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VICTORIAN ROYAL COMMISSION INTO FAMILY VIOLENCE

MELBOURNE

FRIDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2015

(25th day of hearing)

BEFORE:

THE HONOURABLE M. NEAVE AO - Commissioner

MS P. FAULKNER AO - Deputy Commissioner

MR T. NICHOLSON - Deputy Commissioner

1 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Before we begin, the Inquiries Act permits
2 me to determine from time to time that the functions of
3 the Commission may be performed by one or more
4 Commissioners. Today two Commissioners will be present at
5 the public hearing.

6 MR MOSHINSKY: Commissioners, could I start by outlining the
7 program for today. First, we have a panel comprising the
8 secretaries of four government departments, and that panel
9 will deal with the topic generally of governance
10 structures, and that will run from now until approximately
11 12.30, with a mid-morning break. Then following that,
12 most likely after lunch at about 1.30, we will have a
13 further panel comprising three secretaries or deputy
14 secretaries dealing more with funding related governance
15 issues. Then finally at about 3 o'clock we will have
16 evidence from the Chief Commissioner of Police, Graham
17 Ashton, on governance structures and related issues, with
18 a plan to close at about 3.45 today.

19 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

20 MR MOSHINSKY: Could the first panel please be sworn.

21 <GREGORY ROBERT WILSON, affirmed and examined:

22 <KYM LEANNE PEAKE, affirmed and examined:

23 <GILLIAN ANNE CALLISTER, affirmed and examined:

24 <CHRISTOPHER BARCROFT ECCLES, affirmed and examined:

25 MR MOSHINSKY: Could I start with you, Mr Eccles, you hold the
26 position of Secretary of the Victorian Department of
27 Premier and Cabinet?

28 MR ECCLES: Correct.

29 MR MOSHINSKY: You have prepared a witness statement for the
30 Royal Commission?

31 MR ECCLES: Yes, I did.

1 MR MOSHINSKY: Are the contents of your statement true and
2 correct?
3 MR ECCLES: Yes, they are.
4 MR MOSHINSKY: Ms Callister, you have given evidence at the
5 earlier public hearings, and you have prepared a
6 supplementary statement to update the Commission on some
7 developments since giving evidence on the earlier
8 occasion?
9 MS CALLISTER: That's correct.
10 MR MOSHINSKY: Are the contents of your supplementary statement
11 true and correct?
12 MS CALLISTER: Yes, they are.
13 MR MOSHINSKY: I just note that you hold the position of
14 Secretary of the Department of Education and Training?
15 MS CALLISTER: That's correct.
16 MR MOSHINSKY: Ms Peake, you are the Acting Secretary of the
17 Department of Health and Human Services?
18 MS PEAKE: That's correct.
19 MR MOSHINSKY: You have prepared a witness statement for the
20 Royal Commission?
21 MS PEAKE: I have.
22 MR MOSHINSKY: Are the contents of that statement true and
23 correct?
24 MS PEAKE: They are.
25 MR MOSHINSKY: Mr Wilson, you hold the position of Secretary of
26 the Department of Justice and Regulation?
27 MR WILSON: That's correct.
28 MR MOSHINSKY: And you have prepared a witness statement for
29 the Royal Commission?
30 MR WILSON: Yes.
31 MR MOSHINSKY: Are the contents of your statement true and

1 correct?

2 MR WILSON: Yes.

3 MR MOSHINSKY: I note that all four of you have participated in
4 a round table before the Royal Commission as well as
5 giving evidence today. As you know, the subject matter of
6 this week's hearing is generally the subject of governance
7 and structures and arrangements as they relate to family
8 violence. I would like to start broadly with the social
9 services system. You will be aware that we had some
10 evidence yesterday from Mr Dave Heatley from the New
11 Zealand Productivity Commission in relation to a recent
12 report prepared by that Commission called, "More effective
13 social services".

14 I would like to start with some of the weaknesses
15 of the current system of social services in New Zealand
16 that were identified in that report as a convenient
17 reference point for some of the themes that have also
18 emerged in the evidence in this Royal Commission. You are
19 about to be passed a copy of the overview of that report.

20 If I could ask you to turn to page 5 of that
21 document. On the second half of that page there's a list
22 of weaknesses in the social services system identified
23 there. Can I invite you, perhaps first Ms Peake, to
24 comment on the applicability of that list and what you
25 would see as some of the weaknesses of the current social
26 services system currently?

27 MS PEAKE: Thank you. In general I would concur that the
28 summary that is contained in the New Zealand report has
29 applicability to Victoria. We have a system which is
30 really devised according to historical programmatic
31 interventions. If I just give you a bit of a picture of

1 that, within child and family and community services there
2 are over 5,000 activity level service agreements across
3 more than 200 programs. Each of those programs is
4 designed around historical groupings of clients and
5 doesn't reflect, as this report highlights, the complex
6 needs of both disadvantaged people and their communities,
7 and doesn't really enable there to be service responses
8 that cross over program boundaries. So that I think is
9 really the first critical point to be made.

10 The second critical point to be made is that you
11 have heard a lot of testimony and evidence led in this
12 hearing that again is consistent with the finding in the
13 New Zealand Productivity Commission report that often the
14 responses to need are driven through the prism of crisis
15 rather than being available earlier before problems really
16 escalate.

17 I think the third point which I would emphasise
18 is that there's a strong theme that has come through
19 around the evidence base and the efficacy of the
20 particular interventions to meet those needs, which
21 I think we again have in common with New Zealand, and
22 really all social service systems around the world are
23 deepening understanding of what really works.

24 MR MOSHINSKY: One of the diagrams in this report - and we
25 might bring up the slide figure 0.1 of the quadrants, and
26 you will have it on the top of page 3 in the document
27 that's been handed to you. There's a diagram they have of
28 four quadrants with "complexity of client need" across
29 from right to left and "client capacity" vertically. Does
30 that diagram - and Mr Heatley gave evidence about this
31 yesterday - assist in categorising the point that you made

1 earlier about people who have need to access multiple
2 services?

3 MS PEAKE: I think it does. The other overlay would be
4 differentiating between how the system organises itself to
5 better support people earlier versus how the system
6 organises itself to respond quickly and effectively where
7 there are matters of legal import, where there are matters
8 of crisis. So I think the same notion of the four
9 segments is applicable but we would want to think it
10 through really carefully what does it mean when we are
11 thinking about better meeting individual needs in
12 community settings earlier and what does it mean when we
13 are dealing with people at moments of crisis.

14 MR MOSHINSKY: Just on this initial topic of weaknesses in the
15 current social services system, can I invite any of the
16 other members of the panel to comment on that issue?

17 MS CALLISTER: I would agree with the things that Kym said, and
18 I think part of the problem is that the programmatic lens,
19 which is the lens that the system is designed to view the
20 client through, is the label that you get. So it's a
21 focus on program and problem rather than people. So some
22 of the examples in this report and other examples that the
23 Commission will be familiar with after lots of evidence
24 are that if you appear in the homelessness system as a
25 victim of family violence you are largely seen through the
26 lens of homelessness; if you appear in the mental health
27 system as a victim of family violence you will be seen
28 through a mental health lens; if you appear in the family
29 violence system as a victim but you have a mental illness
30 you will be seen perhaps first through a family violence
31 lens; and you won't necessarily get much attention as a

1 child until you appear in a child system.

2 So it's about sort of I think changing the lens
3 from a program-dominated lens to understanding the whole
4 person and what's going on. One of the consequences of
5 those lenses is people are referred to a service for each
6 component, and each service does a plan and each service
7 has a kind of intervention plan with the client.

8 A lot of those overlap and are the same and
9 others are different, but it's very difficult to bring
10 them together and that's where people talk about system
11 coordination. But I think there's an opportunity and
12 I think the Commission has had some evidence about some of
13 the models out there that actually start to integrate
14 these things rather than place five or 10 or more services
15 around people.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: Mr Eccles?

17 MR ECCLES: I might take it in a slightly different direction,
18 which is to reference the question around the current
19 social services system with the government's view of the
20 public sector and Public Service more broadly and its
21 reform agenda. So it elevates, if you like, the
22 conditions that we are seeking to address as a government.
23 There's probably five or six conditions and themes for a
24 reform agenda.

25 One is about enhancing trust and confidence in
26 systems of government and the government itself. The
27 other is more openness and transparency. Another aspect
28 is driven by outcomes and evaluation. The fourth would be
29 measuring impact and being guided by evidence. The final
30 element is engaging with the public purpose sector in the
31 design and delivery of programs. So, if you like, that's

1 the more elevated set of reforms that the government is
2 committed to.

3 MR MOSHINSKY: Is it implicit in each of those that those are
4 areas that there are perceived weaknesses at present?

5 MR ECCLES: Indeed.

6 MR MOSHINSKY: Mr Wilson, one of the facts about the
7 interaction of family violence with the social services
8 system is that a very large part of court time in terms of
9 Magistrates' Court in particular and also police time is
10 as a result of family violence. Do you have any comments
11 about any weaknesses with the current system from the
12 point of view of the individual who comes into contact
13 with the system and its ability to perhaps knit together
14 various components of the system?

15 MR WILSON: I guess I would concur with the observed weaknesses
16 by our colleague in New Zealand, and there is evidence
17 I think from - we hear from courts and our roles in
18 corrections about some of those difficulties that have
19 been mentioned by my colleagues here of providing or
20 getting clients through to the right services and so on.
21 So we do often hear that from magistrates and others and
22 our own community corrections staff where they need to
23 find services for clients. So it's really from that
24 perspective that I observe some of those weaknesses
25 perhaps more as a user that interacts with it rather than
26 a provider relative to DHHS and Education.

27 MR MOSHINSKY: One of the points that's made in the New Zealand
28 report towards the top of page 5 is that numerous
29 government reviews over the past 20 years have identified
30 remarkably consistent lists of issues and proposed rather
31 similar solutions, but still these same weaknesses are

1 being identified. Can I ask you, Mr Eccles, is that true
2 in the Australian context? I appreciate you have
3 experience in a number of state jurisdictions in
4 Australia. Are these themes ones that have been raised
5 over a period of the last 20 years with similar solutions
6 proposed?

7 MR ECCLES: I can't speak to the last 20 years, but I can
8 probably speak to my immediate past experience of perhaps
9 10 or so years in other jurisdictions, including South
10 Australia and New South Wales. These are issues that have
11 tested the social service systems that I have been
12 associated with in all jurisdictions. That's not to say
13 that there hasn't been concerted reform in a number of
14 those domains. But whether that reform has led to
15 wholesale change that addresses all of the conditions here
16 I think there would be - it wouldn't be the case that
17 there has been such reform across the board to address all
18 of these issues in any jurisdiction I have been associated
19 with.

20 MR MOSHINSKY: Do you have any observations on why that is the
21 case, why there hasn't been more progress made over the
22 last 10 or 15 years on this set of issues?

23 MR ECCLES: As to the reason why - I guess partly it's just the
24 innate complexity of the issues that are identified here.
25 It's not through the absence of goodwill and intent on the
26 part of governments. It is I think more that each of the
27 elements described here reveals deep, complex problems.
28 I think in each domain there would have been some
29 progress. The biggest issue has been having progress that
30 could be described as holistic, comprehensive and
31 integrated.

1 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Can I just follow up on that question.

2 Systems tend to preserve themselves and tend to preserve
3 themselves in the way they have historically operated. We
4 know from many areas of reform that you need both cultural
5 change and legal and policy change. Have you given any
6 thought to the sort of cultural components that tend to
7 make systems go on operating in the same way that they
8 have always operated and how you might change that?

9 MR ECCLES: Absolutely, Commissioner. I think if I go back to
10 the five conditions that I described earlier, the sort of
11 elevated conditions that are motivating reform, you are
12 never going to be able to move to having greater trust and
13 confidence in government or openness and transparency or
14 genuine engagement with the public purpose sector or
15 having proper regard for impact and evidence unless it is
16 supported by capability and supported by a cultural
17 change, as you describe it.

18 There has to be the investment. There has to be
19 the belief. There has to be the authority that has to be
20 legitimised. It has to be led. It has to be authorised.
21 All of those are components, if you like, of a cultural
22 condition. It's sometimes an overused term but it is a
23 precondition to genuine reform that there is a cultural
24 change within not only the public sector but the public
25 purpose sector itself.

26 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

27 MR MOSHINSKY: The context in which we are discussing these
28 governance issues, the evidence that the Commission has
29 heard so far indicates is one where the system, the family
30 violence system, is under strain as a result of increased
31 numbers of reports to police, intervention order

1 applications and people seeking help for social services.
2 Ms Peake, would you agree that the family violence system
3 is under strain as a result of those reasons?

4 MS PEAKE: Absolutely. If you look at child protection as one
5 example, we have had an increase in reports to Child
6 Protection from when I was in the system a decade ago of
7 around 40,000 reports to - we are now up to 91,000
8 reports, and a significant driver of the growth in those
9 reports has been exposure to family violence. In fact,
10 two-thirds of children where there is an investigation and
11 a finding that, yes, this child is at risk, family
12 violence is evident.

13 So whether we are talking about the number of
14 police call-outs that are relevant and court matters that
15 are relevant to family violence or the incidence of
16 service responses that are required, the demand generally
17 has been increasing and in particular driven by a
18 co-occurrence with family violence.

19 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I move then to another topic, which is this
20 topic of integration and break it up and start with really
21 integration of social services from the point of view of
22 the individual who seeks help from those social services,
23 and ask some questions around the extent to which there is
24 greater potential to leverage off existing systems or
25 services that already exist to better respond to victims
26 of family violence, and start with you, Ms Peake. One of
27 the existing structures that we have already had evidence
28 about this week is the Primary Care Partnership structure
29 comprising a number of different services that are brought
30 together under that structure, including alcohol and drug
31 services, mental health services, community health

1 services, women's health services and sometimes others.
2 There are 28 Primary Care Partnerships around the state.
3 To what extent do those services provide an existing
4 platform which may be available to better respond to the
5 needs of those affected by family violence?

6 MS PEAKE: I think it's really important to distinguish between
7 the mechanisms that have been established to encourage and
8 support different types of professionals to work together
9 and the places and platforms that then exist to connect
10 people to the types of supports that they need. So
11 I would be tempted, rather than starting with Primary Care
12 Partnerships as the kind of starting point for the
13 conversation, to be thinking about the sorts of platforms
14 that we have that people go to and how might they be
15 further developed, and to in particular the community
16 health platform, where there is a real focus on community
17 development, and connections to a range of those primary
18 care services and other partners that you just described.
19 The other is thinking about, where there are integrated
20 family services, how that platform might be better
21 developed.

22 The second point that I would make, though, is
23 that we have a tendency to design entry points into
24 services that are specific to particular types of services
25 rather than, where we started this conversation, thinking
26 about the whole person and what they need. So there is
27 going to be, in my mind, a mix of what's co-located and
28 what's integrated. So the community health platform needs
29 to be brought closer together with an integrated family
30 services platform.

31 Then there needs to be I think three things

1 developed in the system. I'm sure you will want to unpack
2 these in a bit more detail. The first is how you actually
3 screen for what people need, who does that and what that
4 means, and how you make sure that you are keeping hold of
5 both risk and safety as well as a focus on making sure
6 that the whole person's needs are identified.

7 The second is then for people who do have
8 multiple needs, if we go back to the diagram about the
9 quadrants, if you are in C or D, how you are then
10 supported to not have, as Gill described, 10 different
11 plans, that you are supported through 10 different case
12 managers, but an approach to integrating case management
13 so that you only have to tell your story once and there is
14 someone who is helping you have access to the range of
15 services that you need.

16 Then the third is about the actual service
17 responses. For me there are two parts of this. One is
18 building the evidence base on what works, and I'm sure we
19 will talk more about that over the course of the morning,
20 and the second is are there some services that can be
21 combined in different ways more effectively so that there
22 aren't so many handover points between particular
23 professionals.

24 The short answer to the question is absolutely
25 I think in place we should build off the existing
26 platforms we have, community health and family services,
27 but in building off those platforms we need to design for
28 those three new real system interventions that better
29 support people, clearer entry points and screening,
30 coordinated integrated case management to really support
31 someone through all of what they need, and then better

1 service responses to meet those needs.

2 MR MOSHINSKY: In terms of those three levels of work do you
3 see potential for upskilling of non-family violence
4 workers to also deal with family violence issues and/or
5 for co-location or close working relationships between
6 family violence workers and workers who provide other
7 services?

8 MS PEAKE: This is where I think it's really important that we
9 make the distinction between what we mean by family
10 violence as well or family violence workers. There are a
11 set of professionals who are involved in the moment of
12 crisis and supporting immediate safety needs being met.
13 Then there are a group of professionals who are engaged in
14 looking at the impacts of trauma associated with being
15 exposed to family violence and how you take account of
16 that in assisting recovery.

17 On the former, which is really the space we are
18 talking about at the moment, I think that you can have
19 more generalist upskilling of a whole range of
20 professionals to better understand what does it actually
21 mean to have been exposed to family violence, particularly
22 an accumulation of exposure to family violence, as Gill
23 said earlier, not only for the adult victim of family
24 violence but also for children who have either experienced
25 or been exposed to family violence.

26 So I think whether we are talking mental health,
27 drug and alcohol, general GP services or we are talking
28 about services that we might need to develop more of
29 specific interventions for children and victims of
30 violence, I would say a generalist capability can be
31 developed.

1 Where we are talking about making the assessment
2 of is there an imminent risk of harm, is there a safety
3 risk, that's where I think either co-location or very
4 tight connections between this community early
5 intervention intake and a more specialist tertiary crisis
6 response that is highly specialist is very important.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Could I just try to unpack that
8 a little bit because one of the things that we have heard
9 is that if you upskill a more generalist practitioner they
10 have to make an assessment somewhere along the line of the
11 circumstances of this person and whether there is
12 immediate danger et cetera. You seem to be saying that
13 that's not their role?

14 MS PEAKE: I think they need to be making that screening
15 assessment; "Is there a basis to involve someone who can
16 then not only do a deeper assessment but then take
17 action?" So I think that in a screening sense everyone
18 needs to be able to identify, "Is this person at risk?"
19 That should then trigger them making contact with their
20 specialist services, whether that's police, Child
21 Protection and other specialist services that can address
22 the immediate safety needs.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Thank you.

24 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I follow on from that by asking you about
25 the Services Connect model. We have had evidence during
26 this week from a panel, including a number of people
27 working in one of the Services Connect pilots. They
28 indicated there are I think eight pilots going on. They
29 are not all the identical model; there are differences
30 between them. But we had a flavour of what one of them is
31 like and essentially involved co-locating in that model

1 I think about 15 workers from different parts of the
2 social services system and each of them learnt from each
3 other and provided services directly themselves, in the
4 main, to an individual or a family to try to meet a range
5 of needs, not just the specialty that that worker had come
6 from. Can you comment on the potential of that model to
7 provide better services to those affected by family
8 violence?

9 MS PEAKE: Certainly. Again I think in the example that you
10 have used and the evidence that's been led there has been
11 discussion both about that initial screening and about the
12 integrated case management. So in the initial screening
13 the more that different professionals are exposed to one
14 another, to the Deputy Commissioner's question, the more
15 there can be that understanding of what are the
16 indicators, how do you apply risk assessment frameworks to
17 determine whether more specialist intervention is
18 required. So, yes, I think that cross-fertilisation is
19 really important.

20 In terms of the case management function I think
21 that we have heard a lot of testimony and it is consistent
22 with what we hear in the system all the time that the
23 re-traumatisation of people by asking them to retell their
24 story is incredibly damaging and that building up the
25 capacity of case managers to not need to have multiple
26 people involved in the telling of the story but to be able
27 to identify the needs of an individual, and then to be the
28 one who is the navigator in the description of the New
29 Zealand model to bring other services into the picture,
30 those deep relationships will be critical to achieve that.
31 But I'm not sure that you then need to have the case

1 management function embedded with a whole lot of other
2 services. For me it's a service of its own.

3 MR MOSHINSKY: Do you use the expression "case management" to
4 include the type of pilot of Services Connect that we
5 heard evidence about where the worker was primarily
6 providing the services directly to the individual?

7 MS PEAKE: That's correct. Well, it is a combination of two
8 things. There is some direct delivery with coaching and
9 motivational work and really deeply understanding needs
10 that can be met - think about a GP where there is a
11 breadth of initial support that can be provided. The
12 other element of case management is then the really deeply
13 case planning, "What other support does this person need,"
14 and connecting that person to it. It might be that it's a
15 dual diagnosis mental health and drug and alcohol support
16 that that person might require.

17 MR MOSHINSKY: Just so we understand the Services Connect
18 model, there are differences between the different pilots.
19 Is one of the differences between them how much direct
20 service provision is provided by the key worker or how
21 much they are more of a navigator and referring out to
22 different other services?

23 MS PEAKE: You might want to get more of the background on this
24 from Ms Callister, but certainly from my perspective one
25 of the differences between different pilots is also
26 whether the case management services embedded in an agency
27 that delivers other services or whether it is separate to
28 an individual service provider. So some of the pilots
29 have looked at being the sort of integrator/navigator.
30 Others have been that they are an entry point into quite a
31 range of services their own organisation delivers.

1 MR MOSHINSKY: The Services Connect that we had evidence about,
2 there was a family violence worker part of the co-located
3 team. I understand some of the other Services Connect
4 pilots don't have a family violence worker as part of the
5 program.

