myself and the Chairman of the Board, Mr Reg Harris, met with the contingent in Sydney and Melbourne.

The activities of the promotion tour involved a one day visit to Perth, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. In Perth, the board members and tourist industry representatives consulted with 60 people from 25 different travel agencies. In Melbourne, they consulted with 102 people from 36 different travel agencies. In Sydney, 49 people attended 2 seminars involving 22 travel agencies. And in Brisbane, 70 people attended 3 seminars and they represented 29 travel agencies.

The functions that the board conducted were very simply an audio-visual presentation of Northern Territory destinations and facilities. Most interest was shown by the agencies in the southern states of the amount and quality of accommodation that is available in the Territory. They were very keen to know the exact position of Ayers Rock facilities and they showed great enthusiasm for the tours of Katherine Gorge.

The third part of the question was "who paid?". The trip was sponsored by Ansett, who provided the air fares. The Territorian Motel Group provided the accommodation, Avis provided the transport in the respective cities and the individuals gave their time.

1432 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

Has the recruitment of medical officers in the Northern Territory been made easier by the recent increase in salaries and, if so, has the Darwin Hospital now reached its full complement of medical officers and others? Has the Gove Hospital been considered also and will they have their full complement in the next few months?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the question in detail at this stage. However, I am told that the recent increases in salaries and conditions for medical officers has made it a lot easier for the department to recruit staff. It is hoped that, at the beginning of the next calendar year, the staffing situation will be greatly relieved. There will be a number of new medical practitioners joining the service and this will alleviate the situation at Darwin and at other centres in the Territory. If I can get some more information for the member later in the session, I will.

1433 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

Does he have further information about the prospect of introducing a licence for abattoirs of less than full export standard who already export to countries overseas other than the United States?

ANSWER

I did broach this matter with the Minister for Primary Industry during a recent meeting I had with him in my electorate and he undertook to have a look at the matter. I will be seeing the Minister again on Friday this week and I will check with him whether any progress has been made in this consideration.

1434 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise the likely date of appointment of a commissioner or commissioners to conduct the proposed inquiry into the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to make an announcement which I believe will come from the Administrator in the near future as to the commencement of the inquiry initiated by this Assembly some 12 months ago. I can inform the Assembly that everything is now known except the commencement date. The commissioners have been approached, have agreed to participate and will be available in the near future. The exact starting time has not yet been fixed and as soon as that is known I believe the Administrator will make an announcement.

1435 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

Will he take up urgently with the Minister the matter of establishing a contributing superannuation scheme for members of this Assembly on the general lines of the scheme operating in Federal Parliament?

ANSWER

The matter has already been taken up with the Minister. The member for Finance and Community Development has been handling this and he may be able to give the honourable member further information on the matter.

1436 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

I refer to statements made from time to time in this House concerning a review of the liquor ordinance and a liquor commission. Can he give any indication as to when this will take place?

ANSWER

As I have reported to the House before, the executive has approved basic principles and guidelines for that legislation. We have asked the Minister to provide staff to assist us in preparing the detailed papers necessary to prepare drafting instructions but that assistance has not been forthcoming. Until it is, we are just not in a position to go ahead and effect the reform to that law that we want. Only 2 days ago, I telegraphed the Minister's office asking what he is doing about our request to provide staff to assist us in preparing drafting instructions for that legislation. When those instructions are prepared, the next problem will probably be the drafting.

1437 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

My question relates to the Northern Territory bus service operating in Darwin. I have been somewhat concerned by the lack of patronage of this bus service - oh no, I have not been using my leather pass too

much and I certainly have not seen the Majority Leader riding down to the 11 mile on it either. But the bus service seems to operate on rather inconvenient routes for its patrons and also not always at convenient times. I ask the Executive Member whether he is taking any steps to reschedule and re-route the bus service so as to make it more attractive to its patrons?

ANSWER

The situation with bus services in Darwin is that nobody seems to be able to come up with the right answers to satisfy everybody. The bus services are running on a fairly high subsidy and I have been having discussions with the department about the rationalisation of the bus services. The department is looking at the possibility of trying to rationalise the service. The main problem, as mentioned by the honourable member for Jingili, is that the services are not patronised to a great extent and, while this does form an excuse to curtail the service, consideration does have to be given to those people who have no other means of transport. I will be having some further discussions with the department and I would expect within the next week or so that they will be making an announcement on some changes to some of the routes in Darwin to try to rationalise the service.

1438 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

It seems to be clearly the legal position that members of this Assembly are not covered by any workers compensation provisions at all. Would the honourable member look into this matter and see if something can be done?

ANSWER

The matter of superannuation and disablement benefits for members of this Assembly has been raised in discussion with the Minister for the Northern Territory. He has sought from me a submission for presentation to Senator Withers, the Minister for Administrative Services, who has control of the Remuneration Tribunal and who will actively pursue the matter on our behalf.

1439 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise me who is the person responsible for making the recent reallocation of positions in the top ranks of the Department of the Northern Territory due to the absence of Mr Dwyer?

ANSWER

The answer to that question, I believe, would be the permanent head of the Northern Territory. He would have the job of selecting his acting deputy in the absence of Mr Dwyer.

1440 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise if and when the National Highway Corridor Study Team for the Barkly region will be visiting Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I cannot give the honourable member for Stuart an answer on the Barkly area corridor investigation that is taking place. I will attempt to find out. The Department of Construction should be able to supply me with this information and I will pass it on to him at a later day in these sittings.

1441 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise when the Darwin Reconstruction Commission gave approval for the extension of the Mindil Beach caravan park northward, extensions which are being carried out by the Corporation of the City of Darwin? Has the commission a policy which he can make public on the alienation of foreshore areas for any purpose?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has no authority over areas of land that are vested in the care and control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin. It would therefore not be in its charter to have directed the corporation with regard to the reserve at Mindil Beach and the action that it has taken with regard to the northern or sea-front extension to that caravan park. As a member of the commission, I raised the matter, and the environmental representations that had been made to me, at a meeting of the commission; however, the commission did not pursue the matter and it was left in the hands of the Mayor and the corporation to take whatever action they considered fit.

With regard to foreshores in the Darwin area there is a program between the commission and the corporation where they are cooperating on foreshore improvements and erosion measures and the DRC is also looking at those beaches that are outside the corporation's present control.

1442 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it a fact that that area has not been gazetted and passed over to the control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin?

ANSWER

I do not have information with regard to the boundaries of any reserves in that particular area. However, I will seek it for the honourable member.

1443 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

What organisation sponsored the training course for union shop stewards recently conducted at the Darwin Community College?

ANSWER

The organisation which sponsored that recent training course was the Australian Council for Trade Union Training. It is a part of an authority which was set up in 1975 by the Labor Government and has been quite active in the Northern Territory setting up an interim local council to get various people who would be allowed to attend training courses under the Trade Union Training Authority scheme. It is expected that some time in the future regulations will be formulated to that act in the Federal Parliament formally setting up a Northern Territory Trade Union Training Council which will consist of various representatives from trade unions in the Northern Territory. Its function will be to both conduct courses within the Northern Territory for unionists and also to select unionists who will be allowed to attend federal courses at the Clyde Cameron Union Training centre at Albury Wadonga.

1444 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

How many loans has the Home Finance Trustee approved to date? How many applications for loans are awaiting approval? What is the current

waiting time for such a loan? Can he confirm that the cut-off date for persons wishing to apply for the 6% concessional loan will be 31 December 1976?

