

# Official Report

*PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION (2012-2013) 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*

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53<sup>RD</sup> Sitting

Monday, 22<sup>ND</sup> April, 2013

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*Assembly convened at 2.20 p.m.*

*Prayers*

*[Mdm. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**

### **The Speaker's absence**

**Mdm. Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, I would like to indicate that His Hon. the Speaker Mr. Trotman is unavailable for today's sitting, so I will be presiding. As usual, I expect to have your kind cooperation and, as happens, the House tends to be a bit quieter when I am in the Chair.

## **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

### **[Written Replies]**

#### **1. NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION PASSED AGAINST REO, REGION 8**

**Mr. Bulkan:** Could the Hon. Minister inform Members of the National Assembly what actions he has taken in relation to the no-confidence motion that was passed against Regional Executive Officer (REO) Mr. Harsawack of Region 8?

## **2. PROTOCOL RELATING TO AN APPOINTED OFFICIAL OF A REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION**

**Mr. Bulkan:** Could the Hon. Minister inform Members of the National Assembly what is the protocol relating to an appointed official of a regional administration committing the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development for the provision of goods and services and, in particular, if Mr. Harsawack is empowered to commit the region in the absence of approval of the RDC?

## **3. COMMUNITY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT PROJECT**

**Mr. Bulkan:** In 2006, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and Government of Guyana initiated the project named at the caption and which had as its purpose/objective, to prepare four communities for their upgrading to municipalities, these being, Bartica, Charity, Parika and Supenaam.

- (i) Could the Hon. Minister provide the relevant details for the Communities Services Enhancement Project, which was initiated in 2006 and give information on its current status?
- (ii) Could the Hon. Minister say which other communities have been added to the four previously identified and for similar upgrading in status, if any?

*Answers not provided.*

## **REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

### **NEWSPAPER REPORT ON ALLEGED TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**

**Mdm. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, I, this morning, received a letter from the Hon. Leader of the Opposition seeking leave to move the adjournment of the National Assembly for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance. As a result of discussions that took part at the tripartite level, it has been agreed that we will not pursue this matter fully under Standing Order 12, which would mean putting it, I rule and, if it is agreed on, then it stands adjourned to later on in the day. It has been agreed that Mr. Granger will share, with the

National Assembly, the contents of his letter, his request after which a Member from the Alliance For Change (AFC) will make his or her statement and that will be responded to, as such, by the Hon. Prime Minister.

It has also been agreed that we will take this now, under this head, and we expect that this will take no more than twenty minutes, but the outside time will be half an hour. We believe that in twenty minutes we can conclude it.

Hon. Leader of the Opposition I invite you to speak to the matter.

**Leader of the Opposition [Brigadier (Ret'd) Granger]:** I would like to take this opportunity to raise this matter of urgent public importance. It concerns a report which has appeared in today's newspaper about alleged trafficking in persons. Four young women, one as young as 14 years old, were reportedly victims of this abuse.

According to the newspaper's report the girls, having been rescued from the camp where the abuse occurred, were taken to the police station and they were obliged to stay there because there were no long-term arrangements for their accommodation. This raised several issues about the long-term termination of the trafficking in persons, but today I am concerned, largely, with the short-term effect of having girls rescued from places where the abuse occurred and having them properly accommodated. This is a responsibility of the State and we are aware that the Non Governmental Organization (NGO), the Guyana Women Miners Association, has done a lot of work over the last year to rescue girls from abusive situations.

Today I took the opportunity to speak to the Chairman of the Cuyuni/Mazaruni region, Mr. Gordon Bradford, and I also spoke to the President of the Guyana Women Miners Association and I would like to invite the executive branch of Government to look at the short-term relief and eventually we will deal with the resolution of the problem. Today I am mostly concerned with the relief of the situation confronting us.

