

Official Report

*PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2012) OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE
PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN*

14TH Sitting

Thursday, 19TH April, 2012

The Assembly convened at 2.06 p.m.

PRAYERS

[Speaker in the Chair]

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Invitation to Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Disability Ramp at the Parliament Office

Mr. Speaker: Good afternoon Hon. Members. I think most of you, if not all of you, would have received an invitation for a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony tomorrow. That is for the opening of a wheelchair ramp. I am happy to report that when I became Speaker, in discussions with the Clerk, it occurred that, us having passed the laws that every public building should have such a ramp and we were without one. So I had asked the Clerk to immediately set about getting one put in place and he has diligently and quite effectively been able to do so. And so, at 1.30 p.m. tomorrow, we are inviting all Members, just before we commence the Sitting at two O'clock, to be present. It is going to be a very simple ceremony and the Clerk has ensured that a member of the Disabled Association will be present and at hand to do the actual ribbon cutting. I believe that we have invited Minister Webster to say a few words and Mrs. Catherine Hughes, Member of Parliament (M.P), who has a personal interest in matters of this nature, to say a few words as

well. So thank you Mr. Clerk and I look forward to as many of you being present and, of course, the press to be there as well. Thank you very much.

Provision of Documentation by the Minister of Housing and Water

Mr. Speaker: In keeping with a commitment given last evening, the brightly coloured Minister, Mr. Irfaan Ali, undertook to provide documentation for every question asked that he was unable to provide last night. I am happy to report that as of two o'clock today, he has submitted all of those documents to the Parliament office and those will be circulated during the course of the Sitting. So thank you very much Hon. Minister. You are leading by example and you are creating history. Thank you very much.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

For Written Replies

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN FOR REGION # 10

Mr. Morian: Could the Hon. Minister provide the plan for Disaster Preparedness for Region #10 and state who is the official point person responsible for this project?

Minister of Agriculture [Mr. R. Persaud]: The Civil Defense Commission (CDC) is the National Coordinating Agency for Disaster Preparedness. There Is a National Disaster Risk Reduction and Preparedness Plan and copies could be obtained through the CDC. The plan is also on the website of the CDC. The CDC has been working with various sectors and agencies to prepare sector-specific Risk Reduction and Response Plans. For example, there are Risk Reduction and Response Plans at the EPA, Ministry of Health et cetera. The Ministry of Agriculture is finalising an Agriculture Sector Risk Reduction and Response Plan 2012-2020.

The Ministry of local Government has been working with the CDC to develop Risk Reduction and Disaster Response Plans for the Regions also. The Hon. MP should direct his question to the Prime Minister who has responsibility for the CDC.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS, INCLUDING POLICY STATEMENTS

DISCUSSION BETWEEN BRIGADIER (RET'D) DAVID GRANGER AND PRESIDENT DONALD RAMOTAR

Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs [Mr. Hinds]: Thank you very much Mr. Speaker. Hon. Members, I would like to report that this morning the Government continued the discussions requested by Hon. Member Mr. David Granger, Leader of the Opposition and of the A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) with His Excellency The President Mr. Donald Ramotar, to avoid unnecessary collisions in the exercise, we are engaged in, of approving the nation's Budget. The discussions also followed on from the question asked by Hon. Member Volda Lawrence of the Minister of Finance in this Hon. House on Tuesday 17th April, 2012 whether Government would be willing to meet with the Opposition in relation to the Budget Estimates. The Hon. Minister of Finance confirmed Government's continued availability to receive views from stakeholders and to consider these, provided that the matters to be discussed were documented and that the schedule for consideration of the Estimates was adhered to in its entirety.

The Government believes that these meetings have been useful in creating a wider and better understanding of the inevitable, specific trade-offs in the fashioning of our nation's Budget and in avoiding unnecessary collisions. I want to acknowledge and express appreciation also for your own efforts in keeping relationships from breaking down.

Today's discussion revolved around the ongoing considerable allocations to the electricity sector which is intended to cushion the impact of cost recovering electricity tariffs on our people, and acknowledging the special, historical circumstances of Linden. Today's discussion focussed on Linden and what could be done to ease and make good the transition of Linden into a regular Guyanese town, and the greater inclusion and participation of all of Region 10 into the programmes and fortunes of Guyana as a whole. More specifically, the matter of Linden electricity tariffs along with other issues relating to Linden was discussed.

In relation to electricity tariffs, it was agreed that alignment with the Guyana Power and Light Inc. (GPL) tariffs and elimination of the Linden electricity subsidy was necessary. It was also agreed that the tariff adjustment will proceed from 2012, guided by the

principles of gradualism and selectivity with a transition to the aligned tariffs being introduced in a differentiated manner that cushioned the impact on the most vulnerable consumers. It was further agreed that the first stage of tariff adjustment, this year, would be implemented along the lines outlined and in a manner that would ensure adherence to the allocation provided in Budget 2012, bearing in mind applicable budgetary constraints.

In relation to the promotion of accelerated growth in economic activity in Linden, Government undertook to explore ways in which small business activity could be encouraged. In particular, Government undertook to reactivate the post-Linden Economic Advancement Programme/Linden Economic Advancement Fund (LEAP/LEAF) facility, now known as the Linden Enterprise Network (LEN), aimed at promoting affordable access to financing by small businesses in Linden and Region 10. Government also undertook to engage the financial services sector on the possibility of establishing small business financing facilities in Linden, along the lines of the Women Of Worth (WOW) Programme, also aimed at promoting more affordable access to financing.

In relation to television stations which exist in Georgetown and the Coast being available in Linden and across our country, our Government will shortly be granting, on application, additional “over the air” television broadcast licences all over Guyana, including Linden.

In relation to the continuing dust problems, the Government will firmly hold BOSAI to its commitment to President Ramotar to complete the installation of the dust collecting system on the first kiln by the end of June 2012 and on the second kiln by the end of September 2012.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MOTION

BUDGET SPEECH 2012 - MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2012

“WHEREAS the Constitution of Guyana requires that Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of Guyana for any financial year should be laid before the National Assembly;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution also provided that when the Estimates of Expenditure have been approved by the Assembly an Appropriation Bill shall be introduced in the Assembly providing for the issue from the consolidated fund of the sums necessary to meet expenditure;

AND WHEREAS Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of Guyana for the financial year 2012 have been prepared and laid before the Assembly on 2012-03-30.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2012, of a total sum of **one hundred and seventy nine billion, six hundred and ninety six million, five hundred and forty six thousand dollar(\$179,696,546,000)**, excluding **thirteen billion, and eighty for million, seven hundred and thirty five thousand dollars (13,084,735,000)** which is chargeable by law, as detailed therein and summarised in the under mentioned schedule, and agree that it is expedient to amend the law and to make further provision in respect of finance.” [Minister of Finance]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, we will now resume consideration of the Estimates. We will now resolve into Committee of Supply to continue consideration of those Estimates.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply

In Committee of Supply

Mr. Chairman: We are now in Committee of Supply, Hon. Members. We will proceed as per our schedule for today. We have four Ministries to cover, including, of course, the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation and we hope to do so within the time that we resolved to do so in. There is going to be one slight change which I attempted last evening and that is to move from Current Expenditure to Capital Expenditure in each Head, without doing them in a “lumped way”, if I can use a loose term. So I will be going to Current

Expenditure then to Capital Expenditure for each because I believe that that is the preferred method by the technical staff of the various Ministries and it will also ease some of the congestion that is building up.

Agency: 46 Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation

Current Expenditure

Programme: 461 – Public Hospital - \$4,466,047,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6112 – Senior Technical – we see that in the staffing details there was a reduction of 13 workers, yet the salaries practically remained the same. Could the Hon. Minister explain this?

Minister of Health [Dr. Ramsaran]: Thank you for the Question. Thank you for the opportunity to answer. We are taking into consideration that there has been an 8% increase that was awarded for that year.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6114 – Clerical and Office Support – could the Hon. Minister say what the designation is of this person who will be employed?

Dr. Ramsaran: I have the entire list here so I will have to try to disaggregate who is the additional person. That is the designation of a Clerk II. The salary is the handsome sum of \$49,224.

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much Mr. Minister. Under line item 6116 – Contracted Workers- there was an increase by 44, yet there was no increase in salaries. Could the Hon. Minister pronounce on this?

Dr. Ramsaran: These are Cuban Trained doctors. We will be having quite a few coming back and they are not salaried. They get an allowance. That explains the increase and not the commensurate increase in the funds.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister let the House know what that allowance would be?

Dr. Ramsaran: There is a rate of per call - \$2,500 – and a \$500 allowance for meals.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister state where that is reflected so that we would have been aware of this?

Dr. Ramsaran: When we come down, you will be having that. There is a relevant area in the line items where such moneys are reflected.

Dr. Norton: Line item 6131 – Other Direct Labour Costs – there is an increase of \$19 million. Could the Hon. Minister say what other direct labour cost is this referring to?

Dr. Ramsaran: Well this is where we might have captured the information relevant to your previous question, the overtime and such other activities which the hospital has to pay for these operatives.

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much Mr. Minister. Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure – could the Hon. Minister say what other infrastructure there is to maintain for that \$3.5 million?

Dr. Ramsaran: There is a significant increase here and this is like a cyclical activity. There is a wide and large compound with drains, tarmacs and so on and it is not reflected in every year's budget because on periodic inspection we will find that these things need to be done - the tarmacs, the general roads and such things in the hospital which is a fairly large compound.

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much Mr. Minister. Mr. Chairman, line item 6281 – Security Services – we see an increase of \$14 million. Could the Hon. Minister kindly explain to this honourable House the reason for this increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: There are several locations where we provide security and this, through the tendering process, happened.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister mention these locations for the Hon. House?

Dr. Ramsaran: Bear with me because they are quite a few. There are the Accident and Emergency (A&E) Unit and the main pharmacy at the Hospital, the operation suites, the Ambulatory Care Unit, the Male Medical Ward, psychiatric holding, maternity block, the Industry Health Centres, and remember that the Hospital has now started to take on the

responsible of quite a few other facilities: the Kitty Health Centre, for example, and then, of course, the Industry Health Centre which I mentioned, the Enmore Poly Clinic which is a filial, a branch of the Hospital and the Campbellville Health Centre which recently was handed over to the Georgetown Public Hospital and a whole list of other departments like the Paediatric Ward, the Male Medical Ward and the doctor's quarters for the Chinese doctors which is our building, but we provide security from a private firm.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister say if these locations only came on for this year or if they were there before, especially the ones outside of the Georgetown Hospital?

Dr. Ramsaran: The Hon. Member should know that we have taken on the responsibility for Campbellville Health Centre. That is a new additional charge and I think the residents for the Chinese medical team are some of the new additions that we have had.

Dr. Norton: Line Item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – there is an increase of \$6 million. Could the Hon. Minister say specifically what form of training this would entail?

Dr. Ramsaran: Recently, and more particularly over the past year or two, the Hospital has expanded its training programmes, especially in the area of specialised nursing, for example the Anaesthetic Nursing Programme which previously was supported by a funding agency. Then we have the postgraduate programmes for doctors to allow doctors to move on from graduate doctors in areas like Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Critical Care Nursing Programme, Nurse Anaesthesia Training Programme, Orthopaedics and Grammatology, Postgraduate Diploma Programme, and such like. Shortly, we will be introducing the Neonatal Intensive Care Programme for this year. So this is that collection of basic postgraduate training for doctors and nurses in narrow specialist areas.

Dr. Norton: A follow up question: what is this money specifically for - allowances, training, tutors and teaching aids?

Dr. Ramsaran: This is not for paying the participants. There are faculty members and this is for accommodation for some of them. Remember some of these programmes are not water down, home grown programmes. They are supported by foreign universities – McMaster

University, Vanderbilt University and so on - periodically people come in to keep the standards to acceptable levels, so they have to be provided for.

Ms. Ferguson: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon, Minister tell this House at line item 6284 – Other – what are the classifications under the category of “Other”? Thank you.

Dr. Ramsaran: A significant amount: here we take care of the air fares for the large foreign medical brigades that we have in Guyana and particularly the Chinese, Cuban and Indian teams, and if we have any visiting doctors or technicians who are coming under any particular exchange programmes, particularly to do clinical work. There is also the accommodation of visitors: although the Georgetown Hospital has some capacity, sometimes it has to resort to renting services. Advertising costs; consultancy and legal fees; Korea shipping and freight; legal and professional fees; and sometimes for poor burials - for the grave diggers; and insurance of one of our projects, Project Dawn - there is such a building and we insure that too; lab tests, some of which are subsidised; Computerised Tomography (CT) scans; ultrasounds; Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRIs); transportation subsidised for select patients; rental of oxygen cylinders and so on. The complete list is here but those are the big ticket items.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister say if the rental of oxygen cylinders is supposed to be a continuous thing or just temporary?

Dr. Ramsaran: The Company retains possession of the cylinders and rents them to its customers. That is how it is done. That is a forever process.

Mr. Jones: Comrade Chairman, Line Item 6291 – National and Other Events – I do not know if last year was a special year, but we note \$3.36 million in 2011 and this year we note \$800,000. Could the Hon. Minister explain why there is a decrease and what was special last year?

Dr. Ramsaran: Last year was special. We had, for example, a significant national event we took part in – Feminiton. We had a large contingent there for some time, renting of tents and support facilities. This year we would have liked to have more money but we will have to make do with this. So last year was special. For example, we had the opening of the new

inpatient building. That entailed certain social activities and that amounted for the fact that we rose from the \$800,000 that we had asked for and it became revised somewhat above that. So hopefully we will be able to settle for the base \$800,000 for this year.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, I refer to line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies – and I would like to pose this question to the Minister. In view of the fact that there have been several complaints, both from patients and your medical staff, about the poor quality of some of the medication provided, are you prepared to do a review of your suppliers and, by extension, the medication that you are buying in order to satisfy...

Mr. Chairman: Line item please.

Mr. Trotman: Line item 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies.

Dr. Ramsaran: I am at a bit disadvantage to answer that question because I am looking at the approach or procedure where I am supposed to answer on the figures. However, we are definitely always open to reviews. I do not think that is an appropriate question under this line item. I appreciate your concern but we can have a review of the whole process. I was prepared to answer on the actual figures and the propriety or the correctness of the process. I appreciate your concern but I do not think it is for this section of the activity.

Programme: 461 – Public Hospital - \$4,466,047,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 461 – Public Hospital - \$128,000,000

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Project 2404400 – Land and water Transport – could the Hon. Minister say what made and the amount of vehicles are to be procured for the Georgetown Public Hospital? Thank you.

Dr. Ramsaran: Usually, we would not tell you the model but we will tell you the type of vehicle we want. That is a motor vehicle to replace a very old vehicle which the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) uses and which now is becoming uneconomical to continue repairing. The second vehicle will be a 15-seater bus which will help us do some of the

things we spoke of just now like transporting staff, trainers, administration personnel to and from one of our training centres at the Project Dawn, an influx of our professional technical persons from overseas when we are bringing them down from the Airport sometimes with their baggage – some 15 to 20 persons at times, transport of Chinese and Cuban doctors plus their baggage on a protocol agreement that we have between the two partners, Guyana and Cuba, transport staff around Georgetown to the four health centres where Georgetown Hospital has an operational interest.

Mr. Jones: Follow up to the same question: could the Hon. Minister please state the vehicle type?

2.36 p.m.

Dr. Ramsarran: Like I said, one would a saloon car for the CEO and one would be a 15-seater bus; these would have to be tendered for.

Ms. Ferguson: I am moving on Mr. Chairman. Project code number 4500202 – Equipment – could the Hon. Minister explain the following: firstly, what procedures will be used in acquiring cost for the laundry-washer and the mortuary-freezer for the Georgetown Public Hospital.

Dr. Ramsarran: Thank you for that question. These are two vital pieces of equipment that need replacement. As for the laundry-washer, we have several of those, but one is down and we need to replace it. This will be done by open tender. It will be advertised and potential bidders will have to uplift the documents and go through the regular process.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you Hon. Minister. This is a follow up to the very project code number. Of the \$67 million allocated for the purchase of equipment, how much is for the laundry-washer?

Dr. Ramsarran: We estimate that it will cost in the vicinity of probably \$37 million and the mortuary freezer will take up the other \$30 million.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you Hon. Minister. Project code number 4500203 - Equipment – Medical. I will hold on this other question.

Programme: 461 – Public Hospital – \$128,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Agency: 47 Ministry of Health

Current Expenditure

Programme: 471 – Ministry Administration – \$707,234,000

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Line item 6111 – Administrative – the staffing details indicate an increase of one person while the salaries went up by \$4 million. Could the Hon. Minister say what the designation of this staff is?

Dr. Ramsarran: I think this is the addition of a Field Auditor. Let me get the salary for you. We had it so finely printed out that it was difficult to read here. It is \$57,356.

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much Mr. Minister. Mr. Chairman, line item 6114 – Clerical and Office Support – while the staffing details would show a decrease of 24 in number, the salaries only decreased by \$300,000. Could the Hon. Minister explain this?

Dr. Ramsarran: The Hon. Member might recall that we did have some minimal increases over the past years salary, so we need to take that into consideration for the balancing off of the numbers.

Dr. Norton: Line Item 6281 – Security Services – once again, there is an increase by \$11 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain this?

Mr. Chairman: Somebody's phone is ringing; you need to answer it.

Dr. Ramsarran: This is due to an increase to the actual boost on the ground for the personnel recruited for the security established for the Ministry of Health.

Dr. Norton: Line Item 6302 – Training – there is an increase by \$5 million, could the Hon. Minister specify what type of training this entails?

Dr. Ramsarran: This entails training of the visits by our Administrative personnel and at the same time the convocation of more workshops, particularly since we are concerned with the weakness in managerial capacity at certain local levels. This is basically the workshop type of training, not scholarships.

Mr. Jones: Comrade Chairman, line item 6284 could the Hon. Minister explain an increase from \$23.96 million to \$29 million under the caption “Other”?

Dr. Ramsarran: I am advised that we are taking into consideration the increases of which are dependent upon the fluctuation of cost in services and we are using this for example for petty contracts, the payments of portering services, morticians and such other petty contracts.

Mr. B. Williams: Mr. Chairman, line item 6111 to 6117 of staffing details, could the Hon. Minister confirm that out of a total workforce of 174, more than half, 88 to be exact, comprise of contracted employees.

Dr. Ramsarran: Could the Member do the proper thing and ask it according to line item so that we may be able to address it.

Mr. B. Williams: I dealt with it, from 6111 to 6117- the entire Staffing Details.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members it is customary that we go line by line, but I believe the question is a generic one that applies to a range. I think in the interest of time that Mr. Williams’ question is understandable and permissible. It is a principle as to the contracted workers as against permanent staff.

Mr. B. Williams: Could the Minister confirm for the record...

Mr. Hinds: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Williams himself asked if 88 is more than half of 174. The answer is yes, 88 is more than 174.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Prime Minister we have been having some interest in arithmetic in the House through these debate discussions. Let us hear the answer.

Dr. Ramsarran: I will confirm for the Hon. Member that his mathematics is approximately correct.

Mr. B. Williams: Thank you. A follow up question, could the Hon. Minister confirm that out of a total wages bill for this Ministry’s administration of \$162,597,000 that the total payable to contracted workers is \$83,450,000?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister I believe that the answer is provided to you, but you can say yes.

Dr. Ramsarran: Yes, the mathematics is there and I do concur.

Mr. B. Williams: Could the Hon. Minister confirm that for all the other categories of workers, the total payable to them is \$79,149,000.

Dr. Ramsarran: My assumption is that you have looked at the mathematics and that is correct. So, if we could get the substantive question that would be good Mr. Williams.

Mr. B. Williams: You want a conclusion which is also obvious, that contracted employees make up most of the workers at the Ministry's administration and the wages bill is higher than all the other categories of workers put together. Could you confirm that?

Mr. Chairman: I think that was established yesterday out there. Can you confirm that Hon. Minister?

Mr. B. Williams: Why are you so agitated? Just answer the question.

Dr. Ramsarran: I would like to thank Mr. Williams for that question and indicate that this is a collection of many workers, some of whom are drivers and other persons with quite modest salaries. If that aim is to show that contracted workers are overpaid, then the evidence does not show that.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Line item 6302 - could the Hon. Minister say if training is included here for the interior locations?

Dr. Ramsarran: Thank you for that question. Yes, as I said, sometimes it entails bringing people out to workshops or it entails personnel from the coast going in and training people from clusters in the Hinterland.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Could the Hon. Minister say how much really is allocated for the Interior locations?

Dr. Ramsarran: That would be difficult to say now, exactly, it depends on the workshop and the gap analysis that are being done from time to time. For example, last year we might have liquidated a certain training need in particular Region, we would not have to go back there, instead you go to another Region and so on and so forth. Sometimes you lose capacity because

trained personnel migrate or move up to a higher level and you have to go back and train them. Some of these things are training and retraining. So, it is a bit ticklish to exactly pin down which Region it is going to be, when, and how you are going to get it, but that is our approximation based on historic data of what we will need.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you.