ANSWER

Taking the last part of that question first, I can confirm that the cut-off date is 31 December 1976, as has been announced in a number of ministerial statements. I do not have the statistical information sought by the honourable member but I will seek it and make it available to him at this sittings.

1445 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS -

Could he advise me when the report by David Hay on Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Bill will be available?

ANSWER

I attempted to answer that question yesterday for the honourable member for Tiwi but since yesterday further information on the availability of this report is available, I ask the Executive Member for Social Affairs if he would look into the matter for us and perhaps he is in a better position to answer the question than I am.

1446 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he aware that, where people own land in the surge area and were not able to build for some 15 months and have bought property in a higher area, they cannot get the Home Finance Trustee loan until such time as the land in the surge area is sold? You cannot sell it on the open market and there is no money for acquisition by the Government. If he is aware of this ridiculous position, has he made any approach to the Minister to have it rectified?

ANSWER

A number of cases where people have subsequently built on alternative sites have been considered by the Home Finance Trustee. I am aware that in the initial stages of approval of loans by the Home Finance Trustee, a number of loans were made available with just book entry adjustments made for the value of the other property. I was informed recently, however, that there is now a policy where valuations and sales are being reviewed. I do not have the up-to-date information on this but I will seek it and make it available.

1447 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he considering the introduction of legislation for the legalisation of poker machines in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The matter of poker machines has been rearing its head rather frequently in recent weeks and there have been press reports and comments and so forth from people. Somebody seems to have it in his head that the executive and myself have decided that we are hell-bent on introducing poker machines into the Northern Territory in the near future. I can assure the public that the matter has not been discussed by the Majority Party or the executive and I personally have no intention of introducing any legislation to legalise poker machines. People who have an interest in this might well get their case together, and make submission to the inquiry which is to be carried out into the general

lottery and gaming provisions of the law for the Northern Territory.

1448 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

Can he tell me whether the incidence of treatment of persons using hard drugs such as heroin and so on by the Department of Health in the Northern Territory has increased in the last 12 months?

ANSWER

I am advised that hard drug addicts are rarely seen in the Territory in government hospitals outside of Darwin and most of those at the Darwin Hospital are treated at outpatients. The incidence runs at about 7 patients per week in the wet season but rises sharply during the dry to the point where 95 patients received treatment in September 1976. Most of those patients are transients and the majority are already on treatment commenced elsewhere.

1449 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he tell me which department handled the sale of the Taiwanese fishing boat recently for \$6,000?

ANSWER

The Minister responsible for the sale of the Taiwanese trawler for \$6,000 was the Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Sinclair.

1450 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN -

Has he studied the Law Reform Commission's report on alcohol, drugs and driving and, if so, when does he expect to take legislative action to correct the problems inherent in our breathalisher legislation?

ANSWER

I received a copy of the report mentioned by the honourable member for Gillen and I am studying it. After reading the report, I will have discussions with Crown Law and the department and hopefully we can look at introducing legislation to solve some of the problems that exist in the Territory law with regard to the breathalisher.

1451 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Was there any assessment of value of the fishing boat in question and the catch, which I understand was sold for \$1,000, obtained by the department or any branch, agency or authority of the Commonwealth Government before the sale of this vessel?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to provide an answer during these sittings.

1452 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The member for Arnhem asked a question about the law enforcement authorities being able to identify or name the organisation in Darwin which persists in illegal radio operations with communist Fretilin forces in East Timor. I am advised by the Northern Territory police that, in liaison with the licensing section of the Postal and Telecommunications Commission, on Monday 27 September 1976, they identified 2 persons who were operating an unlicensed trans-

ceiver from the mainland. The persons were Andrew Phillip Waterhouse of Epping, New South Wales and Stanislaus Da Silva who gave the same address as Waterhouse. It is believed the unlicensed transceiver was used to communicate with persons in Timor.

1453 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The member for Arnhem also asked about the Alyangula Area School. The provision of teacher accommodation in Alyangula is the responsibility of the Department of the Northern Territory who have advised that they have programmed tenders to be called for the construction of 4 houses at Alyangula for government employees in the 1976-77 financial year. However, both departments are aware of the current accommodation problems and officers from the Department of the Northern Territory Administrative Division have planned a visit in a few days time to investigate the teacher housing situation.

1454 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked a question with regard to cyclone shelters held by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. The commission purchased 212 concrete pipe shelters with steel doors. Twenty of the pipes were used and the remaining 192 have been offered to the public for sale at a cost of \$447 each.

1455 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked in what places in Doctors Gully samples of sea water are being taken to assess the level of sewage pollution. I am advised that the laboratory tests are carried out on foreshore samples taken at various states of the tide in approximately 1 foot of water off the foreshore adjacent to Doctors Gully.

1456 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Stuart asked a question about repairs to Bradshaw Primary School. The Department of Construction has advised me that they intend to carry out these repairs over the Christmas holidays.

1457 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Is there any truth in the rumour that the Area 4 office of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission at Bradshaw Terrace Casuarina is going to close?

ANSWER

There is no truth in the rumour.

1458 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

What assistance will be available to parents in isolated areas to give their children access to appropriate schools?

ANSWER

I am advised that for basic boarding there is an increase of \$150 and \$500 will be available. The maximum additional boarding allowance will be \$450, over and above the \$500. The correspondence basic of \$200 will remain the same. The correspondence reimbursement will be a maximum of \$300, that is a rise of \$150, and short term boarding will be \$15 a week an increase of \$5 a week.

1459 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Who will be paying for the repairs to the Bradshaw School in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I do not know for sure. I do not think the Education Department will be expected to pay for the repairs. However, I will have this confirmed by the Department of Construction and advise the honourable member later in these sittings.

1460 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

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

ANSWER

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

1461 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

What increases will become effective in 1977 for the Aboriginal Secondary Education Grants Scheme and will a means test apply?

ANSWER

A means test will not apply in 1977 but one is being considered. Living allowances for junior grades will be \$308 per annum, and that is an increase from \$240. Living allowances for senior grades \$440 per annum. Books and clothing allowances will be \$250 per annum. A personal allowance for junior grades will be \$1.50 per week and personal allowance for senior grades will be \$3 per week. A boarding allowance for a boarding school will be \$1,450 maximum, an increase of approximately \$200. Hostel allowance will be \$28 per week and private \$20 per week.

1462 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

When will the Block 8 cafeteria be reopened?

ANSWER

I am unable to enlighten the honourable member any further than I have on previous occasions. I have written to the officer in charge of the Department of Administrative Services in recent days and asked what is going on but as yet I have not had a reply. I will advise the member in due course.

1463 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

What is the latest development in the Connair dispute?

ANSWER

I had some discussions last night with the Minister for Transport, Peter Nixon, and Senator Kilgariff in Canberra. There did not appear to be any major developments then except that the situation seemed to be getting worse. I rang again this morning and spoke to Senator Kilgariff who met with the Transport Minister at 1 am this morning and he feels quite confident that the proposed extension of the strike over the weekend by the national airlines will not go ahead. He is also confident that there can be arranged a meeting between Connair and the pilots on the weekend with the Transport Minister as the mediator. Hopefully, out of these discussions, the Government will give an indication that it is prepared to support the airline so that it can continue to run until such time that the interdepartmental committee has completed its investigation into the airline. If one can believe the reports, the chairman insists that he cannot run the airline on the same basis as before and the pilots have agreed to go back to work providing the status quo remains. Senator Kilgariff is quite confident that the extension of the strike can be averted and if the Government intervenes the airline can be assisted and operated until such time as the interdepartmental committee comes along with its findings.