6 MS PEAKE: Yes.

7 MR MOSHINSKY: Do you have a view on whether that would inhibit
8 the ability to deal with family violence issues?

9 MS PEAKE: Certainly I think as part of the design of the
10 services that are involved in the partnership, absolutely
11 family violence services need to be involved. As you
12 mentioned earlier, that might be at the screening end by
13 being part of the team, and it might be in the case
14 management and service response as being either co-located
15 or having protocols that enable there to be really strong
16 referral pathways. Over time I think that the integrated
17 family services and family violence would benefit from
18 being brought more closely together, which would be one of
19 the service responses.

20 MR MOSHINSKY: Ms Callister, do you wish to comment on whether
21 the Services Connect model provides an opportunity to
22 provide better help to those who need it affected by
23 family violence?

24 MS CALLISTER: Thank you. Certainly the Services Connect model
25 was designed to try to get better outcomes for clients in
26 the social services system. So it was based on an
27 analysis that said just providing people with multiple
28 touch points of services that are focused entirely through
29 a program lens or a problem lens as opposed to what do you
30 need to improve your life and how do we design something
31 around that, that was the essential driver of it.

1 I think the analogy of GPs is the kind of one
2 I wanted to extrapolate on. We don't really have that
3 strong, highly capable primary care workforce in the
4 social services sector the way we have it in the health
5 sector, where you go to a GP and they can diagnose and
6 treat a very broad range of problems. We would see them
7 as very, very skilled practitioners that we all trust and
8 rely on, and they make a decision at what point a
9 specialist service is also needed.

10 So Services Connect was about saying we have a
11 great, big workforce at our disposal and by building their
12 knowledge and capability, by training them in these other
13 issues, they cannot only provide a broader range of
14 services but it can be an integrated service. So they are
15 not just thinking about each problem in isolation. They
16 are understanding the relationship between them; and
17 whether for some clients it's their mental illness driving
18 consequential problems and for others it's other drivers.
19 But the service can be, with support and training and
20 building capability, much more like what we have in
21 health, which is your primary care, highly capable people.

22 Although the word "generalist" has come to be
23 seen as something of a negative and something of a
24 dilution of capability, in fact it is the opposite. It is
25 meant to be building capability in what are already
26 reasonably well-educated workforces. It varies a bit in
27 terms of levels of qualification, but you build people's
28 capability to understand the range of social problems and
29 the relationship between them and then how they might
30 respond.

31 It wasn't intended to be a case coordination

1 service. So it was not intended to create a new layer of
2 triage assessment and then still refer everyone to their
3 15 services and help them navigate that. It was in its
4 original intent about how we build a strong primary care
5 workforce with the capability to help people get much
6 better outcomes than the system that currently manages,
7 with sometimes the best intention in the world.

8 The other point I just wanted to make, picking up
9 on Mr Eccles' point, is that proper regard for impact and
10 evidence, and, picking up on the Commissioner's point that
11 systems tend to preserve themselves, I know the health
12 system isn't perfect, but if you do a cancer trial that
13 gets a seven-year average remission versus one that gets a
14 five-year average remission everyone wants the seven-year
15 average remission, obviously. We settle for pretty
16 average outcomes and pretty - it is very difficult to take
17 a program that is evaluated better than another one and
18 say, "We should actually move to that." People will
19 settle, in my experience, for outcomes that are a bit
20 better but not as good as somewhere else.

21 MR MOSHINSKY: Just following on from that, one of the points
22 Mr Heatley made in evidence yesterday was the political
23 difficulties with taking away funding from a service
24 provider, which perhaps is one of the reasons which may
25 explain the problem that you have identified of settling
26 for programs which are evaluated perhaps less well than
27 other programs?

28 MS CALLISTER: Yes.

29 MR MOSHINSKY: Would you agree that in looking at these
30 governance issues one of the aims would be to design a
31 structure or systems which promote the type of health

1 approach that you have indicated rather than what you have
2 indicated happens in the social services?

3 MS CALLISTER: I think that should be one of the aims, and
4 I think the other aim should be to take the system with us
5 and have the system that sometimes is grown up through
6 advocacy - and people strongly have advocated so hard to
7 get progress that they then often become wedded to a
8 particular way of viewing things. It's about helping
9 people see evidence as something that we all have to move
10 along with and building that knowledge and capability in
11 the system.

12 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I just follow on from those questions about
13 building on existing platforms to better meet needs of
14 individuals or families affected by family violence. Do
15 any of the panel wish to comment on the greater potential
16 to utilise mainstream or universal services to respond to
17 family violence issues?

18 MS CALLISTER: I will comment quickly because I do have a
19 strong view about this and I think that one of the ways
20 that we are going to get progress on this is seeing the
21 whole community owning this problem, from the broader
22 issues of gender equity, which the research points to as
23 one of the areas in prevention where we might make
24 progress.

25 But I think in maternal and child health nurses,
26 where we already have work underway in schools, in
27 hospitals, in GPs, I think there has to be stronger
28 awareness and understanding of detection and early
29 intervention and prevention type issues. I think that we
30 have to move away from only - and I know this is
31 critically important to see the highest risk women and be

1 able to respond to them, but it's only through that
2 broader ownership of the role that many parts of the
3 universal system can play that I think we will start to
4 get that broader understanding and earlier intervention
5 approach.

6 MS PEAKE: I might just add two things to that. I think in
7 addition to the services that we often immediately turn
8 our minds to there are also a range of other services and
9 supports that all levels of government provide that can
10 help to build protective factors. So, alongside gender
11 equity, economic exclusion is another risk factor for
12 exposure to susceptibility to family violence. So
13 employment services and employers generally are a really
14 important part of the solution.

15 Secondly, community connectedness I think is
16 really important, so local government, sporting clubs.
17 There are a range of what - even beyond universal services
18 that have a part to play in a whole-of-community response.

19 Then the final point I would make is, just
20 building on Ms Callister's comment on detection, is that
21 understanding amongst a range of health services in our
22 portfolio that it's not only a matter of is there exposure
23 to violence that needs to be understood; it's also are
24 there earlier signs of the risk that - behaviours that
25 might be controlling, for example, may further develop,
26 escalate into violent behaviours. So really understanding
27 the dynamics of relationships and how family violence
28 evolves and manifests is part of building the
29 understanding in all of our workforces.

30 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I move then from the individual and their
31 interaction with the system and how to make that more

1 integrated to the organisations that are involved in
2 providing services and how we knit them together to
3 provide a more integrated system. We had evidence
4 yesterday from a panel in relation to the regional
5 integration committees that relate to family violence, and
6 they bring together in each region quite a large number of
7 different organisations who all have some interaction with
8 people affected by family violence.

9 Can I ask you, perhaps Ms Peake, to comment on
10 that structure, the regional integration committee
11 structure, as a mechanism for bringing together agencies
12 or organisations that deal with family violence?

13 MS PEAKE: Sure. That structure really has evolved over the
14 last 10 years as a very organic, ground-up way of bringing
15 together all of the professionals who may have a role in
16 better supporting particularly victims but increasingly
17 also responding to perpetrators of family violence. So
18 its strength is that it has built those relationships, but
19 I think, as you have heard, the challenge for that
20 structure is that it is neither embedded in any sort of
21 statewide structured approach to thinking about where to
22 put your effort, nor is it supported to be really clear
23 about what the priorities, accountabilities and reporting
24 on results should look like.

25 I know we will move through to how we think about
26 the whole sort of governance and stewardship model, but
27 the solution to better supporting joining up of
28 organisations on the ground needs to be connected to both
29 how there is that vertical connection to planning
30 strategy, evaluation and accountability for family
31 violence services specifically and for responses to people

1 experiencing family violence specifically, but also the
2 sort of horizontal connection to how are social service
3 systems being organised and how are community safety
4 strategies being given effect. As we move through that
5 there will always be a place for place-based partnerships
6 that bring together the professionals particularly focused
7 on family violence, but they can be better supported, more
8 structured and more accountable.

9 MR MOSHINSKY: Focusing first on the horizontal before getting
10 to the vertical, the horizontal, as in the connections
11 between the various different organisations in a region
12 that deal with family violence issues, there was evidence
13 that the coordinators are under quite considerable
14 pressure, there was a lot of work involved on the various
15 organisations participating in that framework, and there
16 had been some turnover of coordinators because of the
17 challenges of that position. Has there been an assessment
18 of whether that as a structure is working well?

19 MS PEAKE: Yes. There's a three-year evaluation that is in
20 progress currently, and really what that is finding is a
21 lot of feedback from coordinators that they are a little
22 bit floating positions at the moment and that they don't
23 feel like they are supported either with data or with a
24 broader structure to really facilitate that cross-agency
25 collaboration.

26 Again, I think it's really important to
27 distinguish between the purpose of that collaboration. So
28 we started the conversation with how do we organise
29 services for better collaboration and designing of
30 responses integrated around an individual. That's one
31 part of what in fact some of what the coordinators are

1 trying to do at the moment, to work with different
2 professionals about how they work together.

3 The second part is then how they identify the
4 sort of strategy and performance measures and approaches
5 to monitoring progress, which I'd call the more sort of
6 institutional governance mechanisms, where they are also
7 trying to play a role. So part of the difficulty for them
8 is that they are really trying to fulfil two very
9 different sorts of functions.

10 So I think if we stick with that second set of
11 functions at the moment, really what needs to happen is
12 that there is a state framework which describes what is
13 our approach to improving the way that we deal with family
14 violence which cascades down to a local plan, and I think
15 that sort of structure and resourcing could then be
16 incredibly powerful in helping to develop that local plan,
17 to track progress against that plan and to share learnings
18 across the state about what is working.

19 That then needs to be embedded, though, in a
20 broader look at social system reform, as we were
21 describing. So the mechanisms that are there to look at
22 what is a concerted place-based approach to tackling
23 family violence needs to be nested in a concerted
24 place-based approach to addressing disadvantage.

25 MR MOSHINSKY: Moving then to the vertical, in a sense what's
26 above the regional integration committees, a theme in the
27 evidence yesterday on that panel was that, really, there
28 wasn't much above. If I could just read you a couple of
29 passages from the evidence. Ms Smith, at 3737, said, "It
30 appears we need some sort of structure in place where we
31 can actually have - whether it's an authorising body or a

1 committee I'm not sure, but we need some sort of structure
2 in place where we can actually feed up and feed down."
3 Then later she said, "So there doesn't seem to be clarity
4 and consistency in what message and what direction the
5 regional integration committees are getting."

6 Ms Ellyard then asked Ms Campbell, "To what
7 extent is there a direct line of reporting up to
8 Department of Health and Human Services at the moment or
9 to any other part of government from the work that your
10 partnership is doing?" In her answer Ms Campbell said
11 that they would "provide information back to government,
12 which they thanked us for, but there's been no real
13 dialogue around that. So I would say that it's minimal.
14 I don't think we feel we have any accountability in terms
15 of the work that we do."

16 Then finally Ms McCormack said - this is at
17 3739 - "We had a members meeting just recently and we were
18 really struck. You always get kind of grumblings about
19 this, grumblings about that, but the family violence
20 sector feel right now enormous frustration and also feel
21 quite disrespected because they are working over capacity
22 and they have very little traction anywhere. So there's
23 actually nobody at the wheel. So for us as a peak body" -
24 DV Vic - "if I want to go and talk to government about how
25 the system is going there's nowhere to go. I might go and
26 talk to Department of Health and Human Services about what
27 they are doing. I might go to police and talk about what
28 they are doing. But in terms of anything that's working
29 together or towards common objectives there's nowhere."

30 Can I invite you to comment on is there something
31 vertically above the regional integration committees and,

1 if not, what do we need?

2 MS PEAKE: Again, we have two systems that we are really
3 talking about here. We are talking about family violence
4 responses and how they relate to social services more
5 generally. I believe that there would be great value in
6 building on the structures that we have already, and Chris
7 might want to talk a bit more about this, where we do have
8 leadership structures through the Victorian Secretaries
9 Board and through both an IDC and through another
10 leadership group that are looking at what is the state
11 plan for family violence.

12 So that then needs to cascade down to give the
13 authority but also that accountability as you describe, to
14 looking at how new regional governance arrangements
15 connect government with local government, Commonwealth
16 government and community leaders to identify what the
17 strategic plan is for a region, which then cascades down
18 into what's the specific actions that are going to be
19 taken in that place to advance family violence.

20 I think if you had that cascade of strategic
21 planning with clear measures and clear actions that would
22 enable then the bodies that are really helping to bring
23 the professionals together working on family violence both
24 the authority and the clarity around what framework they
25 are working within.

26 I touched at the regional level that the focus on
27 family violence should be elevated into a regional
28 strategic plan that is looking at what do local leaders
29 believe is important for their community. I think that
30 needs to both have a combination of guidance from
31 government about the few priorities that should be common

1 across the state and provide some flexibility for those to
2 be added to with what are local priorities.

3 So to make that much more concrete I would
4 suggest that there would be great value in government
5 sending a clear message that attending to family violence
6 is something that is a priority not only at a statewide
7 level but for each regional community. Those regional
8 communities might then also take a view that youth
9 unemployment or aged care is a particular need for their
10 community.

11 So I think that is what would assist in providing
12 a greater framework and a greater structure around the
13 operations of the regional committees on the ground, how
14 they connect to regional leadership and how they connect
15 to statewide priorities planning and accountability.

16 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Can I just clarify that because there are
17 a plethora of structures at the moment that I'm not sure
18 that I fully understand. You referred to the Victorian
19 Secretaries Board, you referred I think to
20 interdepartmental committees, and I think you implicitly
21 referred to the regional management committees that
22 currently exist.

23 MS PEAKE: Yes.

24 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: At the moment there doesn't seem to be any
25 relationship at all between the integrated family violence
26 committees, regional committees, and the regional
27 management committees; is that right? Do I understand
28 that correctly?

29 MS PEAKE: I think that it's certainly the case that that's not
30 formalised. There are some places where from time to time
31 there would be a connection drawn, but I think it's

1 absolutely accurate to say it's not systematic and it is
2 not formalised.

3 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: In fact, I don't know that any of our
4 witnesses yesterday referred to those regional management
5 committees at all. So those committees would be the ones
6 that would presumably design the structure for their
7 region based on the priorities set by government. Have
8 I understood what you said? I just wanted to make sure
9 I understood it correctly.

10 MS PEAKE: Absolutely. That's right. Certainly - I am a
11 co-chair of one of the regional management forums down in
12 Gippsland, and there has been occasions where there has
13 been a session that has been on family violence involving
14 local services. So I wouldn't say that it never happens
15 but it is very ad hoc. So, yes, my suggestion is that
16 there is a cascade down and up. So local communities are
17 identifying what matters to them and providing more
18 formalised feedback loops through regional management
19 forums, whatever they might look like in the future,
20 through to both bureaucracy through the Secretaries Board,
21 but also more direct links through to government
22 decision-making processes as well, and in reverse that
23 government can signal through those regional management
24 forums the priority that they are seeking to place on more
25 integrated approaches to planning and delivery of family
26 violence responses.

27 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Do those regional management forums
28 currently include people from non-government
29 organisations, or are they local government and
30 government?

31 MS PEAKE: Again, it does differ from region to region. There

1 is a - again, Mr Eccles might want to comment on this -
2 current review that is underway that Mr Brumby has
3 undertaken on regional services, and regional governance
4 has been examined in the course of that review. Some of
5 the feedback that has been published, that is in the
6 public arena, about the operation of the existing regional
7 governance mechanisms has been really focused on how is
8 the engagement with local communities best strengthened
9 and how other feedback loops both ways between government
10 and those regional forums enhanced.

11 So government is currently considering all of
12 the consultations and feedback from that review, and
13 I think that that provides the opportunity to think about
14 that vertical relationship, and, as I say, I just really
15 want to emphasise that it's important that it's not
16 perceived as just being top-down guidance, that is it is
17 also the feedback loops that come from community about
18 what matters to them, what works, that influences and
19 exposes government to the priority setting, investment
20 decisions, policy considerations.

21 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Ms Peake, can I take from that
23 that you would think it appropriate for at least the chair
24 of that regional committee on family violence to be part
25 of the regional management group?

26 MS PEAKE: Certainly I think it's important that there is a
27 direct connection. I think that that's certainly worthy
28 of consideration, whether it's through membership or
29 whether it's through planning processes that make sure
30 that, as a regional plan is identified, there is that
31 direct involvement in the chair in working up a part of

1 the plan that is relevant to family violence. So it's
2 worthy of consideration how that's best achieved.

3 MR MOSHINSKY: Mr Eccles, can I ask you to comment on the
4 evidence that I read out from yesterday, the gist of which
5 was for these regional integration committees for family
6 violence there was nowhere to feed up to and they didn't
7 feel a sense of accountability to anyone for what they
8 were doing and they weren't getting a plan and a sense of
9 direction. Is that the way you see things at the moment?

10 MR ECCLES: Yes, and I think it's a broader condition about the
11 nature of the engagement between the regions and the
12 central decision-making apparatus of government. As
13 Ms Peake identified, regional governance is being
14 addressed as part of a broader plan to set the direction
15 of Victoria's regional policy. That plan is in active
16 consideration by government.

17 But, without preannouncing the detail of the
18 regional governance aspect of that, I think I can say with
19 confidence that there will be definitely a focus on local
20 engagement, definitely a focus on strategic place-based
21 planning, definitely a commitment to engage non-government
22 participants and for there to be a whole-of-government
23 policy focus, and a very real awareness of the need for
24 there to be systematic information or information being
25 systematically sourced from local regions back to the
26 central decision-making part of government.

27 So it's a work in progress yet to be publicly
28 announced, but I have no doubt that we would be able to
29 provide you, to assist the Commission in its
30 deliberations, with information about where the
31 government's thinking is up to without exposing it

1 publicly.

2 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you, Mr Eccles. That would be very
3 helpful.

4 MR MOSHINSKY: Just to clarify, are you referring to
5 arrangements that relate specifically to family violence
6 or social services more generally?

7 MR ECCLES: It's even broader than social services. Economic
8 development will be part of it, but social services are
9 also contemplated by the new arrangements, that more
10 systematic regard to the needs of regions, and their
11 frustration at the moment in the centre not apparently
12 hearing from them about their needs, that will now be
13 addressed through the new arrangements.

14 MR MOSHINSKY: Focusing then on the regional integration
15 committees for family violence, the complaint was there's
16 nowhere to feed up to, no accountability to anyone,
17 because there didn't seem to be a vertical structure. Is
18 there a structure at the moment, or what should there be?

19 MR ECCLES: I understand there is a structure, which is the
20 chairs of the - a statewide connection through the chairs.

21 MS PEAKE: That's correct. But I think it is more focused on
22 information sharing currently than providing an
23 architecture for that cascading strategic planning. So,
24 really, that's what I was trying to describe. There both
25 needs to be an architecture for specific family violence
26 planning, but embedded then in that this isn't just a
27 matter for family violence specialists addressing the
28 causes and effects of family violence need to be embedded
29 and then these broader whole-of-government strategic
30 planning processes.

31 MR MOSHINSKY: There was evidence that DV Vic convenes a

1 meeting of chairs, but that isn't really a substitute from
2 some sort of reporting line to a part of government.
3 Should there be something sitting above the regional
4 integration committees?

5 MS PEAKE: Again, I think that the architecture both
6 needs - I agree - that needs to provide the cascade down
7 from the Victorian Secretaries Board to some architecture
8 that provides - but I think we can build off what we have
9 now - cross-government leadership on policy and planning
10 in family violence specifically that then cascades down to
11 the integration committees. So, yes, that part of the
12 architecture needs to be formalised and strengthened, and
13 I think we have the elements of the architecture that can
14 be used to that effect. Just the relationships between
15 them need to be strengthened as well as then the embedding
16 in this broader whole-of-government approach.

17 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Counsel, I would like to explore the
18 issues about the Victorian Secretaries Board, but I think
19 we might be coming to that, might we not?

20 MR MOSHINSKY: No, by all means, please. Perhaps if I could
21 ask Mr Eccles to explain, first of all, what is the
22 Victorian Secretaries Board and what potential is there
23 for that to be utilised in relation to family violence?

24 MR ECCLES: Thank you. The Victorian Secretaries Board
25 comprises the seven secretaries of the departments of
26 state plus the Chief Commissioner of Police and the
27 Victorian Public Service Commissioner. So it's a body of
28 nine. It meets fortnightly.

29 It essentially has three responsibilities - one,
30 in relation to coordination. So it has an overall
31 coordination function where there are significant matters

1 requiring whole-of-government attention. The second is
2 around leadership, which is - the motivation is for there
3 to be a collective model of leadership so that there is
4 a - we are presenting to the Public Service as a whole the
5 need for deep collaboration in the way we operate as
6 public sector leaders and our expectations that that model
7 of collaborative endeavour is replicated through the rest
8 of the Public Service. Then stewardship, we have a role,
9 which includes at its sharpest point the integrity
10 associated with the system. But it is as much about the
11 promotion of appropriate attitudes, values and behaviours
12 in the Public Service.

13 Its operation to date in sort of the nine months
14 since it's been refreshed has been more about the
15 coordination of the enterprise of government, so the IT
16 platforms, the procurement platforms, and less about the
17 seizing of matters of significant whole-of-government
18 public policy. There is some of that, but it has not been
19 the focus of the committee to date. It is the perfect
20 forum for a matter that has whole-of-government
21 significance that presents in complex issues - for that to
22 be the responsibility of the committee.

23 We do meet - the same collective meets for the
24 purpose of Aboriginal reform. So if at the end point of
25 the Royal Commission there was a suggestion that family
26 violence should be the utmost priority of government, then
27 it would absolutely fall to the Victorian Secretaries
28 Board to have a role in the supervision of a reform agenda
29 and to be involved in the implementation arrangements
30 associated with the roll-out of reform.

31 MR MOSHINSKY: In terms of how much the Victorian Secretaries

1 Board has on its plate and the demands on the time of each
2 of the secretaries, is it a suitable body to sort of take
3 up and run with a particular issue that needs sustained
4 focus over a long period of time?