Ms. Ferguson: Could the Hon. Minister explain at line item 6272 - the \$8 million increase for electricity charges as against last year's budgeted amount?

Dr. Ramsarran: This is a fairly modest increase. I must tell you that we are hoping to have commissioned our new modern updated warehouse in Eccles where we will be able to store our drugs and medications better. This is a fully air-conditioned facility with other demands on the power grid. That is one of the main explanations or main components for this increase. May I make a correction, it is not Eccles; it is Diamond.

Mr. Jones: Comrade Chairman, line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants – could the Hon. Minister explain the fuel and lubricants for which operation?

Dr. Ramsarran: Let me just consult some of the notes. I have the entire list of our vehicles. Some of them are dated and sometimes are consumptive of lubricants, but particularly we are hoping to have more outreaches. This will entail more visits. As you would have been seeing, we have more personnel at our disposal, more Medex for example have graduated. Wherever there is now a doctor, the Medex will be allowed or mandated to do more frequent visits out of his clinical base because, his clinical base would be protected by a doctor or provided for by a doctor there. Because of this, the supervisory visits from the Centre to these locations would have increased. So, that is in part why are seeing over a period of time, increases yearly in the fuel and lubricant allocations.

Programme: 471 – Ministry Administration – \$707,234,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 471 – Ministry Administration – \$1,222,626,000

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you Mr. Chairman. As per project code number 1201700 – Ministry of Health – Buildings, could the Hon. Minister say where this fence costing \$10 million will be built and the dimensions and material of the fence. Thank you.

Dr. Ramsarran: As you know, the Ministry of Health's main property is not far from the Square of the Revolution. You would have noted a little playfield there which for many years have had only the remnants of a fence. We hope to fence that. Further to that, we detained a joining property belonging to the Geology and Mines Survey. There is no fence, particularly since that was destroyed by the great fire of 2009. We intend to replace that fence for the security of our property.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman and thank you Mr. Minister for your explanation. Project code number 2404500 – Land and Water Transport – could the Hon. Minister say for which department would the refrigerated truck be assigned? Thank you.

Dr. Ramsarran: Are you asking for which Region?

Ms. Ferguson: No Hon. Minister, which department?

Dr. Ramsarran: This is a specialised refrigerated truck which is being bought for what is called the materials management unit, previously referred loosely as the drug bond. That vehicle would be needed to transport our medications under controlled temperatures to various locations.

Ms. Ferguson: Comrade Chairman could the Hon. Minister say for project code number 2502000 – Equipment – what is the cost for the public address system and where it will be assigned.

Dr. Ramsarran: Yes, I can tell you that. The public address system will cost \$100,000. This will be utilised predominantly in Region r coming out of the central Ministry of Health's Office.

Mr. Allcock: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Line item 1201700 – Ministry of Health Buildings – can the Hon. Minister explain the construction of drugs and alcohol facility. Could the Minister just explain?

Dr. Ramsarran: I think that little statement could be expounded. Right now we are expanding our services to certain vulnerable groups including person who would have fallen victim of

substance abuse including alcohol. We have two buildings belonging to the health sector; one at the Mahaica Hospital compound and one at the Linden Hospital complex compound, the old buildings. We are intending to upgrade those to allow such patients to be managed there, some of them on an in-house and in-patient basis.

Mr. Allicock: Mr. Chairman, as a follow up question, could the Hon. Minister say whether there is any consideration for the Lethem Hospital?

Dr. Ramsarran: When we come to that area we could probable discuss those things, but it is not falling under this line item. Even the question you gave, we have not come to that as yet, but we will try to answer the Lethem question entirely.

Mr. Chairman: I would appreciate that we try to answer.

Mr. Allicock: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I sense that there are no other questions. I now put the question.

Programme: 471 – Ministry Administration – \$1,222,626,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 472 – Diseases Control – \$1,222,626,000

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Line item 6255 - could the Hon. Minister say for this increase of \$2 million, what infrastructure would there be for maintenance?

Dr. Ramsarran: Under this programme we have the National Reference Laboratory, a fairly large building; it has to be maintained along with the malaria control structures for example under disease control.

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much Mr. Minister. Line item 6281 – Security – there has been an increase of \$3 million, could the Hon. Minister explain this?

Dr. Ramsarran: There has been some realignment of payment of costs. For example, the Laboratory I just referred to, previously security for that was borne by the Georgetown Hospital

Corporation. It is recognised now as a national facility and the Central Ministry has undertaken to put that under its budget.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister under line item 6282 – Equipment Maintenance – say of that \$5 million, what equipment is going to be maintained?

Dr. Ramsarran: This is in continuation based on what I just said. We now have to take care of expensive equipment in that new facility. The Central Ministry of Health will be undertaking the maintenance and repair of equipment for the National Reference Laboratory.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6294 – Other Operating Expenses – we have the category “Other” and there has been \$11 million. Could the Hon. Minister say what this category “Other” entails?

Dr. Ramsarran: That is a good observation, a significant increase. We have something called the “Steps Survey”. The emphasis now is on battling chronic diseases and their long-term outcome. To do this we are hoping to gather good data on how to do this from across the nation. So, we are sending out survey teams with special questionnaires having been specially trained. It also entails widespread advertisements in the newspapers and on the television. This would be a fairly long-term undertaking. Hopefully after we analyse the data we will be in a better position to implement our strategies to fight chronic diseases in Guyana such as diabetes, hypertension and so forth.

Mr. Jones: Line Item 6284 – I do not know if last year was a special year, but we note \$18.572 million and this year we see an allocation requested for \$7.9 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain what falls under the category “Other” and why the decrease?

Mr. Chairman: Are you ready Hon. Minister?

Dr. Ramsarran: Yes. Under this, as I pointed out in a previous intervention, we do things like advertisements and other awareness programmes. Last year there was heightening of those activities and we are benefiting from those. For example, the brochures and the glossy production that we have, we have benefited from that investment last year. It is a matter now of consolidating and getting the best for what we have invested last year. Hopefully these monies

will invest and we will not have, as I said in my speech, haemorrhage not only drugs by expiring, but wastage of such printed material which sometimes is piled up in our storage areas.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Could the Hon. Minister explain in line item 6321 - who will be receiving the subsidies and contributions? I see \$9 million.

3.06 p.m.

Dr. Ramsaran: I would like to refer the Hon. Member to page 398 which I think gives guidance on that matter generally, both for local and international agencies. Let us go through. Under Details of Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations, in bracket is 6322, there is Ministry of Health and each programme is listed (which is the twinning agency). So you can have a look at that Hon. Member.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you Hon. Minister.

Programme: 472 - Disease Control - \$1,222,626,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 472 - Disease Control - \$29,860,000

Ms. Ferguson: Mr. Chairman, Project Code No. 1201700. Could the Hon. Minister explain what the scope of work is to be undertaken at the National Psychiatric Hospital and for how much of the \$10 million?

Dr. Ramsaran: This basically is for upgrading the compound – landscaping, filling of drains, and improving the irrigation of that property which by its location tends to be easily susceptible to flooding.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, just a follow-up question. According to the project details the project entails upgrading of the hospital and the compound. The question was what of the hospital?

Dr. Ramsaran: Basically Hon. Dr. Norton, this is for improving the ambience of the compound and such like. If you see it is a fairly modest sum. **[Dr. Norton: Ten million.]** That

compound is fairly large so we are hoping to upgrade it. There are certain areas like the drainage which needs to be fixed to prevent flooding and the sappy nature of the compound.

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister say if this description of the project is wrong in stating “Upgrading of National Psychiatric Hospital and compound” when it should be National Psychiatric Hospital compound.

Dr. Ramsaran: No, Dr. Norton, it is correct. There are old buildings there and there might be the small remedial works to be done on the actual buildings. But generally, this allocation is to allow the hospital compound to look like a hospital. It is sometimes not up to the standard that we would like. There would be minor works especially on the older buildings to make them safe for that type of patient and so on.

Mr. Jones: Comrade Chairman, project code 2404500 - Land and Water Transport - could the Hon. Minister inform this House of the vehicle type and which department will be utilising the vehicle?

Dr. Ramsaran: All of these vehicles will be work-type vehicles to provide for the needs of the Malaria Programme. The Malaria Programme also falls under Programme 2. The Malaria Programme is one of our flagship programmes because we are anxious to push malaria back into the farthest reaches of the country. We are having boats for Cuyuni/Mazaruni and at the same time we are having a vehicle to move the teams from Georgetown around the country. Some of the vehicles in this programme are fairly old, and because of the terrain they traverse they are battered. This will be an SUV type, off-road, vehicle for the transportation of personnel and material.

Mr. Jones: Could the Hon. Minister please state specifically vehicle type.

Dr. Ramsaran: As I emphasised it will be an off-road, four-wheel drive vehicle to be able to undertake the rigorous demands of our rough terrain where the malaria teams go.

Mr. Chairman: Do you have a make and model?

Dr. Ramsammy: Usually, Mr. Chairman, we do not put a make or model because that prejudices the tender process. That is how it is done. That is how we have been doing it and

bringing it to this House. We would not say Toyota or Nissan because automatically we are prejudicing the process.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members I am hearing a cell phone. I do not know if the Member wishes for me to stop so they can take the call and then we resume afterwards. I can break while you take the call and then we come back. The phone is ringing all the time. I am hearing it. If it is in the public gallery I am going to ask the person to leave.

Mr. Damon: I humbly apologise, Mr. Chairman, it was just a coincidence.

Mr. Chairman: A coincidence. I would give you time to take the call.

Sorry Hon. Minister for interrupting your answer. I think it is a very fair answer. Thank you.

Dr. Ramsaran: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I can conclude by saying that this is part of the natural process. It is a generic question so persons wishing to ask such a question can note we do not say Toyota, Nissan or Marino or whatever otherwise it prejudices and excludes persons who will not be offering that product. We might state how much cc, what is the vehicle to do and so on.

Mr. Jones: Mr. Chairman, a follow-up question under the same line item. I note boats for the Malaria Programme. Could the Hon. Minister inform this House which region?

Dr. Ramsaran: Was the question where we will use the boats? As I said, Cuyuni/ Mazaruni-Region 7.

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Ferguson you were anxious.

Ms. Ferguson: Mr. Chairman, I will not proceed since my Hon. Friend asked the question.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Mr. Chairman the Minister also answered my question.

Dr. Ramsammy: Mr. Chairman, I am happy I have been able to conduct a lesson in geography today.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I am glad to note there is some humour and levity in the House today.

Ms. Hastings: On the same project code 2404500, could the Hon. Minister say which community or health centres in Region 7 will benefit from this purchase?

Dr. Ramsaran: I assume you mean which community will benefit from the boats. Please recall that the Malaria Programme goes beyond the boats. These boats will be used to move persons from spot to spot as is necessary. This is just additional to what exists. Let us say there is a treat, the Malaria Programme under the region will deploy officers under the guidance of the central office to go and fight malaria in the area where there is the treat, for example. Some of the boats in the area are already doing that. They are used just to dispatch - take the people there - then there is a link in transportation by foot or by air.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Mr. Chairman, programme 2502000 - Purchase of Equipment - could the Minister kindly say which hospital or health centre will benefit from the refrigerator and other items here?

Dr. Ramsaran: I have a list of fairly expensive equipment here. We will be using the autoclave at the Hansen clinic and that is Georgetown based. Hansen is what is otherwise referred to as leprosy clinic. A thermal cyler is for the national public health reference library and there are several other such pieces. For example, there is an electrophoresis chamber for that national institution. There are beds for the Tuberculosis (TB) clinic. We are getting 20 such beds. The national reference library again will be getting centrifuges to get their job done.

Ms. Ferguson: Project code 2501800. The description reads, "The project includes purchase of projector, cameras, photocopier, filing cabinets, chairs, mattresses, fans, water dispenser and tables". Could the Hon. Minister state the cost of the mattresses and where they will be placed?

Dr. Ramsaran: Yes, I most definitely can. These will be twenty mattresses and we expect them to cost approximately \$8,000. We are going to be putting these in the TB facility at the GPHC and the Guyana Prisons.

Programme: 473 – Disease Control - \$29,860,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 473 - Primary Health Care Services - \$497,109,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, Line Item 6255 - could the Hon. Minister say what other infrastructure is there to maintain for that \$2 million increase?

Dr. Ramsaran: Under Programme 3 our Dental Facilities include the Cheddi Jagan Dental School in Carmichael Street. That sum entails the cleaning of the compound and its surroundings, and its upgrade generally. Predominantly that is what this line item speaks to.

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much Hon. Minister. Mr. Chairman, on line item 6302, could the Hon. Minister say what the training entails for that increase in \$6 million?

Dr. Ramsaran: This line item speaks to the fact that there is going to be additional training in certain areas, predominantly workshops in the dental area, and in-house training of staff. There is going to be an EPI review meeting and some more emphasis on health promotion particularly in the area of oral health. We have been emphasising health promotion in other areas; oral health will be getting its attention this time.

Further to that, our adolescent unit will also be reaching out to the vulnerable youth population with more and more health workshops.

I want to point out that this comes in the wake of the graduation last year our first five trained dental surgeons in Guyana. They expect to do more outreaches including health promotion for oral health with emphasis on schools. Therefore, this is the workshop type of training, not scholarships and travelling overseas. These are workshop-enlightening types of training.

Programme: 473 – Primary Health Care Services - \$497,109,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 473 – Primary Health Care Services - \$259,920,000

Ms. Ferguson: Mr. Chairman, project code 1201700 - could the Hon. Minister state the cost out of the \$8 million to complete the construction of the Drugs and Alcohol Facility at Mahaica?

Dr. Ramsaran: Thank you for that question and your continued interest in this item. This voted provision is expected to be divided equally for the two facilities.

Ms. Ferguson: Project code 2502000. I have noted the project description reads, “the project entails purchase of global positioning system and public address systems”. Could the Hon. Minister say where the public address systems will be placed and the average cost of each item.

Dr. Ramsaran: Yes, Hon. Member I most definitely can. The Environmental Health Department will need the global positioning system to be able to map exactly where we have patterns of diseases and so on to keep in sync with more international scientific trends of surveillance, pinpointing surveillance right across our country in places difficult to reach. This system will allow us to do that.

The public address systems will include a potable system which will be in the central office and will be used as necessary wherever staff is going for various programmes. Sometimes, especially in Region 4, it turns out more cost effective to have our own equipment for lectures, other community engagements and so on.

Mr. Greenidge: Sorry, Mr. Chairman, are you taking Programme 474 because I believe you mentioned page 440.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, but only as it relates to Programme 473.

Programme: 473 – Primary Health Care Services - \$259,920,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 474 – Regional and Clinical Services - \$3,867,138,000

Dr. Norton: Could the Hon. Minister under line item 6115 state the designation of the two semi-skilled operatives that would be added on for this year? There is an increase of \$5 million, could you say what the designations are for these two persons?

Dr. Ramsaran: If I understand the question correctly, usually we do not add on in a perspective budget the salaries of someone who is coming on when the GO is offered. If I understand you correctly, you are asking why there is some increase in the allocation.

Dr. Norton: What is the designation of the two persons?

Dr. Ramsaran: These are nursing assistants who have just completed training.

Dr. Norton: Two for \$5 million?

Dr. Ramsaran: No, we do not add on the salaries for persons who will be employed in the coming year. Those moneys will be reflective of the increases awarded last year and now have to be added on to the salaries of the persons who already exist on the establishment. I think it was an eight per cent increase.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, line item 6117 - Temporary Employees - as in the staffing details. There is an increase of \$120 million on average but the temporary employees remain the same. Could the Hon Minister explain this?

Dr. Ramsaran: Thank you for that observation. This covers a category of employees like 151 Cuban doctors and some nurses who are employed, not in the traditional Cuban brigade but, at the diagnostic and treatment centres at Diamond, Leonora, Suddie and Mahaicony. Why the increase? Up to quite recently these professionals were receiving US\$300 per month. In the past you would recall the sum used to be \$500 but certain determinations led to it being dropped. Now we have come to the conclusion after discussions that it needs to be increased to a more realistic sum. So now each Cuban at a diagnostic and treatment centre will be given a US\$700 stipend. That is why you see such a significant increase.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, to the Minister a follow-up. That increase is not reflected in your staffing details. Staffing details remain at two. [Ms. Westford: Dr. Ramsaran, this is the salaries.] That is what I am concerned about. The salaries tell us there is an increase by \$120 million approximately. How are we to know that? Where is it reflected here?

Dr. Ramsaran: What I am saying is that these are workers who are at a certain level now. We are increasing their salaries because it was unrealistic. You would recall Hon. Dr. Norton that

previously the sum used to be US\$500 and after a certain visit it became US\$300 but that is unrealistic and more so since the circumstances of the Cuban employment has changed. Apparently the agreement said certain things which have changed and it is necessary now to bring the sum back to a more realistic amount. Remember about four or five years ago the doctors used to be getting US\$500. So the increase is for the existing 150 staff already on the establishment.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, staffing details for 2011 we see two; staffing details for 2012 we see two at line item 6117 - Temporary Employees.

Dr. Ramsaran: The temporary employees you might be referring to, I think Dr. Norton, are our traditional employees here. I am referring to those under the Cuban programme which accounts for the increase in the provisions.

Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister I do not think Dr. Norton is questioning the good sense of the policy and the support coming from the Cuban medical brigade, as you put it. But I think it is a fact that the numbers do not seem to add up. I do not think he is challenging the policy. What we have here is a figure of two for temporary staff. I think what he is trying to elicit from you is whether there is a mistake or you could guide us as to what is happening here. Am I correct Dr. Norton?

Dr. Norton: You are correct. I still think that for everybody's interest that someone not involved in anything medical should be able to look at these figures and say something adds up. It is not adding up. We have an increase of \$120 million and there is no increase in the particular line item for temporary employees. How do we explain that?

Mr. Chairman: I think what the Hon. Minister is saying is that the allowance being paid if there are ten and they are getting \$3 the same ten will now get \$5, and that is why there has been an increase in the figure. I do believe that indeed the support the Cuban doctors with the help the Cuban Government is giving is commendable and we ought to support it. The figure goes up because the allowance goes up to a fixed number of persons.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, at line item 6255 there is an increase of \$10 million from last year for maintenance of infrastructure. Could the Hon. Minister say what infrastructure he is referring to?

Dr. Ramsaran: Under this line item there are several facilities including the regional health services which run ten health centres in and round the city. The Linden Hospital Complex is directly overlooked from the central office along with the Kwakwani Hospital. In some of these facilities, for example the East La Penitence we have to do some more works on the fence. So that amount of money is not only for the ten central health centres but for the Kwakwani and Linden Hospitals as we are responsible for such works centrally.

Mr. B. Williams: If it pleases you Comrade Chairman, line items 6111 to 6117, out of a total workforce of 725 there are 520 contracted employees. Could the Hon. Minister explain why such a disproportionate number of contracted employees out of the total work force have been employed under contracts?

3.36 p.m.

Dr. Ramsaran: If I understand the question correctly we are covering some of the staff in various locations as I just pointed out. We have 163 staff from the Ministry of Health; this is inclusive of 101 new doctors who recently came back from Government of Guyana scholarships in Cuba and other countries. Approximately 353 staff of the Linden Hospital Complex and the Kwakwani Hospital is included. The total number of staff covered here is 516.

Mr. B. Williams: We know that, but what I am asking is what your rationale is? Do you employ them as Contractual Employees, or are they more or less permanent. Does the nature of the work lend itself to that?

Dr. Ramsaran: I think I will probably have to at sometime shortly, call on the expertise of some of my other colleagues. As I was explaining before, Contracted or Establishment Employees, that is your choice. There is permanent contract between employer and employee, the difference being that a contracted employee gets a gratuity up front, whereas the traditional public service employee gets a nest egg at the end of his/her service years called a pension. So it is an option, you make a decision with a mobile workforce now that they are contracted. If we were to look at

the list of contracted employees, sometimes it includes simple people like drivers. So, that is the generic explanation, the difference between a contracted and an established Public Service Employee (PSM).

Ms. Wade: Line Item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings, Cde. Minister, can you say whether the nurses' living quarters in the Government compound at Fort Wellington is included for maintenance, if no why not?

Dr. Ramsarran: I thank the Hon. Member from Region 5 for this question, but you are being probably a bit too anxious. This comes under Region 5, that facility is regional. We are discussing the central Ministry of Health, Agency 47. So hopefully when we come to that, I will be able to locate that information for you.

Ms. Wade: Okay, thank you.

Ms. Ferguson: Under Line Item 6284 – 'Other', I have noted an increase to \$6 million, can the Hon. Minister please explain to the House why the increase and what 'Other' entails?