1464 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS -

What action can be taken to overcome the restrictive effects of quotas laid down by the AMIEU to limit the export of live cattle from the NT? Does he agree that the greater use of the live cattle market can help overcome the glut of cattle in the Northern Territory which is having a number of serious consequences here?

ANSWER

Answering the second part of the question first, I do agree that the greater use of the live cattle market could help to overcome the glut in the cattle industry here. The effect of the overstocking is being masked to some extent by the good seasons we have had. However, should the current dry season be extended and there be a delayed wet or a light wet this year, the effect of that overstocking will become obvious in a very dramatic and pronounced way. The more cattle we can get rid of at this stage, particularly breeding cattle which is surplus to requirements, the better it will be for the industry.

To overcome the restrictive effects of the quotas established by the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union, the meatworks themselves have to agree that there are cattle surplus to requirements and that could not be normally killed through the meatworks. I believe that

the meatworks recognise clearly that we have got more cattle than they can put through in the current circumstances. This needs to be done and probably a figure set of 20,000 or 25,000 head or whatever is regarded as surplus to the meatworks requirements. The second thing that needs to be done is to have a direct negotiation with the executive of the AIMEU, which would have to be done in Brisbane or Sydney because they have not got a branch up here, in order to get them to adopt a reasonable and logical approach to the situation, in a similar way to that which the Western Australian branch has with regard to the export of livestock from Western Australia. I believe that this could be done; I do not accept the view that they are totally unreasonable men. In fact, I would be prepared to offer my services along with somebody from the cattle industry like Mr Bill DeVoss to have discussions with the AIMEU officers with this object in mind. This should be done as soon as possible and efforts made to reactivate the live cattle trade which, while it does have its difficulties and complications, could make a useful contribution to our industry at present.

1465 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise when the new School of the Air building in Alice Springs, presently under construction, will be opened and occupied?

ANSWER

I understand that the expected completion date is December of this year, 1976, and that the building will be occupied in early 1977. However, this is subject to the arrival and installation of the transmitting equipment.

1466 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

My question relates to what is commonly known as the "Northumberland" amendment to the Motor Vehicles Ordinance relating to the provision that was passed by this House in November 1974 to afford relief to persons who held compulsory third party insurance with companies which had become defunct or had defaulted through insolvency. I am holding a letter from a solicitor in this town who advises that a judgment of \$5,097.25, plus costs, was obtained against a person insured with the Northumberland on 15 November 1974. The judgment has not since that date been satisfied and, that so far as this firm can see, the only relief for their client now to be obtained is to take enforcement, which I presume means bankruptcy proceedings against the defendant personally. This piece of legislation has been held in abeyance, awaiting Administrator's assent, for almost 2 years, and I ask the Executive Member what is going to be done to get assent to this legislation within the very near future?

ANSWER

I do not think that this legislation will ever receive assent.

Mr Everingham: Why did the Government approve it then?

Mr RYAN: I do not know why the Government approved it. All that I know is that the Government has had second thoughts on the implications of that legislation in as much as they are not prepared to foot the bill. I think that is to put it simply. We therefore have a situation whereby people who have been affected by insurance companies going broke are not left with a great deal of hope. The new legislation that I hope to introduce is still being prepared. However, I am having a

certain amount of lack of success with the provisions that the honourable member for Jingili and those people affected by the insurance companies that have gone out of business would like to see. The Government still is not prepared to accept the cost, and the insurance companies, quite obviously, are not too happy to accept losses that were incurred by another company which is now out of business.

I do not know what the answer is. I have had correspondence myself from various law firms around the town virtually along the same lines, although that is the first one I have seen whereby a decision has been made and somebody was unable to pay up. There are some much larger claims floating around which are going to cause various hardships to the people concerned. I certainly do not have any quick answer. We have no authority in the matter. Any retrospectivity that will be involved in the legislation that I hope to present will have to be either approved by the Government, inasmuch as they are prepared to accept some responsibility because they initially okayed the companies going into business, or accepted by the insurance companies. I cannot see them doing this. They are prepared to contribute to a fund in the future to cover any companies that go out of business but I think we are going to have a very difficult job in convincing them that they have got to look after the people that have already been affected.

1467 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Can the Executive Member advise me what the Housing Commission's intentions are regarding the concrete houses that were part of a contract interrupted by Cyclone Tracy? The houses I talk about are situated on Trower Road between Ellengowan Drive and Bradshaw Terrace,

ANSWER

I am aware that a problem exists with regard to some 20 houses that were subject to a contract at the day of the cyclone. Ten of these houses were delayed for initial consideration with regard to rebuilding because of the 1975 early town planning constraints placed upon that area by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. That would not give encouragement to the commission in the early days to plan or consider any sort of rebuilding program. This procrastination in turn was further aggravated when the contractor for the erection of those buildings dissolved his partnership and therefore there had to be a negotiation out of the contract with the Housing Commission with consequential insurance problems. There now exists the further problem that engineering design must be modified on the plans of these buildings to ensure that their standards, particularly as to roofing, meet the new cyclone code. It is the intention of the Northern Territory Housing Commission to restore these buildings. However, it is unlikely that work will be commenced until the 1977/78 financial year.

1468 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

This question concerns a statement made at the Roads Conference in Katherine recently which indicated that road works on the Pine Creek/Cullen River Road may not go ahead this financial year. If this is so, could the Executive Member use his influence to have that money diverted to the Stuart Highway through the foothills north of Alice Springs?

ANSWER

It is pleasing to see the concern expressed by a member from the centre for a northern electorate. This section of road is on the program this

year and, in fact, does make up the majority of the money which has been made available in cash for the upgrading. That particular job, I think, has been allocated somewhere in the vicinity of \$400,000 cash. However, the argument still exists as to whether the road should bypass Cullen Creek to the extent that has been planned. The federal members have been pursuing the matter with the Minister for the Northern Territory. If the decision is made to once again have a look at the situation, this would mean that it would have to go back to the Parliamentary Works Committee because the hearings that were conducted last year into the second 3-year road program by the Parliamentary Works Committee decided that the arguments put up by the people from Pine Creek would not justify the re-routing of the road closer to Pine Creek. The only thing that has changed since then is the closure of the railway and of course this puts a bit of extra pressure on Pine Creek. I personally feel that the matter should be reconsidered and we are concerned that if it is reconsidered it would mean a setback on that particular contract of somewhere in the vicinity of 6 months which would mean that it would be impossible to spend the \$400,000 cash allocated to that particular project. At that particular meeting, a wish was expressed that if a decision was made to have a look at the possibility that the road might pass closer to Pine Creek that the cash that is available be transferred to another contract and I hope that this is what would happen. But I have not heard anything further on the matter regarding the Pine Creek diversion. I will be contacting, most probably Senator Kilgariff because he is in close cahoots with the Minister for the Northern Territory to see if there is likely to be a decision on this matter.

1469 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr POLLOCK -

I have been told that the report on Aboriginal housing associations has been released in Federal Parliament. Can the honourable member advise how much money has been allocated?