5 MR ECCLES: It can't be the substitute for the
6 sub-architecture, if you like, of the - where we would
7 conventionally form an interdepartmental committee of
8 responsible executives who would provide matters to the
9 Secretaries Board for decision. So the primary effort
10 can't be found with the Secretaries Board, can't be
11 located with the Secretaries Board. But it is a point of
12 intervention, escalation, design, authority. So I would
13 see it having a role, but it wouldn't be the sole role.
14 There would be other parts of the architecture within
15 government to support a focus on family violence reform.

16 MS PEAKE: I might just add to that that at the moment in the
17 architecture the body that I was referring to that
18 provides that more information sharing isn't the meeting
19 of chairs that are convened by the domestic violence peak
20 body. There is also a violence against women and children
21 advisory forum that is chaired by DPC and VicPol, and
22 involves both government and community agencies within it.
23 Separate to that is then, as Chris has described, an
24 interdepartmental committee which is advising secretaries
25 and government on policy directions.

26 So I think that into the future in terms of the
27 sub-architecture that Mr Eccles referred to there is an
28 opportunity to strengthen the relationship between the
29 Victorian Secretaries Board as having that overall sort of
30 stewardship responsibility, the violence against women and
31 children advisory forum, which is the connection statewide

1 to the range of services and professionals involved in
2 responding, cascading down to the regional integration
3 forums, which would give them the authority and support
4 that they need.

5 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Is that violence against women and
6 children advisory forum a substitute for what used to be
7 called I think the Statewide Steering Committee on - - -

8 MS PEAKE: It is.

9 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: But that, as I understood it, had been
10 relatively inactive for some time. Perhaps it's being
11 revitalised. How frequently does it meet, and who does it
12 include?

13 MS PEAKE: It is meeting quarterly, and it is I think correct
14 to say that it is relatively recently being re-energised.
15 It is attended by the full range of government
16 departments, Justice and a range of community service
17 sector stakeholders. As I indicated, it has over this
18 year predominantly been a forum for information sharing,
19 and I think that there is an appetite and an opportunity
20 for it to be given a slightly more formal role in the
21 architecture.

22 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

23 MR MOSHINSKY: The interdepartmental committee, is the scope of
24 its remit violence against women and their children?

25 MS PEAKE: Correct.

26 MR MOSHINSKY: Is it correct that both the advisory forum and
27 the interdepartmental committee as presently constituted
28 at least don't cover the full range of family violence
29 that this Commission is looking at?

30 MS PEAKE: My understanding is that certainly the
31 interdepartmental committee is looking at the full

1 spectrum of who is exposed to family violence and what are
2 the effective responses to better support them. I would
3 have to take on notice the coverage of the forum.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: But the committee and the
5 violence against women and children forum is about
6 violence against women and children; it's not about the
7 broader - - -

8 MS PEAKE: I would have to check for you exactly what its
9 coverage is.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Does the title not tell us?

11 MS PEAKE: Again, that doesn't preclude the scope being
12 broadened by virtue of the work of this Commission.

13 MR MOSHINSKY: Commissioners, I was going to move to a new
14 topic, so I wonder whether that might be a convenient time
15 to take a 15-minute break.

16 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you, Mr Moshinsky.

17 (Short adjournment.)

18 MR MOSHINSKY: Before I move on to the next topic, there's a
19 couple of follow-up things from the subject we were
20 discussing before the break. First of all, Ms Callister,
21 I think you wanted to offer some comments about the
22 regional integration committees?

23 MS CALLISTER: It was more about the regional management
24 forums. I chair the southern regional management forum,
25 and one of our priorities this year is family violence,
26 and it's around prevention and local community awareness,
27 particularly through local government and the connection
28 of local government to schools and police and other parts
29 of government that are represented on the management
30 forum. It's very much about building awareness and
31 prevention, and what can be done at multiple touch points

1 and multiple places. So it's less about services and more
2 about leadership and awareness.

3 That's been a journey in itself for some members
4 of the forum who saw that as more something that is
5 service provision after the fact. So it's been quite an
6 interesting experience, and now there's a lot of ownership
7 of how we take that notion of awareness building and
8 prevention forward in different ways.

9 MR MOSHINSKY: Is there some mechanism to share the learnings
10 of your regional management forum with other regional
11 management forums?

12 MS CALLISTER: At the moment that mechanism is the Victorian
13 Secretaries Board, and I think the initiatives Mr Eccles
14 referred to earlier that are being developed will
15 formalise that even further.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: Ms Peake, did you have further information about
17 the scope of the advisory forum or the interdepartmental
18 committee?

19 MS PEAKE: Thank you. Just in relation to the forum, there was
20 a meeting of the forum in September that really had this
21 discussion about scope and where it was agreed that the
22 full range of experiences and cohorts affected by family
23 violence should be covered. So I just wanted to come back
24 on that. Obviously we can provide the Commission with the
25 updated terms of reference, but it also was strong
26 feedback from the forum that they would like to see the
27 forum as being the vehicle both to provide advice to
28 government on the statewide framework but then also
29 feedback on how that's being put into effect and learnings
30 from the experience of putting it into effect. So I think
31 there is already work underway really to repurpose that

1 forum, formalise its role in the architecture, deepen the
2 connections between the regional integration committees
3 and the purpose of that forum.

4 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: It might be worth reconsidering changing
5 its name because one of the problems about focusing always
6 and entirely on women and children is that some of those
7 other affected groups get forgotten about.

8 MS PEAKE: I think that's right.

9 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: We know of course that women are the
10 majority of victims, women and children, but I think it's
11 really important to broaden out that understanding so that
12 people - - -

13 MS PEAKE: I think that's absolutely correct, and also on the
14 back of that August discussion really how it organises
15 itself, whether there's working parties, its work program,
16 there's both an appetite and opportunity to repurpose it
17 to some extent.

18 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I move onto the topic of more the system
19 architecture, so moving up from the individual through the
20 regional arrangements and then now the system as a whole.
21 One of the topics under the heading "System architecture"
22 that the New Zealand Productively Commission refers to is
23 a concept of system stewardship, and it is in the overview
24 that you have a copy of it, page 10, about halfway down.

25 The concept is of stewardship of someone or a
26 body or it may be a number of different bodies taking
27 responsibility for system architecture and really the
28 social services system as a whole. In the context
29 specifically of family violence, is there a need for an
30 entity or more than one entity to perform this stewardship
31 role in relation to the issue of family violence? Perhaps

1 you, Mr Eccles?

2 MR ECCLES: Absolutely. I think the concept of stewardship
3 that's identified - that identifies those various elements
4 there is directly applicable to the challenge that the
5 Commission and the government have before it.

6 There might be an additional element to the
7 concept of stewardship there which goes to the reality
8 that stewardship involves both political and governance
9 processes that involve balancing competing influences and
10 demands. So there's a stewardship component that is of
11 this character, which is around governance architecture,
12 but there is something around stewardship that rests with
13 government, which is the one about how do we balance
14 competing influences and demands upon us as a responsible
15 government. But otherwise that resonates.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: In terms of some of the examples, the bullet
17 points that appear on this page, there's reference to
18 conscious oversight of the system as a whole; clearly
19 defined desired outcomes; monitoring overall system
20 performance; prompting change when system underperforms.
21 I might just read the whole list, actually. Identifying
22 barriers to and opportunities for beneficial change and
23 leading the wider conversations required to achieve that
24 change; setting standards and regulations; ensuring that
25 data is collected, shared and used in ways that enhance
26 system performance; improving capability; promoting an
27 effective learning system; and active management of the
28 system architecture and enabling environment.

29 So, Mr Eccles, you think there is a need for an
30 entity or entities to perform those roles in relation to
31 the family violence system?

1 MR ECCLES: I do. Just having a quick review of those
2 components, I think there is at least one other element,
3 although it might be contemplated by "promoting an
4 effective learning system", which is around public
5 education and awareness. I'm not quite sure that's
6 directly captured. Perhaps research best practice and
7 evaluation are also components of what I would see as
8 stewardship. That may be captured somewhere within those
9 concepts but don't leap out at me directly. I think part
10 of our conversation should deal with issues of public
11 education, awareness, research, best practice, evidence.

12 MR MOSHINSKY: The topic of primary prevention I want to come
13 back to later. If we put that public education and
14 awareness to the side for the moment and then come back to
15 that as a specific subject matter, but take up the point
16 of research best practice and evaluation, which may be
17 perhaps contemplated by "monitoring overall system
18 performance", but if not it can form part of this set of
19 functions . Where should these stewardship roles for the
20 family violence system best be located?

21 MR ECCLES: Thank you. I have had the opportunity to
22 contemplate this. I think as a threshold issue it's
23 important to separate out the function of long-term focus
24 on research, best practice evaluation and I would combine
25 that with public education and awareness raising, although
26 I know you have parked it to one side, and, if you like,
27 the performance monitoring or the assurance that the
28 system is working. I think they are two separate
29 functions and would desirably be located within two
30 separate entities.

31 It is almost an extension of the evidence from

1 Mr Comrie, where I understand he was an implementation
2 monitor to do with royal commission recommendations. But
3 the extension of his point about the need for the
4 separation of those functions I think applies equally to
5 the division between something that might be a centre for
6 family violence prevention and research and a commissioner
7 or a commission that has responsibility for the
8 independent oversight of the whole family violence system.

9 MR MOSHINSKY: So you are contemplating one might have a centre
10 for family violence research and prevention, picking up
11 those public education awareness, research best practice
12 and evaluation functions.

13 MR ECCLES: Yes.

14 MR MOSHINSKY: And then, separately from that, the other
15 stewardship functions here, where would you best locate
16 them, if you have a view, or what are the possibilities
17 and what are the implications of different possibilities?

18 MR ECCLES: I'll start with the view and then perhaps we could
19 explore what the options are. I'm persuaded by the role
20 of the Inspector General for Emergency Management in terms
21 of - it's Tony Pearce - his responsibility as an assurance
22 entity for the independent oversight of the whole
23 emergency management system. I think it could apply
24 equally to a system with the significance and complexity
25 of the family violence system where someone who has the
26 responsibility to review, evaluate and assess the system's
27 performance and perhaps even you could take it to the
28 capacity and capability of the various components of the
29 workforce that form part of the system.

30 MR MOSHINSKY: So you have in mind a commissioner-type model?

31 MR ECCLES: It could be a commissioner, it could be a monitor.

1 The language is probably important. Particularly if the
2 Commission is of the mind to have a monitor in the Neil
3 Comrie model for supervising the implementation of the
4 recommendations of the Commission, there might be some
5 benefit in identifying the function with a different
6 title, this alternative function I describe.

7 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Would there be a problem about having the
8 same person or body reviewing the implementation of our
9 recommendations and having an ongoing role in overseeing
10 the operation of the system? It does seem to me that you
11 might well want to tweak. While you are overseeing the
12 implementation of our recommendations you might find that
13 one of our recommendations had unanticipated effects and
14 you'd want to make proposals to deal with that.

15 MR ECCLES: It's a really good point. You could have a blended
16 model. I think it's about point in time as well. So the
17 implementation of the Royal Commission recommendations
18 will blend into the ultimate performance of a new system.
19 You could have an individual or an office that began with
20 the more specific function of holding the government to
21 account for the implementation of recommendations, and
22 then they transition that role or mature that role into a
23 broader assurance and reporting role. The fundamentals
24 remain the same. They are independent of government.
25 They are holding government to account publicly for
26 performance. It's just that the functions I think would
27 be a bit different depending on the point in time.

28 The only - and again this goes to the sort of
29 experience of how the Inspector-General for Emergency
30 Management operates. He is built into the ongoing
31 governance of the emergency management system in that he

1 sits as an observer of the State Crisis and Resilience
2 Council that I chair. But he also occupies an independent
3 statutory role of reporting on the performance of
4 government to the Parliament. So I don't imagine that the
5 Royal Commission monitor would be that embedded within the
6 governance because there would need to be a degree of
7 separateness in the initial stages.

8 So I think that the blended model is possible,
9 but equally I think you could run with two discrete
10 offices or two discrete functions.

11 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Can I just go on to test your proposition
12 about separating out the research function. One way of
13 thinking about that might be to repose that in a
14 university or to have some combination of people with
15 practical experience and people with the academic
16 background to research into the effectiveness of
17 particular programs.

18 But it does seem to me that our other body,
19 whatever we might call it, Commissioner, who is looking at
20 the overall system would want to use that research as a
21 means of testing the effectiveness of particular models .
22 If that's the case, why do you need to separate those
23 functions? Why wouldn't you give the Commissioner or the
24 agency or whatever it is simply the power to commission or
25 undertake research on their own behalf and use that as
26 part of the monitoring process?

27 MR ECCLES: I think if you combine the public education and
28 awareness function with the function of research - the
29 Washington model - - -

30 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Yes.

31 MR ECCLES: Or the Our Watch model, if you were to combine the

1 TAC, Responsible Gambling Foundation, VicHealth public
2 awareness function, it sits more naturally separate from
3 the function independently of government to review,
4 supervise and report on performance. So I think partly
5 the answer to your question is the content of the role of
6 what I characterise as the centre.

7 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I see. Because you might also want to
8 undertake research into the effectiveness of prevention
9 techniques.

10 MR ECCLES: Indeed.

11 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: There are enormous difficulties in doing
12 that, but you might want to do various things and test
13 whether they had had any effect on the reduction of family
14 violence.

15 MR ECCLES: Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: So that might be an argument for including
17 the research function or the ability to commission
18 research, which I think the responsible gambling body has,
19 with the other functions that you have described.

20 MR ECCLES: You could operate the model in either form.

21 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: You could obviously, and I just
22 wondered whether you had a - I think your preliminary view
23 is you would want to separate those functions?

24 MR ECCLES: I think so, yes.

25 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

26 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: We have heard that one of
27 the gaps is in the building the body of knowledge about
28 what works and what doesn't work, particularly in terms of
29 programs. You have ANROWS that's working at a national
30 level at a certain level, but what we have heard is there
31 is a big gap between what ANROWS does and the sort of more

1 applied research that is much more closer to the
2 practitioners, and that's ultimately how you build a body
3 of knowledge about what works and what doesn't et cetera.
4 Is that a good argument for saying that you wouldn't want
5 to separate that type of what I call building the body of
6 knowledge of what works from the monitoring and oversight
7 functions?

8 MR ECCLES: No, I thought your statement of where the ANROWS
9 work and its application in an applied way to assist
10 practitioners would rest perfectly with the centre. It
11 becomes in fact the centre as the organisation that takes
12 the academic learning and perhaps through the membership
13 of its board partly and perhaps through the people who are
14 employed are able to convert the more theoretical
15 underpinnings of research into something that can be used
16 in a more practical way by practitioners in the system.
17 So I almost thought your argument was taking us to a point
18 of it being a logical home for the centre. The centre
19 could even be the home of the Family Violence Index when
20 it is fully matured. So that in itself talks about a very
21 applied function.

22 MS PEAKE: I think the development work which really helps
23 build the capability of the system from the body which is
24 then monitoring oversight of performance feels to me to be
25 a natural distinction so that the first body, the centre,
26 is much more deeply working in and with the system, and
27 then there's a separate oversight.

28 MR MOSHINSKY: Could I ask you, Mr Eccles, to address the issue
29 of independence from government departments. A number of
30 the bodies that one sees put forward as potential models
31 have a degree of independence. They are set up under a

1 statute. The statute in some cases refers to independence
2 from government decision making. So, for example, the
3 Commissioner for Children and Young People there's
4 reference to independence in the statute. Other statutory
5 authorities are set up in the way that there is a degree
6 of independence. In terms of the functions that you were
7 referring to - review, supervise, report on performance
8 - how does independence from government affect those
9 functions?

10 MR ECCLES: I was again, having read or at least a precis of
11 Mr Comrie's evidence, persuaded by his argument for having
12 his function or the function reflected in legislation on
13 the basis of there being absolute clarity around role, the
14 independence from government secured because of the
15 monitoring function, and also a very good point about
16 sending a very clear signal to the community more
17 generally about its independence. So I think there are
18 many strong arguments for having that function reflected
19 in legislation.

20 I might say even the centre for family violence
21 research and prevention could very well find a home in
22 legislation, again not for the reasons of it being
23 separate from government but for reasons associated with
24 its prominence, the fact that it is seen as an enduring
25 feature of the family violence reform landscape. So I'm
26 attracted to the idea of both of those entities, if they
27 go forward, being reflected in a suite of legislative
28 reform.

29 MR MOSHINSKY: Is one of the policy arguments that might lend a
30 structure to being independent of government that it is
31 addressing an issue which needs a long-term sustained

1 focus and to try to remove it from sort of the election
2 cycle, and one thinks of examples like the TAC or the
3 Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation?

4 MR ECCLES: It has that effect. If it is done by parliament
5 then it would need to be undone by parliament. I would
6 hope that it rises or falls on its delivery, on the
7 strength of the community response to its purpose, the
8 bipartisan nature of support for the body. Legislation
9 is, if you like, the icing on the cake.

10 MR MOSHINSKY: Looking back at the list on page 10, are there
11 particular functions in this list that you think lend
12 themselves to inclusion? If we focus on the possibility
13 of an entity which deals with reviewing, supervising,
14 reporting on performance, which in these lists would you
15 include in that entity?

16 MR ECCLES: I think there's an interesting issue about
17 improving capability. We have heard evidence both today
18 and before that there is a significant issue around
19 workforce capability, and there is an interesting question
20 about where that responsibility is located. You could
21 argue that it's located in the centre in coming up with,
22 if you like, what the professionalisation of the workforce
23 might look like, what might be the learning and
24 development approach to the system. If you conceptualised
25 the commissioner's role and performance of the system
26 quite broadly, you could locate a workforce capability
27 function within that role as well. Then it's clearly a
28 core function of government to support its workforce
29 directly and the workforce of those with whom it's
30 contracting to deliver services. So I think there's a
31 nice discussion to have around where the location of

1 workforce capability might reside.

2 There's an interesting issue, too, around setting
3 standards and regulation. I think Ms Peake might be able
4 to describe more completely what the current arrangements
5 are within the system for regulation and standards, and we
6 might kick that conversation off.

7 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Just before you go to that, when you talk
8 about workforce capability are you actually talking about
9 the planning of what sorts of qualifications people need,
10 how they should be trained, rather than the actual doing
11 of it, or are you talking about both levels?

12 MR ECCLES: I was thinking more about workforce development.

13 So that means the professionalisation of the workforce,
14 the level of credentialing required, the formality
15 associated with that. So that was where I was - - -

16 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: It's the standard setting as far as the
17 workforce is concerned rather than the delivery of
18 programs?

19 MR ECCLES: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

21 MS CALLISTER: Could I just add to that. I think this is also
22 about development probably of resources that help various
23 workforces understand their particular role and give some
24 support to employers of those services about how you
25 actually embed it. It seems to be one of the things
26 missing a bit, the focus on workforce and not just how you
27 train workforces but how you actually then coach them to
28 embed some of this because it can be quite foreign. We
29 have seen patchy take-up, I know, in the maternal and
30 child health workforce, yet they are trained and there is
31 a standard there about a point of screening.

1 If you think about Beyondblue, that's taken a
2 whole lot of mental health research around depression and
3 then turned it into not just awareness raising in the
4 community but resources that can be used in a workplace or
5 in a clinic or in different places that help build that
6 capability and give some pointers around embedding it,
7 because the how is one of the things that's really
8 important here.

9 MS PEAKE: Just before we move on to regulation, just another
10 entity that has a similar set of functions to the centre
11 that Mr Eccles described that might be interesting to look
12 at is the Centre on the Developing Child at Harvard. That
13 organisation does a couple of things. It does a lot of
14 work on bringing together researchers to have both the
15 sort of scientific evidence on children's development but
16 also then the applied research on, "So what does that mean
17 for public policy and programs?"

18 It then produces a whole lot of guidance
19 material, as Ms Callister has just described, for
20 different workforces about how to make use of the science
21 and the evidence.

22 Thirdly, it runs a whole series of collaborative
23 projects where it connects evaluators and researchers with
24 groups of professionals to really trial new interventions
25 and have that really rapid innovation methodology of
26 prototyping, evaluating and assessing whether to bring to
27 scale and replicate. So it does have an interesting sort
28 of set of functions. It's been both here in Victoria and
29 internationally pretty influential on government policy
30 thinking as well as to what comes next. It's just another
31 interesting example.

1 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you for that.

2 MR MOSHINSKY: Ms Peake, on the topic of standards and
3 regulations, is that something that as a matter of policy
4 and design of structures would lend itself to inclusion in
5 a separate entity or would that, in your view, have
6 advantages if it's sited elsewhere?

7 MS PEAKE: I might just start with how it works now and then
8 work through to how it might look in the future. At the
9 moment the areas for standards development for social
10 services are spelt out in a number of different pieces of
11 legislation. So the Housing Act, the Children, Youth and
12 Families Act and the disability legislation all set out
13 that standards must be developed for services.

14 We then have a function within our department to
15 recommend to government what the substance of those
16 standards should be. Then we have a regulator that is
17 located within the department that assesses funded
18 agencies or community agencies against those standards to
19 register them, and that registration is a precondition for
20 receipt of funding.

21 There are some gaps where departmentally
22 delivered services are not all subject to those standards.
23 Some are. Some are not. Child protection, for example,
24 is not currently subject to those service standards. Our
25 regulators - and there are a couple in the
26 department - also adopt some different approaches to how
27 they test providers against those standards.