Dr. Ramsarran: Under this Line Item we include provisions for the Cuban brigade travelling back home, to and fro, between Cuba and Guyana. It is reflective of some increases in cost expected to be incurred. We have seen a historical trend and we expect that to be the numbers needed to get these persons home and back as a contractual obligation, which we have.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you Mr. Minister. Under Line Item 6291 – National and other Events, I noted from the previous years, you had \$3 million budgeted, now it is close to \$2.180 million, could you tell us the reason for this increase and what are the National and Other Events. Thank you.

Dr. Ramsaran: This year, Hon. Member, the vaccination in the Americas Day for example, will be coinciding with the inauguration of World Immunisation Week; two events that we hope will not compete, but complement each other. That will be something additional we will be addressing, for example, we will be engaging more actively in such things as the Linden Town Day and our Mashramani activities will be more aggressive this year to use the occasion to highlight health issues, especially among the young and vulnerable.

Programme: 474 – Regional and Clinical Services - \$3,867,138,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 474 – Regional and Clinical Services - \$855,940,000

Ms. Ferguson: Project 1201700 – Ministry of Health – Buildings, could the Hon. Minister say which health facilities are currently under rehabilitative works?

Dr. Ramsaran: This is for the rehabilitation of nursing schools and the payment of retentions. That is what this Line Item addresses and we will be having minor improvements in works, for example, the retentions were for minor improvements in works to selected areas of the East Bank Demerara Regional Hospital, at Diamond. If you have visited there lately, you would have seen that there were some upgrades. It has been up for about three years now and we are doing certain things for example, putting a fence around the Cuban doctors' quarters, painting the guard hut and other such minor activities were undertaken and the retention is coming out of that.

Also, there were the upgrades of selected critical services in the West Demerara Regional Hospital, for example, the remodelling of the blood bank area and the general enhancement of the Administrative building, sewer and the security building.

Also at the East Bank Demerara Regional Hospital there was the construction of a small storage facility and remodelling of a space for a doctor's quarters. The hope being, that we can have a senior resident Guyanese doctor there to complement and enhance the transition from a predominately Cuban team, as we had in the bigger vision, to do within five to eight years of the facility being in existence, to have leadership by Guyanese doctors. So that is relative to this provision.

Ms. Ferguson: Just to seek clarity on this very Project, the Minister in explaining, said that rehabilitative works are currently being undertaken at the Georgetown School of Nursing, but if we go to Project Profiles, Ref: 197, I recognise that under Description of Project, you have here, "Rehabilitation of Georgetown School of Nursing", can you explain it to this House?

Dr. Ramsaran: We are looking at Programme 4, Project Profiles, Ref: 190, under Description of Project, Items 1 and 2, “Completion and rehabilitation of health facilities and payment of retention”. But that is what I am attempting to address here. [*Interruption*] Probably when we come to that we can address it, but we are dealing with, “Completion and rehabilitation of health facilities and the payment of retention”.

A significant amount of that is going towards these things I have just mentioned along with the construction of a new canteen area... [*Interruption*] The nursing school most likely will fall under programme 5.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, when the Hon. Member asked the question, could the Hon. Minister say which health facilities are currently under rehabilitation work, under Project 1201700 – Ministry of Health - Buildings, this is talking about Regional and Clinical Services? The Minister mentioned the Georgetown Nursing School, if we go down under Health Science Education, it is there again.

Dr. Ramsaran: Okay, my apologies Doctor, I should have read a few lines up, “Completion and rehabilitation of health facilities and Payment of retention”. If I did inadvertently look at that, I got caught with the term Retentions, my apologies. That will be discussed under Programme 5.

So that is what we are hoping to use those moneys for and I can add to that, the completion and the rehabilitation of the new canteen area at the National Psychiatric Hospital and a few other things; the upgrade of selected critical services and facilities at the West Demerara Regional Hospital, emphasis here on the upgrade of the electrical works; and the establishment of a Diabetic Foot Clinic at the East Bank Regional Hospital, at Diamond and the upgrade in certain spaces already existing there.

Dr. Norton: Follow up to the rehabilitative works that is being taken at the West Demerara Regional Hospital. Could you say what the status is with respect to Outpatient and the Accident and Emergency Department of that particular hospital?

Dr. Ramsaran: I am at a disadvantage to answer that particular question because I do not link it to a Line Item, but I can attempt this answer. We are emphasising the upgrade of the electrical works there...

Dr. Norton: Where?

Dr. Ramsaran: In the hospital, but that I think is in one of the wards where there are some unfinished work so I cannot answer you exactly. I know those works are finished. I do not know if you are asking about the actual services or if you can link that question with a Line Item so that I can probably address it.

Dr. Norton: I will link it much more with a Project and the Project is 1201700 and it refers to the rehabilitation of the West Demerara Regional Hospital. My question was what type of work is being done there, specifically with respect to the Outpatient, Accident and Emergency Department and not the electrical area that you mentioned?

Dr. Ramsaran: I can offer you this answer, I think it has to do with the upgrade of the pharmacy space, for example, making it air-conditioned and generally on improving the laboratory conditions and counter tops will be installed to make the services better.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Project 1201700 - Ministry of Health – Buildings, could the Hon. Minister say, under Project Profile, Ref: 190, Description of Project, Item No. 2, “Completion and Rehabilitation of Health Facilities”, if the Santa Rosa District Hospital comes under this?

Dr. Ramsaran: I appreciate the question from the Hon. Member. The Santa Rosa District Hospital is run by the Regional authorities, so we will have to explore that under the relevant region; they will have provisions to explain that for you.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you.

Ms. Marcelo: Project 2404500 – Land and Water Transport, can the Hon. Member say if there are any provisions made for Region 8 under this Project?

Dr. Ramsaran: Could you please repeat the question?

Ms. Marcelo: Project 2404500 - Land and Water Transport, can the Hon. Member tell this House if any provisions are made for Region 8 under this Project?

Dr. Ramsaran: I will attempt a generic answer here. Region 8 will be dealt with when the Regional... Region 8 and the section on health is discussed here. We are discussing the Ministry

of Health and the central allocations now. These are ambulances basically to start on the Coast an improved ambulance service. I am certain there will be goodies for you when we come to your region.

Dr. Norton: Just a follow up on the question. Can the Hon. Minister state clearly how many ambulances will be purchased and for which area? Following up from Project 2404500 – Land and Water Transport...

Dr. Ramsaran: Six ambulances are provided for with this allocation. This basically will be along the Coast and at our central hospitals. Some of the ambulances are now aging and we might replace them, but this is basically for the Coastal network, some of the other hospitals already have ambulances.

Ms. Ferguson: Project 1207700 – Doctors’ Quarters, could the Hon. Minister say how many Doctors’ Quarters at Corriverton and how many Medex quarters at the Long Creek Health Centre are to be rehabilitated and at what cost?

Dr. Ramsaran: Yes, I can most definitely give the Hon. Member that information. It will be one at each location.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you Hon. Member. Project 2501800 – Office Furniture and Equipment, could the Hon. Minister say what is the cost of the television sets, the quantity and from where these purchases will be made? Sorry, not where the purchases will be made, where exactly will this equipment be assigned?

Dr. Ramsaran: This unit/television is for educational purposes at the Linden Hospital.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions?

Mr. Greenidge: Mr. Chairman, can I ask you to refer to Project 1213000 – Specialty Hospital Project, you will see that the amount budgeted for 2012 is \$672,541 million. For 2011, whilst the budget is \$150 million, the latest estimated is \$29 million. This poses for me some difficulty, because you will recall that this item was the subject of more than one exchanges in this House and that arose from the fact that not only was \$150 million budgeted for, but the Supplementary

Paper, Financial Paper No. 7 indicated that \$150 million was spent and the Ministry was seeking an additional \$29 million as supplementary, which this House declined to provide.

If you look at the Project Profile, Ref: 192, you will see that Item 9 has a total Project Cost, but under the amount spent before 2012 there was a sum of \$29.1 million. I am having something of a difficulty understanding how an unauthorised amount could have been spent and is shown here as having been spent. If you look at the Description of Project, it inaccurately portrays as, “The project entails design, construction and equipping of Specialty Hospital”.

I would like to remind you that when the budget of \$150 million was submitted and when the Ministry reported on the expenditure, the \$150 million was for design and study and that phase was completed. There should be no reference to design here and most certainly the figure of \$29 million should not appear as an amount spent before 2012 because it was not authorised and if it was being confused with the design, then in any case the amount involved was \$150 million plus \$29.1 million.

It is something of a problem and I hope that the Minister can clarify this.

Minister of Finance [Dr. Singh]: Hon. Chairman, if I may because I believe this was an item that I had during the course of the consideration of the Supplementary Estimates. It is an item that I had intervened and elucidated further the answer given by the Hon. Minister of Health.

The Hon. Greenidge draws attention to the fact that the budgeted amount in 2011 was \$150 million and in this year's estimates, the latest estimates for 2011, reflects \$29.1 million. I believe that I had pointed out at the time that Financial Paper No. 7 of 2011 was being considered that the \$150 million in the 2011 Budget was in fact what we describe as Specific Funding or budgeted as a foreign inflow under the Indian Exempt Bank loan that is expected to fund this project.

So, because the original budget had provided \$150 million, that \$150 million under specific appropriation, which is essentially an appropriation that originates from an external funding source, in this case the Indian Exempt Bank. In executing the budget, we do not typically use a foreign funded appropriation to fund locally funded expenditure.

In the 2011 Budget \$150 million was budgeted as in-flows from India, but those in-flows were not spent because of the stage at which the project preparation was. The site preparation, which is I suppose the excavation of the land and landfill etc, which was required to be advance, was in fact to be funded from a local appropriation, hence the need for a contingency fund advance to finance the site preparation.

So at the time Financial Paper No. 7 came to Parliament, I had pointed out that the \$150 million was originally budgeted for had not been spent and is unlikely to be spent because that was originating from a foreign funding source, but the site preparation was going to be funded locally, hence, a Contingency Fund advance of \$29.1 million.

In the course of things, the Contingency's Fund advance has been properly authorised. A request came on the necessary approvals granted by the Ministry of Health and subsequently by the Ministry of Finance. That Contingency Fund advance was granted, a contract was executed and expenditure was made properly and authorised out of the Contingency's Fund advance, so that expenditure was incurred, hence, it being reflected under the latest estimates. It is a fact that the expenditure did happen.

With the passage of time, of course, Financial Paper No. 7 came to the National Assembly and it remains one of the items for which endorsements by the National Assembly remains pending. It would be recall that the Hon. Speaker has indicated in his ruling on this matter that the four pending matters on Financial Paper No. 7 can be resubmitted for reconsideration by this National Assembly. It is my publicly expressed intention to comply with his ruling.

So I suppose in an abbreviated form the answer would be that the \$150 million originally budgeted for in 2011 was foreign funding. We did not co-mingle foreign funding with local funding and so a local Contingency Fund advance was granted for the site prep, out of which the \$29.1 million was met. Hence, the \$29.1 million reflected under the latest estimates.

I know it was a multi part question, forgive me if I did not answer all of the parts, but if Mr. Greenidge points out any part of his question that I did not answer, I would be happy to return to the matter.

Mr. Greenidge: I thank the Minister for his explanation. I happen to have with me here the notes I kept during the time of the discussions of the Supplementary Provision. It was not clear to me at that time that the \$150 million was foreign funding, but of course we can... *[Interruption]* We can, of course, verify that afterwards. The question is this, if a Supplementary Paper comes to this House and it is voted against, because it was not a pending matter, we voted against it, can it be shown as an expenditure when it was unauthorised? That is the issue.

Dr. Singh: First of all in relations to the matter of whether the \$150 million was budgeted as specific or not, I will say that it was and I invite Mr. Greenidge to examine the 2011 Estimates for the relevant Line Item. I am sure he will observe, in fact I know that he will observe, that under Specific Allocations of the 2011 Estimates, the budgeted specific funding in the 2011 Estimates. Ms. Lawrence I see has a copy of the 2011 Estimates, it is Volume 1, and you will find it in the relevant page. I will be happy to point Mr. Greenidge to the page. If you find the relevant page you will see that under Specific it was \$150 million that was budgeted, that is the first point.

The second point is, in relation to Contingency Fund advances, it would be recalled that at the time we considered the two Financial Papers I had provided a fairly lengthy elaboration on the distinction between Contingency Fund advances that are properly authorised by the Finance Minister and comes to the National Assembly for expos endorsements under legislative provisions, Constitutional provisions in the first instance and legislative provisions in the subsequently and indeed in accordance with our Standing Orders on the one hand and on the other hand original supplemental appropriations. In fact, I had explained that that is why Financial Papers typically come in pairs. The first typically clear Contingency Fund advances that may have been granted and the second to seek approval for original supplementary appropriations, hence, Financial Papers No. 7 and 8 coming to the National Assembly as they did.

In the case of the Contingency Fund advance which was granted to finance the site preparation, the fact that the National Assembly did not grant it expos endorsement does not alter the fact that a Contingency Fund advance was approved properly by the authorities vested under the Constitution and under the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act and does not alter the fact that that expenditure was incurred.

4.06 p.m.

The incurrence of that expenditure under a Contingencies Fund Advance is a historical fact, hence its inclusion under the latest estimate.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, Hon. Minister.

Mr. Greenidge: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I hear the Minister and I can confirm that in the Estimates of 2011 it does say “specific funding”. The issue, therefore, turns on whether he is right in saying that unauthorised expenditure can be shown here against 2012 as being expenditure prior to 2012.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, I thank you for your observation. I will have to seek advice. I am not a financial expert but these are the Minister’s records and not the Parliamentary records or the Speakers records but it is, as the Minister points out, a historical fact that there has been an expenditure whether it is authorised or unauthorised. I would not want to prejudice the opinion of financial experts but by my own view – subject, of course, to expert advice – is that if there has been an expenditure I would like for it to be reflected somewhere. Wrongly or rightly I would like at least that it be shown that there has been, even if with a note or an explanatory memoranda or something accompanying it. With your permission I would like to perhaps consult. There are a number of financial experts that have come about recently. I could meet with one or two of them and get some opinions.

Dr. Singh: Mr. Chairman, may I point out that this matter is governed by Article 220 of the Constitution and Section 41 of the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act, 2003, and I will read the Fiscal Management...

Mr. Chairman: One second, please, that would be Article...?

Dr. Singh: Article 220, which refers to the establishment of a Contingencies Fund and I will read Article 220 (1). Are you with me, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Dr. Singh: Article 220 (1) says:

“Parliament may make provision for the establishment of a Contingencies Fund and for authorising the Minister responsible for finance to make advances from that Fund if he...” the Minister of Finance “...is satisfied that there is an urgent need for expenditure for which no other provision exists.”

That Constitutional provision, having stated that Parliament may make provision for the establishment of a Contingencies Fund, then manifested itself in Parliament making such a provision in the form of Section 41 of the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act. I do not know if you have yours with you but I would be happy to share a copy with you. Section 41 of the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act, Subsection 2 says:

“The Minister...” referring to the Minister responsible for finance “...shall have sole authority for the release of monies from the Contingencies Fund which authority shall not be delegated.”

Section 41, Subsection 3 says:

“The Minister when satisfied that certain needs have arisen and when certain conditions are satisfied may approve a contingencies fund advance as an expenditure out of the Consolidated Fund by the issuance of a drawing right.”

So there is an authority derived from the Constitution’s Article 220 and reinforced by Section 41 and doubly reinforced by the relevant Standing Orders that authorise the Minister to make drawings from the Contingencies Fund. That authority having been exercised, the expenditure is incurred and the incurrence of the expenditure is an objective verifiable historical fact. That Contingencies Fund then requires *ex post imprimatur* of the National Assembly hence the submission of the Financial Paper. The entire Assembly is aware, of course, that there were four items in Financial Paper No. 7 that are yet to receive the *ex post imprimatur* of the National Assembly and this item is indeed one of them, but that does not alter the fact that expenditure of \$29.1 million was incurred...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, let me say that I am in no position to make a ruling on this matter. I will have to seek advice as to whether or not I can even make a ruling; whether or not it is a matter in the jurisdiction of the Speaker or the Parliament to have an item stated as an

expenditure that has been “spent”, so to speak. Hon. Member, Mr. Greenidge, I will not entertain any further debate.

Mr. Greenidge: I just want to clarify that the issue at hand, and the point I am raising, is not the authority of the Minister to grant a contingency; it is Parliament having rejected it. It is not a question of it lying before Parliament. The matter was considered and it was rejected. That is all I am pointing out.

Mr. Chairman: I appreciate that. Thank you. Notwithstanding that I urge that we proceed with the consideration of the estimates as they are before us while I seek some guidance as to how we should treat a matter such as this. In any event we are to proceed with the estimates that are before us.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Chairman, if you would indulge me, we have allocated times for different Ministries and we are way over the Health Ministry. I am not quite sure that a ruling is required on this issue because there is a charge pending on the Contingencies Fund and the Minister has made it clear that he is coming back to Parliament, as advised by you. At this point we are looking at the Estimates for 2012. The House can decide when the Minister returns whether to reject again or to change its mind. Mr. Chairman, I think that we should proceed with other matters.

Mr. Chairman: Which is what I said two minutes ago and I said that I am not even sure that I have the jurisdiction to make a ruling on the matter so we will proceed with the consideration of the Estimates.

Mr. Allen: Yes, Mr. Chairman, under line item 2501900, can the Hon. Minister say how much of this sum is allocated for Region 1 and what the exact item is that will be purchased?

Dr. Ramsaran: The Hon. Member should know that this covers a wide cross section of equipment and they are for the various Regions; practically all of the Regions would be getting depending on their needs. For example, I can indicate that surgical instruments would be bought to replace where necessary in the health facilities across the Regions: An x-ray processor for Regions 3, 5 and 6, a sanitiser for Region 10, an autoclave for Region 4, blood pressure kits for Region 1 to 10, Haemoglobin meters for Regions 1 to 10, endoscopy machines, oxygen gauges

for Regions 1 to 10, oxygen tanks for Regions 1 to 10 – those are the small ones – echocardiogram (ECG) machines for Region 4, hodoscopes for Regions 1 to 10, examination lamps and trolleys for Regions 1 to 10, wheel chairs for Region 10, drip stands for Region 10, suction machines for Region 10 and so forth and so on. It is a very wide list of equipment and they would be shared among the facilities as per a predetermined list based on requests already made.

Mr. Allen: Thank you.

Programme: 474 – Regional and Clinical Services – \$855,940,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 475 – Health Sciences Education – \$451,666,000

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Under line item 6116 - Contracted Employees: Here again we had an increase of two employees, from 33 to 35, but we had the amount allocated to this area increased to \$15 million. Could the Hon. Minister say what the salaries are of these two persons and their designations?

Dr. Ramsaran: I think that it is not as simple as it would appear. Across the period one might have had various workers leaving from time to time in the “Contracted Worker” category and that might account for the fact that the permutations and combinations of those changes would lead to this situation which is not mathematically linearly expressed.

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much, Hon. Minister. Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say, under line item 6302, Training (Including Scholarships), as there was an increase of \$30 million, what does that training entail?

Dr. Ramsaran: This indicates expansion in the persons taken on to our training programmes. This represents, by and large, stipends for the technician level programmes like x-ray technician, medics, CHW, nursing training of different categories, medical laboratory technician, pharmacy assistant, environmental health assistant and dental technician. Those programmes have experienced an expansion in their intakes in the past few years and especially in this period and

that accounts for the significant increase in the stipends. That is why I regularly say that the stipends are small but when we multiply them by the number of people in the programmes it is a significant burden.

Programme: 475 – Health Sciences Education – \$451,666,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 475 – Health Sciences Education – \$34,600,000

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 1201700: Could the Hon. Minister say what ongoing works currently exist at the Georgetown School of Nursing and what works are to be done for this year? Thank you.

Dr. Ramsaran: This is for retention for works already done, recently. Remember that last year we expanded the Nursing School significantly, which is not very visible from East Street but it is going way down to the alleyway now and it also includes the cost of a transformer because the expanded demands on the electrical circuitry; these demands that the facility has its standalone, its own transformer. Of course we have to do some improvement in the actual circuitry of the building.

Dr. Norton: To follow-up on this particular question, could the Hon. Minister say, among the works that are planned for this year, if rehabilitation of the toilet facility that I mentioned in my Budget Presentation is supposed to be undertaken at the Georgetown Nursing School?

Dr. Ramsaran: As I said, the building was extended beyond the original dimensions to approximately an increase of 100%. There are more new toilet facilities in that. The older facilities in the older wing – the front part of the building – should be addressed. In many cases, Hon. Dr. Norton, this is a matter of management of these facilities so that will come under maintenance and we will be encouraging, along with my Director of Training, more frequent visits by the relevant persons to see that these facilities are maintained in a good condition. That comes under maintenance and we will ensure that the powers that be, at these schools, ensure that these sanitary facilities are maintained. They are not broken; it is a matter of maintenance of these facilities and seeing that the workers actually keep them clean, tidy and functional.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you, Sir. Line item 2404500: Could the Hon. Minister say what type of vehicles are to be purchased and for which locations? Thank you.