ANSWER

The situation is that the report compiled by Mr Hay on government services provided by finance from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs was tabled in the House of Representatives and the Senate on Tuesday. Copies of that report are on their way here to Darwin now and hopefully I will have one later today or tomorrow. The report itself I believe is fairly general. In relation to money, the Minister made an announcement on Tuesday afternoon in the House that \$25m extra would be available for Aboriginal Affairs for Australia and, as I reported to the House I think it was yesterday, this money is for Aboriginal housing, employment and enterprise. Just what the break-up of that money is as far as the Territory is concerned I do not know at this stage but as soon as that information is available I will advise the member.

1470 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

He has indicated that major highway street lighting is going to be upgraded and restored this financial year. Can he tell me if the section between the Casuarina shopping centre and Ellengowan Drive is going to be included in that?

ANSWER

My understanding is that the amount of money which has been allocated for upgrading of street lighting in Darwin and the resources that are available to execute work in the Darwin area are such that the portion

of major arterial roads that the honourable member refers to will not be in the program for this coming financial year. Depending on financial and resource considerations, it may not even be in the program for the following financial year.

1471 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

Has he had any reaction from the public regarding the present extensions to the caravan park at Mindil Beach and has the public been informed that the work going on there will destroy the environment of the beach front? What plans are in hand to beautify that area after this work is carried out?

ANSWER

The area under development at the moment is under the care and control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin. The extension of the beach front side of the Mindil Beach caravan park is being undertaken by the corporation and I believe has received considerable publicity within the last month. I have received electoral representation from a number of people who are concerned about the environmental aspects of the extension on the beach side of the park and I have made these known to the mayor and the corporation.

1472 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH -

What does the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau intend to do with their property in Smith Street? Are they going to redevelop it or leave it?

ANSWER

My understanding is that the bureau intends to redevelop the property but it is subject to budgetary considerations. I will confirm that later in this session today.

1473 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK -

When is it anticipated that the new Alice Springs hospital will be completed and commissioned? Will staff establishment levels at the hospital be sufficient to service the hospital?

ANSWER

It is anticipated that the new Alice Springs hospital will be completed and handed over between 1 and 15 December this year. It is uncertain at this stage whether the Department of Health will actually commission the hospital and have it in use before Christmas or leave it till after the Christmas period and have it in operation in early January.

It is a matter of concern that the present staff ceilings and staff establishment levels that are imposed on the health service in the Territory are going to prove of some difficulty to the department in fully staffing the new hospital. Staff ceilings will also affect the 32 bed ward at Katherine that is expected to be in operation before Christmas and the 4 additional wards at the Darwin Hospital which are expected to be in operation before Christmas. To staff all these facilities within the staff ceilings at the moment is going to be difficult. I have taken the matter up with the Minister for Health and the Prime Minister, and we are hopeful that staff ceilings can be raised to such a level as to allow full staffing of all those facilities that I have mentioned as they come on stream.

1474 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

Can he give me any information about the planning or consideration of a bridge on the Roper River downstream from its junction with the Wilton River?

ANSWER

I have not heard of any proposal for the bridging of this particular section of the Roper River. In any discussions I had at the recent Roads Conference the matter was not raised. However, I will speak to the Transport Planning Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory to see if they have any long term plans with regard to the bridging of the Roper and will supply that information to the honourable member for Arnhem later in the sittings.

1475 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

I have another question about this Northumberland Insurance amendment. Is the Executive Member aware, and has he brought it to the attention of the Australian Government, that legislation of similar affect to the legislation passed in this House, to relieve persons in the default position, has been passed in the states of South Australia and Queensland and, I believe, in other Australian states? Is he aware that an estimate of \$250,000 compiled from information obtained from legal firms in the Northern Territory as to the total cost to it of honouring this legislation was provided to the Australian Government in early 1975? And is he aware that the responsible member of the responsible department approved the legislation before it was passed in this House? If the honourable member is not aware of any of these matters, will he undertake to bring them to the attention of the department?

ANSWER

I was aware that legislation has been passed in some of the states to cover this provision. I am not aware whether or not there was any retrospectivity attached to the legislation. Maybe the honourable member for Jingili could inform me later on. I will have discussion with the member for Jingili and get some more details from him and will make an approach to the department on the matter.

1476 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

I refer to an article in today's "STAR" which alleges that in the Miss Australia Quest on the panel of judges was a detective who quizzed the girls on their knowledge of marihuana, whether they had smoked it, whether they knew anyone who had and, apparently, whether they could name the people who had. Is this a fact? Was it with the knowledge and consent of the Commissioner of Police that this person was on the panel asking these questions and could she also advise as to who chose the panel?

ANSWER

I will ask the Commissioner.

1477 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Casuarina asked several questions relating to statistical information on the 6 per cent concessional loan scheme of the Home Finance Trustee. I am advised that 703

loans have been approved since the commencement of this scheme. There are 440 loans still awaiting approval or which have been notified as lodgements for possible future loans. A great majority of these are still awaiting further information from the applicant and a large number have indicated that they are not interested in taking up the loan until after December 1976; in fact, some have indicated that their intention is not to take up the loan until as late as 1980,

The honourable member also asked what was the current waiting time for an application to receive approval once all information had been lodged. I am advised that the current waiting period is 2 months, although a staff interviewing position was filled last week and the Home Finance Trustee now expects the period of waiting to be reduced.

1478 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The honourable member for Stuart asked me yesterday about the new preschool at the Racecourse Subdivision in Alice Springs. I am advised by the department that the Racecourse Subdivision is presently serviced by the Teppa Hill preschool. The department has included a new preschool to be built on the Braitling Primary School site in its 1976-77 design list. The project will be included in the department 1977-78 draft program proposal. It is expected that the project will be approved and construction will commence during 1977-78 financial year. I am also advised that, as an interim measure, the infants section of the Braitling School will be used as a preschool in 1977.

1479 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK: The honourable member for Nhulumbuy asked a question about the medical staff situation as the result of recent increases in wages. I am advised that the recruitment period from the time of placement of an advertisement is initiated through to the actual arrival of the doctor in the Territory such that it is at this stage too early to give a firm indication of the effect of recent salary increases. However, present indications are that recruitment of hospital doctors is improving and we should have a full complement of doctors in our hospitals at the beginning of 1977. However, the prospect for the recruitment of district medical officers is not as bright.

1480 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK: The honourable member for Arnhem asked several questions on Tuesday in relation to venereal disease. I am advised that the Department of Health maintains confidential registers of venereal disease notification in each region and staffs the statistical unit in Darwin which collates monthly and annual figures on venereal disease. The department has been concerned about the prevalence of venereal disease for several years and it is currently one of the priority field programs. The high record incidence of syphilis in the Northern Territory is particularly explained because of the concentrated case detection carried out over the past two years. Tables setting out details of venereal disease notifications are available and I will advise the member of those.

For his information, in the 3 regions of the department in the Territory for 1975-76 gonorrhoea notifications totalled in the northern region 319, east Arnhem region 1, southern region 196; syphilis in northern region 254, in the east Arnhem region 7 and in the southern region 309. The incidence of syphilis particularly in the

the centre is far higher than would be expected. However, the laboratory tests used to diagnose syphilis cannot distinguish between venereal and non-venereal infections. It is likely that a considerable proportion of cases in central Australia are of the non-venereal type. Current departmental activities to reduce the problem include standard diagnostic measures in all Northern Territory hospitals, standardised therapy throughout the Northern Territory, use of rural health staff to trace and offer treatment to contacts of known cases, preparation of educational material in selected Aboriginal languages and incorporation of venereal disease into the curriculum of the Aboriginal health workers training program.