28 Overall, the emphasis is really on quality
29 improvement rather than quality assurance. So every three
30 years providers are independently audited to determine
31 their performance against the standards and there is a

1 discussion about improvement strategies. In out-of-home
2 care is the one place where there is a program of risk
3 based spot audits, if you like, to determine whether
4 quality is being met sufficiently well and making
5 decisions on whether providers should continue to be
6 accredited, if you like, to deliver services.

7 One of the things that is quite interesting is
8 that, given the focus on quality improvement, the
9 legislation that spells out the broad areas of standards
10 doesn't give any guidance on the level of definition of
11 the standard. So within the department we have quite
12 broad definitions of, "How do you know that this area of
13 standard that client's wellbeing is being attended to, for
14 example? How do you define the specifications of what
15 would you have to do to meet that standard?" That's quite
16 variable across the different services that we deliver or
17 fund.

18 So, in talking about what standard setting
19 responsibility that an entity might play a role in,
20 I think it's just important to situate the areas of
21 standards are spelt out in legislation . Where there
22 would be real value is providing some more guidance to
23 government on what the guidance is on how do you meet
24 those standards, translating broad areas of standards into
25 specifications that you need to meet.

26 Ultimately, though, I think it's important just
27 to reflect that it is a decision for government to approve
28 that, "Yes, that is the level of performance, that is the
29 criteria to measure against standards that regulators
30 should regulate against," because it's a policy decision
31 ultimately. So I think the short answer is there would be

1 value in getting an evidence base and advice from an
2 agency about the content of those standards, but
3 ultimately it would then need to be taken by a government
4 department through a government decision-making process to
5 be put into effect.

6 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Can I just go a little bit further on
7 that. That's looking at the standards of the providers.

8 MS PEAKE: Correct.

9 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I think one of the concerns that we have
10 is it's not necessarily the particular provider doesn't
11 have good standards; it's the usefulness of the particular
12 programs that they may offer.

13 MS PEAKE: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: There are two problems which probably cut
15 in different directions. One is what I call pilotitis.
16 You get money for something, you pilot it and often even
17 if it is successful it's not continued because the funding
18 isn't available for it. That may result in the loss of
19 valuable knowledge. That's one problem. The other
20 problem is that you have lots of little programs being
21 funded all over the place without any real feeling about
22 their effectiveness.

23 It doesn't seem to me that prescribing standards
24 or attempting to enforce standards for the providers
25 necessarily deals with that particular issue. I wondered
26 whether there might be a place for having a more
27 formalised process for providing expert advice to the
28 departments, and particularly your department, on
29 particular programs when somebody is seeking funding for a
30 particular program and on whether it worked at the end of
31 it. I know all of those issues about evaluation which we

1 have previously discussed, but it's not just evaluation.

2 MS PEAKE: No, I totally agree. I think that's where in the
3 health context something like the Cochrane collaboration
4 is a really interesting model where it's really the
5 evidence base on what interventions work which then
6 informs decision on what it is that government is going to
7 fund. So I completely agree.

8 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I don't understand how the Cochrane
9 collaboration information feeds into the departmental
10 decisions.

11 MS PEAKE: It happens in a couple of ways. It both happens in
12 terms of in the health context informing what are the sort
13 of clinical protocols that are applied by the health
14 professionals and that then impacts on our oversight of
15 their performance. The health context is not quite
16 directly transferable here, but they are funded for
17 activity. In determining their achievement against that
18 activity one of the tests is, "Are the clinical protocols
19 that are evidence based being applied?"

20 But if we extrapolate from that to what that
21 would then look like in a social services space it would
22 be more a product of in defining the specifications of the
23 services that we are seeking to invest in that then the
24 providers that we are funding demonstrating that they are
25 delivering services in accordance with those evidence
26 informed specifications. That doesn't mean that we then
27 get to what we have now, which is very, very prescriptive,
28 "You must do this in this order and we are buying 10
29 widgets," but it does mean that in giving a funding
30 envelope that is to deliver this bundle of services that
31 you would then be testing as the funder upfront the

1 providers that you are engaging have the capability to
2 deliver the evidence informed specifications and that you
3 would from time to time be coming out and actually doing
4 quality assessments that they are meeting those
5 specifications.

6 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: So would there be a place for having an
7 expert committee within the department to advise on those
8 issues?

9 MS PEAKE: I think so. If we start with the evidence being
10 developed through the centre around, "What are the
11 interventions that work," then having an expert group in
12 the department who are saying, "How do you translate that
13 into the sorts of service specifications," and then deeper
14 expertise in how we assess the services that we are either
15 directly delivering or that we are commissioning to
16 deliver those services are capable of meeting those
17 service specifications and in fact are meeting those
18 service specifications.

19 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Can I take that just a step
21 further. One of the issues that have emerged for me in
22 this Commission is that a lot of work in family violence
23 isn't really evidence informed. The question is: do you
24 stop doing things until you get the evidence? Clearly
25 I would take a different view, that you start doing
26 things. The sort of process that you described seems to
27 me to need to be flexible enough so that rather than just
28 saying, "These are the evidence informed specifications;
29 you contract to deliver those," you are actually
30 contracting for some innovation so that you can learn as
31 you go and you can take a more adaptive management

1 approach to it.

2 MS PEAKE: Again I think this is a situation of both/and. As
3 the evidence firms up, the specifications can be clearer
4 about the features of effective interventions. As you are
5 building that evidence base, absolutely I agree that you
6 need to have - very much like clinical trials that happen
7 in the health sphere - the ability to have the hardwired
8 in approaches to innovation which are evaluated and inform
9 ongoingly those service specifications.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Are you saying then at least in
11 the early stages of the strategy period that needs to be
12 explicitly recognised; that we need innovation, we need to
13 be gathering evidence, we need to be adapting as we go?

14 MS PEAKE: I am. I think I'm also saying there is no cut-off
15 point where all of a sudden we have perfect knowledge and
16 specifications are immutable. That process of having
17 clearer evidence informed guidance on the services needs
18 always to be underpinned by a continuing stream of
19 innovation supported activity.

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Is the implication of that that
21 you need to take quite a radically different approach to
22 how you contract service provision?

23 MS PEAKE: Yes. So at the moment, as I say, we are really
24 contracting for very prescribed, narrow programs that
25 neither provide clear guidance on the features of
26 effective services because the evidence is patchy and so
27 in place of that we seek to drive quality through sort of
28 input measures, nor are we systematic about how we partner
29 with research collaborations - there are excellent
30 examples of this, but it's not systematic of how we
31 hardwire in that approach to innovation which is really

1 well informed, tested, evaluated and decisions made on
2 whether that should be replicated.

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: One witness talked to us about
4 the notion that there has to be a reverse onus; so this
5 idea that the commitment is to fund the service until we
6 find that it's not working or it's inappropriate. So
7 that's a sort of reverse onus to what we now face, that
8 the service is only going to be funded for a certain
9 period of time and then we will evaluate and see what
10 comes next.

11 MS PEAKE: I think I would not quite land that far out.

12 I think that there always needs to be assurance that money
13 is spent on the purpose that it was provided when it is
14 taxpayers' money and I think there does need to be some
15 assurance that the money is being spent in accordance with
16 the best available evidence. So I think we would be
17 derelict in our responsibilities as funders if we simply
18 said, "Here's a funding envelope. Go forth."

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: I think the notion of the
20 reverse onus was pointing to the problem that Commissioner
21 Neave was alluding to earlier, and that is very short-term
22 funding arrangements. The idea of reverse onus, the
23 implication is that you have a longer period of time in
24 which you can seriously take on board learnings.

25 MS PEAKE: I think there are two elements to this. One I think
26 in principle is that providing longer funding certainty is
27 an important part of a stable system as long as it has
28 built into it the ability to assure that there is quality
29 performance. There is then the practical reality that,
30 for example, if there is a funding source from the
31 Commonwealth which is time limited, how as budget managers

1 we grapple with that.

2 I think the third point I would make is that to
3 move to that sort of system would require a really open,
4 honest engagement between the department and agencies that
5 that will only work if there is an unpicking of all of the
6 multitude of little line item programs that exist
7 currently and a bundling of funding to enable different
8 ways of working. So there's quite a significant change
9 process that would be involved.

10 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Just before we go on, I wanted to address
11 a question to Mr Wilson because this also arises at least
12 in the context of Corrections and the programs that are
13 offered for prisoners either while they are in custody or
14 after they finish. I don't have a feeling for how much
15 work has been done in that area on assessing and
16 evaluating and getting expert advice at the point of time
17 that it's decided to fund a particular program.

18 MR WILSON: We went through an exercise a year or so ago with
19 Treasury looking at all of our cost, including the money
20 we spent on those programs as well as things like prison
21 industries and what have you. Out of that we asked the
22 Australian Institute of Criminology to produce an
23 evaluation framework, which I'm happy to provide the
24 Commission. So we recognised that you need to continue to
25 do that sort of work.

26 In the overall scheme of things I must say our
27 Corrections budget is probably in the order of a billion
28 dollars and programs might be 50 or 60 million. So
29 I think there's an assumption that those things will
30 continue, but it's how they ought to be updated, modified,
31 tendered for and so on. So we went through that work.

1 I think it came back pretty positively, but I'm happy to
2 provide that to the Commission for you to consider as
3 well.

4 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Is there a regular evaluation? For
5 example, has anyone done any follow-up of prisoners who
6 have gone through a particular program to see whether they
7 work and how is that fed back to the system in the context
8 of justice?

9 MR WILSON: Not to my knowledge, Commissioner. There may have
10 been studies done at certain points of time, but this is
11 one of the things that we certainly are looking at when
12 you think of recidivism and repeat offenders and demands
13 on the justice system. We are building those sorts of
14 incentives into the new prison at Ravenhall. So that's
15 something that's a focus for us. We will be spending more
16 time working up that type of model where we can track a
17 prisoner or someone on a community correction order who
18 goes through programs, where do they end up and do they
19 end up coming back like 40-plus per cent do within two
20 years of leaving prison.

21 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: It has always struck me when you are
22 involved in sentencing decisions people tell you about the
23 programs that people might be doing or put into and yet
24 you have no real idea as a judge about whether they work
25 or they don't work.

26 MR WILSON: In terms of people on orders that go through
27 programs as conditions of orders, we would measure
28 successful completion rates and so on. So we do measure
29 those sorts of things. But in terms of, say, a men's
30 behaviour program or parenting or literacy, employment
31 skills, I'm not aware of much of what we do in tracking

1 people after they have left our system.

2 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

3 MS PEAKE: Could I just add one point. One of the points that
4 Mr Wilson has made which is really critical which I should
5 have added in is that measurement of outcomes and client
6 experience. So, as well as thinking about the sort of
7 Cochrane example of what are the evidence informed
8 features of a service, I completely agree that it is
9 critically important that we are driving improvement
10 through measuring what's been the experience of people who
11 have been through this service and what are the outcomes
12 that are achieved.

13 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Do you do any client satisfaction surveys?

14 MS PEAKE: At the moment we are just actually trialling through
15 the Services Connect projects an outcome survey which does
16 get to that. We have also had partnerships in the past
17 with peak bodies particularly for young people, so create
18 around young people's reflections on their experiences in
19 our care system. But I think it's a space that could
20 again be really a function of this centre to have a more
21 proactive approach to periodic experience surveys as well
22 as the objective monitoring about - of collection of
23 information about at a system level outcomes, us as the
24 service providers and funders should also be doing that
25 and thinking about the client outcomes.

26 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

27 MR MOSHINSKY: Just following on with the questions that
28 Mr Wilson was answering, I think Professor Jim Ogloff in
29 his submission noted strong evidence based progress in a
30 non-family violence context, for example, in sexual
31 offenders in a non-family violence context. Are you aware

1 of that type of evaluation work?

2 MR WILSON: Yes. So sex offenders and using people like
3 Professor Ogloff and going - I get probably five or six a
4 week where I'm making decisions on them. So going through
5 all the clinical assessments and the programs they have
6 been through, I tend to get it case by case. But, yes,
7 I'm broadly aware of the work on sex offenders and what we
8 do there.

9 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I turn back to you, Mr Eccles, and just
10 clarify. You referred to the centre, and I won't go back
11 to that at the moment, but then in terms of the other
12 entity - I will just call it an entity at the moment -
13 I think you referred to reviewing, supervising, reporting
14 on performance. Could you just clarify what type of
15 functions you are referring to under those headings?

16 MR ECCLES: The performance of the system might be against
17 data - and we will come to that point, because at the
18 moment there would be limitations on how the commissioner,
19 the entity, what they could be reporting system
20 performance against because of the problems we have with
21 consistent data, or even to establish what is relevant for
22 data within system performance.

23 They would probably also assess the experience of
24 individuals; so a qualitative component. Data is not
25 going to be able to capture every element of system
26 performance. I would imagine they would be able to make a
27 qualitative assessment of the system's performance by
28 talking to victims, families and perpetrators; the
29 effectiveness of the governance, whatever governance it is
30 that we seek to establish or the Commission seeks to
31 establish, how the coordination between the various parts

1 of government is working; if we do have an element which
2 is the operation of more localised place based regionally
3 referenced activity, whether that's proving effective and
4 whether the same set of complaints that you have been
5 getting from practitioners in the regions about their
6 difficulty in having their lived experience captured and
7 understood and accommodated and responded to at the
8 centre. So I think the dimensions of performance are as
9 wide as the system is in its operation.

10 MR MOSHINSKY: Reviewing and supervising, what did you have in
11 mind under those headings?

12 MR ECCLES: I think the supervision just goes to the
13 aggregation of the performance. There's supervisory
14 responsibility that properly rests with government, and
15 that goes to the first, I think, two dot points under the
16 system's stewardship. Government - and it's the way it is
17 represented through cabinet committees and the Victorian
18 Secretaries Board - ultimately has the prudential
19 responsibility for the effectiveness of the system. So
20 you can't outsource that to the commissioner. So the
21 identification of outcomes and the conscious oversight of
22 the system as a whole properly rests with government and
23 its agencies, that being the cabinet, the ministry, the
24 departments and perhaps the Victorian Secretaries Board.
25 So supervision I think only in the sense of it being the
26 sum of the assessment of the individual of the system's
27 performance.

28 MR MOSHINSKY: I see. I referred to it as an entity. You
29 referred to the Inspector-General for Emergency
30 Management. We have the model of a commissioner in some
31 context, such as the Commissioner for Children and Young

1 People, and there's also a model of a statutory agency
2 such as TAC or the Victorian Responsible Gambling
3 Foundation. What are some of the policy arguments in
4 favour of which of those models is adopted if there were
5 to be an entity? Are there arguments that tend you in one
6 direction rather than the other between those different
7 models?

8 MR ECCLES: The TAC, for me, falls more into the domain of the
9 centre. So it has a fundamental purpose around public
10 awareness, public education. The TAC, VicHealth, the
11 Responsible Gambling Foundation fall within my loose
12 concept of the centre. So I would imagine - - -

13 MR MOSHINSKY: Sorry to interrupt you, but in terms of the
14 centre you would conceive of that potentially as being a
15 statutory agency?

16 MR ECCLES: Yes.

17 MR MOSHINSKY: Then the other body, the other entity, are there
18 arguments for an inspector-general versus a commissioner
19 versus a statutory authority?

20 MR ECCLES: I think it could be a blend of all three. The
21 statutory authority is simply what is the basis for its
22 authority. I think there is a strong argument for it to
23 be statutorily based. Whether you call it a commissioner
24 or whether you call it - names are important, but not as
25 important as the function and the formality that is
26 attached to the function. So a statute with perhaps a
27 commissioner rather than a monitor.

28 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Can I just follow up on that. Presumably
29 you would want that body to be able to make findings that
30 were transparent, because only if they were transparent
31 would that hold the government to account. So you would

1 either require a reporting to parliament mechanism or
2 something along those lines so that if the commissioner
3 found that the government was dragging its feet and not
4 doing any of the things it said it was going to do or
5 something along those lines you would want that to be
6 publicly exposed, wouldn't you?

7 MR ECCLES: Absolutely. I think the model of reporting to
8 parliament is a pretty powerful way of concentrating the
9 minds of government. So I would expect that you would
10 want to have some sort of parliamentary role in the
11 architecture.

12 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Would you want it to give advice, either
13 the centre or the commissioner, I'm not quite sure which
14 at the moment, to have some formal advice-giving role for
15 the Secretaries Board?

16 MR ECCLES: I think the way it would work in practice, the
17 centre would be making a contribution through its practice
18 to the development of policy which in turn would influence
19 the way government adjusts its policy settings, adjusts
20 its market settings, adjusts the program settings, adjusts
21 its funding. So the centre's relationship to government
22 would be one of principally providing advice to those who
23 provide advice to government.

24 I think the commissioner, the entity, would have
25 a more formal role because of the requirement for it to be
26 independent of government to acquit its responsibility to
27 independently review and report on the system's
28 performance, and that that would be a relationship both
29 directly to the parliament but also not so separate from
30 government; that if the commissioner is discovering
31 matters in the running, that the commissioner is then able

1 to have a relationship with government to inform
2 government about under-performance or whatever the issue
3 might be. So I don't think it's as binary as having the
4 entity so separate from government that it can't make an
5 ongoing contribution to the effectiveness of the system.

6 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I think you mentioned - and I don't now
7 recall who it was - an observer at the Secretaries
8 Board - - -

9 MR ECCLES: Very close. It's the peak Public Service body for
10 emergency management. The individual, the
11 Inspector-General, is an observer and is able to make a
12 contribution to the operation of the system. But it
13 doesn't compromise the individual's responsibility to make
14 an independent report to parliament on the performance of
15 the system as a whole.

16 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

17 MR MOSHINSKY: Mr Wilson, did you have any observations about a
18 model such as Mr Eccles has described?

19 MR WILSON: Yes. Well, there's observations regarding
20 emergency management and the Inspector-General which
21 Mr Eccles has explained. But I think the additional
22 features of that are that it does create the State Crisis
23 and Resilience Council, yes, but it also creates an
24 obligation to produce a rolling three-year action plan of
25 reform which includes things like capability building,
26 inter-operability, and cooperation and coordination, and
27 then over and above that it includes a duty for all of the
28 heads of agencies to actually implement their parts of
29 that strategic action plan.

30 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: So that's done by the?

31 MR WILSON: The State Crisis and Resilience Council must

1 produce the three-year rolling strategy, and the Act
2 prescribes what that strategy must do. Then the
3 Inspector-General will monitor performance against that.
4 So there's a layer above. It's not just create an
5 Inspector-General and say, "You can monitor performance
6 and do those things." There are quite specific things
7 that must be done and duties that are captured in the Act
8 of secretaries in addition to their Public Administration
9 Act duties to implement their parts of that action plan.

10 MS PEAKE: I was just going to reflect that one of the
11 distinctions in my mind would be that the entity would
12 monitor and report on performance within the existing
13 design, so the system architecture and the system
14 structure, and may make comment that that system structure
15 seems to not be working. But I would then think that it's
16 really more the centre that is providing the advice on
17 evidence about where the settings should be changed.

18 So I wouldn't see the commissioner or the monitor
19 role getting into the level of saying, "We need a
20 different type of intervention that should have these
21 characteristics," or at a regional level, "That particular
22 structure should be changed to look more like this." They
23 might point out, "We don't think that is working," and
24 then that would lead to further work being done to see
25 what would be better.

26 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Why would you take that limited view,
27 given the would-be expertise in the independent body that
28 might be relevant to that issue?

29 MS PEAKE: Because I think it is then hard to comment further
30 on something you have designed. So to maintain the
31 ongoing oversight and monitoring role, in my view, you

1 need to be separate from the detailed design function.

2 MR ECCLES: Would it be possible just to elaborate very briefly
3 on one extra component of our thinking around the
4 operation of the centre as it relates to evaluation,
5 because I know that's been something that's been on the
6 Commission's mind. It might be that the Commission has
7 responsibility for the development of evaluation standards
8 to facilitate consistency in government's application of
9 evaluation and of evidence gathering.

10 We don't have any centre of excellence, if you
11 like, to support government in its evaluative activity.
12 It might even be that public servants go to the centre to
13 learn how to evaluate, because you are never going to
14 remove from the Public Service the responsibility to embed
15 evaluation within programs, whether it's summative or
16 formative evaluation. But at the moment we don't have
17 anywhere where the standards for excellence in evaluation
18 method is located, and the centre might also perform that
19 function. Thank you.

20 MR MOSHINSKY: I want to move then to the topic of data, and it
21 has a link with evaluation in terms of the overall system.
22 We have had evidence this week about the Family Violence
23 Database from Ms Dowsley, the Chief Statistician at the
24 Crime Statistics Agency. There was evidence about what's
25 captured by the family database. There are a number of
26 datasets. I can read it out if you are not familiar with
27 it. But I was wondering whether I could invite you to
28 comment on datasets that don't seem to be included such as
29 in particular child protection data. Perhaps, Ms Peake,
30 would you speak to that, please?

31 MS PEAKE: Certainly my understanding is that that database has

1 evolved over time and has many strong features. But it's
2 absolutely correct to say that it doesn't include all of
3 the data items that would be really helpful to bring
4 together, in part because of gaps in data that we collect
5 through some of our programs and in part because of the
6 work that I know the Commission has been reflecting on in
7 terms of the complexity around some of the information
8 sharing and protection of personal information, perceived
9 or real constraints on the combination of that data. So
10 it's certainly something that we would be very keen to
11 continue to work on getting the right data and combining
12 it in useful ways.

13 We would also reflect that, while it's been an
14 incredibly valuable tool, actually we think the time is
15 right for government to think more broadly about how to
16 take that database to the next level and the expertise
17 that would be required to do that. I know that there's
18 been some really interesting work that's been done in New
19 South Wales around a social services hub which brings a
20 whole lot of data together and has the technical expertise
21 to link it. Building that capability within
22 government - and I do think it needs to be within
23 government given the sensitivity of the data - seems to me
24 to be a really important part of improving the system
25 operation.