Trafficking in persons is a reality, whether it episodically continuous, the fact is that when young women are rescued from abusive situations they need to be treated in a humane manner. We are asking that the State accepts responsibility for placing those girls in safe custody and sometimes,

it has been proven, the safe custody might not necessarily mean a police station with a lot of male police officers.

We are asking for a separate institution to be established, so that immediately, on being rescued, they can be taken to a safe destination where they are given a bed, food and medical attention if necessary, but under the State, through the police force, through the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, through the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs in some instances, through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and through the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, so that in the short term, as soon as the girls are rescued, they are taken to a haven or a shelter where they could be processed and where they could be prepared to return to their families. This is what I am asking for and I am asking for the cooperation of all of the parties in this House. Eventually we have to bring this scourge to an end, we have to stop trafficking in persons, but today I am asking that the plight of the young women, who have been rescued, be put foremost on the agenda of the executive branch and that they be given a safe place to stay and they could be reunited with their families.

Thank you. *[Applause]*

**Mrs. Hughes:** We just want to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Granger for bringing this very important issue to the National Assembly. I think it is of concern to all Guyanese, especially us in this room, because certainly we need to ensure that we have firm solutions that can be found. We are hearing more and more about these incidences. I would request of the Minister that, now given the relationship she has with several communities, maybe in the interim we consider partnering with an NGO or a church or some facility that can help to create that safe space that we need almost immediately to deal with some of these situations that we are finding, proper accommodation, and certainly not a bench in a police station.

I think, more and more, it is clear that protection must be provided. I want to compliment the Guyana Women Miners Association for the work that it is doing and it is quite alarming to know that the women were there feeling threatened themselves, much less miners who find themselves in this difficult and unacceptable situation. We are committed to working to ensuring that we can find some real solutions to this challenge.

Thank you. *[Applause]*

**Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs [Mr. Hinds]:** The Government joins in condemning all forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation, trafficking in persons and child labour. We have been taking measures to reduce these occurrences in our society. In this particular case we appreciate the work being done by the Guyana Women Miners Association. We have been learning of this case, mostly from the article in the newspapers, today. I can say that, at this time, my latest information is that things have been going into place, ever since this morning, and at this time, I am told, that the four young persons are in Georgetown and with them are officers of the Child Protection Agency, a Probation Officer, someone from the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs and they are working at this problem.

The Government takes on board the consideration of having some protocols in place, so that if or when an incident, such as this recurs, there would be some guidelines and some systems in place to rescue girls or to provide them with some place of rescue until the matters could be sorted out.

I want to end by reaffirming that the Government is, in itself, very much against the kind of things that seems to be occurring here in the Puruni. I can say as a past Minister of Mines, who spent a lot of time visiting in the hinterland, that we are in the process of changing the nature of the hinterland and the way, in particular, miners see the hinterland and would behave when they are in the hinterland. The Minister of Natural Resources and Environment has assured me that we will intend to persist and bring about transformation so that the hinterland becomes very much like the coast and all of the laws on the coast are respected and confirmed with, in the hinterland.

Thank you very much. *[Applause]*

**Mdm. Deputy Speaker:** Thank you Hon. Prime Minister. I just want to say, before we move on, speaking for myself, I find it very heartening that the Assembly can, so to speak, close ranks on an issue such as this. I mean our children are our most precious assets and I would want to congratulate all sides of the House for realising that this is not about blaming anyone but this is a national problem that together we have to seek to solve.