1485 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he able to inform the Assembly when the unit titles legislation, previously passed in this place, is likely to receive assent and be brought into operation?

ANSWER

Action has been proceeding on the implementation of legislation for strata titles. Regulations will be made to cover the necessary fee structures in the very near future. The Department of the Northern Territory has put all guns in motion and, hopefully, the ordinance will be commenced and operation of strata titles in the Northern Territory will commence on 1 November 1976.

1486 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise why the original specifications for the reroofing of the assembly area of Nightcliff Primary School has been altered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission so that there will be now no roofing of the general assembly area and consequently children will be wet right throughout the wet season? I understand this was done by the DRC against the advice of the Education Department and everyone else concerned.

ANSWER

The issue raised by the honourable member is one of a technical nature that has not been referred to the commission itself. However, I will seek the information sought by the honourable member today.

1487 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

What plans does the Education Department have for a special school class to take care of the children who should be going to high school but have special learning difficulties?

ANSWER

These children are placed in ordinary classes to a large extent. I am advised by the department that the provision of educational facilities for moderately and severely handicapped children of secondary school age is under review. The department has been corresponding with the Handicapped Persons Association in an attempt to negotiate the use of certain facilities available at the Coconut Grove Centre for a secondary age moderately to severely handicapped children's class. Officers of the department are meeting with the association on 11 October, which I believe was yesterday, to discuss alternatives. Should appropriate facilities be available, the department will attempt to provide a suitably qualified teacher to cater for the needs of the secondary age handicapped children in Darwin. I only hope that these moves come about quickly and we get some action because the situation at the moment is somewhat disastrous.

1488 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he advise if water restrictions are to apply in Alice Springs this year and, if so, how severe will they be?

ANSWER

It is not proposed to introduce restrictions in Alice Springs this year.

1489 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Is the Darwin Community College being involved in the negotiations regarding the Brinkin Subdivision?

ANSWER

No. I have a copy of a letter sent to the Chairman of the Community College Council from the Minister for the Northern Territory on 5 October advising that he felt it was unnecessary for the college to be concerned at this time and that their interests were being cared for by the Department of the Northern Territory.

1490 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

My question concerns a press release from the Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust which I believe he tabled. I refer to the balance of the Mayor's Trust Fund for the restoration of community recreation and cultural facilities for the people of Darwin. Is it a fact that this amounts to some hundreds of thousands of dollars and can he advise the precise amount?

ANSWER

The information was contained in a press statement that was distributed for the information of members but I do not believe it has been tabled. I believe that reports of the Trust Fund, as required by the trust deed will be tabled in the Federal Parliament, this Assembly and the Corporation of the City of Darwin, and will contain full details of all disbursements made by that Trust Fund. It would be proper to seek the detailed information sought by the honourable member from the chairman of the fund.

1491 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

What is the establishment number of health inspectors in the Northern Territory at each working base? What is the present strength of health inspectors at each working base? If the operative strength is below establishment, what reasons are given for the situation? How many resignations from the health inspection section have there been in the past 2 years in the Darwin area in particular?

ANSWER

I have had prior advice of this question. The previous establishments, including senior staff, is as follows: Gove 3, Katherine 1, Tennant Creek 1, Alice Springs 7, Darwin 12 - a total of 24 health inspectors for the Territory. The number of health inspectors actually employed on 7 October was: Gove 2, Katherine 1, Tennant Creek 1, Alice Springs 4, Darwin 5 - a total of 13. Recruitment and retention has been difficult, particularly in Darwin over the past 2 years. Recently, there has been a good response to advertisements and it is hoped to make a further 4 appointments shortly. From July 1974 to July 1976, there have been 8 resignations in the Northern Territory including 6 from Darwin and there have been 4 transfers from the health inspection section.

1492 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS -

Has any progress been made in resolving the problem between the Army and the Rifle Club so that the sport of range shooting may commence?

ANSWER

Yes, there has been some progress. Following representations I made to the Minister for Defence, I received a letter a couple of days ago from him advising formally that the Army has no further requirement for the range. I understand it is now up to the Department of the Northern Territory to spring off its backside to get the piece of land back from the Army and to make it available to the Rifle Club, at least for temporary use on an occupational licence whilst negotiations take place for a more permanent site for the long term future.

1493 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

I must assume that he is aware that some people are receiving a letter from Crown Law saying that they have been instructed to institute legal proceedings against them for the recovery of charges due for rents for Wacol Hostel to which people were evacuated immediately after the cyclone. Some of these people have very little prospect of being able to pay without severe hardship. Would it not be better and more proper to have this met by the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund? There are adequate funds there. Would he take steps to ensure that this is done?

ANSWER

I do not know very much about the matter; I have had no real personal approaches about it. I do understand that there have been letters - from whom I do not know - sent to some people who are said to be in arrears for costs incurred after the cyclone at some hostels at various places throughout the Commonwealth. As far as getting the funds from the Relief Trust Fund is concerned, I believe that has been virtually wound up now, so there is no prospect of getting funds from there. However, I will see what I can find out.

1494 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Has the Department of Education yet decided to resume teachers' conferences at Batchelor?

ANSWER

I was speaking to one of the officers only this morning on this matter. It seems that in-service conferences will be recommenced, using the Batchelor education exhibit, almost immediately on the same basis as was used in 1973/74. Up until now there has been a shortage of finance. The committee has recently reviewed the situation and this is their decision, to recommence the in-service conferences.

1495 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

I refer to a press release regarding lot 3744 in Darwin. The press release implied that the handing over of that portion to a youth hostels committee was a fait accompli. I ask him, in his capacity as a member of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, if that is a fact and if he is aware that other groups applied for that land, with development plans, a long while before the Youth Hostels Association did?

ANSWER

I am aware of press reports relating to the proposed allocation of a block of land for the Youth Hostels Association. I am not aware that

any matter relating to it has been referred to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

1496 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

What is the cost of one mile of the cable normally used for street lighting?

ANSWER

The cost of the electrical conductor for street lighting is approximately \$180 per kilometre.

1497 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Is she aware that a group of people calling themselves the Children of God have been handing pamphlets and treatises to children on high school precincts in Darwin and can she advise if the school principals are aware of this?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get some information to the honourable member later today.

1498 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

Following his visit to Sydney to attend the Agricultural Council last week, can he advise when the council is expected to make a decision concerning a national beef price stabilisation scheme?

ANSWER

I do not expect a decision to be made in under 12 months. The Agricultural Council expressed great interest in the idea of a stabilisation scheme they have had actually 2 schemes submitted to them, a Queensland scheme and a Victorian scheme. They have referred the matter to a standing committee on agriculture and this will take some time. The working party's analysis and report will not be available until mid-autumn next year. Even if the decision was to go ahead, by the time the producers had been approached in some kind of poll and the necessary legislation made, I do not believe that such a national scheme could possibly be established during the 1977 year. Thus, it would have no effect either this year or next year as far as the Territory is concerned and, in the light of that, the department has been asked to re-examine the scheme represented in the bill which we passed in this Assembly last year to see whether, with some changes in the mathematics to take account of current beef prices, there is any possibility of activating that particular proposal.

1499 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

What is the role of adult education advisers in Aboriginal communities?

ANSWER

The principal of a school in an Aboriginal community has responsibilities for the educational development of all members of the community and, where possible, an adult educator is attached to the staff to work specifically with the adults.