26 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Do you know whether the social services
27 hub in New South Wales deals with police and courts as
28 well as social service provision?

29 MS PEAKE: My understanding is that it does. I think there's
30 so much work that needs to be done on the social services
31 side that dedicated attention to that is really important.

1 But obviously the connections then and over time what the
2 relationship is with the crime statistics is definitely a
3 longer term - needs to be kept in prospect.

4 MR MOSHINSKY: Just to clarify, did you indicate that you saw
5 that child protection data should be included?

6 MS PEAKE: I think it should, but we need to just work through
7 how that best occurs, recognising the sensitivity of the
8 information.

9 MR MOSHINSKY: Just starting with the Family Violence Database
10 with perhaps additional datasets before I move on to other
11 types of data, where ought that data be held and who
12 should analyse it in terms of the structure that we were
13 talking about before?

14 MR ECCLES: If I can take just a step back before dealing with
15 the specific issue of where the data should be located.
16 One of our experiences over the last nine months of
17 government is the difficulties with the coverage and the
18 quality and the consistency of data more broadly across
19 government. It provides a highly unreliable basis for
20 evidence based decision making. So there is a very, very
21 broad and deep reform agenda within government to deal
22 with not only the issues that the Privacy Commissioner
23 dealt with around accessing the primary data and its use
24 but also just with the standardisation of data, the
25 incompatibility of systems and databases.

26 We would see there being a concentrated whole of
27 government reform agenda around the data held by
28 government and for that to be driven from within
29 government, partly because of the privacy considerations
30 that Ms Peake identified, partly because for it to be
31 fully effective it would require deep engagement with the

1 Commonwealth. So if we are able to capture client data we
2 are going to need to be able to capture data that is held
3 by other levels of government.

4 So because of the complexity, sensitivity and
5 broken nature of the system at the moment I would see that
6 reform initiative residing within probably the centre of
7 government and probably within - - -

8 MR MOSHINSKY: By "centre of government" you are referring to
9 DPC?

10 MR ECCLES: Yes, I am. I would see that as being a
11 research - an endeavour. Again it's not just government
12 doing it to itself. We would need to bring in
13 practitioners, experts to enable us to - and this will
14 take years. It's not something that can be done quickly.
15 So I don't know if that goes to your initial question.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: For example, just going back to these bullet
17 points in the New Zealand report, the fourth last one is
18 "ensuring that data is collected, shared and used in ways
19 that enhance system performance". It is not actually
20 saying "collect it", but it is ensuring that that happens,
21 ensuring that data is collected, shared and used in ways
22 that enhance system performance. Would that function fall
23 within the remit of either the centre or the other entity
24 that we were discussing before?

25 MR ECCLES: I think it would reside within the centre while the
26 system is being developed. I don't see it being
27 ultimately the repository of the system. I think it needs
28 to be capable of being used by all parts of the system.
29 It would be drawn upon by the entity for the purpose of
30 assessing system performance at the right time. Whether
31 at some point it becomes an agency - so I would use an

1 analogy of the National Centre for Vocational Education
2 and Research. That is an independent body. It's
3 constituted by the governments of Australia that own a
4 company. The data for the operation of the national
5 vocational education and training system is held by that
6 body. They are responsible for its upkeep. They are
7 responsible for reporting on performance against that.

8 Maybe in time when our family violence system
9 data is robust enough and reliable enough and stable
10 enough for it to be spun out, if you like, to an agency
11 separate to government, I think that's a possibility. But
12 at the moment we are so far short of that that it is core
13 government business, in my view, for us to embark on this
14 reform endeavour.

15 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Has the government got to the point of
16 developing a sort of short, medium, long-term plan,
17 because we all know that these huge systems that capture
18 lots of data are very difficult to do and very expensive?
19 Is the government considering an interim approach that
20 would mean that we could track performance at least up to
21 a point - - -

22 MR ECCLES: I'm relying on Ms Peake in her old capacity as the
23 deputy secretary in my department to answer that.

24 MS PEAKE: We certainly have a dedicated team and work program
25 to get to that point of mapping out. So that's a half
26 answer. It's a work in progress, is the honest answer.

27 The other thing that I would add to Mr Eccles'
28 comments is it is really important to separate out the
29 custodianship of the data from the use and analysis of the
30 data. Much of the data is going to be collected by virtue
31 of our administrative systems related to our services, and

1 that data also needs to be used for funding and policy and
2 quality purposes. Then it being able to be shared into
3 the centre or the centre of government to be able to
4 really make use of it, connect it to the crimes stats is
5 I think a really important function. But I just wouldn't
6 want to mix up the custodianship of the data from the
7 analysis and use of it.

8 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I have one further question. There are
9 all of the non-government bodies that may well hold data.
10 As I understand it, in the health system there is now use
11 of a single form on which the information is provided and
12 if you are going to have one health service but you might
13 want another within the same organisation you don't have
14 to have 16 different forms filled out, you can tell your
15 story once and the information is recorded. I may not
16 have described it quite accurately, but I'm referring to
17 I think it's called "Scott" or SCTT.

18 I'm wondering whether that's a model which might
19 be part of this data collection process which would not
20 only be better for the agencies and for public policy
21 generally but would probably be better for the individuals
22 because they don't, as I said, have to then provide
23 different sets of information to people again and again.

24 MS PEAKE: Absolutely. So, yes, it is definitely in scope of
25 social services reform. As you have outlined,
26 Commissioner, there are a multitude of systems - not only
27 specifications that providers are trying to acquit but
28 systems that they are collecting data in. So it is a
29 significant undertaking to achieve a single client view.
30 So what we are trying to do is again break that down very
31 practically to how do we take the first step of having a

1 single form and having a solution which enables the
2 sharing of that client data so it doesn't have to be
3 replicated.

4 We have a business case that we are working on on
5 the way of doing that. Advances in technology are such
6 that we don't have to re-design all of our systems to
7 enable that to happen, which is a good thing. So by early
8 next year we are hoping to have the business case which
9 will look at again the sort of short, medium, long-term
10 approaches to achieving exactly what you have described.

11 MR WILSON: Commissioner, can I just make one point around the
12 Crime Stats Agency and the merits of having a statutory
13 statistician, because I think we are all so hungry for
14 data you tend to take as much as you can from wherever you
15 can get it. But having statutory responsibilities imposes
16 a certain level of confidence in the robustness of data.
17 I think that's quite important as well as just rounding up
18 what everyone has, which we sometimes have to do, it's the
19 best evidence we have. But that's been quite useful to
20 have that role do that sort of work I know with VicPol and
21 data cleansing and all those sorts of things that they
22 have been doing together.

23 MR ECCLES: But that's at a point of stability and maturity of
24 the system where you are able to.

25 MR WILSON: Yes.

26 MR ECCLES: Whereas the challenge we have is that the rest of
27 the data is so unstable and inconsistent and lacking in
28 quality that we can't immediately move to that sort of
29 statutory based responsibility. We have to do the design
30 work.

31 In fact in the design work because, as you say,

1 Commissioner, it relies upon data that's held by agencies
2 outside government, I would see that DPC would perhaps
3 form a board, and on that board we would have
4 representatives of agencies outside government who can
5 contribute to data and perhaps, even if there is the
6 centre, the CEO of the centre to make sure that there is a
7 sort of virtuous connection between the work of this
8 family violence prevention and research centre and the
9 work of government around data development.

10 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I have just forgotten; is the crimes
11 statistics unit now on a statutory basis?

12 MR WILSON: Yes. Fiona Dowsley is a statutory position, and
13 the employees are basically part of my department.

14 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Because in the past they have come and
15 gone and gone to different places.

16 MR WILSON: I think it emerged out of - it was police producing
17 data and releasing its own reports about its activities to
18 a higher level of, I guess, independence and separation,
19 I think was the rationale for it. So it's residing within
20 the department, but as a statutory position with functions
21 and so on.

22 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

23 MR MOSHINSKY: Mr Eccles, one of the points Ms Dowsley made was
24 that the Family Violence Database essentially is a series
25 of datasets relating to services provided, broadly, and
26 she contrasted that with crime victimisation surveys,
27 which are the superior way of telling what the prevalence
28 is, for example, of family violence. The best example of
29 that that we have available at the moment is the ABS
30 personal safety surveys, she said. Would you see a role
31 for the centre that you referred to earlier as - if

1 there's gaps in our knowledge about prevalence and
2 breaking that down, would that be part of its role?

3 MR ECCLES: Absolutely at the heart of the reform proposal.

4 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I go back to the topic of prevention, which
5 you raised also as another role potentially for the
6 centre. In the TAC model, which I think you also referred
7 to, the TAC, the evidence indicated yesterday, spends
8 about \$160 million of its budget on prevention work and a
9 large part of that, about 120 million, is paid to VicRoads
10 to actually do road upgrades where their research
11 indicates certain upgrades are needed. Would you envisage
12 the centre actually carrying out primary prevention work
13 itself or researching and others would actually do it?

14 MR ECCLES: I would imagine that if there are social marketing
15 campaigns grounded in issues of gender inequality and then
16 trying to work out what a social marketing response might
17 be to that, that it would be the core business of an
18 agency that had responsibility for public education and
19 awareness. So determining the psychographics of those who
20 are part of the family violence system and working out
21 attitudes, values and behaviours and then how you might
22 respond to it in social marketing terms I would see as
23 being a core part of the work of the centre.

24 MR MOSHINSKY: The type of prevention measures might be quite
25 varied and extend beyond social marketing.

26 MR ECCLES: Indeed.

27 MR MOSHINSKY: To all manner of different types of primary
28 prevention mechanisms. For example, some of the
29 prevention initiatives we have had evidence about this
30 week are more at the local level utilising a collective
31 impact approach.

1 MR ECCLES: I imagine that they would be advising on the
2 utility of those mechanisms rather than being, if you
3 like, the funding source of those mechanisms. Again it
4 would be advice to government on what works, what part of
5 social marketing or what part of prevention might be
6 effective, and then that advice being provided to
7 government, and government then making a judgment about
8 whether it should be applied.

9 One of the difficulties, and it is an
10 unresolvable difficulty at the moment, is that each of the
11 entities we refer to in this area, being the TAC and the
12 foundation and VicHealth, has access to a hypothecated
13 flow of funding to support their activity with a logic to
14 where that is sourced because it connects to their public
15 purpose.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: If we can just push that to one side and come
17 back to that in the panel after lunch which will deal with
18 funding issues, just in the interests of time.

19 MR ECCLES: Yes.

20 MR MOSHINSKY: We had evidence from New Zealand about the "It's
21 Not Ok" campaign during this week and there's a team there
22 located within the Ministry of Social Development that
23 does the primary prevention work - that they combine the
24 social marketing part of the work with the community
25 engagement work and the two really go hand in hand
26 together.

27 MR ECCLES: Yes.

28 MR MOSHINSKY: Is there a case for the combining of those two
29 aspects of primary prevention?

30 MR ECCLES: Could you elaborate on that a little bit?

31 MR MOSHINSKY: They run a nationwide campaign which includes TV

1 advertisements and other types of - the whole range of
2 social marketing, but they also support a whole range of
3 localised initiatives for community groups, be they
4 geographically organised or sporting groups or other types
5 of organisations, to carry out primary prevention work and
6 the two actually link in closely together. So it's an
7 overarching framework and designed model.

8 MR ECCLES: I guess it gets to that point as to where the
9 responsibility for funding and purchasing service delivery
10 rests. I would see the centre as being about all of the
11 characteristics I described earlier but not being the
12 funder or the purchaser of services that would probably
13 be, I would argue, the responsibility of government.
14 Whether in the New Zealand example you describe it becomes
15 a recurrent form of investment by the agency in service
16 delivery or whether it's more experimental innovation from
17 which you draw lessons and you create case studies, I'm
18 not quite clear how the New Zealand model works.

19 MR MOSHINSKY: It's an ongoing function.

20 MR ECCLES: My personal view is having the centre involved in
21 the ongoing funding of a component of service delivery is
22 a step beyond what I was conceiving as the role of the
23 centre.

24 MR MOSHINSKY: But isn't it just another means of primary
25 prevention rather than service delivery in the response
26 sense?

27 MR ECCLES: Yes, I can see that it is another form of primary
28 prevention. But I don't imagine that every aspect of
29 primary prevention would be invested in the centre as
30 against a responsibility that is properly located within
31 government.

1 MR MOSHINSKY: Ms Callister, what is your view about the extent
2 to which primary prevention might form part of the role of
3 a centre such as we have been discussing?

4 MS CALLISTER: I think that would be one of its sort of
5 fundamental purposes, primary prevention, building
6 community awareness. We talked about the workforce type
7 role it might have. A centre like that in an ideal sense,
8 and if you think about some of the others, needs a certain
9 base of funding but is likely also to attract other
10 funding - so possibly research funding, philanthropic
11 funding and other opportunities to build its capability.
12 Most of the examples that we have have elements of that,
13 like VicHealth - not so much TAC I think, but VicHealth
14 certainly and Beyondblue is another example.

15 So I can imagine them using their - one of the
16 options might be having that broader remit and looking to
17 seed or test certain things perhaps in partnership with
18 primary prevention type organisations. Schools would be
19 one of those opportunities, and local government and some
20 of those other grassroots places where those social impact
21 type activities are taking place.

22 Maybe what Mr Eccles is getting at is them not
23 starting a service delivery stream all of their own that
24 creates its own momentum for then government feeling bound
25 to continue with. So it's somehow about them having
26 capacity to run marketing campaigns, build awareness,
27 create resources, possibly seed things in partnership
28 without becoming the agency that somehow starts to dictate
29 the service delivery system totally.

30 MR ECCLES: Ms Callister has been more eloquent than me.

31 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I think the difficulty is there's an

1 ambiguity in what we are talking about service delivery.
2 I think Mr Moshinsky was pursuing the primary prevention.
3 You could describe that as service delivery, and I think
4 all the evidence we have heard has been that it's no use
5 having big marketing campaigns unless they are supported
6 by the underpinning. So if the centre was involved in the
7 social marketing campaign it would be unfortunate if that
8 were divorced from the underpinning. That's the argument
9 that's made.

10 MR ECCLES: Absolutely. That's absolutely the case.

11 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: So really they all need to be in one
12 place. Your view, Mr Eccles, is probably not the centre;
13 I think, Ms Callister, you have a slightly more liberal
14 view. I'm not trying to set up a difference of opinion.

15 MR ECCLES: No, I'm with her.

16 MS CALLISTER: If they are going to run big social marketing
17 campaigns everybody has to be onboard because that's going
18 to have impacts on the police and the courts and the
19 response system. So everybody has to be prepared for
20 that. We have seen examples of Federal Government
21 campaigns increasing people ringing up a phone number and
22 there's nothing happening at the delivery end, and where
23 the state and Commonwealth haven't been in sync and the
24 service system hasn't been engaged. So anything that
25 involves campaigns - and I think the New Zealand example
26 shows that they have to be sustained; you can't just have
27 one, and that's the TAC model as well - I don't think the
28 agency running the campaign has to be the agency that then
29 funds the whole system, including police, to make that
30 happen. They have to be in sync. But what it may do in
31 primary prevention is start to reach out a little bit

1 itself and seed things and trial things based on the
2 research that it's developing.

3 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

4 MR MOSHINSKY: Mr Wilson, does the Victorian Responsible
5 Gambling Foundation and its primary prevention work in
6 your opinion provide a useful model, because it does
7 primary prevention work sort of at all layers including
8 funding local initiatives?

9 MR WILSON: It does, and I guess it's at a certain scale as
10 well. So it's around 40 million a year and it does the
11 1800 numbers and the treatment services and so on and a
12 fair bit of that prevention work. So I think it's a good
13 model to look at, the suite of those things in one spot
14 with respect to one particular problem. So, yes, it's a
15 useful example.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: Just a couple of last questions on discrete
17 points from the witness statements. Ms Callister, in your
18 supplementary statement you refer to the recently
19 announced Respectful Relationships program I think across
20 all ages in schools. Could you just briefly explain the
21 interaction between that program and the one that you gave
22 evidence about on the last occasion which appeared to be
23 more of a pilot of a particular type of Respectful
24 Relationships program?

25 MS CALLISTER: Yes. Thank you. In August the Victorian
26 Government announced the introduction of Respectful
27 Relationships into the school curriculum from prep all the
28 way to year 10 students. That is part of the whole new
29 curriculum that was announced at that time. So it will be
30 delivered through the health and physical education
31 curriculum and the personal and social capability

1 curriculum. There are some existing resources. So
2 there's a difference between the curriculum that sets out
3 what children should learn and what their capability
4 should be and then the resources teachers use to actually
5 get there.

6 What I gave evidence about in my first appearance
7 here was about the actual resources at year 8 and year 9,
8 so the actual Respectful Relationship resources that we
9 have available at year 8 and year 9 with a further module
10 shortly to be available at year 10. The Our Watch
11 evaluation is about how we best implement those resources,
12 how we make the absolute best use in a whole of school
13 approach to those resources so that as we roll them out
14 across the rest of the school system that we use an
15 approach that gets the best value.

16 The new curriculum extends that to the primary
17 years, and we have a number of resources available under
18 those two areas that I mentioned. What we are planning to
19 do is have those reviewed and look at a more integrated
20 approach across those primary years to how we actually
21 deliver that curriculum. The Our Watch evaluation will
22 help us with both the secondary and to some extent the
23 development of the primary along with other work that we
24 are doing.

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Can I just follow up, counsel.
26 Just scanning through your witness statements,
27 Ms Callister, the curriculum that has been developed and
28 is, as I understand it, being piloted by Our Watch in a
29 number of schools seems to be much more explicit about
30 family violence than what you have indicated is the
31 government's intention for Respectful Relationships

1 training in the curriculum.

2 MS CALLISTER: Commissioner, I believe you are talking about
3 "Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping out against
4 gender based violence", which is the modules in year 8 and
5 year 9 and I think they go for about eight sessions each.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: I'm referring to the ones that
7 we spoke about last time you were here that are being
8 trialled under the auspices of Our Watch in a number of
9 schools, and that curriculum seems to be much, much more
10 explicit about family violence than in the curriculum you
11 have indicated is now being implemented.

12 MS CALLISTER: We have a number of resources currently, as
13 I said, that will help implement that curriculum. But our
14 most immediate focus is to have some independent
15 assessment of those different resources and look at how we
16 develop something much more specific but more primary
17 appropriate for the foundation to year 6. So there will
18 be resources that are more explicit about gender and more
19 explicit about violence. We think we have some of them,
20 but we want some advice about how to integrate them and
21 build on them utilising what we know now about the year 8,
22 year 9 resources.

23 MR MOSHINSKY: The other question I had was about the navigator
24 services that you refer to in paragraphs 23 and following
25 in the supplementary statement, and you have provided as
26 an exhibit a fact sheet about them. Could you just
27 briefly explain what that navigator service is?
28 I appreciate it's a pilot, but how will that work?

29 MS CALLISTER: We are in the process of designing how that will
30 work and we have some previous work that's been done in a
31 number of different programs that we want to try and learn

1 from in the design of this service. So this is explicitly
2 designed around the 10,000 or so students that we talked
3 about last time who are disengaged or in the process of
4 disengaging from school from essentially year 7 onwards.

5 This is about how we have a combined approach
6 between the school system and the social services system
7 to reintegrate and have those kids back in school or in an
8 appropriate learning environment. So it's absolutely
9 focused on those young people.

10 It's fair to say we have had a few goes at this
11 before. We need to learn from what worked but also
12 clearly what didn't, because we still have that 10,000 or
13 so children not attending school who are of school age and
14 some of whom are quite young.

15 MR MOSHINSKY: Then Mr Eccles, in your statement you refer to
16 the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. Could
17 you just indicate what the approach Victoria is taking to
18 that partnership agreement?

19 MR ECCLES: Under the agreement, which is a commitment - and
20 this is part of the issue - for 2015 to 2017, so it's two
21 years, it's \$115 million of which the state is
22 contributing nearly \$70 million and the Commonwealth
23 around \$45 million, for the first time the national
24 partnership has specific family violence outputs. So
25 that's progress. Victoria, more than \$22 million will be
26 invested in family violence services to support victims of
27 family violence, and there are some specific program
28 responses to that.

29 The issue that we have is implicit in the
30 statement that it's from '15 to '17, that it is not
31 enduring, and we have had had issues from national

1 partnership to national partnership in its iterations
2 where the Commonwealth has changed the quantum and has
3 changed the focus of the national partnership. So it
4 makes it difficult for us to plan the system with such
5 uncertainty both in terms of the quantum and in terms of
6 the direction of the Commonwealth's preferred focus of
7 funding.

8 MR MOSHINSKY: Do the Commissioners have any questions of the
9 panel?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: I just had one more, without
11 encroaching on lunchtime too much. The witness from the
12 New Zealand Productivity Commission yesterday alluded to
13 the problems faced in trying to create an environment in
14 which trialling and innovation is fostered and privileged.
15 The challenge he pointed out is that in such an
16 environment you have to be able to accept that there will
17 be failures and that often a new initiative is taken,
18 there's political commitment to it and it is hard to
19 actually have a rigorous look at assessment.

20 I notice, Mr Eccles, in your witness statement
21 you point to the Newpin social investment bond in New
22 South Wales. That was a trial. We now have a situation
23 where the New South Wales Government says it's a great
24 success and there is some championing of it, but people
25 who have seriously looked at it are really calling into
26 question the evidence about it, and that includes the
27 Associate Secretary of Treasury in New South Wales is
28 suggesting that perhaps this is not quite as good as we
29 might have thought.