Dr. Ramsaran: This will be a vehicle to support the movement of staff, especially senior staff, for supervisory functions of the Programme 5, which is the training division of the Ministry of Health. This will be a “4x4” vehicle. I want you to recall that we have schools in Linden and in New Amsterdam and we need to send our people there on those supervisory visits that I told you about. Hopefully these will be monthly visits by the head of Programme 5 and the Chief Nurse to overcome some of those problems, some of which Dr. Norton just mentioned.

Programme: 475 – Health Sciences Education – \$34,600,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 476 – Standards and Technical Services – \$323,095,000

Programme: 476 – Standards and Technical Services – \$323,095,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 476 – Standards and Technical Services – \$5,300,000

Programme: 476 – Standards and Technical Services – \$5,300,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 477 – Rehabilitation Services – \$220,345,000

Programme: 477 – Rehabilitation Services – \$220,345,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 477 – Rehabilitation Services – \$3,500,000

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 2501900: Could the Hon. Minister say how many audiometers will be purchased and where they will be placed? Thank you.

Dr. Ramsaran: The audiometers will be four in number and they will be in the central clinic in Programme 4, at the Centre of Excellence, the Audiology Centre in Georgetown.

Ms. Ferguson: Thank you very much, Hon. Minister.

Programme: 477 – Rehabilitation Services – \$3,500,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: I am happy to report that that concludes the consideration of the Estimates for the Ministry of Health for expenditures covering Programmes 471-477 and I wish to thank the Hon. Minister of Health and his staff for assisting; save and accept for the one issue which I will clarify in due course. Thank you, Hon. Minister and the technical staff of the Ministry.

Agency: 41 – Ministry of Education

Current Expenditure

Programme: 411 – Main Office – \$426,634,000

Ms. Ally: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6116, staffing details reflect an almost 100% increase for the contracted employees. My first question: Could the Hon. Minister say whether the policy now is to make all of the Public Sector Employees contracted employees?

Minister of Education [Ms. Manickchand]: No, Sir. That is not the policy.

Ms. Ally: Thank you, Hon. Minister. Mr. Chairman, supplementary questions regarding 6116: Could the Hon. Minister say whether there are senior appointments in the contracted employees? Could they be listed with their emoluments? Thank you.

Ms. Manickchand: I was not clear on the question. Did the Hon. Member want all or the new ones?

Ms. Ally: The new ones.

Ms. Manickchand: Technical Facilitator, Information Communication Technology (ICT) Specialist, Administrator, Personal Assistant, Protocol Officer, Driver.

Salaries:

Driver - \$63,452

Protocol Officer - \$86,475

Personal Assistant – \$170,407

Administrator - \$162,000

ICT Specialist - \$324,000

Technical Facilitator - \$345,600

Ms. Ally: Thank you, Hon. Minister. Line item 6224 - Print and Non-Print Materias: Could the Hon. Minister give examples of these print and non-print materials and say what is responsible for an upward movement under this head?

Ms. Manickchand: There is no upward movement under this head, but I could tell the Hon. Member and this House what is bought under this line item. These are usually publications, newspapers and subscriptions for different magazines that aid in the development and delivery of education, for example, News Week.

4.36 p.m.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: Could the Hon. Minister say what can be accounted for under “Maintenance of Other Infrastructure”?

Ms. Manickchand: It is the weeding and cleaning of drains and the cleaning of fences at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Office.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6281 – Security Services: The budgeted sum for 2011 was \$4.38 million, while the revised amount was \$2.41 million. Yet, the budgeted sum for 2012 is \$4.38 million. Could the Minister explain the reason for this?

Ms. Manickchand: A detailed assessment of the security services provided to the Ministry was done by the technical staff and it has determined that it needs more reliable service and so it has opted to go back out to tender, which is presently happening.

Ms. Ally: A supplementary. Could the Minister say which security service won the tender in 2011 and the one for 2012?

Ms. Manickchand: I could be guided here. I said earlier...

Mr. Chairman: You can tell us about 2011. You can tell us about the past.

Ms. Manickchand: I said earlier that the companies were not reliable, so now I am going to name them publicly.

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Ally, would you be comfortable with the Minister telling you the name of the company privately?

Ms. Ally: Yes Mr. Chairman. That would be fine.

Ms. Manickchand: The reason why I cannot give it privately is because I was just advised that it would have been many. It would not just be one, which I would have felt uncomfortable doing.

Mr. Chairman: What I would suggest is that rather than saying that it was unsatisfactory, just say that the need arose to have a review of the security services. In that way, no company would feel that it was pilloried in the House, or defamed. It might lose all of its other contracts if it is announced that it could not provide a security service. So you can say that a review became necessary. But the Hon. Member has agreed to get the names from you, in written form, which could be circulated either directly to her or through the Clerk. Thank you. The list would be provided, Ms. Ally.

Ms. Ally: Thank you.

Programme: 411 – Main Office - \$426,634,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 411 – Main Office - \$15,100,000

Mrs. Lawrence: Project 1206200 - Building – National Library: Could the Hon. Minister give a breakdown of the allocation as per the four categories listed here?

Ms. Manickchand: For the retention for rehabilitation of rural centres, which can be found at Salem, Ruimveldt, it is \$0.482 million; rehabilitation of the enclosure of the computer room with a new air conditioning unit, central library - \$1.2 million; rehabilitation of rural centres at Golden Grove, Beterverwagting, Mahaicony - \$9.129 million; purchase of a photocopier for Linden - \$0.8 million; purchase of three fire extinguishers for Georgetown - \$96,000; purchase of ten fans for Georgetown - \$90,000 and purchase of seven water dispensers for Georgetown - \$140,000.

Mrs. Lawrence: Project 1208000 – Adult Education Association: Could the Minister tell us why, after there was an allocation of \$700,000 in 2011 for the same items being purchased here, furniture, another provision is now being made in 2012 for the same entity?

Ms. Manickchand: Sir, this is to purchase furniture and equipment. When needs are submitted to the Ministry or when the Ministry submits to the Ministry of Finance, often they are met in a phased way. So, the needs which were met in 2011 are not necessarily the exact needs which the Ministry will be meeting with this allocation, once it is voted for, in 2012.

Ms. Ally: Project 1206500 – Teachers’ Training Complex: Could the Hon. Minister say what amount goes to furniture and equipment and what portion goes to the rewiring of the laboratory?

Ms. Manickchand: Mr. Chairman, are you doing it...?

Mr. Chairman: You are correct. I am doing the Programme 411 only, for now.

Programme: 411 – Main Office - \$15,100,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 412 – National Education Policy - Implementation and Supervision - \$197,314,000

Ms. Ally: Line item 6112 – Senior Technical: Could the Hon. Minister indicate where those senior technical staff are attached?

Ms. Manickchand: They are attached to the Assistant Chief Education Officer's (ACEO) offices, School Inspectorate, ACEO, School Welfare Office, Senior Education Officer's office, Technical and Vocational Education (Tech-Voc), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) offices and the Guidance and Counsellor Unit.

Ms. Ally: Supplementary. There is an increase from \$34.6 million to \$42.1 million. What is responsible for this, Hon. Minister?

Ms. Manickchand: Is it line item 6112, Hon. Member? The Ministry has recorded a decrease by four per cent.

Ms. Ally: At line item 6112, it is from \$34.687 million to \$42.108 million.

Ms. Manickchand: I think that the comparison is from budget to budget because it was revised downwards. The question was what was responsible for the increase. It came down in 2011 because persons had retired and resigned. Now the Ministry is going to be filling those vacancies, hopefully with permission, it is going to go up back. There was not an actual decrease, *per se*.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: What are the seven new posts and their emoluments?

Ms. Manickchand: The new posts and the emoluments are: Head of the Inspectorate Unit - \$237,600, Curriculum Development Officer - \$233,734, School Inspectors, that is two - \$211,504, one Senior Education Officer - \$211,016, Typist Clerk - \$39,127 and Office Assistant - \$35,864.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): There is approximately a \$19 million increase. What categories of training are being dealt with and are there any scholarships included in this sum? Are the scholarships for overseas or local training?

Ms. Manickchand: It is a twelve per cent increase. There are no scholarships that the Ministry intends to award under this line item. The Ministry does intend, however, to host parenting

seminars, as a matter of training, seminars for the National Students' Council and training of one thousand teachers to teach Spanish at the primary level. The Grade Six Remedial programme will teach volunteers...stipend for their housing is provided under this line item. The stipend for the teachers who come under the Project Trust programme is also paid from this line item. Additionally, the cost of the professional development training for the Regional Education Officers (REdOs) and District Education Officers (DEOs) is met under this line item. The cost of training falling under the ACEOs, secondary, is also met under this line item.

Ms. Ally: Supplementary. Could the Hon. Minister say how many persons are anticipated to benefit from this type of training, in various fields?

Ms. Manickchand: It is really hard to measure that, Sir, because it is not only the people we train, but it is about what happens when they use that training. Children get to be taught and they use that to develop Guyana. So it is hard to measure it. But if we are talking about the actual number of trainees who will sit in a room, I am advised that it is going to be more than one thousand five hundred.

Ms. Ally: I did not expect to have a specific figure, but I thank the Minister for that approximate figure. Line item 6264 – Vehicles and Spares: How many vehicles are being talked about in this line item?

Ms. Manickchand: The provision caters for the maintenance of one vehicle.

Mr. Jones: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: It is noted that the Ministry increased the number by seven, but it is also noted that the allocation remains almost the same as last year's. Could the Hon. Minister explain this?

Ms. Manickchand: These positions were filled last year under another line item because those are persons... The Ministry of Education seeks to utilise all of the resources available to Guyana. Much of it is invested in persons who will be retiring at various points. We do not want to send them out into the pasture when we so desperately need to cultivate our younger staff, as well as utilise the experience and training that those persons have. Many of those persons actually are placed under line item 6112 – Senior Technical - last year. Now that they are retired, they are

now catered for under line item 6116 and so there would not be a change in the figure next to the line item.

Mr. Bond: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: Could the Minister say how many of those contracted employees are employed at the National Centre for Educational Resource Development (NCERD)?

Ms. Manickchand: It is none under this programme. This programme deals with the Chief Education Officer and the Deputy Chief Education Officer, Development. There is an entire programme. I believe it is Programme 414 which deals with NCERD. You can ask that when we get to Programme 414. But these here do not work with NCERD.

Programme: 412 – National Education Policy - Implementation and Supervision - \$197,314,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 412 – National Education Policy - \$2,100,000

Programme: 412 – National Education Policy - \$2,100,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 413 – Ministry Administration - \$1,517,315,000

Ms. Ally: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: How many senior appointments are contained in this detail? Could the Hon. Minister list them with their emoluments?

Ms. Manickchand: Could I ask for some clarification? Was that, as it relates to the new contracted employees, being reflected or all of the contracted employees?

Ms. Ally: It is the new and senior contracted employees.

Ms. Manickchand: We do not see “senior” reflected. The highest paid person would be a System Development Coordinator at \$97,492.

Ms. Ally: How many, Mr. Chairman?

Ms. Manickchand: There are sixteen new workers under this line item. The highest paid is a System Development Coordinator and there are two of those and the lowest is a Cleaner at \$35,864.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Minister say which building is earmarked for this maintenance?

Ms. Manickchand: Those would be Lot 26 Brickdam, Lot 21 Brickdam and the Book Distribution Unit at Charlestown.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: What other infrastructure is catered for under this line item?

Ms. Manickchand: The infrastructures that the Ministry attempts to address here are at Lot 21 Brickdam, Lot 26 Brickdam and Lot 68 Brickdam. What the Ministry intends to do, as maintenance, would be weeding and cleaning of the compounds and washing of the fences.

Ms. Ally: Mr. Chairman, is it the understanding then that the same type of work that will be done for the maintenance of those buildings, listed at line item 6242, repeats itself at line item 6255?

Ms. Manickchand: Line item 6242, I am advised, Sir, deals with the substantive infrastructure - the roof, floor and steps. Line item 6255 deals with the fence, drains, guttering and the weeding.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6264 – Vehicle Spares and Service: How many vehicles are we talking about?

Ms. Manickchand: We are talking about fourteen vehicles, Hon. Member.

Mrs. Lawrence: On the same line item 6264: Minister, could you kindly tell me what are the ages of the five oldest vehicles?

Ms. Manickchand: The Ministry is presently reviewing how economical it is to maintain those vehicles. They are old vehicles and we recognise that it is more expensive to maintain those old vehicles. To answer the Member, they are twenty years old.

Mr. Chairman: They are twenty years. It is as what is happening around this Parliament Office.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6281 – Security Services: Which security company is contracted?

Ms. Manickchand: Presently, Sir, at Lot 21 Brickdam, it is Security Services Limited and at Lot 26 Brickdam, it is the Inter-Services Enterprise Ltd. But as I said, Sir, there was a need to review all of the security services across the various departments in the Ministry. It did that and as a result of that review, we advertised for security firms to bid to provide service for the Ministry. Those advertisements have been responded to and I believe that the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB) is addressing them.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6284 – Other: Could the Hon. Minister do a classification of the item “Other” for this House?

Ms. Manickchand: This line item caters for internet connectivity charges, water for the offices, the marking and supervision of national and external examinations, so as to maintain the integrity, credibility and security of examinations, and it also caters for facilitating regional observers and monitors from the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) Headquarters.

Ms. Ferguson: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): Could the Minister tell me what would have caused the increase from \$2.90 million, last year, to \$5 million for this year?

Ms. Manickchand: It is under this line item that teachers from the National Volunteer Teachers’ Programme are paid. As it can be seen, in 2011, the Ministry had actually anticipated that it would have needed \$7 million, but because it did not actually expend that, it was revised and it got \$3.5 million. There is actually a reduction in twenty-nine per cent of what the Ministry is going to get this year. The reason it did not spend as much as it had anticipated was because it took more time in developing the implementation of the programme, rather than attracting persons to it. This year, having developed that implementation, the Ministry believes that it can step forward and attract more persons, as a result of which it would need more stipend for those persons.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): I am interested in knowing what type of training it is, training for whom and the number that will benefit from it.

Ms. Manickchand: It caters for training of staff in the personnel department and planning unit - upgrading of skills in those units, as well as the Human Resources (HR) department. The line

item also caters for increasing the number of volunteers in the National Volunteer Teachers' programme.

Ms Ally: A follow-up. I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether, already, a programme has been developed for the training of those personnel.

Ms. Manickchand: Who are personnel, Hon. Member?

Ms. Ally: The personnel that you have just mentioned.

Ms. Manickchand: I did say there are several – Human Resources, Planning Unit, National Volunteer Teachers' Programme. Which one is it?

Ms. Ally: It is all of them.

Ms. Manickchand: There are some, and I am giving, as an example, the Planning Unit, which are developed and the Ministry would execute and implement those and some which come up naturally because of change of staff or the injection of new staff, and so on.

5.06 p.m.

Ms. Ally: I know the policy is that you ought to be satisfied with the answers, but I wonder Sir... I am just saying this for placing it on the record, that I see money budgeted, but no programme is planned to utilise this money.

Mr. Chairman: The observations before you, Hon. Minister...

Ms. Manickchand: Sir, I am being advised by the Chief Education Officer that for the National Volunteer Teachers' Programme there is an extensive six-week programme which has been developed. We will be happy to share it with the Hon. Member.

Ms. Selman: Line tem 6292 - Dietary: Could the Hon. Minister say what covers this basically and the estimated number of persons to benefit from it? Is it the School Feeding Programme and how many persons?

Ms. Manickchand: This line item caters for the Government's intervention in the School's Feeding Programme. As you would know, Sir, the Ministry recognises, to be serious issues, how

it could deliver education better and how it could stem dropout rates and so a lot of different interventions have been undertaken, one of which is the School Feeding Programme. Under that programme, all of our children attending nursery schools, as well as Grades One and Two, receive, every single school day, fortified biscuits and nutritious, so determined by the Ministry of Health testing, juices. That is what this line item is used to do.

To answer the second part of the Hon. Member's question, it is over seventy-five thousand students who benefit every single day from this line item.

Programme: 413 – Ministry Administration - \$1,517,315,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 413 - Ministry Administration – \$8,600,000

Mr. Chairman: The 5 o' clock hour has been, but I am asking for your indulgence because I would not want to have the Ministry's technical staff here while we take a break and then resume just for one or two heads. So I ask that we work through to allow that process to take place so that when we return we will have a new Ministry to consider entirely.

Ms. Ally: Project 2403300 - Land Transport: Could the Hon. Minister say which department will utilise this vehicle?

Ms. Manickchand: The Ministry is very pleased that it has improved the services at Book Distribution Unit, in terms of what the content is of what it delivered from it, but it remains displeased at the fact that it is not delivered on time. The Ministry thinks that it could improve the services offered from this Book Distribution Unit by making available to that unit a double cab canter truck or vehicle. That is what the Ministry is purchasing it for.

Ms. Ally: A follow-up. Could the Hon. Minister say whether the vehicle has been sourced?

Ms. Manickchand: The Ministry does not know that if it will get approval. It still does not, in fact. It is waiting on the Members to vote for that and then it will have to go out to bid and advertise that it is looking for a vehicle, get the cheapest bidder, it has to go to NPTAB, and so on. It has not sourced the vehicle.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, can I ask a follow-up question? I would believe that when it is that these items are listed for consideration that a price would have already been sourced from some place. I wonder if it is that, the Minister can say what quotations the Ministry would have had - how many they were - and the individual prices of the quotations.

Mr. Chairman: How is it normally be done within the Ministry?

Ms. Manickchand: Maybe Minister Singh would like to help with this answer, Sir. I think what happens - I am being advised by my Principal Assistant Secretary (PAS), Finance, and my Permanent Secretary, who incidentally serves also as new as I am - is that the Ministry will have a vague idea of how much the vehicle will cost, an estimate of how much it is going to cost, and then it submits that to the Ministry of Finance and it then determines whether it is going to award it. The Ministry does not source the vehicle and decide which one it wants before it puts it in the Estimates.

Mr. Trotman: I am a bit worried by that answer, because impression which is got is that the figures that the Ministry is asking us to approve really cannot be reliable. They are figures that we could have no confidence in. So I am wondering if it is that the explanation which is given is really authentic.

Ms. Manickchand: Perhaps I did not articulate that well enough. When the Ministry decides what it needs, the type of vehicle, for example, it will do some research to determine what the average best price would be. I suppose it will look at highest and the lowest and come up with an average price of what the vehicle may cost, and that is how the Ministry of Finance determines how much it can award. Minister Singh could help with this answer.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister of Finance, perhaps you could provide some guidance as to the policy, in so far, of sourcing vehicles.

Dr. Singh: Just a brief observation to say that the Ministry does not typically initiate the procurement process - that is to say, solicit quotations, and so on - until after the budget is approved. What the Ministry does is that it will have an idea of what the vehicle is required to do, and so if it is a double cab vehicle or a passenger, people-carrier, vehicle, or an all-terrain vehicle, it will have an idea of the specification which is required and it will make an estimate - it

really is an estimate - and then the procurement process is initiated once the budget would have been passed, and it then will have to buy within the estimate.

Mr. Chairman: That was my sense. Hon. Members, could we please proceed.

Programme: 413 - Ministry Administration – \$8,600,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 414 - Training and Development - \$1,124,338,000

Ms. Ally: Line item 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: What infrastructure comes under this line item?

Ms. Manickchand: Those will be NCERD, Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) and the Allied Arts Unit.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence: Is this sum for officers going out of Georgetown to conduct training or is it training, Georgetown based?

Ms. Manickchand: I am told, Sir, that it is all kinds of things, in terms of training. It is for CPCE and going into its centres, literacy officers, moving from NCERD to go and deliver programmes at various places where education is delivered and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) specialists. This caters for travel to the various regions, really, Sir, to deliver education. I see the Multimedia Centre Unit, that is, the Guyana Learning Channel, could also access funds from here to either monitor or actually set up its infrastructure.

Ms. Ally: Supplementary. A similar question to what I asked earlier. Could the Hon. Minister say whether a programme has been developed for this aspect?

Ms. Manickchand: Sir, a host of persons from NCERD, CPCE and Allied Arts Unit developed a range of programmes for many persons under this line item. For example, there are twenty-seven continuous professional development courses that would be delivered, or where travelling subsistence would be used, under this line item, to deliver those programmes. That is just one example.

Ms. Ally: So I take it, Mr. Chairman, that the answer is “yes”. There is a programme. Thank you Minister you are doing well.

Line item 6264 – Vehicles Spares and Services: How many vehicles and types are presently in that fleet?

Ms. Manickchand: It caters for seven vehicles, Hon. Member, a tractor and a generator set.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6117 - Temporary Employees: I am noting that there are a large number of temporary employees. Could the Minister say what categories those temporary employees come under?