1500 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

I was told recently by passengers on the "Darwin Duchess", the passenger ferry between Darwin and Mandorah, that passengers from that boat participated in the rescue of certain people from an upturned small craft in Darwin Harbour. One of the persons being rescued was a young child under 2 years of age and there appeared to be no life jackets worn by any of these people or present in the upturned boat. Does the Northern Territory Port Authority have any persons policing the provisions of safety equipment in pleasure craft?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the question at the moment. However, I will approach the Port Authority for information.

1501 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

I would like to ask a question about the Radio Australia transmitter which I visited recently. At what stage is the rehabilitation of the Radio Australia transmitter station at Cox Peninsula? When will this very important service recommence transmission and who is responsible for the money appropriation for the rehabilitation, the DRC or Telecom?

ANSWER

The bulk of the installation has been rehabilitated. However, there are no aerials. There is part of a wharf over there. The main problem is that there are no aerials. I have written to the Minister for Posts and Telecommunications and I have also sent him a couple of telegrams. I also had some correspondence with the previous government's minister. He advised me that there was an investigation into Cox Peninsula, as to whether or not it would be appropriate to leave the installation in that particular location in view of the damage caused by the cyclone. I did point out to the present minister, when I mentioned the previous minister's correspondence, that it does not seem to matter much where in the north of Australia they put the installation; it has to be in the top end of Australia and the top end of Australia, unless it is away from the coast - and this is unsatisfactory - is subject to cyclones. I venture to say that in the east and west coastal regions it would be more likely to be subject to cyclone damage. The technical people have also told me that the particular location at Cox Peninsula is the best location in the northern part of Australia. Should the installation be rehabilitated, and I have heard rumours that it would be although the report of the inquiry should be out in about 2 weeks time - I had some advice from the Minister's office last week to this effect, I would assume that any money for the rehabilitation will come from the Department of Posts and Telecommunications.

1502 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Could she also ascertain if it is a fact that people known as the Children of God have been travelling on the free school bus service and importuning children? For her information, I believe their spiritual leader is a man called David who claims some direct descent.

ANSWER

Could I remind the honourable member for Nightcliff that my responsi-

bility is education and law? No, I was not aware that they were travelling on the buses. I shall seek to find out who their divine leader, David, is.

1503 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

How many single police officers were required by the Commissioner of Police to move their residence to the new police barracks at Alice Springs when the building was occupied last year? How many of those officers have been paid the allowance provided for in clauses 93 and 94 of the PATTD, No. 12, in force at the time? If any officer has not been paid the allowance, why not?

ANSWER

I believe that 8 police officers were required to remove their residences. None have been paid allowances, Only one officer has applied and this claim is currently being processed.

1504 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW -

Is it a fact that 16 schools in the Northern Territory have a teacher shortage? Is it also a fact that there are unemployed teachers available in other states of Australia who refuse to come to the Northern Territory? What steps can the honourable member take to alleviate the teacher shortage problem?

ANSWER

I could not say whether there are 16 schools short-staffed in the Northern Territory or one. However, I will endeavour to find out. I think the Northern Territory at the moment, whilst there are a few shortages, is fairly evenly balanced; in fact Alice Springs is, if anything, overstaffed while Darwin is fairly stable, I am sure there are unemployed teachers down south who do not wish to come to the Territory. I guess they do not want to go to Antarctica or south-east Asia either. As to what I can do about it, there has just been a recruitment campaign down south and it was discovered that people in promotion positions were not generally interested in coming to the Northern Territory. This is providing the department with some difficulties; however, I shall make further representations to the Minister.

1505 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he aware of the trouble at Docker River last week? If so, can he advise the amount of damage sustained by the recently opened health centre at that settlement?

ANSWER

I am aware that there was some incident at Docker River last week or in recent weeks. Some damage was done to the health centre at that community. At this stage I am unable to advise the member further but I hope to do so later.

1506 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

I advise him that block 7619, Nightcliff was sold at a public auction on behalf of the Government of Australia. Is he aware that this is well in the primary surge zone? Has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission now a policy of allowing the Government to resell primary

surge blocks they have acquired because they would not let anyone else build on them?

ANSWER

The honourable member's question seeks information that I cannot give without reference and I ask that she place it on notice.

1507 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware that private letter box holders in Alice Springs have recently been notified that, with the relocation of the new post office, those holders will be required to change the letter box numbers and this will cost quite an amount of money? If so, will he undertake to have this decision reversed?

ANSWER

I am aware of the situation; I have in front of me a copy of a letter which was sent to the box holders in Alice Springs. I will make some inquiries within the department and see if it is possible to retain the same numbers and overcome the problem. The cost that the honourable member for Stuart has referred to is the cost that would be imposed on those people with letter heads and pre-addressed stationery.

1508 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Last week I asked her when legislation would be reintroduced covering such people as the Northumberland Insurance Company and I believe that the honourable member from Jingili made some excellent remarks in this context at a later time. Her reply then was that the matter was under review. Can she now give me any idea when this legislation will be introduced?

ANSWER

No.

1509 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TUXWORTH -

Some time ago, he gave the House information on world copper prices necessary to make the Tennant Creek smelter viable. Is he able to advise the current position and give any indication when that smelter may reopen?

ANSWER

The height recently obtained on the world copper market was \$1,520 per ton but it has slipped down to about \$1,200 a ton which is not a viable price for the Peko Mining operation to function in Tennant Creek. The company anticipated that the price would slump at this time and they do not anticipate that it will go back to the \$1,600 to \$2,000 a ton before next July and that would be the earliest that they would be able to open the smelter. For the company to be sure to open the smelter in July 1978, they would need to start moving approximately 400 - 600 people back in January. If they misinterpret the market and the price does not rise they will go through the hoop for quite a few million.

1510 Mr DONDAS to Mr SPEAKER -

What steps are being taken to protect the members in the press box from the constant attack by mosquitoes up there? If nothing is being done, will he undertake to supply them with a tin of Mortein?

ANSWER

I give the honourable member that undertaking.

1511 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Further to my questions last week relating to the sale - or perhaps the giving away - of the Taiwanese fishing boat recently for \$6,000, can he advise if there was any valuation or assessment of the value of the boat and catch obtained by the responsible department before sale?

ANSWER

The Department of Primary Industries has not yet provided that information.

1512 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

What steps are being taken to bring the Land and Business Agents Ordinance 1974 into operation?

ANSWER

The Land and Business Agents Ordinance has been under review because it is inadequate in its present form. Some time ago, the Executive completed its recommendations and forwarded them to the draftsman. The severe shortage of draftsmen in the Northern Territory is holding up this bill.

1513 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Could she tell the House if music is part of the curriculum in Northern Territory schools and, if so, will it be introduced to all schools and at all levels in 1977?

ANSWER

I am sure that the department would be delighted if they could provide music as part of the curriculum in every school in the Northern Territory but, unfortunately, there is an Australia-wide shortage of music teachers.

1514 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: I was asked a question by the honourable member for Night-cliff about an article that appeared in the "Star" concerning a detective questioning girls about marihuana. I am unable to determine whether or not this was a fact because the organisation was a private one. She also asked: "Was it with the knowledge and consent of the Commissioner of Police that this person was on the panel asking these questions?" I am advised that the person concerned was on recreation leave and he had this leave with the knowledge and consent of the Commissioner of Police but in fact was acting in a private capacity by being on the panel. I was also asked if I could advise who chose the panel. I spoke with the organisers but they have

refused the information.