30 How in the future can we create that type of
31 environment where it's accepted that we are trialling

1 things, things will work, some will need to be adjusted,
2 some don't work?

3 MR ECCLES: The perspective of the Associate Secretary is as
4 legitimate as the perspective of the advocates, who would
5 point to the outcome and the success. Was it value for
6 money? That, I guess, becomes in the eye of the beholder.
7 As a trialling of a new approach to sourcing social
8 service positive outcomes, I think it's worth doing. The
9 Treasury perspective is entirely legitimate because it is
10 for government to determine at what price do you
11 contemplate risk.

12 My sense of this government in Victoria is that
13 there is an appetite to experiment and an appetite to
14 innovate. If the price of experimentation and innovation
15 is periodic failure, so long as the lessons are learnt
16 from that failure in the re-design and re-investment then
17 I think it's a price that the government would consider
18 worth paying.

19 MR MOSHINSKY: If there are no further questions, could we
20 adjourn for lunch. I think Ms Callister and Mr Wilson
21 could be excused. The other members of the panel will be
22 coming back for the next session. Perhaps if we adjourn
23 until - - -

24 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Come back in an hour.

25 MR MOSHINSKY: In one hour?

26 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Yes.

27 <(THE WITNESSES WITHDREW)

28 LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT

1 UPON RESUMING AT 1.40 PM:

2 MR MOSHINSKY: Commissioners, we have one new witness in this
3 panel, if she could please be sworn.

4 <MELISSA ANNE SKILBECK, affirmed and examined:

5 <CHRISTOPHER BARCROFT ECCLES, recalled:

6 <KYM LEANNE PEAKE, recalled:

7 MR MOSHINSKY: Ms Skilbeck, could you please outline to the
8 Commission what your current position is and give a brief
9 outline of your professional background?

10 MS SKILBECK: Certainly. I'm currently the Deputy Secretary in
11 Treasury and Finance department in charge of the budget
12 and finance area, which covers the budgeting process, we
13 have a team per portfolio, the financial reporting process
14 to parliament, and the budget strategy and wages policy
15 areas of government.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: The subject matter for this panel follows on
17 from the panel this morning, which included Mr Eccles,
18 Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, and
19 Ms Peake, Acting Secretary of Department of Health and
20 Human Services, and the focus for this panel is really the
21 interrelationship between funding mechanisms and
22 performance of the system, efficiencies and other
23 objectives that one might be seeking to derive.

24 Could I start with the subject of how family
25 violence services and also other social services that
26 relate to victims of family violence are currently funded,
27 how that funding is structured.

28 Ms Skilbeck, you have prepared a witness
29 statement for this Royal Commission?

30 MS SKILBECK: Yes, I have.

31 MR MOSHINSKY: Are the contents of that statement true and

1 correct?

2 MS SKILBECK: They are indeed.

3 MR MOSHINSKY: In your statement at paragraph 37 you outline
4 the two main funding streams that relate - that cover what
5 might be called specific family violence services. They
6 are called outputs, is the terminology.

7 MS SKILBECK: That's correct.

8 MR MOSHINSKY: I might use interchangeably the expression
9 "funding streams" for those. The two funding streams are
10 the housing assistance funding stream of approximately 420
11 million and the Child Protection family services funding
12 stream of 990 million. Both of those funding streams
13 relate to the Department of Health and Human Services; is
14 that right?

15 MS SKILBECK: That's correct.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: Could you just very briefly explain perhaps for
17 the lay person how the budgetary system with these outputs
18 or funding streams works? What do they represent?

19 MS SKILBECK: They represent the view into budget allocation by
20 parliament to government. The outputs are the way in
21 which we describe the goods and services government will
22 provide in return for the funding parliament approves.

23 Parliament actually appropriates, gives
24 authority, for spending on the basis of whole departments.
25 So the Department of Health and Human Services will
26 receive an appropriation for output, operating, spending,
27 and another output for capital or asset spending. But the
28 way in which that is informed is through the budget papers
29 that set out these outputs and many others, and the output
30 performance measures underneath them to describe the
31 type - the performance, literally, of the output expected

1 for the funding being approved.

2 MR MOSHINSKY: So for each output are there associated

3 performance measures in the budget paper?

4 MS SKILBECK: There are indeed. In our coordination role of

5 these we ask that they be - cover off the quantity,

6 quality, timeliness of the nature of the output provision.

7 But the degree of detail of those measures per output does

8 vary across the set of outputs, and the quality of them

9 being - some will err more on the side of measures of

10 input, the number of widgets produced perhaps, activity,

11 rather than the output, the impact one has on the

12 community through service delivery.

13 MR MOSHINSKY: These two outputs or funding streams cover what

14 I'm referring to as family violence services. So these

15 are social services that are specifically named as

16 relating to family violence, whether they be crisis

17 accommodation or preparation of safety plans or risk

18 assessments, those types of services.

19 MS SKILBECK: That's right. There will be a subset of each of

20 those.

21 MR MOSHINSKY: A subset of each of those. Is it the case that

22 there's no output or funding stream across all of the

23 government departments that specifically relates to family

24 violence?

25 MS SKILBECK: That's correct. There would never be - in the

26 current system there would not be an output across - a

27 single output across multiple departments. The key

28 principle of financial accountability to parliament is

29 that parliament can hold to account a department and a

30 minister for delivery - for the acquittal of spending

31 against that output. But there could be common outputs

1 described across departments. But we do not have any
2 outputs currently that are focused on family violence.

3 MR MOSHINSKY: In terms of the performance measures that sit
4 under the outputs, is it the case that currently there are
5 no performance measures across any of the departments that
6 relate specifically to family violence?

7 MS SKILBECK: It's true of the two you have noted. I would
8 highlight that police, policing services output under the
9 Department of Justice and Regulation, the police do
10 differentiate some of their crime statistics by those
11 related to family violence and not. But that would be the
12 only key call-out of family violence in the performance
13 measures.

14 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I invite each of the panel to comment on
15 whether there are problems with this, the fact that the
16 two funding streams that cover the family violence
17 services don't refer specifically to family violence and
18 nor do the performance measures under those two funding
19 streams. Could I start with you, Ms Skilbeck, but then
20 invite the others to comment.

21 MS SKILBECK: I will defer particularly to Kym because that is
22 the process that we would undertake in reforming outputs
23 and output performance measures. They should reflect the
24 priorities of the government and the department of the
25 day. They are able to be adjusted to those changed
26 priorities, and certainly additional output performance
27 measures can be added too. With the focus on family
28 violence I would expect that that would change
29 accordingly. But I will defer to Kym.

30 MS PEAKE: Certainly in principle there are a range of ways to
31 report on the performance of the system, but I do think

1 that it would signal very strongly the priority that is
2 given to family violence to have clear performance
3 measures in the budget papers and that the risk of pulling
4 out the specialist services to have a particular output
5 would just be the risk of sending a signal that for all
6 the rest of the services that are funded - health
7 services, the rest of the child protection - the whole of
8 the child protection system, the whole of the housing
9 system - that there is a suggestion that it's only the
10 small part that is specifically funded for specialist
11 family services that is relevant to tackling family
12 violence.

13 On balance, my advice would be definitely having
14 clearer performance measures that could be built across
15 the full range of services, but some consideration given
16 to weighing up the risk of inadvertently abrogating
17 responsibility across all of our services if we define a
18 specific output.

19 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Could I just understand that. Take the
20 housing and homelessness area. I assume that the output
21 has something to do with the provision of support for
22 people seeking housing or in some cases the provision of
23 housing. But you could have underneath that a reference
24 to - it might be quantity or quality - a measure of
25 performance in terms of family violence; is that what you
26 are saying?

27 MS PEAKE: Correct.

28 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Could I just ask you about the objectives,
29 because the department also has objectives. How is
30 progress towards objectives as compared to performance of
31 outputs measured over time?

1 MS PEAKE: It's a good question because the objectives at the
2 moment are really a proxy for measuring outcomes. So in
3 the current system the objectives then cascade down
4 through to our strategic plan and down to our annual
5 business plans. So that's the logical flow for tracking
6 how are we actually dedicating our effort towards our
7 objectives, and the performance measures that are in our
8 strategic plan get more not only to the delivery of
9 activity but the impact of that activity.

10 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: But family violence isn't in there either,
11 is it, or is it?

12 MS PEAKE: As we get down into our group plans, for example,
13 there is more reflection. But I think that, as well as
14 having clearer expression of performance measures, a
15 clearer articulation of objectives would strengthen the
16 focus. Alongside that the work that we are doing to
17 really better measure outcomes would give us the ability
18 to say, "Beyond articulating objectives, how do we
19 concretely measure at a system level and at a client level
20 that all of our services are making their contribution to
21 having impact in relation to family violence?"

22 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Is there a way that you can design your
23 budget process that would encourage a greater degree of
24 cooperation between bits of the same department, for
25 example, the relationship between housing and family
26 services, say? Could you design that in such a way that
27 you got the housing people talking more to - I'm assuming
28 they don't always - the people who provide the other
29 services? Is there a way you can design your outputs or
30 your objectives or your performance measures?

31 MS PEAKE: I think that the key to that is actually about our

1 strategic planning process and our strategic planning
2 cycle. So underneath the budget papers is a set of
3 requirements under the Financial Management Act for how we
4 undertake long-term planning and translate that into
5 annual activity.

6 In the Department of Health and Human Services we
7 have recently signed off on a new strategic planning and
8 investment cycle where at the start of the year we would
9 bring together all of our senior managers and look at is
10 our strategic plan still fit for purpose, does it need a
11 refresh, what are the measures that we want to hold
12 ourselves to account to and how do we translate a
13 three-year strategic plan into the next year's annual
14 business plan. That would then cascade down into each of
15 the responsible areas' own plans.

16 That then cascades through in the second half of
17 the year to looking at an investment process, an
18 investment planning process, which both informs our bids
19 for new money but also looks at how we should
20 re-prioritise existing effort on the basis of evidence of
21 what is working and what is lower value to make
22 recommendations to ministers. So I actually think that it
23 is that cycle, that process of planning, which has a link
24 back through to the budget process but actually has a
25 broader role in defining where we put our effort and how
26 we monitor whether we are making a difference.

27 MS SKILBECK: For completeness, if I might, the departmental
28 objectives and the indicators under them are reported in
29 the budget papers. They are also reported against in the
30 annual reports of each department. Also, in addition to
31 Ms Peake's description of the departmental process for

1 budget development the government of the day, and there
2 have been various different ways of doing this across
3 governments, will declare themes for a budget in a timing
4 that influences that departmental work. So clearly with
5 the Royal Commission bringing down its findings late
6 February we are busily restructuring a budget process to
7 fit in with that timing, for example, and that will happen
8 with the themes up to the government of the day and the
9 times as to what themes they wish to predeclare.

10 MR MOSHINSKY: Mr Eccles, could I invite you to comment on does
11 it matter or is it a problem that at present none of the
12 outputs or funding streams specifically relates to family
13 violence and, apart from the one mentioned about police
14 statistics, it seems that none of the performance measures
15 relates specifically to family violence?

16 MR ECCLES: I think it would be an incomplete reform objective
17 to have governance and system reform propelled forward
18 without there being attention paid to the funding side.
19 The two are interdependent, and reform should be mutually
20 reinforcing. There's a practical component, and then
21 there's an optical, a messaging component. I think the
22 evidence shows that there is substantial flexibility in
23 the architecture of the system in Victoria to enable us to
24 provide greater focus to objectives and measures and
25 indicators that sharpen - that give expression to the
26 government's priority and to the Commission's role. So
27 the answer to your - that's a long way of saying, yes, we
28 should be paying attention to it.

29 MR MOSHINSKY: Are there arguments in favour of actually having
30 a dedicated funding stream that relates to at least direct
31 family violence services, for instance the transparency

1 that that gives and perhaps the focus and attention that
2 that gives to that particular issue?

3 MR ECCLES: I probably can't take it much further than
4 Ms Skilbeck in that there is the - that the fundamental
5 accountability via ministers and portfolios to the
6 parliament for acquitting the appropriation which is
7 referenced to outputs I think remains the bedrock of the
8 system. So we are operating within some of the
9 constraints that go with the application of responsible
10 government to the funding system within the state. But
11 within that I think there is substantial flexibility.

12 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Is there any example of a topic, a social
13 problem or something, being used in the budgeting process
14 in a way that sort of says, "We need to make the funds
15 devoted to this topic transparent. We need to make it
16 clear that this is a whole-of-government approach", all
17 those sorts of things, as opposed to funding to
18 departments for particular things?

19 MS SKILBECK: There are a number of ways in which that's been
20 done, Commissioner, and the one that leaps to mind most
21 readily has been the significant focus on infrastructure
22 in recent budgets. There have been a number of ways of
23 illustrating the application of funds to particular
24 infrastructure priorities.

25 They haven't necessarily meant a legally defined
26 stream of, say, a particular tax feeding directly into a
27 particular spending. However, there have been a number of
28 ways of particularly reporting back to parliament or to a
29 public report outside of parliament the plan in relation
30 to infrastructure or plan in relation to another area and
31 what has actually been done, including the acquittal of

1 funds for it.

2 It would be remiss of me in the budget community
3 if I didn't note what's called hypothecation, strong
4 hypothecation of one stream of revenue to one purpose.
5 While I'm fully aware that it provides that transparency
6 in the sense of a comfort of an alignment between
7 dollars and - - -

8 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: And an expression of the importance that
9 the government gives to this.

10 MS SKILBECK: At least at first that's true. I think over
11 time, though, it can create - it certainly is an
12 inefficient use of funding across the board, but it can
13 over time create some difficulties. In this particular
14 space there's no obvious direct source of funding in the
15 manner of problem gambling and the tax which the state is
16 able to apply and does apply to gaming activity - - -

17 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I will come back to you on that issue.
18 I know Mr Moshinsky has some questions to ask you about
19 that.

20 MR MOSHINSKY: Yes, we might come back to that one. Just
21 before we move on, Ms Skilbeck, is there a process for
22 output reviews by the Department of Treasury and Finance?

23 MS SKILBECK: It's an ongoing process. We ask and have
24 discussions with departments early in the New Year,
25 knowing that we have spoken with departments throughout
26 the year, whether they do want to change outputs and
27 output performance measures. We hope that we get that
28 information in a timely way so that our budget
29 deliberation process can be aligned to new structures.
30 But often it comes quite late in the budget process. So
31 it can be March/April.

1 MR MOSHINSKY: Does that process include some evaluation of
2 whether the funding stream for a particular category is
3 adequate to achieve what's desired for that category?

4 MS SKILBECK: No, it's a separate process. We call our funding
5 source the consolidated fund for good reason. It's a
6 consolidated picture. The priorities within that are
7 declared by government in the process of budget
8 deliberation. The output structure is the means by which
9 they measure that. So it provides the means of
10 description of the goods and services they are going to
11 provide. But the whole funding picture is a bigger
12 examination across the entirety of budget, both capital
13 and output.

14 MR MOSHINSKY: In your statement, Ms Skilbeck, you say that
15 there's considerable flexibility within the existing
16 structure to do things differently. Could you outline
17 what some of that flexibility is in terms of options that
18 are available to do things differently, specifically as
19 they relate to family violence social services?

20 MS SKILBECK: Yes, certainly. The elements that we have just
21 discussed, so both the departmental objectives and the
22 indicators of them, are free to ministers to seek change,
23 usually, again, according to the budget process, to
24 facilitate complete publication of budget. Likewise, the
25 outputs can be changed and the output performance
26 measures.

27 A slightly more restrictive process by choice,
28 because they are the means by which parliament assures
29 itself of the goods and services it's providing funding
30 authority for, we have a process or the government has a
31 process by which any changes, significant changes,

1 particularly deletions of output performance measures,
2 are - the views of the parliamentary accounts and
3 estimates committee are sought, and their views provided
4 back to government and we don't complete the deletion of
5 those measures until their views have been considered by
6 government, and that occurs after budget.

7 Within that - again, very flexible. It really
8 does depend on ministers seeking that opportunity. We
9 have a strong discussion about the pros and cons of any
10 particular change put forward in relation to the degree of
11 specificity that the overall picture will provide. For
12 example, if a minister sought to combine two outputs, does
13 that provide insufficient transparencies for both
14 ourselves and for parliament? Likewise, are the output
15 performance measures actually meaningful? Are they
16 providing us with real information? Does the data exist
17 so that they can be provided according to the cycle of
18 publication? So in terms of the matrix that's the
19 flexibility we have.

20 In terms of there is flexibility after parliament
21 has approved their appropriation, where departments within
22 the 12 months of the budget year find that they actually
23 need rather than what they estimated a different mix of
24 output to capital, they can seek that approval from the
25 Treasurer. There are a number of other mechanisms to
26 rearrange the classification of the funding provided at
27 budget time.

28 MR MOSHINSKY: Is another option in terms of that flexibility
29 that there could be an appropriation which relates to
30 matters across departments but given to a lead agency?

31 MS SKILBECK: Appropriations are made to an agency. The

1 purpose of them is then underneath that appropriation. So
2 if you want a joint activity there would be either funding
3 provided to one department and arrangements for provision
4 across departments or there would be appropriation
5 provided to each department and they jointly work together
6 thereafter. But the appropriation itself is by
7 department.

8 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I ask each of the panel to comment on this.

9 If there is all this flexibility within the confines of
10 the current structure, why is it that the recognition of
11 family violence in the funding streams and performance
12 measures really hasn't occurred?

13 MS PEAKE: Part of the answer to that question is there has
14 been work that's been happening across government to look
15 at how to flexibly deploy resources. I'm not sure that
16 I would start from a premise that it never happens. Some
17 of the examples that have been talked about through the
18 hearings of the multi-disciplinary centres, the joint work
19 around risk assessment and risk management, some of the
20 initiatives where there's been co-location of legal
21 support in hospitals, for example, are all examples where
22 funding that is sitting in different portfolios has been
23 brought together in different sorts of ways to get a
24 better effect - - -

25 MR MOSHINSKY: Sorry to interrupt, but my question is really
26 more directed to the outputs in terms of funding streams
27 and the performance measures - - -

28 MS PEAKE: So the measures rather than the use of the money.

29 MR MOSHINSKY: Which have an important role to play, as I think
30 Mr Eccles indicated, but they don't at the moment seem to
31 recognise family violence.

1 MS PEAKE: I think that it really is an historical issue around
2 particularly the source of funds have come through either
3 negotiations with the Commonwealth where there has been a
4 focus on - I think Mr Eccles talked earlier about the
5 homelessness national partnership agreement, there's
6 funding that's in the family support bucket that really
7 came through in the first instance really focused on
8 strengthening early intervention and strengthening family
9 support, none of which is to resile from my earlier
10 comment that I do think that there should be more emphasis
11 in the performance measures. So really I think it's an
12 artefact of history and priorities at different points in
13 time, and it's really important that we shine more of a
14 light on family violence.

15 MR ECCLES: It is partly about the goad to action. Family
16 violence is now assuming a prominence in the social
17 discourse and in the attention of government. The Royal
18 Commission is witness to that. So with that attention and
19 with the commitment to reform comes the responsibility to
20 look at all of the settings, whether it's governance and
21 accountability and funding. So it's a product, I think,
22 partly of the prominence that the issue now holds in the
23 minds of society and government that means that we are now
24 paying it the attention that it perhaps wasn't paid in the
25 past.

26 MS SKILBECK: I would also add an observation, as I don't think
27 it is an explanation, but the performance measures
28 reported to parliament need to be based on verifiable data
29 and, as I think the Commission has heard in many different
30 dimensions, that information is of poor dataset at the
31 moment. So I would encourage the Commission in

1 considering that particular issue to factor in at what
2 time that data is going - or the cascading improvement in
3 data that might be possible to be reflected in output
4 performance measures and at what stage of development.

5 Because it does go to parliament and we do - the
6 Department of Treasury and Finance does seek to maintain
7 some consistency to parliament in the view they have on
8 the way the budget is being appropriated, it would be good
9 to have a strong dataset for the output performance
10 measures once they are introduced to parliament. Of
11 course, that doesn't preclude reporting them publicly and
12 changing them regularly by public reporting beforehand,
13 but to provide some sort of continuity for measures once
14 they go to parliament.

15 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: There is a bit of a catch-22 there, isn't
16 there, because you don't have good data, so you can't
17 recognise the existence of the problem, so you can't then
18 allocate - well, define it as an output and it will take
19 some time to get the data. I'm being a bit unfair.
20 I know that's not quite what you said.

21 MS SKILBECK: I acknowledge your point, Commissioner. I think
22 the point I'm making is more in terms of the actual output
23 performance measures. The output itself, we certainly
24 know we can trace the dollars that apply to a particular
25 area. The question is what is - and there are trade-offs.
26 There are multiple reasonable ways of describing the array
27 of outputs that we produce.

28 MR MOSHINSKY: Mr Eccles, in paragraph 94 of your statement you
29 say you cannot overemphasise the significant cultural
30 change required within the Public Service to foster new
31 ways of working. Is that perhaps an issue here for

1 looking at how things could be done differently,
2 reconstructing outputs or performance measures or
3 objectives?

4 MR ECCLES: Indeed, and it's a parallel consideration, the
5 matters that we traversed this morning won't be achieved
6 without fundamental change in the way we think about our
7 responsibilities of government and how we think about our
8 partnerships with the people with whom we deliver services
9 and the place of the individuals who are on the receiving
10 end of services.