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING AND COUNTERING THE FINANCING OF  
TERRORISM (AMENDMENT) BILL 2013 - Bill No. 12/2013**

The following Bill was introduced and read for the first time:

A Bill intituled:

“AN ACT to amend the Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of  
Terrorism Act.” *[Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs]*

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**GOVERNMENT’S BUSINESS**

**MOTION**

**BUDGET SPEECH 2013 – MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF  
EXPENDITURE FOR 2013**

“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 provides 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 that expenditure;

AND WHEREAS Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of Guyana for the financial year 2013 have been prepared and laid before the Assembly on 2013-03-25;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2013, of a total sum of **one hundred and ninety four billion, three hundred and forty three million, seven hundred and sixty four thousand, eight hundred and seventy three dollars (\$194,343,764,873), excluding fourteen billion, and four hundred and ninety six million, six hundred and seventy nine thousand, one hundred and twenty seven dollars**

(\$14,496,679,127) which is chargeable by law, as detailed therein and summarised in the undermentioned schedule, and agree that it is expedient to amend the law and to make further provision in respect of finance. [*Minister of Finance*]

**Mdm. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, the Assembly will now resolve itself into the Committee of Supply to continue consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the year 2013. We commence today with Region 4.

*Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply*

*In Committee of Supply*

**Agency: 74 Region 4: Demerara/Mahaica**

**Current Expenditure**

**Programme: 741- Regional Administration and Finance - \$134,942,000**

**Mr. Bulkan:** Mdm. Chairperson, I have several questions to ask the Hon. Minister, pertaining to the programme head that is before us, but, before I do so, I crave your indulgence under Standing Order 75(2), which relates to the procedures in the Committee of Supply, and it allows for a debate on the question that is being put, providing that such debate shall be confined to the policy for which the money is to be provided. I seek your permission to so do.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Which Standing Order?

**Mr. Bulkan:** It is Standing Order 75(2).

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Just bear with me one second as I find it here.

Mr. Bulkan, having looked at Standing Order 75(2) and conferred, as you can see, with the Clerk, for a debate to be allowed on every page... You have to remember we have a finite time. If it is that you want to make a very brief...

**Mr. Bulkan:** It is a very brief statement.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I will assume that this will not be prefacing every question asked.

**Mr. Bulkan:** No. It is regard to the policy that the Standing Order provides...

**Mdm. Chairperson:** You can proceed. Please make it very brief. Even as we sort out the Standing Order and as I indicated, and I am saying this generally, we will not allow a policy statement or a debate to proceed every question or every line item, because we may be here... My reading of it is that it does not really allow for that, but proceed.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Mdm. Chairperson, I would like to bring to your attention, and to the attention of the Hon. Members of this House, that what we are being invited to participate here is in an exercise which is arisen out of a process that is at minimum, one that is highly questionable and possibly it may be unlawful or violated our Constitution. In particular, I refer to the programme heads, which we are about to pronounce on, which are programmes 741 to 745, and in particular programmes 742 to 745 which deal with Agriculture, Public Works, Education Delivery and Health Services.

The programme objective, which is stated on page 297, which is the subject before us, imposes the duty of consultation, and in this case it is with the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) regarding the implementation of any policy or development plan that, as it states there, may be determined by those agencies.

It is necessary for me to refer to two things briefly. First, I will refer to a statement that the Hon. Minister Ganga Persaud made here at the last sitting, which was Friday night at about 7.30 p.m., in which, in response to a question by the Hon. Member Mr. Harmon regarding events at Aliko and the *koker* there, the Hon. Minister said that he gave a commitment with regard to providing information and “Members ought to be responsible for what we say”.

Secondly, and briefly, I would like to refer to words spoken by the Hon. Minister Ganga Persaud in this House in the 2012 budget speech and it is contained on page 2287 of the *Hansard*. It has to do with the systems, procedures and processes to arrive at the determination for the allocations that are put before this House. I do not propose to read it in its entirety, brief as it is, it is the words of the Hon. Minister. As I said, it is stated here on page 2287 in the *Hansard* of the 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2012. The relevant part of those particular words of the Minister was that once the procedures have been completed those draft budgets will be presented to the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and then on to the respective subject Ministries.

My respectful submission is that those draft budgets, once they would have gone through that procedure as outlined by the Minister, cannot be unilaterally changed by both the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development or the subject Ministry without reference to the RDC, as that would mean that those elaborate systems and procedures, which the Hon. Minister outlined, would all have been a charade or make a mockery of the role and authority of the duly constituted RDCs and, moreover, contrary to articles of our Constitution on local government and local democracy.