Ms. Manickchand: It could look like a startling number, but it is not. It caters for all the collators, and so on. There are exams - National Grade Two, National Grade Four, National Grade Six, National Grade Nine and those papers are printed, the Ministry publishes them and then they have to be collated as well. The people the Ministry uses to perform those functions are considered temporary staff. In addition, there are several literacy educators. In fact, it is more than two hundred. They are also considered temporary staff and that is how that figure is got which looks starling, but really it is not.

Mr. Bond: Could the Minister say how many contracted employees are working at NCERD - line item 6116 – Contracted Employees?

Ms. Manickchand: The budget’s Estimates, Sir, state that the Ministry is expected to employ seventy-one contracted employees at NCERD. There are seventy-one contracted employees at NCERD.

Mr. Bond: A follow-up, please. Could the Minister tell us the emoluments...?

Ms. Manickchand: Sorry. Sir, that is an incorrect answer. This is not for NCERD alone. It is for NCERD, CPCE and Allied Arts Unit. We could supply that within the course of the afternoon, exactly how much contracted employees there are at NCERD alone.

Mr. Chairman: I suggest that as you do for NCERD you might as well disaggregate and provide for all.

Mr. Bond: Could the Minister, under the same line item, state the designation and emoluments of the senior contracted employees of NCERD?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, Could you provide now the information as regards the salary of the senior employees, not only at NCERD, but of the seventy-one?

Ms. Manickchand: We have the entire list. Would the Hon. Member be happy with the first five highest paid employees and their emolument? So it would be the Director of NCERD and that post attracts a salary of \$420, 714; the Senior Subject Specialist, which position attracts a salary of \$249,480, the Head of the Literacy Unit, which attracts a salary of \$237,600; the Head of the Multimedia Centre Unit, which attracts a salary of \$249,480 and a Senior Subject Specialist whose office also attracts a salary of \$240, 408. I could submit the entire list to the Hon. Member if he so desires.

Programme: 414 - Training and Development - \$1,124,338,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 414 - Training & Development – \$77, 500, 000

Ms. Ally: I now ask my question again, Sir. Project 1206500 - Training and Development: What amount goes to furniture and equipment and also what portion goes to the rewiring of laboratory?

Ms. Manickchand: The rewiring of the laboratory, Sir, would cost \$1 million and the others would go towards furniture and equipment. Would you like me, Hon. Member, to list in detail, what are the furniture and equipment and how much are they going to cost?

Ms. Ally: No.

Programme: 414 - Training and Development - \$77,500,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 415 - Education Delivery - \$4,935,260,000

Ms. Ally: Line item 6133 - Benefits and Allowances: What are the categories of persons who will receive those benefits?

Mr. Chairman: Before you answer, Hon. Minister, I believe every Member would have been supplied with an erratum. There is some correction to page 151, so please refer to that when you are going through this programme. Go ahead Minister.

Ms. Manickchand: I am advised that they are teachers and public officers.

Ms. Ally: They are teachers and public officers

Ms. Manickchand: I could do better, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Please do.

Ms. Manickchand: It caters for vacation allowance and Whitley Council leave, maternity leave, for all employees who are paid by the Ministry under this programme.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: What does maintenance of other infrastructure mean?

Ms. Manickchand: This programme deals with all the schools in Georgetown - primary, nursery, secondary, the Practical Instruction Centres (PIC) and the institutes, Government Technical Institute (GTI), and so on. So it would be all of those schools. What would fall into the category of maintenance would be weeding, washing of the fence, landfill where necessary, repairs to guard huts and those types of activities. What I said may not be exhausted of what the Ministry does.

Ms. Ally: Could the Minister tell this Assembly whether a survey was done to determine, for example, how many guard huts need to be repaired?

Ms. Manickchand: There is a maintenance plan and the Ministry is right on top of accomplishing under that plan. It was a five-year plan and it has worked so well that it is trying to do it across the regions in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6222 - Field Materials and Supplies: Could the Minister explain what embodies this sum budgeted for?

Ms. Manickchand: This caters for cardboards, chalk, markers, the materials that our schools have and are using in the entire nursery, primary and secondary schools as well as the technical institutes and materials under also the Secondary Competency Certificate Programme (SCCP). It is under this line item in which the Ministry purchased those.

Ms. Lawrence: Page 151, line item 6301 - Education Subvention and Grants: Could the Hon. Minister indicate whether the school uniform programme is under this line item?

Ms. Manickchand: No. This is subvention grants which are given under this line item. It is not for uniform. I am told that a warrant is given for the uniform programme from the Ministry of Finance.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6281 - Security Services: Could the Hon. Minister say what percentage of our schools have twenty-four-hour security?

Ms. Manickchand: This entire programme only caters for Georgetown which is considered as a separate education district. Where the need arises the Ministry procures a twenty-four-hour service for schools. But it is not all schools have twenty-four-hour service, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, I believe that it may be difficult to give an accurate figure for a question as that, but I am sure that it can be provided, in due course.

Ms. Manickchand: Without a doubt, Sir, it can be provided, but I want to specifically say no. The Ministry does not provide a twenty-four-hour service.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, the Member is interested in what percentages of schools have a twenty-four-hour security. We know that it is not all are provided for. So the question is: What percentage of all the schools do have twenty-four-hour security?

Ms. Manickchand: We could provide that, Sir, but we may need, because it is a large education district, more than what I offered before, which is to lay over before the night is finished. We would probably need a couple of days for this.

Ms. Ally: One year ago, February, 2011, when this very question was asked, in a different form, to the Hon. Member Baksh, that list was promised. To date, it has not been forthcoming. Mr. Chairman, since the Minister can probably make a promise to furnish this National Assembly with that information, my question is, just as I said, what percentage of our schools has a twenty-four-hour security? I am humbly asking for that list to be presented.

Separate and apart from that, I observe the Minister having said that this caters only for the Georgetown schools. I wonder whether the other regions and the other parts of Region 4 have fallen off the map where security is concerned for the schools.

Ms. Manickchand: Year after year..., the Ministry has not changed anything, under my watch. East Bank Demerara and East Coast Demerara are usually dealt with under Region 4, and that is where the Hon. Member could ask questions in terms of security. This programme, Programme 415 of the Ministry of Education's Estimates, addresses the Georgetown district, which, as far as I understand it, historically, has been district 11, separate and apart from the regional districts.

Deputy Speaker [Mrs. Backer]: Mr. Chairman, through you to the Hon. Minister. Line item 6224 - Print and Non-Print Materials, \$34.475 million: Is it this in which textbooks are provided to children?

Ms. Manickchand: It is not under this. I will tell you where it is. This caters for journals, periodicals, teaching guides, modules, supplies to schools - thirty-two nursery schools, thirty primary schools, thirty-one secondary schools, five Practical Instruction Centres, six institutes, Carnegie School of Home Economics and the Craft Production Unit. That is what this line item deals with.

The line item that deals with textbooks is under another programme. It is under Programme 413.

Ms. Ally: Line item 6282 - Equipment Maintenance: Could the Hon. Minister outline what equipment maintenance is, especially since it comes under "Other Goods and Services Purchased"?

Ms. Manickchand: The equipment expected to be catered for, under this line item, are equipment for the two new technical institutes at Leonora and Mahaicony, which both have a capacity of three hundred students each. This line item also caters for computers and science

equipment for other schools. It caters also for the routine maintenance of equipment in the thirty-two nursery schools, thirty primary schools, thirty-one secondary schools, five Practical Instruction Centres, six institutes, Carnegie School of Home Economics and the Craft Production Unit.

Ms. Ferguson: Under line item 6272 - Electricity Charges - I have noticed that there is an increase in electricity charges. Could the Hon. Minister explain?

Ms. Manickchand: In the interest of addressing all the needs of our children in the country and, particularly, in providing equitable services with a view to stemming social ills that we saw beginning many years ago, as dropouts, the Government took a conscious decision to incorporate into its national curriculum technical vocational education, as a result of which two state-of-the-art Tech-Voc centres have been built at Leonora and Mahaicony. Their electricity bills now have to be paid, so that caters for the increase that you are seeing.

Programme: 415 – Education Delivery - \$4,935,260,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

5.36 p.m.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 415 – Education Delivery - \$2,551,930,000

Ms. Ally: Project 1205900 – Nursery, Primary and Secondary Schools: What amount is allotted for the provision for a consultancy? I have looked at the profile, at reference 135. Could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown of what moneys will be spent on Diamond, La Bonne Intention and the Leonora Secondary Schools?

Ms. Manickchand: The amount allocated for consultancy fees will be \$10 million. At Diamond, there is the construction of the Diamond/Grove Primary School sanitary block. Is that what the Hon. Member was referring to? There is a provision of \$5 million to cater for that. The extension of the La Bonne Intention Secondary School, there is a provision of \$50 million to cater for that. The construction of the Leonora Secondary School, which has been completed, and I am told it is a rollover project, there is \$17,915,000 in this provision to cater for that. Sir, I apparently missed

at Diamond, again a rollover, apparently this is a term of art “rollover project”, construction of a new primary school. It is \$40,753,000 to complete it.

Ms. Ally: The same project 1205900: Could the Hon. Minister list the secondary schools that those science laboratories will be done?

Ms. Manickchand: The Ministry is catering to do this - provide the science laboratories to all of its schools. This year it caters for the provision of about five of those laboratories. We could provide the list from our science department at NCERD, as to which schools may be ready, both in terms of having trained teachers, as well as infrastructure which could accommodate those laboratories. We could give that to the Hon. Member.

Ms. Ally: The same project 1205900: In the profile of item seven, it states “Construction and rehabilitation of information technology and science laboratories at primary and secondary schools.” Could the Hon. Minister provide the list of those schools? Mr. Chairman, may I say that if the Hon. Minister does not have the list with her now I will be comfortable receiving it at a subsequent time or if it is too many to tell us?

Ms. Manickchand: Sir, we know that \$70 million is allocated for the construction of laboratories in secondary schools and \$59,575,000 is allocated for the construction of laboratories in primary schools, but the list we would have to agree to furnish the Hon. Member with afterwards.

Ms. Ally: How soon may I ask, Mr. Chairman?

Ms. Manickchand: Sir, I am being told that there is no determination as yet to say that those are the schools. There are works which are ongoing with the schools to make them ready. The works started years ago. I would hate to give a name here - that schools are not ready - and because I did not give a name of a school that is ready we end up punishing the children there, because, as you know, I did not get to name that school in our initial document.

Mr. Chairman: So some reasonableness must be applied in terms of a day, a week, two weeks, a month.

Ms. Manickchand: Sir, what I am being told would be safe for us to do is that we could give a list of the works which are being done and where. We have to depend on contractors and so.

Mr. Chairman: I am just saying that some degree of reasonableness, which you would understand, in terms of...

Ms. Manickchand: I could give the list of what is being done and where by next week Tuesday, as you said, but as to where we will actually put those laboratories down, I would be hesitant to name those, except to say that it would perhaps be confined to the schools which are listed in the list where work is being done.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, I think what would meet the standard of transparency is that you provide what you know and what you can give, but you cannot give what you do not know. So I think that would meet the standard. If there is a commitment ongoing as things evolve you would continue to meet with your counterpart, the shadow Minister of Education, and share with her information as it unfolds. I think that would be fair, but you certainly cannot give what you do not have and, at the same time, we cannot wait indefinitely for you to get everything before you share. It has to be, I would say, a continuous process of engagement.

Ms. Manickchand: Sir, I just want to add to the information that we already have in the House. This is not to purchase the equipment, computers, and so. This is to set up the physical infrastructure and we know, right now, that there are eighty schools which are finished, secondary schools, and sixty-four primary schools which are finished.

Ms. Ally: I trust that information will be forthcoming as early as the Minister has access or has completed her work, in terms of planning. Honestly, what was going through my head, as the Minister was answering, was a situation with the computer laboratories which existed and that we spoke about during the budget debate.

The same project 1205900: The profile at item ten, "Provision for electricity for Sand Creek Dormitory", could I ask the Hon. Minister what portion of the \$600 million goes to this item?

Ms. Manickchand: It is \$20 million Hon. Member.

Ms. Ally: Thank you.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Project 1205900 – Nursery, Primary and Secondary Schools: With regards to the design of the Kato Secondary School Complex, how much would that cost? For the extension of the Waramadong dormitory and secondary school, what will be the cost, Hon. Minister?

Ms. Manickchand: For the design of the Kato Secondary School Complex, the Ministry has allocated \$10 million. For the extension of the teaching block at the Waramadong Secondary School, it has allocated \$20 million. And for the extension of the dormitory at the Waramadong Secondary School, it has allocated \$20 million.

Mr. Morian: Under the same project, I know part of the legend speaks to the construction and rehabilitation. Could the Hon. Minister state how many new schools will be constructed in Region 10 and give a list of the schools which are to be rehabilitated?

Ms. Manickchand: Looking at this programme alone to determine what is happening in Region 10 would be misleading, Sir. Region 10, there is a lot of the education delivery. In fact, there is a lot under the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development for education delivery where the Hon. Member may be able to determine better. Sometime central Ministry addresses very big projects based on capacity, and so on. Right now, there is not any listed for Region 10 but it may be in the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development's budget.

Ms. Hastings: Project 4502200 – Education for All Fast Track Initiatives – EFA – FTI: I see an allocation of \$900 million. Could the Hon. Minister give a breakdown of the cost allocated to each of the five projects, which are listed in the project profile, that includes the school feeding project and others?

Ms. Manickchand: Purchase of goods, \$60 million. That will be textbooks for all primary tops in Guyana, although the Ministry is working feverishly to make this a matter of extinction. It will be for works, that is, utilities' upgrading in primary schools in Regions 2, 3 and 4. That is thirteen schools, \$100 million. A Clerk of Works will need to be paid, consultants, and the Ministry has catered for \$40 million to do that. Training in the school improvement programme - School Feeding Programme, data collection and evaluations - the Ministry has assigned \$20 million to that. School improvement programme, the Ministry is granting to that \$40 million to improve forty primary schools all over the country which have now make themselves compliant

with the requirements. It is allocating \$65 million to the remote areas incentives, this is where teachers are being paid in Regions 1, 7, 8, 9 and riverain areas of Region 10, and incentives for teaching in those areas. It has allocated \$495 million to the School Feeding Programme. This particular School Feeding Programme addresses primary schools in Regions 1, 7, 8 and 9 where hot meals are provided and to operating expenses the Ministry has allocated \$80 million that is to cater for flights into the interior, because this programme really addresses, almost solely, the schools in Regions 1, 7, 8 and 9 to bring them up to scratch, or equal, with the services that is being got on the coast.

Ms. Selman: Project 1206000 – President’s College: Could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown of the budgetary allocation, one? Two, could she tell us the building which has been constructed, whether it is a boys’ dormitory, a girls’ dormitory? Could she tell us the furniture and equipment that will be purchased?

Ms. Manickchand: For rolled over retention and construction of the building, \$0.695 million is allocated. For the construction of the building to the Agriculture and Maintenance Department and the canteen, and to Phase II of the walkway, \$9 million is allocated plus \$1.1 million. For the purchase of a tractor, \$6.3 million is allocated. For the purchase of fifty double bunk beds with mattresses, \$1.2 million is allocated. For the purchase of thirty library chairs, \$205,000 is allocated and for the purchase of equipment, \$1.5 million is allocated.

Mr. Bulkan: I would like to return to 1205900 – Nursery, Primary and Secondary Schools - capital project, reference number 135, and I am looking at the project which is listed here, project number eight. The Hon. Minister has already informed us that the sum of \$10 million has been allocated for the design of Kato Secondary School Complex and my supplementary question to the Hon. Minister is, for the benefit of Members of this National Assembly, that if we can get an idea please of the procedure that will be involved in arriving at the design of this school.

Ms. Manickchand: The procedure would be the one that is outlined in the national procurement legislation, Sir, which is employed by the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board.

Mr. Bulkan: Supplementary please, Mr. Chairman. Is the Minister aware if the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) of Region 8, or in particular the Education Sub-Committee of the RDC, would be involved in the design of this project?

Ms. Manickchand: Consultation is our middle name at the Ministry of Education. So when the Ministry is looking to build buildings it would have to take into consideration the needs of the people the building would have to house and to do that it would have to have to consult with the people of Region 8 to determine how to design the building. I am being told by the Chief Planning Officer, Ms. Hamilton, that it is not only consultation for design; there is supervision included in this field.

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you for that explanation, Hon. Minister. A supplementary please, Mr. Chairman. With all due respect, the Minister did not adequately answer the question. I need to know specifically if the RDC of Region 8, and in particular, the Education Sub-Committee of Region No. 8, will be integrally involved in the design of this particular secondary school.

Ms. Manickchand: Feasibility came from the Regional Democratic Council of Region 8. I understand that it is the Regional Education Officer, who we fondly called Ms. Paddy, who brought it. So it is yes.

Mr. Allen: On the same project 1205900 – Nursery, Primary and Secondary Schools: Could the Minister say what the type of rehabilitation work is to be done at the Northwest Secondary School and the sum allotted for that project?

Ms. Manickchand: The sum allocated, Sir, is \$40 million for the rehabilitation works at the Northwest Secondary School. It will be, Sir, to rehabilitate the Northwest Secondary School. The Hon. Member wishes detail, if it is a paling stave or a roof, that can be provided through building. Because it is the Northwest, we might need some more time to determine whether that is the complete list of needs which the schools has. If it is the complete list, would this \$40 million meet all the needs? If not, what would be the priority needs?

Ms. Ferguson: Project 1206100 – Craft Production and Design: I have noted the description of project, “Extension of building, purchase of workstation, cupboards and chairs.” Could the Hon.

Minister say which building will be extended and where? And where the items will be purchased for?

Ms. Manickchand: The building that would be extended would be the one in the *Carnegie School of Home Economics*' compound. The workstations would go to *Carnegie School of Craft Production and Design* and the cupboard would also go there, and the chairs. The breakdown is the extension - \$4 million, the purchase of workstations - \$80,000, purchase of three cupboards - \$70,000 and the purchase of five chairs - \$50,000.

Ms. Ally: Project code 4502700 – Teachers' Education Project - \$120 million is for the provision. I note that it is from the profile reference 151; it is a foreign funded project. In the profile it describes three areas of work, my question is: What programme will be implemented to deliver the Associate Degree as well as the Bachelor's Degree of Education, and I am not talking about the lectures, and how much money is budgeted for this project? I think when that is answered I have two additional ones.

Ms. Manickchand: Consultants have been hired, or are in the process of being hired, to design programmes to better prepare our teachers' educators. We are not actually delivering under this programme. We are preparing the educators by preparing manuals and guides, and so on, and designing the actual courses under the Guyana Basic Education Teacher Training Programme (GBET).

Ms. Ally: My second part of the question: What is the target number for training to fit the needs of the Tech-Voc institutions?

Ms. Manickchand: Delivering about four hundred and something students annually...and if the students are being trained to deliver education then we would have to train them to deliver in all the fields that a service is actually provided for. So it is an annual ongoing programme. The Chief Education Officer advised me that a needs assessment is being done, even as we speak, about what might be priority in terms of getting this programme delivered.

Ms. Ally: Have you, Minister, identify where this training will take place in order to prepare people for the Tech-Voc institutions?

Ms. Manickchand: Because the Ministry anticipates training is going to be both academic and practical, it is going to be, for sure, in centres which have the ability to train practically which might be a presently existing structure as well as CPCE. If the Ministry finds that there is a big enough cohort in a particular region that does not have a CPCE centre it may want to find the facility there to train. So it is depending on where the need is.

Ms. Ally: An observation before I proceed with the final part of my question. I really do not understand how these large amounts of money are budgeted and there is no plan. We do not know where what will happen and what will become of these things. That is the reason why we feel that this education system is so questionable at this moment.

Ms. Manickchand: Sir, I was trying to accommodate the Hon. Member by answering a question that is not on the Estimates. I know we have been told, over and over, in this honourable House that we have to stick to the questions on the Estimates and, perhaps, I should have stuck to that rule, Sir. The Hon. Member started asking me about a project that addresses the GBET Programme and in that question arose the question from the Hon. Member about how much of it was assigned to training and how much of the training was done already. The reality, Sir...

Ms. Ally: I did not ask how much training was done already.

Mr. Chairman: Alright, let us hear.

Ms. Manickchand: The allocation provided for in the Estimates, this year, Mr. Chairman, caters for \$65,840,000 to go towards the purchase of goods. That is, computer systems, books, software, UPS, generator for the expansion of the programme at CPCE. One million one hundred and forty thousand dollars for works at CPCE; \$27 million and more for the consultant services to develop the Term of Reference (TOR) for upgrading the CPCE curriculum, international as well as national TOR for the project. It caters for the project's staff salaries and for consultants writing the practical courses. Then there are non-consultant services, which are to cost about \$19,047,000, for training in the use of instrument for the CPCE, for the Master in Education for the CPCE and for the staff of the University of Guyana (UG), for the institutional management courses for UG, and fiduciary training for the project staff. Then \$6,040,532 is expected to be spent on operating cost, that is, maintenance cost - CPCE hot spot, office supplies and materials - and the \$857,000 for stipend. It would be irrational, Sir, to suggest that there was no plan, and

that education was suffering because there is no plan. Here is the plan. It is stepping outside of this plan that I was trying to facilitate that, perhaps, caused some confusion.