11 So all of those fundamental reassessments of how
12 we operate require a deep cultural recalibration. I think
13 this actually tends to be more of a mechanical response to
14 that. The funding arrangements, allowing for the caveats
15 that Melissa has mentioned, will keep pace with the reform
16 that the government seeks to introduce. They are
17 ultimately mechanical and they can be made to fit the
18 purpose. So, if it is culture, I think culture is on the
19 system reform end. Funding is less about culture and more
20 about having the mechanism in place to keep pace with the
21 reform which is dependent upon cultural change.

22 MS SKILBECK: I would agree with that entirely. Funding should
23 follow the form, the efficient structure of service
24 delivery.

25 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I understand that proposition. But
26 I suppose one of my questions is whether the fact that
27 services are delivered in teaspoonfuls, the jam jars,
28 whether the output process contributes to that; that is,
29 if you have particular outputs, performance measures under
30 them in different areas, does that contribute to producing
31 a system which has lots of little bits and you can't see

1 the overall picture?

2 MS SKILBECK: The outputs we have are very large in the first
3 place, just as a practical point, relative to the
4 specialist programs we are talking about. I would be
5 surprised if it is having that sort of practical impact on
6 the ground. In a way I would be pleasantly surprised
7 because it would mean the outputs are a strong behavioural
8 influence on the way in which we provide government
9 services. I don't believe they are quite that effective.
10 But they are not encouraging currently a focus on family
11 violence, for example. So at best they are out of step
12 with that focus.

13 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: I was just looking at table 3 in your
14 statement, which is of course not the whole picture. But
15 there are a whole lot of little bits, if you like - - -

16 MS SKILBECK: Yes, you are quite right.

17 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Of very small amounts, really. Some of
18 these might or might not be combined. I just wondered
19 whether that epitomised the problem that I put to you.

20 MS SKILBECK: I think it's an example of it but actually a
21 slightly different point. The table we are looking at are
22 the output initiatives for the whole-of-government family
23 violence initiative in this year's budget, '15/16 budget.
24 What you see are the titles of initiatives, and that as
25 much reflects the desire of the government of the day to
26 illustrate the focus areas in a particular range of areas.
27 They do indeed get aggregated up in terms of delivery.
28 So, no, the situation is not quite that disaggregated on
29 an ongoing basis.

30 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I just follow on from that discussion about
31 the way the government contracts for the provision of

1 services with you, Ms Peake. This came up a bit this
2 morning. Some of the issues that have been raised concern
3 multiple small contracts with particular outputs, and at
4 the earlier hearings there was some evidence from
5 Professor Oberklaid to suggest that one should be moving
6 more towards an outcomes model rather than outputs model.
7 I'm just talking at the service level agreement level of
8 the system. Is that something that is a good idea in
9 principle, and is it achievable within the confines of
10 this current budgetary structure?

11 MS PEAKE: Really, as Ms Skilbeck has outlined, how we then
12 apply the funding that we have received in broad outputs
13 is the next level of how the budget management system
14 works. It is absolutely the case currently that we have a
15 proliferation of small programs that have very
16 prescriptive description of what is to be delivered.
17 I think as we discussed earlier this morning moving to a
18 model where there are fewer programs, so some broadbanding
19 of programs, with more certainty in the duration of the
20 funding agreement and clearer both definition of the
21 outcomes that are to be achieved and the evidence-based
22 interventions that will achieve them is certainly where we
23 need to go.

24 I think we will move on to the commissioning
25 piece, but in then defining the way in which that funding
26 is provided it really is important to look at the types of
27 services that are being procured, the types of service
28 providers and the types of - of the clients who are
29 receiving those services to just then have a funding model
30 and a way of allocating the funding that is fit for
31 purpose.

1 MR MOSHINSKY: Just to take an example, and tell me if this is
2 an accurate example, with the distinction between one type
3 of approach to contracting and another, in the
4 homelessness context if one were to contract for the
5 output of a certain number of nights of crisis
6 accommodation, a contract could be structured that way.
7 On the other hand, if the outcome was designed in terms of
8 making the woman safe, one might try to achieve that in
9 different ways, including safeguarding her staying in the
10 home. Is that an example of this distinction between
11 outputs and outcomes?

12 MS PEAKE: Yes, it's certainly a distinction between buying a
13 very prescriptive set of activities or outputs and how you
14 commission in a way that gives more flexibility. What
15 would usually then happen is that underneath that would
16 be - the contract would also say for whom, how much and
17 some boundaries on the types of services that are provided
18 through that funding stream.

19 So one of the things that you would want to avoid
20 is that we have a funding stream that is for schools, and
21 that we don't end up again not having schools taking the
22 responsibility for the investment they have for making
23 sure that children of women who might not be able to live
24 safely at home are having to make a different sort of
25 contribution from a smaller source of funds to meet the
26 universal services that are funded elsewhere. So that's
27 just a practical example that, while there should be a
28 broad outcome and flexibility, I do think there needs to
29 be some definition of the bundle of services that the
30 contract is for.

31 MR MOSHINSKY: And re-designing the commissioning of services

1 so as to focus on appropriate outcomes at the service
2 level agreement level, that is quite possible within the
3 current structure which has budget outputs at the top.

4 MS PEAKE: Yes, it is, because the budget outputs are how money
5 is provided to the department. From there it's then a
6 matter of how that money is then allocated to the actual
7 services.

8 MR MOSHINSKY: So why is it that this hasn't happened already,
9 more of a shift towards that type of well-designed
10 outcomes approach at the service level agreement - - -

11 MS PEAKE: So a couple of really practical reasons, one of
12 which we have touched on a few times today, that to be
13 able to manage contracts to outcomes you need to have both
14 good definition of those outcomes and good data sources to
15 measure progress against those outcomes, and that is very
16 much a work in process. So it's a little bit chicken and
17 egg.

18 The second is that there is - it's a really quite
19 significant re-design piece to look at, well, what are all
20 of the programs that should be bundled together and what's
21 the most appropriate funding and contracting model to
22 support the delivery or the achievement of those outcomes.
23 So what we have seen over the past few years is some
24 really interesting trials of what some different sorts of
25 approaches might be and learning from those. I think the
26 next step really is to look at how do we bring some of
27 those different types of models to scale.

28 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I just go back to the sort of high-level
29 budgetary process and outputs, and, Mr Eccles, you raised
30 some possibilities of actually restructuring at that level
31 quite differently through an outcomes approach at the high

1 level. Could you speak to that, please?

2 MR ECCLES: There's the allowing for the practical implications
3 of moving to that approach without having the data to
4 support sort of, if you like, the verification of the
5 results, and I think it needs to be intimately accompanied
6 by having robust data to support an outcomes based model,
7 and I think we should as a system perhaps experiment,
8 trial such an approach, but - - -

9 MR MOSHINSKY: Just to clarify, in terms of an outcomes model
10 you are talking about a whole-of-systems outcomes model,
11 not just the service level agreement?

12 MR ECCLES: That's correct. I think that's where you were
13 taking me.

14 MR MOSHINSKY: Yes, it is. I just wanted to make sure it was
15 clear.

16 MR ECCLES: So the benefits of moving to an approach to the
17 system including funding that's referenced to outcomes, it
18 builds coalitions that are motivated by a shared purpose
19 because people are more invested in an outcome than they
20 are in an output. If you are trying to generate community
21 and collective consciousness around the support for a
22 policy objective, then a description of an outcome is a
23 more persuasive way of capturing the collective
24 imagination of the community.

25 It can encourage a variety of approaches to be
26 considered. So by definition if you have something framed
27 as an outcome there are multiple ways in which the outcome
28 can be achieved. So it becomes a stimulus for innovation
29 and experimentation. There is something about just
30 getting coalitions motivated by a shared purpose. So you
31 are more likely to get the partnering of different parts

1 of civil society if you are moving to an outcomes-based
2 approach.

3 So the rhetoric of moving to outcomes is
4 supported by a whole series of tangible system-wide
5 benefits. But, again, the risk of moving to it without
6 having the mechanisms to ensure that it can be properly
7 accounted for and that the funding is properly and
8 efficiently expended shouldn't be overstated.

9 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I move then to a new topic.

10 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Sorry, Mr Moshinsky, just before you do,
11 just to clarify this in my own mind, you could, for
12 example, define an outcome as being reduction in the
13 overall incidence of family violence?

14 MR ECCLES: You could.

15 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Then you would have to try to track it
16 over time to see whether it worked and you would have to
17 take a reasonably long view because that's not going to
18 happen in a year's time?

19 MR ECCLES: Exactly.

20 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: So that's the sort of approach you are
21 talking about?

22 MR ECCLES: Indeed.

23 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: As anyone else done that successfully?
24 I understand in New Zealand they are further down the
25 track of using an outcomes - - -

26 MR ECCLES: Yes. I think my witness statement draws attention
27 to New Zealand, Scotland, Virginia, where they have
28 arranged their system with a limited number of high-level
29 outcomes.

30 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Good; thank you.

31 MR ECCLES: So it's a proven concept. I'm not familiar enough

1 with those systems to know in the long run how successful
2 or indeed how you could compare the past with the present
3 to see whether there in fact has been a change in the
4 outcome for an individual or a set of individuals.

5 MS SKILBECK: Could I just note that in I think each of those
6 three instances an outcomes-based framework to provide
7 that sort of focus co-exists with the outputs-based
8 financial accountability. They are not substitutes or
9 they have not in the past been substitutes.

10 Likewise, in New Zealand in particular, our
11 closest comparator, their outcomes they refer to as key
12 result areas, and they confine themselves to I think eight
13 or nine, depending how you count them. They have a much
14 more restrictive version of output appropriation. I was
15 noting the evidence provided by the New Zealand
16 Productivity Commission during this week and a description
17 of the degree of resistance to pooling funding. I would
18 note that just because this is one of the very unusual
19 differences between our two systems that I have described
20 to you - that parliament here appropriates funding by
21 department, in effect two allocations, one of output and
22 one of asset. In New Zealand the parliament there
23 allocates by three subsets of every output for every
24 department and every agency, and then I think another
25 breakup of at least two segments of asset. So it's a much
26 more specific and a much more confined allocation in the
27 first place.

28 Then, further, they don't have those flexibility
29 mechanisms I described of post-allocation - sorry,
30 post-parliament appropriation of funding being able to
31 adjust within bounds the allocation thereafter. So they

1 start with a much more granular appropriation of funds by
2 parliament to departments and agencies there.

3 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

4 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I turn next to perhaps a related topic of
5 pooling of funds. In the New Zealand Productivity
6 Commission report, and we have referred to this this
7 morning, one of the models that's suggested particularly
8 for individuals with complex needs is a navigator model.
9 The navigator model set out in this proposal is someone
10 who doesn't provide many direct services themselves but
11 essentially case manages and navigates the system for the
12 individual by finding the right services for that person
13 and purchasing those services with a package of funding
14 that is made available to the navigator, and the navigator
15 would have control over that funding.

16 With that type of model is that possible under
17 our funding system and is there an issue where the
18 services that might be purchased come from a number of
19 different funding streams at present - is there a problem
20 moving to the navigator model like that and providing a
21 package of funding to the navigator to purchase multiple
22 services?

23 MS SKILBECK: The short answer is no. We do something very
24 similar currently within the disability services area. So
25 the funding to department would be for that program, and
26 then the purchase of services, if it was across
27 departmental boundaries, would simply be by invoicing.

28 MR MOSHINSKY: Ms Peake, do you wish to comment on that?

29 MS PEAKE: I was just going to add to that that there are two
30 approaches that you can really have the navigator apply.

31 The first is that brokerage model where they are acting as

1 purchaser themselves, and the other is where they are
2 really acting almost as advocate to achieve access to a
3 service for their client, and in the disability space
4 there is a bit of both, and I think that would be relevant
5 in any model in family violence as well.

6 MR MOSHINSKY: Both of those can work within the confines of
7 the current structure?

8 MS PEAKE: Correct.

9 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I move then to a topic that came up this
10 morning, which is the possibility of having both a centre
11 for research and primary prevention and also another
12 entity having a role of performance management of the
13 entire system and associated matters. One of the points
14 that you, Mr Eccles, raised was there might not seem to be
15 as obvious a funding source as in other models that we
16 referred to. Could I invite you now to speak to that
17 issue of funding for a centre or funding for that entity?

18 MR ECCLES: Sure. The examples that I was drawing upon, the
19 TAC and the Responsible Gambling Foundation and VicHealth,
20 all have the ability to source funds from whether it's
21 payments by motorists or tax under the Victorian Tobacco
22 Act or via the gambling trust fund, which is taxes levied
23 on gaming venue operators. So there's this correlation
24 between a source of revenue and the public purpose.

25 There is no obvious source of revenue that I can
26 think of to support the family violence system, which
27 means that you either create something of that character
28 or you rely upon the appropriation. I can only put it in
29 those terms - that in the absence of an obvious source of
30 revenue that's related to that purpose, then you do depend
31 upon the annual appropriation.

1 MR MOSHINSKY: What do you mean by "create something of that
2 character"?

3 MR ECCLES: If there was - if, and now we are on - I'm
4 probably - it's a bit of a stream of consciousness. If
5 there was a family violence levy that was connected to
6 something and - if you ask me the question of what it
7 would connect to that's when the logic begins to fall over
8 because I haven't thought it through, but if there was a
9 family violence levy of some sort connected to a household
10 or something, then you could apply that dedicated source
11 of levy revenue to the operation of the centre and then of
12 the system more broadly. The difficulty in all of that is
13 that there is not an obvious source of levy revenue.

14 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: It has been put to us, for example, that
15 there is a relationship between the incidence of family
16 violence and the presence of packaged liquor outlets.
17 It's also been put to us that there's a link between
18 gambling and family violence, which I think is now
19 conceded. There's also that community - what is it
20 called - the common purpose fund, which is I think from -
21 - -

22 MR ECCLES: Community support fund.

23 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Sorry, community support fund.

24 MR ECCLES: I suspect, Commissioner, that - I mean I know that
25 the government would be interested in all of your best
26 endeavours.

27 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: They are all a little bit way out, but, as
28 I said, there is evidence about the connection between
29 packaged liquor outlets and family violence. So you might
30 be able to create a link of that kind.

31 MR ECCLES: We would obviously welcome your - - -

1 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: There might be some constitutional
2 problems there because it might be an excise or something.

3 MR ECCLES: We would welcome your contribution around that.

4 MR MOSHINSKY: Can I invite the other members of the panel to
5 comment on a potential funding source if there were to be
6 a centre and this additional entity dealing with family
7 violence?

8 MS SKILBECK: I would make one observation. It is a fairly
9 self-evident one, but the overwhelming proportion of
10 government activity is funded through appropriation,
11 through the consolidated fund, and the specific examples
12 we are discussing are the exception, not the rule.

13 I did start to make the point earlier that - the
14 hypothecation initially that a direct linking of a stream
15 of tax funds to a particular stream of spending has a
16 presentational attraction, it does create risks going
17 forward as to the consistency of that revenue source.
18 There is an interesting circularity, without suggesting
19 this is happening currently, but the receipt by the state
20 of gaming tax is fed by gaming activity. That gaming
21 activity then funds the community support fund from which
22 the first call is the Problem Gambling Foundation work,
23 and then a number of other uses are applied where it's
24 possible thereafter. The more successful the foundation
25 is, the less that revenue stream will be available; and
26 that would be success, I think, in anyone's eyes. But
27 there is that inherent contradiction to the arrangement
28 which I think deserves some decent policy thinking.

29 MR MOSHINSKY: Ms Peake, do you have anything to add on that?

30 MS PEAKE: Nothing to add.

31 MR MOSHINSKY: Do the Commissioners have any further questions

1 for this panel?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Ms Peake, you were talking
3 about moving to an outcomes-based approach to service
4 delivery, which seems to be very attractive. But, as you
5 would be aware, there are lots of complications and
6 complexity about measurement, sometimes there's the
7 creation of perverse incentives, there's the problem of
8 actual attribution - you know, what actually produces the
9 outcome. We have seen in other systems, like the
10 Australian employment services system, that, despite the
11 best efforts and various iterations that try to drive
12 behaviour of providers by outcomes, it still fails highly
13 disadvantaged people.

14 So do you have a sense of how far we are down the
15 path to that, or is it something you can move to
16 reasonably quickly, or perhaps even what would be the sort
17 of things that you would need to do in the next, say, two
18 or three years to start to go down that path? What are
19 the dependencies?

20 MS PEAKE: It's a really excellent question, and, coming back
21 to Special Counsel's question about why haven't we done it
22 yet, the risk of perverse incentives is a really important
23 consideration. Either you have the incentive to only
24 support people who have lower needs, as we have seen
25 sometimes be the case in employment services, or that the
26 benefits of an intervention accrue to one sector by virtue
27 of the activities of another. So the design of the
28 incentives and the design of the sort of reward schemes
29 need absolutely really careful design, they need careful
30 monitoring and trialling to make sure that they aren't
31 going to have those perverse consequences.

1 It is also possible to have funding arrangements
2 where there is more flexibility without going so far as
3 having money at risk for a particular result. An example
4 of that is the work that is happening at the moment which
5 connects to the individualised package idea as well where
6 we are just in the process of an EOI for some flexible
7 packages for specialist family violence services for women
8 who have experienced the sort of very serious risk of harm
9 at the crisis point of the family violence system and
10 looking at packages of up to \$7,000 that would enable
11 those service providers engaging with other services to
12 determine what does this person, this woman, need or this
13 victim need.

14 So that's an example where there is more
15 flexibility and it is geared towards ensuring that this
16 woman is safe and in a position to be able to stabilise
17 her life, usually a her, her life, but it doesn't go so
18 far as to say that there is a component of the money that
19 it is at risk depending on the outcome.

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Accepting that this is a
21 long-term journey you have to go on, do you have a sense
22 of what we need to be doing in the next year or two to lay
23 some foundations for that approach?

24 MS PEAKE: I think there is an exercise to be done, which is
25 really modelling what are the funding mechanisms that are
26 going to be effective in giving more flexibility, creating
27 the accountability for results and providing the right
28 incentives to focus the support on the people who need it
29 most. We can do that then really using some of our data
30 to do a sort of dry run to say what do we think would
31 happen if we had these different sorts of funding

1 mechanisms, obviously engaging deeply, co-producing this
2 with the sector to get their feedback on how did they
3 think different sorts of funding models would play out,
4 stepping through then from a co-produced design process to
5 do some trials - and I don't mean pilots; I mean trials at
6 scale that really look at what are the consequences, what
7 are the effects of different sorts of funding mechanisms
8 with a partner - maybe the centre - who is actually
9 helping us to evaluate as we go, which then enable an
10 informed decision about refinement and system-wide
11 rollout.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: I have just one other question.

13 Mr Eccles, do you ever see a role for for-profit service
14 providers in the area of assisting people who are victims
15 of family violence?

16 MR ECCLES: For profit?

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: Yes.

18 MR ECCLES: I would imagine that we should be blind partly to
19 the motivation of those who are seeking to work with
20 government in the delivery of services. The fact that
21 they are motivated by a profit motive as against a motive
22 to contribute to the public benefit or the social good,
23 I don't know whether you can calculate a premium which you
24 add to the not-for-profit provider to recognise that.
25 I suspect government - to repeat myself, government should
26 be blind to the motivations so long as they are capable of
27 delivering the result.

28 MS PEAKE: I might just add one point to that. In a sector
29 neutral model there is still I think an important
30 characteristic of this service system which is around an
31 expectation of collaboration. So achieving results where

1 you are going to design services around integrated with
2 people's lives rather than what is convenient for
3 different sorts of service providers is absolutely
4 dependent on a range of professionals working together.

5 So one of the criteria for any type of provider
6 being part of a more integrated model would be the both
7 demonstrated preparedness and the demonstrated follow
8 through on working in that way, whereas in other service
9 systems competition is more naturally a feature of how to
10 deliver results.

11 MR ECCLES: And there is the admitted risk that if everything
12 is monetised, then what is the role for volunteers, and
13 that's a bigger question, because I'm not sure we need to
14 be - we shouldn't be dependent upon volunteers, but they
15 do contribute a significant part to civil society and we
16 have to be careful to preserve their role and legitimacy.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NICHOLSON: And in fact strengthening
18 social capital around vulnerable people.

19 MR ECCLES: Yes, and if there was a way of being able to
20 calculate a premium on social capital and its contribution
21 to the effectiveness of a system and that that comes
22 through the not-for-profit sector rather than the
23 for-profit sector, then that is a legitimate part of how
24 you organise your market.

25 MR MOSHINSKY: Commissioners, if there are no further questions
26 I ask that the panel be excused and suggest perhaps we
27 take a 15-minute adjournment.

28 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you very much.

29 <(THE WITNESSES WITHDREW)

30 (Short adjournment.)

31 MR MOSHINSKY: Commissioners, the last witness is the Chief

1 Commissioner of Police. If he could please be sworn.

2 <GRAHAM LEONARD ASHTON, sworn and examined:

3 MR MOSHINSKY: You hold the position of Chief Commissioner of
4 Police of Victoria Police?

5 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Yes, that's correct.

6 MR MOSHINSKY: I might just indicate that the focus of this
7 week is the topic of governance and therefore that most of
8 the questions that I will be addressing to you relate to
9 that topic, and just note for the record that we have
10 heard from several other senior members of Victoria
11 Police, including Assistant Commissioner McWhirter, head
12 of Family Violence Command, Assistant Commissioner
13 Cornelius, and I don't propose to go over grounds that we
14 have already covered with those witnesses.

15 Could I start by inviting you to comment in the
16 context of the topic of governance that we are looking at
17 what you see as the role of leadership in terms of
18 governance in relation to family violence as an issue?