1515 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: I was asked questions by the honourable member for Nightcliff and Nhulunbuy concerning the caravan park area at Mindil Beach owned by the city corporation. The following information has been supplied to me. The area is within reserve number 1018 which was reserved for the purpose of the Corporation of the City of Darwin in relation to recreation and amusement by proclamation appearing in Commonwealth Gazette number 57 dated 17 September 1959 and the Northern Territory Gazette number 42 dated 30 September 1959. On 15 September 1972, the Administrator gave a direction pursuant to section 103B of the Crown Lands Ordinance that part of the land included in reserve number 1018, including the area referred to by the member for Nightcliff, be managed, regulated and controlled by the Corporation of the City of Darwin by operating of the bylaws of the municipality of Darwin. This information relates to the area of the reserve and not the lot which specifically relates to the caravan park.

1516 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Nhulunbuy asked me a question relating to whether a motor registry would be built in Nhulunbuy. The answer to a question without notice answered this. I have asked for a copy to be sent to me and I will pass this onto the honourable member.

1517 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Stuart asked who would pay for repairs to the Bradshaw School and I advised him that I felt that the Education Department would not have to pay for them. I have been in touch with the Department of Construction and they have advised me that discussions are taking place presently between them and the contractor. If the contractor accepts the responsibility, the repairs will be done without any cost to any department. If there is some contribution necessary by the Australian Government I would assume that the Department of Education could possibly be asked to contribute because the Department of Construction does not have its own funding.

1518 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Arnhem asked whether any action or planning was being undertaken for a bridge on the Roper River. The possibility of bridging the Roper River has been examined in the past and a later study of the area suggested a crossing near the Roper Settlement. However, no suggestions or plans at present exist for the bridging of the Roper River.



1519 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW -

Is it a fact that Mr Ralph Hayes, the station manager of Wave Hill Station, was recently assaulted by an Aboriginal employee? If this is true, was the person who made the assault charged with that offence? Is it also true that Mr Ralph Hayes J.P., the same station manager, wrote to Inspector Wyatt of the Katherine Police Station asking if the Northern Territory police could attend the Negri race meeting held last week in Western Australia and that Inspector Wyatt denied police representation to the race meeting on the grounds of staff shortage? Is it true that, because of no Territory representation from the police force between 20 and 30 Northern Territory Aboriginals assaulted 7 stockmen from Wave Hill Station with sticks and stones and knives and that vehicles were damaged by this assault? Is it a fact that additional police representation is needed at the Wave Hill Settlement to maintain law and order?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain the information for the honourable member. I could answer this in part but I think it would be preferable if I left it until I had the full facts.

1520 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

How many primary producers have been considered as ineligible for carry-on finance? Is this because their viability is measured against current or ruling meatworks' prices?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

1521 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Is it true that Browns Mart is to close down because its seating is not considered adequate by the fire brigade?

ANSWER

I understand that the city corporation is not in a position to issue a licence after 31 December unless permanent seating is fixed in Browns Mart. I understand they are not allowed to issue a licence until such time as a permit from the fire brigade is received and the current permit lasts only until the end of the year. I believe that the trustees are endeavouring to launch a fund-raising campaign in order to meet with the proposals of the Chief Fire Officer.

1522 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he advise what steps the Government is taking to service the tourist traffic carried on the Connair service between Cairns and Mount Isa and is it proposed that this route will remain a third level airline operation?

ANSWER

The tourist industry has been concerned for some time at the lack of continuity in the Cairns-Alice Springs air connection, particularly because of the American tourist market that orientates around Cairns and the Alice Springs tourist promotion people are keen to tap it. The Department of Transport and the industry have been holding

consultation for some time and, notwithstanding the Connair strike, the Heron and DC3 connection which has been operating on a weekly basis for some years now will be replaced immediately by Ansett and TAA Fokker Friendships which will start on a fortnightly basis. Early in 1977, DC9s will be introduced to the Alice Springs-Cairns run.

1523 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

My question concerns the roofing of the assembly area of Nightcliff Primary School. In his reply to my question yesterday, the Executive Member advised that the work currently planned for Nightcliff Primary School was part of a staged program and a roof over the assembly area was to be provided, the roof to be completed by the end of January 1977. Is the Executive Member aware that the roofing of the assembly area was omitted by an addendum to the contract just let for the re-roofing of some areas? The contractor was advised, having tendered for it, that it was to be deleted. If this is so, is a separate contract to be let for that area? If so when, and why not now rather than the end of January?

ANSWER

The information that I provided in reply to the honourable member yesterday was supplied to me by officers of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. My understanding is that the item is to be added to any contract that might be currently in existence and it is to be completed by the end of January 1977, not let in January 1977.

1524 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise when an ordinance passed by this Assembly to amend the Encouragement of Primary Production Ordinance will receive assent?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place that question on notice.

1525 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW -

My question follows from that very disturbing answer she gave the honourable member for Casuarina in respect of Browns Mart. Is this House to take it that the theatres of the Alice Springs Youth Centre, the Alice Springs Memorial club, the Totem theatre, and every other theatre probably in the Northern Territory, is going to be closed as a result of this jumped-up new rule about chairs having to be fixed in all theatres in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I understand that the fixing of the chairs is peculiar to the Browns Mart situation and I am not aware that this applies to every other hall in the Northern Territory.

1526 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON -

On behalf of the Member for Tiwi, I ask when the rubbish dump will be established in the Humpty Doo area, on Section 360, as proposed?

ANSWER

I do not have that information at the moment. I will endeavour to seek it and advise the honourable member during the day.

1527 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

What is the installation cost of a pole used to support street lighting?

ANSWER

The cost involved in this type of operation varies but, as a general rule a figure of \$300 should be taken to include the cost of the pole and the erection thereof.

1528 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he aware of the hardships being caused to people because workers' compensation payments are not indexed? If he is aware, will he take steps to amend the ordinance accordingly?

ANSWER

Workers' compensation is not my responsibility.

1529 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Is he aware of cattlemen who are eligible for neither carry-on finance nor unemployment benefits? If so, how are these unfortunate people existing?

ANSWER

I ask him to place that question on notice.

1530 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON -

I re-direct my earlier question about workers' compensation to the Executive Member for Municipal and Consumer Affairs.

ANSWER

The Workmens Compensation Ordinance and the benefits under that ordinance have been the subject of a committee of review. It has recently handed down its report but I have not had time to study it closely. The committee consisted of various representatives from employer groups, unions and government. I will endeavour to find out if the matter that the honourable member has raised has been covered by that committee.

1531 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

How do the recent increased allowances for isolated children compare with increased school allowances to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders under the ABSEC scheme?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

1532 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

In view of the steady build up of residents in the area, when will the bus service to Humpty Doo be reinstated?

ANSWER

I am unable to tell the honourable member for Arnhem when the bus service to Humpty Doo is likely to be reinstated. I have had some approaches from the people living in the area. I intend to talk to the department on the matter and I doubt if I will be able to give an answer this sittings. However, I will pass on to him any information that I can get from the department.

1533 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

I ask him to place the question on notice.

1534 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Will the Nakara School be ready for the 1977 school year?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get the information for the honourable member today.

1535 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Can the honourable member advise me whether he has had discussions recently with the Federal Minister for Transport in relation to the present position in the Connair dispute and, if so, what the position is?