Ms. Ally: I refer, again, to project 4502700 – Teachers’ Education Project. I spoke from the profile. I spoke about the first, one about the delivery of the Associate Degree at CPCE and the rest. I am coming to the third aspect, the “Implementation of the public communication campaign”, but I am asking, Sir, how much of this \$120 million - that is the figure reflected in the Estimates - goes to the aspect of number two in the profile?

Ms. Manickchand: As you can see, Sir, number two is the “Strengthening of human resource and technical capacity of the Cyril Potter College of Education...” Sir, when goods are provided to the teachers there, and staff there, the capacity is strengthened; when research centres are established there, the capacity is strengthened; when scholarships are provided to the lecturers, the capacity is strengthened. I would say, Sir, to answer that would be that the \$120 million, as is allocated here, would be going towards strengthening the capacity at CPCE. But Sir, I could do it a bit better than that. We have the project document here with us, and this is not a secret. This is public. We would be happy to share it with the Hon. Member Ms. Ally, once I remove the notes that Ms. Hamilton may have had personal in the book.

6.06 p.m.

It says:

“The Document of the World Bank, Project Appraisal Document and a Proposed Credit in the amount of US\$2.8 million, including \$1.2 million in pilot and RW resources to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana for and Improving Teacher Education Project.”

It is dated 18th August, 2010. We will be happy to lay this over.

Ms. Ally: My final question, Mr. Chairman, project 4502700 – Teacher’s Education Project – I would like to ask the Hon. Minister, what the programme for the public communication campaign is.

Ms. Manickchand: The plan derived from the conception of the thought that we needed to bring all our teachers, whether they are on this programme or not, up to a certain level of

understanding about where the teaching profession was going forward to, as a result of which we intend to do the public relations (PR) exercises, not only through newspapers and brochures but through the new education channel, the Guyana Learning Channel, television as well as people outreaches, that is CEO going into Region 8 talking to teachers about what we are doing; Mrs. Hamilton going to Region 7 talking to teachers there about what we are doing and about how they can upgrade to match the qualifications that we believe would be needed in this new teaching generation. The Guyana Teachers Union (GTU), I understand, is also agreeing to work with us to sensitise their members, who you know, Sir, are teachers, about this programme.

Mr. Allen: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Project 4502200 – Education for All Fast Track Initiative – EFA – FTI – can the Hon. Minister say how much of this allocated sum is allocated for the School Feeding Programme?

Ms. Manickchand: I would have said in a court room, “asked and answered” but I am not in a court room. \$495 million dollars is for the School Feeding Programme in Regions 1, 7, 8 and 9.

Mr. Allen: Supplemental question: how much of that sum is allocated to each school?

Ms. Manickchand: It is \$175 per child per day multiplied by the number of children in each school and that would amount to 92 primary schools.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Mr. Chairman, with regards to project code 1205900 – Nursery, Primary and Secondary Schools – again the Kato Secondary School design, addressing the needs of the children there. Does the design include a Home Economics department and an Industrial Arts department?

Ms. Manickchand: It is to do a design. We have not done one as yet so we do not know if there is a Home Economics department, Physical Education room or any of those. But when we talk to the people there who might most likely be attending the school and if we determine that Home Economics is important, it will have a Home Economics department; if we determine that an Agriculture room is important, it is going to have that. The design would be finalised on our non-academic standards that is making the environment children friendly. It would be based on the delivery of education, what it is that we want to see our students in Region 8 focussing on, what

we believe will serve their needs most. That is how we will determine what the design will look like. And that determination will come from heavy consultation with the people of Region 8.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you very much Minister.

Programme: 415 – Education Delivery – 2,551,930,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: I would like to thank the Minister, her technical staff and the Members who asked very probing and important questions.

Assembly resumed

Sitting suspended at 6.11 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 7.05 p.m.

Assembly in Committee of Supply

Mr. Chairman: We took a very late break and so our scheduled 7.30 p.m. suspension will not happen. However, snacks are available and if any Hon. Member feels that he or she still needs something after that very heavy meal, please feel free to go to the Lounge, to dine and to have what is available.

Agency: 16 Ministry of Amerindian Affairs

Current Expenditure

Programme: 161 – Amerindian Development - \$385,279,000

Dr. Norton: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Could the Hon. Minister, under line item 6112 – Senior Technical- in the Staffing Details, there is an increase of one. Can the Hon. Minister say what the designation of this person is?

Minister of Amerindian Affairs [Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai]: The designation is a System Administrator.

Dr. Norton: What is the salary?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: It is \$80,538.

Dr. Norton: Line Item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – there is an increase of \$13 million. Could the Hon. Minister say what this training entails?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The training that goes under this line item is to cater for students' pocket allowances, the dormitory allowances, annual vacation, travelling for students, that is taking them back home, examination fees for our hinterland scholarship students, the purchase of text books, if necessary, and assistance for School based Assessment (SBA), that is their projects during preparation for the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) examinations, the Guyana Technical Institute, and students from the Carnegie School of Home Economics.

Ms. Selman: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Follow up question to the out-of-pocket allowances for the students: could the Hon. Minister say how much is given to each child?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: \$4,000 is given per child monthly.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Line Item 6272 – Electricity Charges – I see it has gone up to \$11 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain this?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Under this line item, we cater for the electricity charges to the Amerindian hostel and the head office. We have recently had the opening, last year, of the dormitories and what we have here is an additional sum for the back charges for the dormitories and to cater for this year also. So that will cater for the increase.

Mr. Allicock: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Line Item 6116 – Contracted Employees - I notice that there is an increase of eight persons. Can the Hon. Minister give a list of the top five designations and emoluments?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Is it the top five from the eight or the top five in the entire category?

Mr. Allicock: It is the top five in the entire category.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: There are: the Project Coordinator - \$264,162; the Principal Regional Development Officer - \$151,634; the Management Development Officer - \$158,854; and the Permanent Secretary - \$480,816.

Mr. Allicock: Line Item 6265 – Other Transport, Travel and Postage – can the Hon. Minister give some more details on this please?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Under this line item, we cater for travel by the Ministry officials to monitor projects - the National Secure Livelihood Project, the Presidential Grant – and to conduct training or monitoring of the Ministry’s work in the Hinterland. The village election is also included under this and you will see that there is an increase. This year will be the Village Toshao and Village Council Elections and it will take care of that. It will also take care of flights and this is separate from the one mentioned earlier. These are flights for students from the dormitory of Mahdia to Chenapau and Aishalton to Konashen. It also caters for the return of patients who are referred from the various hinterland villages to Georgetown for tertiary level medical attention.

Mr. Allicock: Line Item 6292 – Dietary – can the Hon. Minister give some more details on this item?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the dietary which is covered under this line item caters for the students at the dormitory at Liliendaal and the patients at the Amerindian residence in Princess Street. Last year, there were 212 scholarships and this year, our scholarship range is higher in terms of students.

Mr. Allen: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Line Item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure – can the Minister explain to us, some more, what this line item is all about?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: It takes care of the maintenance of the water trestle and the reservoir, repairs and painting of the bridge and rails at the Amerindian residence in Princess Street, maintenance of the guard hut and the drive way. At the Head Office, it will look at upgrading the perimeter both internal and external, and at the student dormitory it will cover the construction of a ground reservoir and also the tiling of the Benab floor at Sophia.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants – can the Minister say what the complement of vehicles at the Ministry’s disposal is and can she give a breakdown of those vehicles?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: There are seven vehicles: four all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and three motor cycles.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, a follow up question: can the Minister say, with this complement of vehicles and the amount of fuel and lubricants that you have requested under this line item, what it is that she is going to be doing in relation to the use of this quantity of fuel and lubricant?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, under this line item, in details, in terms of what is covered it caters for the operation of the generator which we expect to procure this year. We, also, will be procuring one new vehicle in this year so we have to cater for fuel for that. In addition, the current categories that use fuel are for the preparation of monitoring of the Village Council Election. We will have to use fuel. It is still ongoing. It is also used for the transportation of students from Paramakatoi and also for the Community development Officer (CDO) vehicles, those that are deployed in the fields. In terms of the use for the vehicles, they are usually used for the work of the Ministry in the centre here and in the fields.

Dr. Norton: Did I hear you right Hon. Minister? Does the number that you gave represent the total number of vehicles that belongs to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: No

Dr. Norton: Mdm. Minister, could I ask, at this point in time, what the total number is?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: There are 11 vehicles at Head Office but why the number is reduced to seven is because they are unserviceable. However, they are still on the inventory. I hope that covers what you are asking.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, I would like to return to line item 6292 – Dietary. I just need a clarification from the Hon. Minister. I think I heard her say, in her explanation a short while ago when she referred to patients at the Amerindian residence in Princess Street. Unless I did not hear correctly, is there also a medical facility at the Amerindian residence in Princess Street?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The residence at Princess Street caters for discharge patients, patients recuperating and patients who are still on medical requirement to check when they are discharged. So they are still considered to be patients. For example, if I am ill and am well

enough to go home, I will not be sent home because the treatment period may not be finished. I might be required to spend two weeks or two months to return to the clinics before I go home.

Mr. Chairman: Minister, are there facilities to cater for recuperating persons?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, Mr. Chairman. There are nurses. In fact, we have a complement of two nurses who help with dressing and caring of the patients. We also cater for accommodation and their dietary needs, including ensuring that we monitor the intake of their medication.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Thank you Mr. Chairman. A follow up question on line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants – the fleet of vehicles: are all seven vehicles assigned to employees of the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs in Georgetown?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: They are deployed at the Head Office and I can say, if you wish me to give further details, there is a land cruiser which is deployed at head office; there are also two pick-ups which are catering to administrative services to the Ministry; there is a bus, obviously that takes the children to and from school; the one in Lethem is also assigned to the CDO; and there is one other assigned to the Head Office.

Ms. Selman: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Line Item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – could the Hon. Minister say how many students are being trained, how many persons or students are awarded scholarships – whether at local institutions or international institutions - and how many of them are at local institutions and how many of them are at international institutions, if any?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, there are 331 students on roll on scholarship. At the national level, there are 168. A breakdown of 168 is 58 secondary – 52 scholarships and six assistance. At the regional level is a further breakdown of this 331 – 155 at regional dormitories. And maybe this will probably suffice. In terms of those who are at secondary, in terms of the breakdown of the categories of institutions, 44 secondary, 14 at technical and four at tertiary. We lumped four at tertiary, meaning two at the University of Guyana and two at the Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA).

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Following up on the training at line item 6302, the Minister said that there are four students at the tertiary level. How many do you cater for per year normally?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, at the tertiary level, we stop at the Government Technical Institute (GTI). If a child is under 17, we support them at our end but as soon as Amerindian students attain the age of 17 years four months, we advise them to seek scholarship from the Public Service Ministry (PSM) and so any other scholarship students from the Amerindian and Hinterland communities benefit under that head from PSM.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Follow up question: so do you advise them or do you recommend them?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes. We recommend them and I can say that for those that we have recommended, they were mostly accepted.

Mr. Chairman: Do you facilitate processing?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Actually, some students apply directly and some come to us. All those who come to us, we provide and facilitate their submissions to the PSM Scholarship Department and we also do a letter of recommendation.

Mr. T. Williams: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Under line item 6291 – National and Other Events – can the Hon. Minister give examples of national and other events budgeted for and say why there is a decrease in budgetary allocation this year?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: The examples of the activities that this line item caters for are the Amerindian Heritage Month, Mashramani, Independence celebration, the Upper Mazaruni Sports Week, the Rupununi Expo, the Moruca Expo and any other activity that engages the participation of our Indigenous people.

Mrs. Baveghems: Thank you Comrade Chairman. A follow up on the question Hon. Member Garrido-Lowe asked, line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): I would like to know how many scholarships were sent out of that Region and how many are working and where.

Mr. Chairman: Which Region are you asking about?

Mrs. Baveghems: I am asking about Region 9.

Mr. Chairman: How many scholarship students are there currently for Region 9 and how many have returned to work in their Region?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Well if the Hon. Member is speaking of this year's scholarship complement, there are 32 from Region 9 and they are still benefiting from attending schools and other institutions.

Mr. Chairman: If you are to look at last year's figures, how many from last year have gone back into their Region, on average?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, with respect to our transportation budget, we would return all those students who graduated. I do not have a figure to tell you if all went back but I can probably share that with you. And why I do not have a figure to tell you is because a few will seek to advance their tertiary level education and they will remain. In terms of employment, I do not have that figure.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Under line item 6111 – Administrative – could the Hon. Minister kindly say what percentage of Indigenous employees are working at the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs?

7.29 p.m.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Is it for under line item 6111?

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: That is right, line item 6111 to 6117, the entire administration.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, I do not have the percentage. I have not worked the percentage out of all the employment under the employment cost and how many Amerindians.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: I am sorry, not the percentage of cost; I was seeking the percentage of employees that are indigenous.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman I have not calculated that.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member one second please. Under our legislation, we are not required and ought not as a nation to be measuring staff by race. It goes against the grain of what is needed at a national level and also based on equal opportunity legislation and so forth. I would not want us

publishing figures of how many Africans, Indo-Guyanese or Amerindians we have at the Ministry. I think the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) and other agencies have a duty to ensure that there is the right mix and so forth. I do not know that a Ministry should even have those records, if I can put it that way.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Could I speak Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, go ahead.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: I asked that question simply because that is the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs and Amerindians will be the ones that will know the habits and natures of Amerindians. They would best know them, including travelling in the Interior.

Mr. Chairman: Given the name one would expect there would be persons of Amerindian Heritage extraction or have a passing interest.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: So why do we have an Amerindian Ministry then?

Mr. Chairman: Our legislation does not allow for us to measure or number race categories in the workforce and then come and give a report. You may move a motion later on.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: I am just expressing myself here that I find it odd then that we ought to have a Ministry of Amerindian Affairs if all of us are one. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: It is a point that we should have everyone. I am sure that the Ministry of Culture's Culture Department has to ensure that it is weighed. I do not know.

Mr. Nagamootoo: Mr. Chairman, we are here discussing allocations. We have to be very mindful. If I may to very humbly state that the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs has as its objective stated in the Estimates, "to promote the continued integration of the Amerindian community in the wider society". It did not state Amerindian or other peoples and races. Therefore, in the context of Guyana where Amerindian people are marginalised, the suggestion that there ought not to be affirmative action to allow the accelerated development of Amerindians is within the context of asking whether Amerindians are being allowed a fair opportunity of employment. There is nothing at all wrong with that. We have seen the instant recently where because of persuasion and agitation, the imbalance in the Court service had to be

corrected. We have a right in this Parliament to ask questions about the empowerment of the respective ethnic groupings of our country. It is legitimate! It is fair! It is reasonable! And it is within our remit as Members of Parliament and elected representatives of the people.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, Mr. Nagamootoo is entirely right that all of those questions may be asked, but that was not the question asked. I agree with you Mr. Nagamootoo, you are entirely correct. The question that was asked is, “how many Amerindians are working in the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs?” In terms of policy and so forth you are right; I agree with you entirely, but as I said the question was not asked. In my view, as I said, having a Ministry that numbers person by race or ethnicity is not what our Constitution and the laws require. I do not know if the Minister has the answer, but if she has it, she can give it. The question as was put, I am saying, was out of order, but you are correct in your contentions. Thank you.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, as I said, we do not keep those and have no such data at this moment. We do not keep it. If we could just look at the top level of our attendance here I am sure that you will notice that we do have Amerindian staff working in the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. That is a fair answer and I understand where the Member was coming from. As I said, I do not know that we are allowed to ask Government departments to name and number their people by race.

Programme: 161 – Amerindian Development – \$385,279,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 161 – Amerindian Development – \$213,600,000

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, project code number 1209600 – Buildings – could the Hon. Minister say how much of this \$14 million that is earmarked for this project will be spent on the extension of the main office?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, \$12.5 million.

Dr. Norton: Follow up on this question. So it is actually only \$1.5 million that will be used for the drainage system at the dormitory. Could you say the materials that you are supposed to be using there?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: That is correct, \$1.5 million will be used for the upgrade of the drainage system for the dormitory complex; it will be concrete works.

Ms. Hastings: Thank you Comrade Chairman. Project code number 2403000 – Water Transport – I see you have an allocation of \$6 million to purchase boats and engines throughout Regions 1 to Regions 10. Could you be kind enough to inform this House which communities or villages will benefit from this project?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: They are Batavia in Region 7, Crash Water in Region 9, Riversview in Region 10, the CDO of Region 1 required a boat so they will also benefit under this heading. An engine will be purchased for Apoteri in Region 9. Konashen will be receiving a 15-horsepower engine and an aluminium boat. Wiki/kalkuni in Region 10 will also receive a boat and engine.

Dr. Norton: The Hon. Minister did mention an aluminium boat for a particular village. Experience would tell us that that is the best way to go if not fibre glass. Could the Hon. Minister say of these boats what material will be used? Only one was mentioned as being aluminium. How many of the others and what other materials do you plan to use?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, it will be a mix of aluminium and wooden boats. For example, Crash Water will receive an aluminium boat. River's View will also receive an aluminium boat. Those communities that are found in boat building regions will be wooden boats.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Project code 1209600 – Buildings – I notice you mentioned that the main office will be having an extension. I notice also that it is under the category “Other”. I visited the Amerindian Hostel and this is critical; it needs repairs. I am wonder if we can exchange the money from your extension at the main office and put it there, because those sick people really need to be kept in comfortable building right now.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, that is current where the maintenance of the Amerindian residents will be maintained. However, under project code 1209600 – Buildings – it will be for provision for additional office space; that is what that extension will cater for.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Just confirming the Hon. Minister. Are you saying right now the Amerindian Hostel is undergoing some repairs or renovations?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: This is a current expenditure question which we answered. It says “Maintenance of Building” and it will cater for the maintenance of the Amerindian Hostel in Princess Street. So, we have already dealt with that under the current expenditure.

Mr. Alicock: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Under project code 1400100 – Amerindian Development Fund – I that under this fund there are a number of projects identified, can the Hon. Minister give a breakdown, not now, but could we access a breakdown of the areas where these projects will be done?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we are willing to provide that detailed breakdown.

Mr. Chairman: How soon? Sorry.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Tomorrow, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Mr. Bulkhan: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have the same item in question. If I may pose a similar question that was asked by the Hon. Member Mr. Sydney Allicock. The description of the project gives four areas or categories. Can the Hon. Minister provide the breakdown as per those four areas or categories that were listed under the project profile?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, do you want it to be broken down the way in which we would submit the information tomorrow, or would you like the breakdown now, because we have already made a commitment to supply the information.

Mr. Bulkhan: As detailed as possible, tomorrow is fine. A follow up question Mr. Chairman, can the Hon. Minister inform this House of what is the mechanism or procedure for approving interventions or projects for funding under this programme?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, we believe in free prior and informed consent and we received the decision from the Village Council as to their priorities. These priorities that are contained here were all submitted by the village. There are also some which would have come out from Ministerial outreach.

Mr. Bulkhan: Thank you Mr. Chairman. A follow up please Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Chairman: Go ahead.

Mr. Bulkhan: I note the Hon. Minister referred to the Village Council, but can I ask if there is a role for the national Toshaos Council in the identification and/or approval for funding under this fund.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, Mr. Chairman. In fact this budget was fortunate to have had the input of the National Toshaos Council meeting last year where many of the projects that are to be funded were deliberated on by the meeting. Some were submitted in writing and some were submitted orally.

Mr. Bulkhan: A follow up please Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Chairman: Go ahead.

Mr. Bulkhan: Can the Hon. Minister inform us if the Minister herself or the Ministry without the approval of the National Toshaos Council or the Village Councils that she have identified have discretionary power to exclusively approve funding of any project or intervention under this fund?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, no.

Mr. Bulkhan: Thank you Hon. Minister. A follow up question please. The project title states that it is the Amerindian Development Fund, but I note that the executing agency happens to be the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. My question to the Hon. Minister is why is it, if the fund is titled as it is, being executed by central government as opposed to representatives chosen by Amerindian villages, districts or communities? My contention is that superior results, I believe, will be achieved if this fund is managed by Amerindian leaders as opposed to bureaucrats based on the coast.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs is the vehicle through which the Ministry of Finance through the Budget will receive the funds. Of course we are the executing agency because we have to disburse the funds. We are also responsible for reporting to Parliament with the implementation of the projects which is the community's responsibility. That does not mean that we support them in terms of technical advice or also with respect to supporting them in any way that they may wish.

Mr. Bulkhan: Thank you Hon. Minister. Finally, Mr. Chairman, I take it that the Minister is saying that she does believe, even though this fund is exclusively for Amerindians, she does believe that its implementation and its execution will be better performed by the Ministry as opposed to Amerindian leaders.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, I can assure you that the Hon. Member is getting it wrong.