These proposed budgetary allocations, which we are about to consider and I am referring to programmes 724 to 745, both current and capital, were not so determined by the RDC. I have in my possession two letters from the Regional Chairman of the RDC, one dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013 and one dated 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2013, in which the Regional Chairman established, as I said, that the proposed allocation before us were not a determination of the RDC.

This is a very serious matter. Even more scandalous is the fact that when we get to the proposed allocations for Region 8, which we will tomorrow, that that entire submission is a wholly unauthorised one and it received no endorsement from the RDC. It was purely the handiwork of the REO of that region. I said that in my response to the Hon. Minister's budget speech. I noted that when the Hon. Minister Ganga Persaud spoke after me, that he made no attempt to refute what I said.

The disrespect that has been shown to those Regional Chairmen of Regions 4 and, in particular, Region 8 ever since he and the RDC were sworn on January 25<sup>th</sup> 2012 is legion and legendary. That RDC in Region 8 only met four times in the year 2012 and, yet, when it met last week Monday and Tuesday neither the Regional Executive Officer (REO) nor any of the programme heads were present at that meeting, they all absent themselves, in the words of the Regional Chairman, "on an implausible excuse".

The question is: What is to be done? How do we go forward from here? The proposed allocations, to being with, are insufficient and inadequate. They are paltry, particularly when we consider that allocations, which have been made under a programme known as the Community Roads Improvement Project (CRIP) programme, where \$941 million is proposed for spending to improve community roads, under the Ministry of Housing; there is the Basic Needs Trust Fund

with an allocation of over \$1 billion, which proposes intervention in communities; there is the poverty programme, under the Ministry of Finance, which proposes to spend \$720 million.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I notice Ms. Teixeira. Mr. Bulkan, are you about to conclude?

**Mr. Bulkan:** I am about to finish, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Ms. Teixeira, would you want to intervene before he concludes? I have indicated that I am not going to allow any further statements. I mean, if questions are asked in a fairly lengthy way I would not obviously stop that, but I am not going to... Once the Hon. Member is finished I will not allow anyone else, from any side of the House, to proceed in this way.

**Ms. Teixeira:** As a result, Mdm. Chairperson, of your offer of whether I want to intervene now or at the end, based on your last sentence, which is that you would not allow further discussion, then I am forced to rise, in between, before Mr. Bulkan ends.

The Standing Orders do not allow for this. The Hon. Member spoke in the general debate, as all of us did and made, and made our points, whether or not we agree is a different issue. We are now on the Estimates for every single head and sub-head. I am therefore asking that understanding what it is it is not provided for and we do not allow this, otherwise we will end up encouraging it on all sides.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** In fact, when we look at Standing Order 75 (2) it may well be that that interpretation is not as far-fetched as it seems, but I do take the point that if we are to have a policy or a debate proceeding every head we will run into an inordinate amount of problems. That is why I indicated to Mr. Bulkan and he has assured me that he is about to conclude. It may well be that we would have to have a ruling on Standing Order 75. Hon. Minister Mr. Ganga Persaud, just allow Mr. Bulkan to finish and then I will take you very briefly.

**Minister of Local Government and Regional Development [Mr. Ganga Persaud]:** Mdm. Chairperson, I was scared when you said that you will not allow anyone else.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I did not mean it in that way. I meant, in terms of getting up, to have a debate on every page. That is the point I was making when I said that I would not allow.

**Mr. Bulkan:** In closing, and as I was saying where do we go from here, I would like to propose, for your consideration, that we seek to get the Government's concurrence that the interventions that are about to be funded from the allocations, which will shortly be approved, that those interventions be determined in consultation with the respective RDCs. It is as simple as that. There is a crisis in this Ministry and I am not here to outline the details of that but, as I said, my respectful recommendations for your consideration I have just outlined.