19 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: I see leadership as critical to any
20 model that is put in place around achieving effective
21 governance in this area. Having a cascading leadership
22 model that goes all the way to the top of government in my
23 view is absolutely critical. As we know across other
24 areas where society has attempted to achieve change,
25 widespread change, in my view that's always been best
26 achieved when you have had leadership voices consistently
27 out there raising attention to this issue - role modelling
28 behaviours, particularly behaviours of narrative, being
29 critically important to success. So in my view any model
30 that's in place must have leadership in its core, and that
31 leadership must cascade through any model, in my view, as

1 well. I think it's absolutely critical.

2 MR MOSHINSKY: In terms of individuals showing leadership you
3 have referred to politicians, and would that also extend
4 to your office of Chief Commissioner of Police?

5 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Absolutely, yes. It's an important
6 role in terms of setting community standards, standards of
7 behaviour, obviously, but also setting the standard in
8 setting expectations of community behaviour is an
9 important part of the role of a Chief Commissioner in a
10 range of different areas, and family violence is one of
11 those most critical areas.

12 MR MOSHINSKY: I appreciate that the work of Victoria Police
13 when it interacts with family violence is mainly at the
14 crisis response end, but could I ask you to comment in
15 terms of the overall governmental system with the other
16 parts of government as well what you see as the importance
17 of prevention work in relation to family violence?

18 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: In my view prevention is critical,
19 and any model that we develop we would hope would have a
20 heavy, heavy emphasis on prevention. You will have
21 received evidence, I'm sure, through the previous weeks
22 talking about the amount of incidents that occur in a
23 family violence context before emergency services are
24 called, before, for example, police are called to an
25 incident.

26 Those early points of intervention in our current
27 system appear to be lost. Those areas when help could be
28 sought, assistance could be sought, from the services
29 sector particularly are not sought and are not achieved,
30 so that we see an escalation in violent behaviour or other
31 behaviour that can lead to family violence not being seen,

1 not being assessed from a risk perspective until it gets
2 to the point when violence is occurring and then police
3 are called. That prevention element must be key to a
4 solution in this area.

5 MR MOSHINSKY: In the evidence this morning we had a panel of
6 the secretaries of four government departments, Department
7 of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Health and Human
8 Services, Department of Education and Training, and
9 Department of Justice and Regulation. In terms of
10 governance structure, the Secretary of the Department of
11 Premier and Cabinet put forward a model, which the others
12 agreed with, which might contemplate that there be
13 essentially two new entities relating to family violence.
14 One would be a centre which would have a research
15 component and also a prevention component, perhaps loosely
16 modelled on the TAC's work; and the other would be another
17 entity, whether it be a commissioner or an
18 inspector-general or some other entity, which would have a
19 role in reviewing the performance of the overall system
20 and providing views on that to government. Because of
21 the crucial role played by Victoria Police in the response
22 to family violence, can I invite you to comment on those
23 proposals?

24 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Those proposals broadly sound
25 consistent with what I would think would be in that sort
26 of model of response. Certainly having a person or an
27 entity, some sort of commissioner or some entity of that
28 type, I think is critical to provide a sustainable model
29 into the future. I think that's quite important.

30 We have seen in the road policing context -
31 you mentioned the TAC model, but in a road safety

1 context - I should put that more broadly; in a road safety
2 context - we have the MUARC at Monash University that
3 provides what is world-leading research in road safety as
4 part of the road safety model in our state, and then you
5 have the TAC leveraging off that very closely, leveraging
6 off that research, and then providing an ongoing
7 sustainable funding mechanism into the road safety sector,
8 which in and of itself is a very complex sector, similar
9 to family violence - perhaps not quite as complex as
10 family violence but it's not far short.

11 So I think that sort of model where we are able
12 to get the research centre of excellence thing going from
13 a preventative context and then have the championing
14 nature of a commissioner or some sustainable entity would
15 in my view be a good model.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: One of the topics that came up in the panel
17 immediately preceding your evidence which related to
18 funding issues was the question of is there, apart from
19 general appropriation, a funding source that might be
20 utilised or hypothecated to fund one or both of those new
21 entities. Have you got any ideas on that topic?

22 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: It is something I have given some
23 thought to and - not something I have discussed more
24 broadly, I might add, so I guess it's rolling it out here
25 first and untested, but I would have thought that there
26 could be some opportunities for the proceeds of crime to
27 fund some sort of initiative. We have a proceeds of crime
28 regime in Victoria, and perhaps if that were enhanced with
29 potentially further unexplained wealth provisions or
30 something of that nature you could create an ability to
31 hypothecate funds in order to fund the preventative work

1 and the research work and even the services sector to some
2 degree in relation to family violence.

3 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Mr Ashton, do you have any knowledge about
4 the size of that proceeds of crime fund and where it goes
5 currently?

6 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Currently it goes into the
7 consolidated revenues. But one of the narratives around
8 unexplained wealth laws is that the criminals pay for the
9 fight against crime. There's perhaps not that direct link
10 with criminals and paying for the family violence because
11 we don't have an asset confiscation scheme per se in this
12 arena in almost all cases, but it does provide that
13 narrative around those who are perpetrating harm in the
14 community funding the response. To me, that has some
15 merit.

16 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Thank you.

17 MR MOSHINSKY: In the evidence at the earlier public hearings
18 from Assistant Commissioner McWhirter he explained the
19 Family Violence Command structure and also the family
20 violence units that have been set up. Can I ask you
21 whether there are sort of any plans to change that going
22 forward or tweak it going forward, or is that structure
23 likely to stay for the foreseeable future?

24 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: It is new. We have only recently
25 had the Assistant Commissioner for Family Violence
26 appointed. That was an initiative of Ken Lay when he was
27 the Chief Commissioner. It's still really in its infancy
28 at the top level, but it is already having an impact in
29 terms of setting standard and getting research off the
30 ground, particularly around the best practice sitting at
31 the moment around the L17s, the form L17, and getting some

1 work done around that, and it's looking at a centralised
2 approach to training, skill set improvement of both our
3 first line of response officers but also our family
4 violence units.

5 We have had the specialist family violence units
6 in place now for quite some time, and I think we have now
7 32 of those around the state. We anticipate that we could
8 have more of those as the Family Violence Command assesses
9 the need for those around the state. So we will certainly
10 perhaps see that model continuing. I certainly have no
11 anticipated plan to change to a different model because
12 the family violence teams are providing a focused
13 response, particularly to recidivist offenders but also to
14 supporting recidivist victims, and I think it is a good
15 model to have that specialist component.

16 One of the challenges we have at the moment is
17 how that is staffed, and at the moment we have a rotation
18 policy through those family violence units. Whether that
19 changes or not in the future, I think we will have to have
20 a look at how that is bedding down and what are the
21 benefits as opposed to what aren't the benefits in
22 relation to that. We do get the benefits of knowledge
23 transfer by moving people through those units and back out
24 to our first response cohort, and that happens in this
25 way.

26 It is very taxing work also. To be in those
27 family violence units we know, a bit like our sexual
28 offending investigations units, our SOCITs, we know that's
29 very, very taxing as well when you are dealing with
30 significant levels of community harm, and some quite
31 graphic, and family violence is no exception. So if we

1 did have a specialist cohort there, for example, we would
2 have to put perhaps some time limits on how long they were
3 in those units.

4 So there are some challenges in making that
5 staffing model work. We understand the benefits of
6 specialisation, particularly in this area, and family
7 violence units are where that specialisation needs to
8 grow. So we could potentially perhaps see at the core of
9 the larger family violence units some more standing
10 expertise capacity.

11 But some of the family violence units, the newer
12 ones, are very small. We have only a handful of members
13 in there. So that would be more difficult to achieve with
14 some of the smaller units. But in the larger units we
15 could start to get some of that balance.

16 So that is perhaps just a bit of a journey of the
17 vision there as to what might transpire with those
18 particular units.

19 MR MOSHINSKY: One of the ideas that's been raised is
20 whether - and this is sort of a related question relating
21 to workforce - there may be roles for bringing in people
22 with particular specialty into that work perhaps as
23 unsworn employees of Victoria Police. Do you think
24 there's merit in consideration of whether there could be
25 more of a role for unsworn members with different - - -

26 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Yes, there's absolutely a role,
27 yes, and I can see that occurring. If we look at our
28 multi-disciplinary centres for responding to sexual
29 assault, they are outstanding examples of rolled-up
30 service delivery where you have no wrong door for the
31 victim to go through. They go to the MDC, sometimes even

1 just to have a conversation about what they have
2 experienced and to understand it better. But in that
3 building they have got CASA experts, they have got
4 obviously our police that can investigate the matter. We
5 can bring medical support to that as well as counselling
6 support to support that victim.

7 They are police - unsworn experts. We have our
8 sworn police in there. But that expertise has come from
9 other agencies and it is brought into one location. That
10 works quite well. That is where the victim can come to us
11 for that support.

12 Where that becomes challenging in the family
13 violence context is we take the support to the victim in
14 family violence. So that becomes slightly more
15 challenging in terms of a service delivery model, but at
16 its concept agencies being able to bring their experts
17 into one team to deliver that support has to be the way
18 forward, in my view, and when it's done it works well.

19 MR MOSHINSKY: Another topic that was the subject of evidence
20 at the earlier hearings was the RAMPs and the rollout of
21 the RAMPs, the risk assessment management panels. Is
22 there any sort of update on that that you can give on how
23 that's proceeding or whether it's been adjusted at all?

24 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: There are some adjustments being
25 made at the moment around those. They are still in their
26 early days. I have had conversations with Assistant
27 Commissioner McWhirter about this. It has really been
28 around trying to ensure that the RAMPs also don't lose the
29 focus on the child. Often the child is looked at within
30 the RAMP context as part of that family context with
31 the mother. It is almost always the mother. But the

1 child in that context should be examined also as an entity
2 with its own risk element.

3 I am starting to certainly see that occur, but
4 the RAMP is good in that it brings together the risks,
5 brings together the agencies in assessing risk. So that's
6 a real positive. But we just have to keep working on
7 trying to refine how that risk is assessed and how that
8 risk is managed through the RAMPs. We will probably see
9 the RAMPs continue to develop.

10 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Can I just ask you whether there's any
11 formal process for evaluating the success of the RAMPs
12 that are operating already on which you could draw in
13 reframing them and expanding them?

14 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Yes, there's an ongoing assessment
15 being done in the Family Violence Command, yes.

16 MR MOSHINSKY: There was also evidence on the earlier occasion
17 about risk assessment through the L17 drawing on the CRAF
18 and work being done around that. Are you able to provide
19 an update of where that is up to?

20 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Yes, certainly. Perhaps since
21 Assistant Commissioner McWhirter last gave evidence we
22 have been looking at enhancing that risk assessment model
23 because it has obviously a close relationship to the L17
24 and the data that the L17 form captures. It needs to be
25 the right data informed by the risk assessment model.

26 We have been looking at, in collaboration with
27 Swinburne University, a model where we have taken I think
28 it is the "Be Safe" model from Canada and we are looking
29 at whether that provides a better risk assessment tool
30 than the CRAF at the moment. That's a piece of work that
31 the Family Violence Command has commenced. We haven't

1 reached a concluded view about that. In fact it's really
2 only in its infancy, but work has started on that as to
3 whether that might provide a more effective risk
4 assessment model.

5 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: That's an actuarial model, as I understand
6 it, with weightings for particular elements.

7 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: That's right. You have a good
8 understanding of that, yes.

9 MR MOSHINSKY: A related matter is I understand there's been
10 work around preparing what might be called a
11 ready-reckoner that police could take with them actually
12 to the home when they are called.

13 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Yes.

14 MR MOSHINSKY: Can you apprise the Commission of where that
15 work is up to?

16 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: We have now completed the
17 ready-reckoner. When we are doing policing, the police
18 officer turns up with a whole bunch of these
19 ready-reckoners which help them to do their job in the
20 field. So they are a small piece of cardboard obviously
21 which is laminated and it just helps them to do their job
22 effectively. We have one of those now to assist in the
23 capture of data required for the L17 and also to help the
24 police officer risk assess at the very time that they are
25 obviously talking to the victim and the perpetrator. So
26 we have started distributing those around our workforce
27 currently.

28 MR MOSHINSKY: My last question is there's a Blue Paper, which
29 I think you will be familiar with, a Victoria Police Blue
30 Paper, "A Vision for Victoria Police in 2025". Are you
31 able to say whether this Blue Paper, the general thrust of

1 that is something that is being progressed by Victoria
2 Police?

3 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Yes, it is being progressed. I was
4 part of the executive team that I guess led the
5 development of that Blue Paper. Deputy Commissioner
6 Lucinda Nolan had the lead role. Certainly as a Deputy
7 Commissioner I was one of the contributors to that paper.

8 It was really Ken Lay's role in terms of putting
9 that vision out there of, "This is what policing needs to
10 look like in the future." So the heavy emphasis on
11 prevention, preventing crime occurring, the focus of the
12 victim being victim orientated that you will see in that
13 paper is the direction that we want to go to. Certainly
14 as Chief Commissioner I want to continue to commit to that
15 vision, to that direction.

16 Part of my role as Chief Commissioner coming in
17 as the 22nd Chief Commissioner is about, in my view,
18 providing the road map to achieve the Blue Paper. So,
19 whilst Ken Lay's term was about establishing the vision
20 and putting the stake in the ground out into the future,
21 I have to provide the road map to get us there and start
22 the build to get the organisation there. So that involves
23 organisational change, organisational adaption, and in
24 some cases investment in terms of improving and adapting
25 policing services to ready us for the future. So that's
26 how I see my imprint as the Chief Commissioner being on
27 the organisation.

28 I'm doing that through the context of a
29 capability plan. There's a number of ways that I can
30 achieve that. I have chosen to go down the path of
31 building a capability plan. I have appointed a Deputy

1 Commissioner Wendy Steendam as the Deputy Commissioner,
2 Capability, with key accountability for the development of
3 the capability plan for Victoria Police. That plan will
4 be in yearly segments, but it will bring together our
5 people skills, our education, our IT, our ICT and our
6 equipment into one cohesive narrative which will build
7 over a number of years with the objectives of being
8 consistent in build and in direction with the Blue Paper.

9 I think that has a number of merits, that
10 particular model. The first is that the language of
11 capability is a language that our workforce understands.
12 Sometimes within Victoria Police when you talk about
13 strategies and outcomes and outputs people's eyes glaze
14 over because they are interested in getting the job done
15 and they are very solutions focused people. But they
16 understand the language of capability. In my view,
17 governments and stakeholders also understand that language
18 of capability and building capability as being a very
19 practical narrative. So I think that's one reason that
20 it's quite a good tool to use and mechanism and device to
21 use.

22 The second one is that this will provide clarity,
23 clarity of the future direction of the organisation in its
24 segments. So in our conversations with government each
25 year, for example, when we talk about the future of
26 Victoria Police, we can talk about year 1 of the
27 capability plan, or year 2 of the capability plan or
28 indeed the out years. So by next July I hope to have a
29 very clear view of year 1, and a pretty strong view of
30 year 2, and a pretty sketchier view of year 3 and that
31 firms up sequentially as we go along. So the Blue Paper

1 is very much a part of our future and we now are building
2 the way to get there.

3 MR MOSHINSKY: Thank you. Do the Commissioners have any
4 questions?

5 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: No, I don't have any further questions.

6 Thank you very much, Chief Commissioner.

7 CHIEF COMMISSIONER ASHTON: Thank you.

8 <(THE WITNESS WITHDREW)

9 COMMISSIONER NEAVE: Today is the final day of the Royal
10 Commission's fifth and final week of public hearings. We
11 have previously heard about the strengths and weaknesses
12 of the present family violence system. Among other
13 things, we have heard about the dramatic increase in
14 demand on family violence services, the need to put much
15 more emphasis on preventing family violence, the
16 importance of early intervention to prevent family
17 violence escalating, the difficulties which victims of
18 family violence have in finding their way around the
19 systems which are intended to provide them with support,
20 the benefits of better information sharing to reduce risk,
21 and the lack of transparency about the costs and
22 performance of the various components of family violence
23 systems.

24 There would be little point in the Commission
25 making recommendations about these matters unless those
26 recommendations were supported by changes to the
27 structures of government and service delivery which have
28 in the past sometimes impeded effective responses to
29 family violence.

30 This week we have explored the ways in which a
31 whole of government and bipartisan approach could be

1 developed to prevent and respond to family violence. We
2 have heard evidence about the structures necessary to
3 reinforce widespread changes which will guide, implement
4 and review measures to tackle family violence. Broadly,
5 the hearing topics this week have related to what the
6 overall family violence system should look like, how it
7 should be funded and how it should be governed.

8 52 witnesses, including a number of senior public
9 servants, have shared their insights and expertise on
10 those questions this week. Because it may be possible to
11 learn from approaches taken in other complex areas of
12 public policy, we have also heard from Victorian witnesses
13 who told us about efforts to reduce the road toll and to
14 support responsible gambling, and a New Zealand witness
15 who described their Productivity Commission's approach to
16 reforming social welfare to make it more responsive to the
17 needs of their citizens.

18 Some of the themes that have emerged from the
19 evidence this week have been the importance of strong
20 leadership in driving and coordinating efforts to address
21 family violence and to hold those with responsibility for
22 delivering outcomes to account; the need to focus on both
23 prevention and response within a coordinated strategy,
24 whilst recognising that each might require separate
25 governance and funding structures; the role of strategies
26 to empower communities to prevent and respond to family
27 violence; the value of the concept of stewardship, that is
28 the need to define all of the elements needed to make the
29 system work effectively, to define desired outcomes and to
30 decide who will have responsibility for overseeing
31 particular elements; the possible establishment of an

1 independent agency to fulfil some or all stewardship
2 functions, for example, overseeing how the system and its
3 constituent parts are working and to encourage ongoing
4 improvements; the need to strike an appropriate balance
5 between proper planning and enabling experimentation about
6 what works, and the political and other pressures that may
7 work against achieving that balance; the ways in which
8 government funding of programs and services can impede its
9 own stated commitment to the provision of integrated and
10 streamlined services; the need to involve victims and
11 survivors of family violence in the design and review of
12 systems and services to ensure that their voices are heard
13 and that their experience informs the response; the
14 critical importance of research and evaluation and
15 evidence informed policy development so that programs and
16 services are fit for purpose and meet the needs of both
17 victims and perpetrators; the importance of supporting
18 front-line workers in the difficult and complex work that
19 they do and of developing and expanding workforce capacity
20 across a variety of sectors to meet the challenge and
21 diversity of family violence; the value of engaging people
22 from a broad range of perspectives and professions in
23 dialogue about how best to tackle family violence to
24 ensure that policy and reform in this area continues to
25 focus on what works and on achieving real results.

26 We are grateful for the care and thought which
27 witnesses have brought to the difficult task of
28 re-imagining a family violence system which could prevent
29 this awful blight, which could keep victims safe and could
30 help those who use family violence to change their
31 behaviour. As was the case with our previous hearings, a

1 number of our witnesses gave evidence in a panel format.
2 This process encouraged people to identify areas of
3 agreement and to discuss differences of view about how the
4 system should be re-designed. We have been greatly
5 assisted by the ideas that people have put forward to
6 improve the ways in which the community, government and
7 non-government bodies and individuals respond to family
8 violence.

9 Prior to the public hearings we held a number of
10 useful round tables, including one with the secretaries of
11 relevant government departments and the Chief Commissioner
12 of Police, who also gave evidence in our public hearing.
13 This enabled us to explore questions of institutional
14 design and budget processes relevant to family violence
15 which have been further explored in the public hearing.
16 We thank them for their contributions.

17 What's the process from now on? The Commission
18 will now rise to reflect upon and analyse the evidence
19 given at this week's hearings along with the testimony
20 from the Commission's previous hearings held in July and
21 August of this year, the detailed contributions made in
22 submissions and consultation sessions and the extensive
23 data and literature that the Commission has gathered
24 throughout its inquiry.

25 Before doing so we would like to acknowledge and
26 thank a number of people who ensured that these hearings
27 have proceeded so smoothly and efficiently. We would like
28 to thank the transcribers, who have been worn out through
29 the process; the technical operators; the Royal Commission
30 team, who have performed tipstaff duties and who have
31 offered support to witnesses.

1 We are also grateful for the assistant of and
2 detailed preparation undertaken by Counsel Assisting the
3 Commission and members of the legal team in devising the
4 structure of the public hearings and in identifying and
5 questioning witnesses. We are also grateful for the
6 cooperation of and assistance provided by counsel for the
7 State and her legal team.

8 Finally, as this is the last day of the Royal
9 Commission's public hearings, I and the other
10 Commissioners would like to take this opportunity to thank
11 all of those who have participated in our processes
12 whether by appearing as a witness, attending a
13 consultation session or a round table discussion, making a
14 submission or providing us with relevant information and
15 data. People have shared very personal accounts of the
16 impact of family violence on their private and
17 professional lives. These contributions have equipped the
18 Commission with a wealth of knowledge, experience and
19 expertise on which to found our deliberations and
20 recommendations.

21 We are also aware that many people across
22 Victoria and Australia and even in some international
23 locations have followed our proceedings. People have
24 watched the hearings via the webstream and have read the
25 submissions, statements and transcripts posted on our
26 website. We hope that our inquiry has helped to expose
27 and explore the many issues experienced by people directly
28 affected by family violence and those who work with them
29 in ways that acknowledge and affirm their experience.

30 We also hope that our hearings have exposed the
31 scale and terrible effect of family violence and have

1 contributed to the community's collective will to support
2 significant improvements in preventing and responding to
3 it.

4 Our findings and recommendations will be set out
5 in our report, which is due to be delivered to the
6 Governor of Victoria by 29 February 2016. Thank you.

7 AT 3.35 PM THE ROYAL COMMISSION ADJOURNED