Mr. Bulkhan: Thank you Minister.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, to the Hon. Minister, just for a bit of verification. In the document that we are expecting, I take it that projects like the purchasing of the cassava mill for instance and tractors with trailers and ploughs will be mentioned there with which village and the amount. I take it that you will provide us with those.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Because that is not a long list, I do not if you want to have the information on the villages that will receive those benefits.

Dr. Norton: Mr. Chairman, I will be happy to have it in a documented form, and I am contented with that.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: It will be provided tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman: That will be provided to you tomorrow.

Dr. Norton: My question to the Hon. Minister is in project code 2506400 – Office Furniture and Equipment – there is the purchasing of a generator. Could the Hon. Minister say the power of this generator, where it is earmarked and its cost?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the generator is intended for the Head Office.

Mr. Trotman: Mr. Chairman, I have a follow up question to that. I notice that the Ministry at line item 2506400 – Office Furniture and Equipment – between 2010 and 2011 purchased furniture and equipment to the tune of \$27.850 million. I am wondering why it is in 2012 that the Ministry requires a further \$10 million for furniture and equipment.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the expenditure during the period that the Hon. Member noted was for the furnishing of the students' dormitory. In this Budget here we are catering for additional staff and replacement of furniture.

Mr. Trotman: A follow up question, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Go ahead.

Mr. Trotman: Can the Minister provide us in writing with a list of the new equipment that she requires to purchase?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: When and in what format?

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, we can provide it in writing or if the Member so wishes, I can read the list out; it is not a very long list.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Mr. Trotman.

Mr. Trotman: I would like it in writing Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: In written form he prefers it. There is a bundle to come tomorrow.

Programme: 161 – Amerindian Development – \$213,600,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much Hon. Minister and members of staff of the Ministry for your support.

Agency: 51 Ministry of Home Affairs

Current Expenditure

Programme: 511 – Secretariat Services, – \$330,821,000

Mr. Felix: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Line Item 6111 – Administrative – there is an increase of three administrative staff in 2012, from 11 to 14. I would like the Hon. Minister to inform this House of the designation pay and emoluments of each of the three additional staff.

Mr. Chairman: Do you need some time for tomorrow?

Minister of Home Affairs [Mr. Rohee]: Mr. Chairman, these three officers would be the Administrative Assistant, the PASG and the EPMU. The Administrative Assistant's salary is \$90,000, the PASG's is \$74,000 and the EPMU is \$111,000.

Mr. Chairman: Are all of these initials acronyms?

Mr. Rohee: PASG stands for Principle Assistant Secretary General, and EPMU stands for Expenditure Planning and Management Analyst.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Hon. Minister.

Mr. Felix: Line Item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled – there is another increase Mr. Chairman of eight members of staff. Five has increased to 13; I would like the Hon. Minister to inform this House again of the designations and emoluments of each of the eight staff and in which departments they are placed.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members I am hearing somebody's phone. I do not know if it is someone in the public gallery running their cell phone. I have spoken about this before. Please turn it off. Thank you.

Mr. Felix: I have asked the second question unless it was not heard.

7.59 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: I see the Minister writing busily as if this is an exam. This is like a Mathematics problem.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, without delaying the House further they have been able to identify four of those persons, so far. [*Interruption*] That is the staff has been unable, not the Minister. The Head of the Information Technology (IT) Section: \$170,000; System Analyst for the IT Section, \$135,000; Deputy EPMU, \$90,000.

Mr. Felix: If it would assist the Hon. Minister we can accept the information in writing thus giving him a little more time to put his House in Order. In the meantime may I proceed with the third question?

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Felix: Line Item 6116 - Contracted Employees - there is an increase in 2012 over 2011 of the number of employees on contract - 51 in 2011 to 62 in 2012. I would like the Hon. Minister to inform this House of the designations, emoluments and the duration of time each contracted employee has been holding the position.

Mr. Chairman: Tonight?

Mr. Felix: Mr. Chairman again, to be helpful, if the Minister would not mind we can take that in writing.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of contracted officers. I do not know if the Member wants the names of each one of them. [*Members shout no*] These are Liaison Officers attached to the Community Policing Organisation and clerical staff members such as Confidential Secretaries and Research Officers. The Liaison Officers receive \$65,000 per month; Research Officers receive \$105,000 per month; Drivers and Clerks attached to the immigration section receive \$45,000 per month. Then there are senior officers attached to the Ministry such as the Permanent Secretary, Accounts Clerks, et cetera.

Mr. Felix: Mr. Chairman, my other question comes from line item 6265 - Maintenance and Other Infrastructure - I would like the Hon. Minister to itemise the infrastructure intended to be maintained this year and the location. [*Interruption*] Line Item 6255 is correct, not 6265.

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with the construction of revetment at the Juvenile Centre at Sophia.

Mr. Felix: Line Item 6294 – Other - I would like the Hon. Minister to explain what is included in the category “Other” for the benefit of this House.

Mr. Rohee: The breakdown would be those associated with the Stray Catcher Programme, the Secretariat of Community Policing and Intelligence.

Mr. Felix: Line Item 6302 Training - I would like the Hon. Minister to explain to this House on what training programmes is this allocation to be expended?

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with computer training and customer care, that is to say persons seeking the services of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Mr. Felix: I move now to Agency 51, Programme 512 - Administrative.

Mr. Chairman: You cannot move on. Let us complete Programme 511- Secretariat Services.

Ms. Ferguson: Mr. Chairman, line item 6117. I have noticed under staffing details for Temporary Employees that the figure remains the same as for last year, however, there has been an increase from last year, \$120 to \$270 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain the increase, please?

Mr. Rohee: These are relief cleaners, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Jones: Cde. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister explain line item 6284? I see an allocation requested of \$12.205 million under the caption “Other”.

Mr. Rohee: Yes, Mr. Chairman, this has to do with issuing of advisories in the newspapers, advertisements on television, radio and other media.

Mr. Adams: Mr. Chair, line item 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions for Local Organisations - could the Minister name the organisations that the Ministry gave donations to?

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with the Customs Anti Narcotic Unit which now comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Guyana Legion and the National Commission for Law and Order.

Mr. Felix: This is just a follow-up to line item 6294. The Minister did explain what “Other” meant. He talked about stray catchers, something about intelligence and community policing. We

would like him to provide a breakdown as to how the money would be divided among those entities.

Mr. Chairman: Well you did not ask for the persons to be named or their classifications. How the money is going to be distributed over those subheads is fair. I think we all want to know how much the stray catchers are getting, indeed. I think that is a fair request and the information can be provided on another day. It is just the head, stray catching programme “X”, “Y”, “Z”, without compromising the names or the particular functions.

Mr. Rohee: Just for clarification, there is a subhead here called “intelligence”.

Mr. Chairman: I do not think to say how much money we are spending on intelligence would compromise your intelligence programme in my view. You may have another view, but I do not see that it will ...

Mr. Rohee: That is true, Mr. Chairman, I do have another view.

Mr. Chairman: We will discuss it then.

Programme: 511 – Secretariat Services - \$330,821,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 511 – Secretariat Services - \$965,259,000

Mr. Felix: Mr. Chairman, project code 1208500 - Citizens Security - would the Hon. Minister describe briefly the components of the citizen security project?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, the various components of the Citizens Security Programme (CSP) are the institutional modernisation of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the modernisation of the Guyana Police Force as well as the community action component. Those are the three components of the Citizens Security Programme.

Mr. B. Williams: Mr. Chairman, project code 1208500 - Citizens Security - might I respectfully refer to the profile at page 214 “Completion and Equipping of Forensic Lab.” Could the Hon. Minister say whether that lab would entail a component for DNA testing?

Mr. Rohee: At this point in time the lab does not envisage a section addressing DNA testing. However, in recent discussions we have considered this matter very seriously and it is quite possible that a decision is to be taken on this matter during the course of this year.

Mr. Felix: I would like to ask the Hon. Minister if the Citizens Security Programme has a component for the integrated crime information system and whether that system is operational.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, the CSP does have several modules, 12 in all, which make up the integrated crime information system and it is indeed a part of the Citizens Security Programme.

Mr. Felix: There was another part of the question which is about the progress.

Mr. Rohee: Significant progress has been made with respect to the integrated crime information system. A number of police stations have been fully computerised and are linked by a wide area network and now are in a position to provide on a real time basis reports from police stations to sub-divisional and divisional headquarters to the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Guyana Police Force. 12 modules have so far been developed for the specific programmes addressing specific issues relating to crime and intelligence. We are now about to embark on another module addressing similar issues.

Mr. Felix: What benefits does the Minister envisage citizens will gain from this project?

Mr. Rohee: There are benefits that citizens are likely to gain from this project. There will be a more efficient and effective police force having regard to the fact that they are able to transmit, on a real time basis, information from a police station network to force headquarters, in turn, force headquarters will be in a position to react operationally as effectively as they could, given the availability of specialized ranks to do so. On the other hand the Ministry of Home Affairs, which has a backup to the system the police has, would be in a position to analyze historical data so as to formulate policies and directives that would be of assistance to the Guyana Police Force. I believe all of this, in short, would bring added benefits to the citizenry as a result of a more effective and efficient Guyana Police Force.

Mr. Allen: Project code 2604000, Community Policing - when we look at the project profile there are some items to be purchased. Can the Hon. Minister say in this House directly to which group in Region 1 these items will be given?

Mr. Rohee: It is envisaged that all terrain vehicles, fibre glass boats and other four-wheel type vehicles would be assigned to “E” & “F” Division which is part of Region 1.

Mr. Allen: Can the Hon. Minister be specific about the areas in Region 1 that these items will be given to?

Mr. Chairman: The sub-region?

Mr. Allen: Yes

Mr. Rohee: I am afraid that I am not in a position at this point in time to do so. Usually when we hand over these vehicles to the Guyana Police Force, that is to say the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Force will then determine which community in “E” & “F” Division would be provided with these vehicles.

Mr. Allen: Can the Minister provide this information at a later date to this National Assembly?

Mr. Chairman: Again, Hon. Member, the assets would be deployed within the division based on activities. There might be specific criminal activity in the mining sector, but what we can do is a follow-up at some point when they are handed over to see where they go, bearing in mind that they can be moved anywhere within the division by the commander and his ranks. I do not know that the Minister has the authority to say it shall specifically be used for the suppression of “this crime” or “that crime”. When those assets are handed over we can try to track where they end up.

Mr. B. Williams: I am referring to project code 2604200 - Community Policing - could the Hon. Minister say whether those vehicles: boats, motor cycles and communication systems are intended to be handed over to community policing groups.

Mr. Rohee: We do that as a routine, Mr. Chairman. There is a handing over ceremony when we hand over these vehicles to the divisional community policing executive and the national community policing executive is present as well.

Mr. Williams: Could the Hon. Minister disclose how many community groups there are and where are they situated.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, as of today there are 264 Community Policing Groups with 4,337 members. 43 of those groups are in the “A” Division, 61 in “B” Division, 48 in “C” Division, 31 in “D” Division, 21 in “E” Division, 11 in Region 7, that is “E” Division; 18 in Region 9, that is Lethem, Rupununi, and 31 in “G” Division.

Mr. B. Williams: Mr. Chairman, a follow-up question - could the Hon. Minister tell us to which community policing groups allocations have already been earmarked?

Mr. Rohee: I am sorry but we have not done so as yet. The divisional executives would usually make requests; they would provide a shopping list of their needs and then those needs would be assessed by the Ministry because obviously we do not have the funds to provide them with everything they need. However, at this point in time we have not determined which divisions would benefit from this allocation were it to be approved.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Mr. Chairman, I think the Hon. Minister has answered my inquiry with regard to the community policing allocation. I just wanted to find out if anything was allocated to Region 8 - the Mahdia Community Policing Group. Thank you.

Mr. Rohee: The all terrain vehicles and some of the fibre glass boats would all go to “E” & “F” Division. I think those items would be best used in these divisions.

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe: Hon. Minister, the Mahdia community really does not use boats. They have to use land vehicles. So boats are not necessary there, rather, land vehicles are.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, I did not specify a community; I said that the division which is the ‘E’ & ‘F’ is where the assets would go. If Mahdia is part of “E” & “F” Division, which I believe verily it is, obviously, we will determine the topography and geography and make a determination which of the assets are best suited for the community. If a boat is not needed in Mahdia, we would not send a boat to Mahdia. We would give them an ATV. [*Interruption*] A balahoo, okay.

Mr. Felix: Mr. Chairman, the very answer of the Hon. Minister would give rise to my next question. I have noted that community policing has a place within the financial structure of the Ministry of Home Affairs. I would like to ask the Minister what relationship do the community

policing now has with the Guyana Police Force. It seems as though we are making allocations to divisional executives. Where is the Commissioner of Police in all of this?

8.29 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I know there is a view that questions may only be asked on a Line Item by Line Item basis. I have a different view. I have had regard for the Standing Orders, particularly Standing Orders 75 (2), which says that when the question is put or the proposal made, a debate may take place on that question. So I believe that there has to be some degree of latitude in terms of policy issues and not everything being restricted to a particular question on a Line Item by Line Item basis.

Mr. Felix: My Project is 2604200 – Community policing...

Mr. Chairman: And your question is?

Mr. Felix: What is the relationship based on what the Minister says? It seems as though the allocations are made through a request from the divisional community policing group, he said so here and I take it to mean the Ministry. My understanding is that community policing has evolved from the Guyana Police Force and in view of what we are hearing here now, I think the question is appropriate.

Mr. Chairman: Do you mean how is the money disbursed?

Mr. Felix: Yes, what is the relationship? The Commissioner has not been mentioned in any of the exchanges in allocations, we and the divisional community policing groups.

Mr. Rohee: I do agree with you Mr. Chairman that this is basically a policy issue, but for safe purposes of clarification for the House. The Commissioner of Police is part of the structure of the Community Policing System. Every month the national executive meets with the Commissioner of Police to discuss matters of mutual interest to the police and the community Policing national executive. At the monthly statutory meetings of the community policing groups the Second-in-Charge (IC) is assigned by the Commissioner to be a part of those meetings. The Commissioner of Police determines together with the leadership of the community policing, the issue of training for Community Policing Groups across the country and the Commissioner of Police at the same

time determines the suitability for community policing Members to become Rural Constables as part of the Community Policing System.

Apart from the Commissioner of Police being part of the structure of community policing and an integral part of the system per se, the fact of the matter is that the allocation of resources for the Community Policing Groups falls traditionally under the Ministry of Home Affairs. This is not something new; it has been so for years. I came and found it like that and it has never changed.

The Commissioner as head of the Guyana Police Force, together with his ranks at the senior management level, would receive requests from his divisional commanders about the assets that are required and they would then come, as Mr. Felix does know as a former Commissioner, to the Ministry of Home Affairs for that list to be agreed upon. It is then for the Permanent Secretary to approach the Ministry of Finance with the totality of the list, both from the Police Force and from the community policing, whereas afterwards the Ministry of Finance determines how many resources would be made available to both sides.

Mr. Trotman: Project 2605700 – Customs and Anti-Narcotic Unit, can the Minister state where he proposes to construct this building and can he list the number of vehicles types, boats and engines, furniture and equipment and the relevant costs he proposes to purchase under this Head?

Mr. Rohee: We are not very clear in respect to the page and the Line Item the Hon. Member is referring to.

Mr. Chairman: Please provide some clarity there Mr. Trotman.

Mr. Trotman: Page 443 and it is under Agency 511- Secretariat Services. It is the last item under that Head and the Project number is 2605700.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, these are items that refer to the Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit (CANU). It is a guard hut, cubicles for the bottom flat of the CANU Headquarters, desk chairs, filing cabinets, a boat, a trailer, vehicle/vehicles, A/C units and a contra-band inspection unit. That constitutes the breakdown of the allocation for CANU

Mr. T. Williams: If it pleases you Mr. Chairman, Project 1208500 – Citizens Security, might I respectfully refer the Hon. Minister to the Project Profile, Ref: 214, Description of Project, Item

5, “Furnishing of Police Training Facility”, could the Hon. Minister tell us where is the Police Training Facility and how much money is earmarked for spending on that facility?

Mr. Rohee: The Police Training Centre is located where the Ministry of Home Affairs is temporary located, at the corner of Camp and Young Streets. The cost of that training facility is \$175 million.

Mr. T. Williams: I think the cost of furnishing... I see you have it as an item. I would be grateful for the figure to build it. I am asking out of a figure of \$895 million, how much has been earmarked for furnishing?

Mr. Rohee: The cost for furnishing that building is \$116 million.

Mr. Felix: If it pleases you Mr. Chairman, Project 2605700- Customs Anti Narcotic Unit, I would like to ask the Minister to explain what structure exist at the Ministry of Home Affairs to manage the Customs Anti Narcotic Unit, which he says will be coming under the Ministry of Home Affairs shortly?

Mr. Rohee: The Customs Anti-Narcotic Unit has its own structure. Its headquarters is on Homestretch Avenue and the Head of CANU would report to the Minister of Home Affairs.

Mr. Felix: My only follow up would have been to enquire if whether as the name suggest, it should not have been with the Customs Trade and Administration.

Mr. Chairman: That is another matter. It has had a long history coming through Revenue and Customs. It seems it may find a home at the Ministry of Home Affairs now.

Mr. T. Williams Project 1208500 - Citizens Security, I am respectfully referring the Hon. Minister to Project Profile, Ref: 214, under Description of Project, Item 3, “Strengthening social cohesion within communities”, could the Hon. Minister tell us what is meant by that and how much money is earmarked for that and what is the nature of the programme he has for that item?

Mr. Rohee: The Social Cohesion Programme falls under the community action component of the Citizens Security Programme. The content of this programme has to do with providing life skills to young persons in various communities. We have targeted 1400 young people between the ages of 14-25 years old who may be school dropouts. By the end of April of this year we

would have completed training 450 youths and we have scored, I do not want to get too much into policy issues here, many successes in this respect. The communities that have benefited from this programme are Agricola/McDoom, Sophia, Plaisance, Annandale/Lusignan, Buxton/Friendship, Port Mourant, Rosehall, Kilcoy/Chesney/Fryrish, Angosy Avenue, Overwinning and Edinburgh. Those would be the communities that would have benefited from the programme.

Mr. T. Williams: For the last part of it, how much money has been earmarked for that Head or item?

Mr. Rohee: The amount of money that has been earmarked for the Community Action Component is \$21,499,000.

Programme: 511 – Secretariat Services - \$965,259,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 512 – Guyana Police Force - \$5,753,344,000

Mr. Felix: Line Item 6111 - Administrative, could the Hon. Minister inform this House of the need to increase the staff from 156 to 171 in 2012?

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with the appointment of Cadet Officers and the promotions of them.

Mr. Felix: Could the Minister say how many Cadet Officers and how long they have been in that rank?

Mr. Rohee: The number is 13 and they have been in that position for approximately one year.

Mr. Felix: I will just suggest to the Minister that he do some research on how long the Cadet Officers have been in their ranks, because the Guyana Police Force has a position for 10 and they have a large number and some of them have been in that rank for five years; they have not been promoted when they should have been on probation for two years.

Mr. Rohee: Just to inform this House that what the former Commissioner of Police is saying is true, but His Excellency, the last President, allocated I think 50 positions for Cadet Officers

within the Guyana Police Force. So I think time has overtaken that position which the Commissioner is aware of.

Mr. Jones: Line Item 6294 – Other, I see an allocation request of \$37.8 million captioned “Other”.

Mr. Rohee: This may sound rather macabre, but it has to do with the handling of dead bodies. We have to pay for that.

Mr. Chairman: Is that okay?

Mr. Felix: I would like to know how long those bodies have been there and how long you have to undertake that expense.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, what is the average time a body lies there and for the State to pick up that expense?

Mr. Rohee: I did not hear you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: What is the average time a body/cadaver would lie at the parlour or the mortuary and the State would have to pick up that expense.

Mr. Rohee: There is no fixed time. I think it has to do with a number of factors, for example, the forensic examinations that are being done, some have to be sent abroad for DNA testing as well. I cannot say specifically how long a dead body would remain, especially if it is still under investigations – that is to say the case.

Mr. Chairman: Alright.

Mr. Jones: Just a follow up, is the Hon. Minister saying that \$37.8 million is requested...

Mr. Chairman: Which Line Item is this?

Mr. Jones: The same Line Item 6294 – Other, \$37.8 million is being requested to be there for an ongoing investigation, forensic and other? I just need some more clarity on it.

Mr. Rohee: A part of it is for ongoing investigation, the other has to do with other dead bodies.

Mr. Chairman: Cold cases.

Mr. Trotman: Line Item 6133 – Benefits and Allowances, can the Minister state what are the benefits and allowances paid under this head?

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with the salary related allowances and uniforms for our policemen.