ANSWER

I have not had any discussions with the Federal Transport Minister since last week. As we all know, a meeting took place on Monday between the company, the pilots and the Federal Minister. I think everybody was hopeful that some agreement would come out of that meeting. In the press yesterday we were told that there are some doubts about this. Late last night I received a phone call from Senator Kilgariff asking whether or not I had spoken to the pilots recently and I said not since Monday when I was unable to get any further information because the meeting had not been held. I spoke to one of the pilots this morning and it would appear that the problem is still some way from being solved. I also believe that the answer to the proposals put by the chairman of Connair will be handed to the Minister today. I do not know exactly what the contents of that letter are but I have asked for a copy to be given to me as soon as possible so that I know exactly what it contains. However, I feel that the pilots are going to reject the proposals made at the meeting and this could put us back to square one. That is about all I can give honourable members on the strike at the moment. Hopefully, later today I may have some more information concerning the problem and I will pass it on to the House.

1536 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Is she yet able to advise how the overcrowding problems in Darwin secondary schools are to be overcome next year and the following year as Dripstone High School is not going ahead?

ANSWER

No.

1537 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Has the Arts Council of the Northern Territory received news of further funding following the failure to receive money from the 1976-77 Budget?

ANSWER

They have; a letter was received yesterday by the chairman of the Arts Council. I understand that the Minister for the Northern Territory has offered \$10,000 to be forwarded as soon as possible. He has also mentioned that if the Arts Council can forward accounts etc another \$10,000 may be available to cover their losses. I would just like to point out, of course, that the figure of \$32,000 forwarded by the Arts Council would be much more realistic. They are going to be placed in an embarrassing position.

1538 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN -

When will work commence on rebuilding the Casuarina Fire Station?

ANSWER

I was under the impression that tenders had been called and let for the repair of the Casuarina station. I will check and answer him later on today.

1539 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

I refer to Newcastle Waters causeway which has caused great difficulty in the last 3 wet seasons. Will there be any relief this wet season or are the authorities hoping that a drought will intervene?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Arnhem could have hit the nail on the head when he said the authorities may be hoping for a drought to intervene. If there is a drought, I hope it can extend over another 2 to 3 wet seasons because that will be the time needed to fix the Newcastle Creek causeway. I am in two minds whether we should be asking for a relief by way of a drought because this would enable our southern colleagues to say that it is not urgent after all, because it has not gone out this wet. If we do have another strong wet this season, it will keep the matter highlighted. I will leave it up to other members to decide which they would like to happen.

1540 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

I preface my question by pointing out to you, Mr Speaker, that I have already asked it twice - I think even 3 times - at this sittings so far, and that I have not yet received an answer from the honourable member. It is my belief that his department is prevaricating in the matter, and I would like him to assure his department that, if it is, I will keep pursuing the matter until I worry the information out of them one way or another. The question is: Was any valuation or assessment of value of the Taiwanese fishing boat recently sold for \$6,000 obtained by the Department of Primary Industries or any other agency before the boat was sold?

ANSWER

With regret, I can only say that the honourable member's assessment, that the department is prevaricating, may be correct; they have not yet provided me with the information.

1541 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Can the Executive Member tell me whether any resolution has yet been reached in relation to the Mataranka Telecom dispute?

ANSWER

I do not know. I did advise the House yesterday that as a result of a telegram which I received from the Mataranka Progress Association. I contacted the Minister's office. At this point I think I should add that in the press last night there were some criticisms of various Executive Members. I do not know whether my name was included in the original press release from the Mataranka people and it was fortunate I think that my name seems to have been edited out of the press report last night, which is quite strange considering that I have what little responsibility there is in the communications side of the operation. Since I was the only one to receive a telegram the other members I guess could be excused for not taking action. After speaking with the Minister's office and requesting that they take some fairly urgent action, later on in the day I spoke to the state manager of Telecom who looks after South Australia and the Northern Territory - that was an hour after I had sent the telegram and spoken to the Minister's office - and he had received a communication from the Minister asking for details of the matter. So hopefully these details would have been given to the Minister. I have asked that the Minister use his influence, little though it may be, with regard to the commission, to try to get them to increase the remuneration to the operator so that the exchange can continue to operate until such times as an automatic exchange can be installed.

1542 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS -

Our pastoralists have been the victims of fires, particularly around their watering points and bores. Are they eligible to make application for drought relief? If not, will he seek to have the guidelines altered?

ANSWER

I do not believe that there is any decision on the eligibility of pastoralists affected by bush fires. In fact, I do not think the question has been put to any responsible authority. The member for Resource Development may know something else about it but drought relief comes in two forms. The first is a local Northern Territory scheme which is brought in from time to time in response to drought. This only extends during the period of that particular drought and, if another drought occurs later, then the scheme has to be restarted. The other form of drought assistance is the Drought Bond Scheme and I do not believe that the situation would apply in that case. That is a Commonwealth administered scheme rather than a Territory scheme. I do not believe the guidelines would provide for this and I doubt whether there would be much chance of getting those guidelines altered quickly. However, if there is a case for special relief for bush fire affected people, and relief has been given in the past for drought, flood and natural catastrophes, then I believe that a case should be submitted as soon as possible to the Department of the Northern Territory.

1543 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware of any outlying settlements that are in desperate or difficult circumstances due to the Connair pilots' strike and, if so, what action is being taken to provide relief for them?

ANSWER

I do not have any details to hand but I do believe that some areas are having problems with communications because of the Connair strike. Some of the charter companies are attempting to take stop-gap action to try to alleviate the problem. I am unaware just exactly how effectively the other air people are in fact handling the problem.

1544 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked me about a certain group of people commonly known as the Children of God and whether they had been handing out pamphlets to school children on high school grounds and whether the headmasters were aware of this. I am advised by the department that the principals of the 3 secondary schools in Darwin contacted yesterday all advised that they were unaware of the presence of the Children of God or any similar groups on their grounds. No teachers, students or parents had reported their presence nor have any requests been received from any such groups seeking access to students. The principal of Darwin High School had been advised of the alleged situation by the honourable member but he has been unable to find any evidence of its occurrence. The second question was whether the Children of God were travelling on school bus runs. The high school principals advise that they have had no reports and no drivers have reported any such incidents. I am unable to answer the third part of the question concerning the gentleman known as "David".

1545 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK: The honourable member for Stuart asked about damage incurred at the Docker River Health Centre. I am advised that the Docker River Health Centre and staff accommodation units were completed but not commissioned in September at a cost of \$485,000. There was an unusually large number of Aboriginals assembled at Docker River for the purpose of initiation ceremonies. Heavy rain in the area gave reason for visiting Aboriginals to seek shelter and the health centre was occupied for about 4 days. Damage estimated by the Department of Construction at about \$1,000 was caused to windows, doors and walls.

1546 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked a question concerning press statements of Youth Hostels Association of Australia about the granting of a lease of land in Fannie Bay. I would advise that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has not had such an application placed before it. However, there is an investigation being done by the Urban and Town Planning Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory with a view to allocating land to Youth Hostels Association of Australia. The site has not yet been allocated and there are no other known claims on the land. There are no official records and the public plan shows that the land in the vicinity of the site under investigation to be crown land with no indication whatsoever of any previous allocation.

1547 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member also asked a question about lot 7619 in the town of Nightcliff and whether it had been allocated for sale although it was a property in the primary surge zone. I am advised that this is a government lot and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission does not determine the selection of land to be sold by the Department of the Northern Territory. The commission resolved last year that people should not be prevented from building or rebuilding in surge zones if they wish to do so.

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