Mr. Felix: Line Item 6113 - Other Technical and Craft Skills, can the Hon. Minister justify the increase of staff in this category from 407 to 418?

Mr. Rohee: The justification rests with the question of promotions.

Mr. Felix: Thank you. Line Item 6116 - Contracted Employees, can the Minister indicate the designation of the seven Contracted Employees and the need to retain their services; with a follow up to come?

Mr. Chairman: Can I suggest that while the Minister's assistants finds that information we move to another question, if there is any other, in the interest of time.

Mr. Rohee: The Contracted Employees are five Assistant Commissioners of Police and one Pathologist. It is six Contracted Employees.

Mr. Felix: So seven is incorrect. My follow up question is how many are beyond the age of 55 and does the Minister recognise that the retention beyond the age of the statutory retirement age affects the development and upward mobility of younger members of the Guyana Police Force.

Mr. Rohee: They are all over the age of 55, they have all been retired, but we have certain skills that are required until we are able to build the necessary capacity, for example, in the office of professional responsibility at the Felix Austin Training School, with the exception of the Pathologist and the band master, these take time to build, the replacements for these persons who are holding for the time being. It does not mean to say that we do not recognise that. In fact, we have adopted a Succession Plan overall for the Guyana Police Force and these positions falls within the context of the Succession Plan.

Mr. B. Williams: Could the Hon. Minister consider that he could put those retirees into another category if he is dealing with nomenclature. He could put them in a category of advisors for

example and they would still be able to make their contribution, rather than retard the upward mobility of younger men and women in the Guyana Police Force.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, have you considered that or will you be willing to consider it?

Mr. Rohee: As I said Mr. Chairman, there is a Succession Plan within the Guyana Police Force. All these areas are part of the Succession Plan. We would not want to do away with services that are of a high quality, while we do not have in place the requisite skills to do so. Incidentally, if I may emphasise, I, as the Minister have not been informed by the Commissioner of any serious discomfort by junior ranks or their appropriately ranked officers that they are being deprived of a position being held by one of these Contracted Employees.

Mr. B. Williams: To tell you like the current Assistant Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ramnarine, you do not expect them to do that, to get the same treatment. Could the Hon. Minister then explain why Former Assistant Commissioner of Police, Mr. Slowe, is not in the Guyana Police Force at this time?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, with due respect I do not think that is a fair question. I really cannot answer about Mr. Slowe. Mr. Slowe is free to approach the Commissioner of Police (Acting) to offer whatever services he wishes to do. We know where his strengths are within the given competencies of the Guyana Police Force. I personally know that and the Guyana Police Force knows that and so if Mr. Slowe wishes, he is free as far as I am aware, like all the others to approach the Commissioner of Police, after which the Commissioner of Police will approach the Ministry of Home Affairs for a contract to be formulated for him. But as far as I know, Mr. Slowe seems to be very comfortable where he is at this point in time.

Mr. B. Williams: Well he had to find comfort.

8.59 p.m.

Mr. Felix: Mr. Chairman, line item 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants: Having looked at the Capital Expenditure, I see that there is a plan to acquire boats, outboard engines and vehicles but in the allocation for fuel and lubricants I noticed for this year, though the fleet is increasing and the price of fuel on the world market is increasing, that allocation is less. Can the Minister explain?

Mr. Rohee: I have, in discussion with the police, made that observation as well and I think we have the possibility of addressing that.

Mr. Felix: I would like to ask the Minister if he has another supplemental plan, probably a \$90 million plan.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, in the event that adjustments have to be made, you anticipate that you will have to seek a supplemental allocation?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, I think Mr. Felix is measuring that against last year's allocation when we had general elections and when a certain sum of money was allocated for this purpose. We are back now to normalcy; meaning, this is not likely to be a year of elections. I hope that I am not anticipating anything but as far as the Police Force is aware we are not in elections mode and therefore even if there might be a shortfall we will have to find ways and means of addressing that, subsequently.

Mr. Allen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On line item 6116: I do not know if I did not hear correctly but I am seeing seven contracted workers but I heard the Hon. Minister mention six. Maybe I misheard. If I did please, correct me.

Mr. Chairman: You are correct. The Hon. Minister did say that there are five Assistant Commissioners of Police and one pathologist and that is what his records revealed. It would appear that there is something that needs to be cleared up here but he is not prepared to name a seventh person that he does not know of.

Mr. Felix: Line item 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence: Could the Minister justify the reduction in the allocation sought in 2012 under this head?

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Felix, the Hon. Member, is quite correct. There is a short fall here and we will obviously have to find ways of addressing that, subsequently; probably in the course of the year.

Mr. Felix: Line item 6264 - Vehicle Spares and Service: Can the Hon. Minister advise this House how much money from the allocation sought would be available to repair the water cannon?

Mr. Rohee: Actually Mr. Felix is having fun at the back there. That is like asking someone when they last beat their wife, but I cannot assume that Mr. Felix has information that I do not have. I am not aware that the water cannon is in dire need of repair; in fact, we have not even tested it as yet publically.

Mr. Felix: Judging from the manner in which we are accustomed to using force, the water cannon is supposed to come before the use of rubber bullets.

Mr. Chairman: That is a comment. Are there any other questions, Hon. Members?

Mr. Jones: Cde. Chairman, it may be the last one. Line item 6284 – and I hope that it has nothing to do with “dead” – captioned as “Other”: Could the Hon. Minister explain the request for \$50.255 million?

Mr. Rohee: I think the Hon. Member wants to know what that “Other” is for.

Mr. Jones: Yes.

Mr. Rohee: It concerns two things: the rental of the trunk call system from Associated Industries Limited (AINLIM) as well as communication – internet services.

Mr. Felix: Line item 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships): Could the Hon. Minister indicate what training under scholarships would the allocation sought in 2012, allow the police to undertake?

Mr. Rohee: We have overseas training. Is that what you are interested in? Or is it local training?

Mr. Felix: No. I have noted the amount and I was in training and I would really like to know if that amount is adequate to satisfy the training needs of the Guyana Police Force in 2012.

Mr. Rohee: Mr. Chairman, the Force has an appetite for resources, as you would know, and we have to obviously work with what we have. The Guyana Police Force, as the Former Commissioner, the Hon. Member, would know has annual training programmes for senior ranks, junior ranks, corporals and sergeants, inspectors and they have been doing that within the resources available to them. With the establishment of the training facility within the meaning of the Citizen Security Programme, additional training is to be provided to senior ranks of the

Guyana Police Force and other departments of the Guyana Police Force. I believe that the force is very well poised in 2012 for the routine training as well as additional training of a higher level which would bring them added disciplines and skills.

Mr. Felix: While I thank the Minister for his answer, I would like him to review his position with relation to supplementary requests.

Mr. Chairman: Are you inviting him to bring supplementary requests?

Mr. Felix: No. I know he would need to.

Mr. Chairman: You are suggesting that he does for this?

Mr. Felix: Correct.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. You have clearance to bring supplementary requests.

Mr. Rohee: I have no difficulty with that providing that Mr. Greenidge does not ask me to withdraw it as in the last occasion.

Mrs. Baveghems: Line Item 6294 - Other: I have noticed here that in 2010 there were \$35,637,000, in the 2011 Budget there was \$27,500,000, in 2011 again there was \$37,600,000 (in 2011, Revised, there was \$37,793,000) and in 2012 there was \$37,800,000 and the Hon. Minister had given an answer that dead persons have to be paid for with this allocation but I would like to know if the longer the dead persons are kept the more money has to be paid as in the cast of Lindo Creek, Sheema Mangar, Monica Reece and others. I would like to know if the longer the dead persons are kept the more money has to be given.

Mr. Chairman: I believe that it does stand to reason that the longer they are kept the more costs are incurred but Minister... In other words, this is the category that pays for those arrangements but it has increased from the last two years to now. Is that a result of cadavers having to be kept for longer than expected?

Mr. Rohee: There are a number of bodies that remain, for example, the bodies from Lindo Creek. They will remain there until we get the full report from the Jamaicans on this matter.

[**Mr. B. Williams:** You have not gotten that report as yet?] No, we have not gotten the report

on all of the bodies as yet. So we cannot dispose of those bodies for fear of running into problems with the families. We have those types of bodies, bodies that are associated with other cases that are currently being investigated. In addition to that, not wanting to sound cynical but we have no control over death and who dies so we have to make provision – in addition to what is there to be paid for – for other bodies that may come into the possession of the police as a result of a crime or some other matter being perpetrated for criminal intent.

Mrs. Baveghems: As a follow-up question to that, would you not think it best that the Ministry buys its own refrigerator so as to cut down on the cost, get its own mortuary or something? It has been three years and more that the Lindo Creek boys have been there.

Mr. Rohee: In some Police Forces and Ministries of National Security in some countries they have their own facilities. We prefer to outsource these facilities to private parlours and to develop relationships or arrangements with them of the type we have with some of these funeral parlours because right now I do not believe that we have the capacity to have our own refrigerating facility to store dead bodies. In any event, it is better we outsource for this facility.

Mr. Jones: A follow-up, Cde. Chairman, on line item 6284: The Minister explained that the monies, in addition to other allocations, are to be used for the rental of radio sets. Has the Hon. Minister considered purchasing radio sets as opposed to renting?

Mr. Rohee: As I understand it the trunk call system is quite different from the handheld radios so what we do is rent the handheld radios but only for specific events as was, for example, in the case of the elections of last year. One would recall that we brought a supplementary provision here for rental of handheld radios from AINLIM and we were asked to produce the vouchers, we did produce the vouchers. We have not heard anything about that since then. We have accounted for the rental of the handheld sets from AINLIM. [Mr. Felix: One short.] Is it the one that you have or purport to have? We are doing the inventory to check to see who has what, Mr. Chairman. That was just on aside.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, it is after 9.00 p.m. and the time for the completion of this Ministry is passing. At 10.00 p.m. we are officially to end and I intend to end at 10.00 p.m. so I urge you to move a little faster.

Programme: 512 – Guyana Police Force – \$5,753,344,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 512 – Guyana Police Force – \$575,000,000

Mr. Felix: Line item 2400400 - Land and Water Transport – Police: Can the Minister advise this house as to what a floating outpost is, where it would be located and for what purpose it is?

Mr. Rohee: This is one of the innovations which the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Guyana Police Force have worked on. Having seen what the Guyana Defense Force has recently acquired for its activities at the mouth the Pomeroon River we have recognised that there has been certain new developments in A and F Division, in the interior, especially the gold mining areas. We recognise that with a “gold shout” the population moves from one area to another. Sometimes people who are involved in illegal activities do not report to police stations as they are expected to do. In seeking to find some creative way of dealing with this we have found it necessary to build here in Guyana, through a local engineering firm, a floating police station that will move from one point to another in the riverine areas, in the interior, to assist with law enforcement and the maintenance of law and order. We have already designed this facility, together with the Guyana Defense Force, and we believe that it would help tremendously in bringing the crime situation under control in A and F Division. This is just one of which we hope we will receive the support of Cabinet and the Ministry of Finance in building to help us in A and F Division, particularly. The ranks will be permanently stationed on this facility. It will be outfitted with almost everything that is necessary for police officers to be comfortably located and they will be rotated on a regular basis. Thank you.

Programme: 512 – Guyana Police Force – \$575,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 513 – Guyana Prison Service – \$922,346,000

Mr. Adams: In line item 6111 – Administrative - I notice that there are six new persons added to that agency. Can the Hon. Minister tell us their emoluments?

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with promotions within the Guyana Prison Service.

Mr. Adams: In line item 6113 - Other Technical and Craft Skilled - there is an increase of 23.

Mr. Rohee: Again, Mr. Chairman, this is a reflection of promotion within the Guyana Prison Service.

Ms. Selman: Line Item 6302: Could the Hon. Minister say how many persons are being trained? Does training involve attendance at the university here? How many persons are at universities overseas, if any? How many persons are being trained overseas?

Mr. Rohee: We have no ranks of the Guyana Prison Service being trained overseas. What we do have from time to time are courses being offered by institutions within the region; particularly for ranks of the Force to participate in, and we do send ranks to participate in those courses, but not permanently at this point in time.

Ms. Selman: The first question was: How many persons are being trained, based on this budgetary allocation?

Mr. Rohee: There are 1,262 ranks that are being trained. They are being trained along the lines of 45 training courses that are organised.

Mr. Adams: Line item 6284 - Other: What constitutes “Other”? Can the Hon. Minister help us with this?

Mr. Rohee: Would you be kind enough to repeat that question?

Mr. Chairman: Line item 6284, the category “Other”.

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with the provision and payment for internet services.

Mr. Adams: Line item 6294 - Other...

Mr. Rohee: The Guyana Prison Service is aggressively implementing its agriculture development plan and the stock of animals that the Prison Service has has to be provided with

feed. This provision is for feed to be provided for the livestock of the Guyana Prison Service; the whole objective ultimately being for the service to be self sufficient in certain dietary items.

Programme: 513 – Guyana Prison Service – \$922,346,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 513 – Guyana Prison Service – \$113,700,000

Programme: 513 – Guyana Prison Service – \$113,700,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Mr. Erskine for your assistance.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 514 – Police Complaints Authority – \$22,133,000

[Mrs. Lawrence assumed the Chair at 9.25 p.m.]

Programme: 514 – Police Complaints Authority – \$22,133,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 514 – Police Complaints Authority – \$1,200,000

Programme: 514 – Police Complaints Authority – \$1,200,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 515 – Guyana Fire Service – \$568,511,000

Mr. Felix: Mdm. Chairperson, line item 6113 - Other Technical and Craft Skilled: There is an increase in the allocation for 2012 and we note under Staffing Details that there is a reduction from 354 to 349. We would like the Minister to explain this situation. The number of staff members is down but the increase in the allocation is there.

9.29 p.m.

Mr. Rohee: There are two aspects to this. One is the eight per cent increase and the other is the promotions within the Guyana Fire Service.

Mr. Felix: Then, there is my second question, please, Mdm. Chairperson. I note that under staff for 2011 there is zero and there is a \$1.4 million allocation. Could the Hon. Minister please explain? The line item is 6116 – Contracted Employees.

Mdm. Chairperson: Are you asking a question on the year 2011?

Mr. Felix: Yes.

Mdm. Chairperson: No questions are allowed, Hon. Member, where there are zeros.

Mr. Felix: Pardon me.

Mdm. Chairperson: Where there are zeros, no questions are allowed. There was no allocation and so you cannot ask a question.

Mr. Felix: But there is an allocation - \$1.4 million.

Mdm. Chairperson: Yes. Hon. Minister, he is asking about the revised amount.

Mr. Rohee: This has to do with the two contracted employees there.

Mr. Felix: I am seeing zero.

Mdm. Chairperson: Is it in the staffing details - line item 6116 – Contracted Employees - for 2011? There is zero there. Was there a staff there and this is a typographical error?

Mr. Rohee: I am not very sure what the Hon. Member is trying to get out, Mdm. Chairperson.

Mdm. Chairperson: Mr. Minister, if your staff could just follow the Estimates and look at the staffing details on page 215, under 6116 – Contracted Employees – and look at the column which states 2011, there is zero for number of employees. If they go across to page 214, at line item 6116, they will see that there is a revised amount of \$1.496 million.

Mr. Rohee: I am advised that in 2011 there were two contracted workers at the Guyana Fire Service.

Dr. Singh: I am advised that at the time when Budget 2011 came to the National Assembly, no one was appointed under that line item, hence the zero under filled. During the course of the year, persons were appointed and expenditure incurred, as a result of which there was expenditure. But the staffing details tabled, as of 2011, would have reflected zero because at the time of the budget the number of filled positions was zero.

Ms. Selman: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): How many persons will benefit from this training programme? Could the Minister say how many persons will be attending the University of Guyana, if any? And how many persons will be attending university internationally, if any?

Mr. Rohee: There are three aspects to that question, Mdm. Chairperson. Firstly, the Ministry has embarked on a new innovative mode of training for the Guyana Fire Service. That is to bring in experts from abroad, as was done last year, to train more ranks, because the sending of ranks abroad tends to be a very expensive exercise for Guyana. What is being done is to bring in experts from abroad, resulting in the training of more ranks. That is one dimension.

The other dimension is that ranks are sent for short-term training in countries, particularly those in the region.

Thirdly, there would be the engagement in training of ranks by ranks of the Guyana Fire Service itself. Those are the three dimensions of training that currently take place within the service.

Ms. Selman: How many persons will be trained?

Mr. Rohee: Approximately one hundred and twenty persons would be involved in training in two batches, locally.

Mr. Trotman: Line item 6222 – Field Materials and Supplies: Could the Hon. Minister say what are the items to be procured under this line item?

Mr. Rohee: There is a foam concentrate that is to be procured. I think that is basically it. The firefighting foam is for use particularly at the aerodromes and at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA), Timehri.

[Mr. Chairman assumed Chair at 9.35 p.m.]

Mr. Felix: Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): We are hearing about the expansion of the CJIA. My question is whether the Ministry has considered aerodrome fire training in the allocation.

Mr. Rohee: Yes. We have done so.

Programme: 515 – Guyana Fire Service - \$568,511,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 515 – Guyana Fire Service - \$211,600,000

Mr. Felix: Project 2400600 – Land and Water Transport – Fire: I would like the Minister to explain: What action is being taken to acquire a vessel to fight fires in the rivers or in the Atlantic?

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Felix, that question has been put in this House for the last ten or more years. It was before you, Mr. Rohee, became the Minister of Home Affairs that question was put.

Mr. Rohee: The Ministry has begun plans to identify a suitable firefighting boat for our rivers, particularly the Demerara River, having regard to the fact that many of those wharves are hooked on to the river. The Ministry has identified a vessel, but it is currently in negotiations with the manufacturers to remodel it so that it could become more affordable to the Government of Guyana.

Mr. Trotman: I notice under this project, project 2400600, Land and Water Transport – Fire, that the Ministry is proposing to purchase one vehicle for the Guyana Fire Service. I am wondering, in light of the fact that there are numerous fires and the inadequacy of firefighting

equipment to deal with the situation, if the Minister believes that this is an adequate number of vehicles to cater for.

Mr. Rohee: I have no doubt that... For example, in 1992, there was one water tender. In 1993, there was not an improved situation. In 1995, three tenders were bought. In 2003, another three tenders were purchased and, currently, there are thirty-four water tenders. I would think that incrementally the Ministry will have to build on what it has. Right now, its priority, apart from procuring additional tenders, is to procure water bearing vessels, that is to say, bowsers. Having regard to the fact that in the city of Georgetown, particularly, the fire hydrants are, basically, not functioning, the Guyana Fire Service would have to rely on the canals, trenches and its own capacity to fetch water. The Ministry objective is for each fire tender to be accompanied by two bowsers - water-carrying vehicles, but I will emphasise that it will take time to build on that, having regard to the amount of money that is available to the Guyana Fire Service. I think we have come a very far way.

Mr. Trotman: A follow-up. I would like the Minister to state how many of those vehicles are in serviceable condition and are available to respond to the immediate needs of the Guyana Fire Service.

Mr. Rohee: In Georgetown, there are nine water tenders, functioning; at Leonora, there are three, functioning; at Anna Regina, there are two. What I am calling out is what is functioning. I am not going to call out vehicles which are not working. At Timheri, there are two water tenders and three crash tenders; Linden, there are three water tenders; New Amsterdam, there are four water tenders; Onverwagt, there is one water tender; at Corriverton, there is one water tender; Ogle, there is one crash tender; Rose Hall there is one water tender; Mahaica, there is one water tender and at Bartica, there is one water tender, which brings us to a total of forty-one water tenders functioning throughout the country.

Mr. Felix: It is just a comment. I just trust that the bowsers that the Minister is thinking of buying have sufficient capacity to withstand an hour-long fire, otherwise it is that we will be back to square one. The bowsers must have capacity, because depending on the force of the water coming from the hoses they can be out of water in fifteen minutes.

Mr. Chairman: I think that I heard the Minister say that it is the bowsers, tenders, drains, canals and everything else that could provide water and are all brought together to fight a fire on any given occasion because there are no hydrants.

Programme: 515 – Guyana Fire Service - \$211,600,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Current Expenditure

Programme: 516 – General Registrar’s Offices - \$96,888,000

Programme: 516 – General Registrar Offices - \$96,888,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 516 – General Registrar’s Offices - \$7,400,000

Programme: 516 – General Registrar Offices - \$7,400,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much Hon. Minister of Home Affairs and your able staff for assisting us this evening.

Assembly resumed

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, this concludes our business for tonight. I am reminded that snacks remain available in the lounge. There was a slight mishap with an electrical problem earlier. Those of you who could be good enough to help us, by taking some, or to remain a bit longer and tarry with us a while. It is up to you. I will ask the Hon. Prime Minister to move the motion for the adjournment, please.

Mr. Hinds: I now move that the House be adjourned to 2 p.m. tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: The House is adjourned to 20th April at 2 p.m.

Adjourned accordingly at 9.49 p.m.