Thank you very much. [*Applause*]

2.50 p.m.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Sometimes it is said that a bit of knowledge can be extremely dangerous. Someone also adding to it a bit of learning too can be extremely dangerous too.

The process, which was undertaken for preparation to completion budgetary Estimates 2013 by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the 10 regional administrations, was similar in many respects to the very processes that were undertaken by every budget agency in this country. By that, I meant that all these agencies would have, through their deliberate processes, arrived at their Estimates that were ultimately present to the Ministry of Finance and it would have looked at the macro national environment, based on resources available, and, based on the Government developmental plan, allocated resources in keeping with the developmental thrust of the country. What the Hon. Member is seeking to present to us here is a scenario in which we must have *fait accompli*, that is, the regional administrations having presented the proposed budgetary estimate must be lock, stock, and barrel taken by the Ministry of Finance and presented here in these Estimates and then it will be a true reflection of the process at the RDC. It is so unfortunate, that at the level of this House, we can bring such simplicity into a very complex process that is called preparation of budgetary estimates.

May I assure this honourable House that every department in each of the regional administrations started preparing Budget 2013 in July of the year 2012 and that process culminated with the Estimates, which are in front of us. The most I can do, as I would have done in the year 2012, is to advise the Hon. Member to spend a bit more time and talk with the heads of department in the various regions and it is not to confuse Region 4 with Region 8, because he spent about four minutes or five minutes of his presentation time dealing with Region 8 whilst we are considering

Region 4, not heeding your caution to be to the point. I wish to assure that the House the Estimates, which are presented in front of us here for Region 4, are Estimates that would have gone through the process starting from consultation at the level at which it should start and throughout the process.

I am not agreeing to no disputing that the Hon. Member has in his possession letters written by the Regional Chairman, Region 4, dated the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> April - if I have those dates correctly - alluding to some disappointments of what is reflected ultimately in the Estimates in comparison to the proposals from the Regional Democratic Council. I am not disputing nor accepting that, but, for me, anyone, who is knowledgeable about budget preparations, knows that it starts with proposal. All of us would like to have everything, all of us would like to fix all the problems, and this is across the globe, but we should ask ourselves the question: Is there any country in the world that would have all the resources available so in a twelve- month budget - it can include every single thing, resource every single thing implement every single thing within that twelve-month period? I hope that all of us will spend a bit more time to remind ourselves of this whole concept of budgetary estimates and the process, the long journey, towards arriving at what we have.

Thank you very much Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Thank you. I would like to thank both Hon. Member Mr. Bulkan and Hon. Minister Mr. Ganga Persaud. As we continue to learn, and as you know now everyone keeps saying that the Tenth Parliament is like no other Parliament. Many things that we, in the past, have taken for granted and when we look at the Standing Orders we see, in fact, that sometimes the Standing Orders have been not observed in breach, but conventions have arisen and so on. I think the point has been made and the Hon. Minister was given an opportunity to respond.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: May I respectfully draw the Minister’s attention to the proposed allocation of some \$21 million? Could I equally, respectfully, ask of the Minister to inform this House of the five highest paid employees under this category, duly providing the designations and the emoluments?

**Minister within the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development [Mr. Whittaker]:** The 24 contracted employees are two Clerk II...

**Mr. Bulkan:** It is the five highest paid...

**Mr. Whittaker:** They will be two Clerk II Clerks, recipients of \$55,819 salary per month, Confidential Secretary, recipient of \$52,318 per month, Security Supervisor - \$52,620 per month.

**Mr. Bulkan:** A follow-up. Hon. Minister. Could you just confirm please that those are the five highest paid employees under this line item?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Yes Hon. Member.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Thank you Hon. Minister.

**Mr. Greenidge:** Would the Minister be kind enough to tell us the reason for the increase under the maintenance of building, which is line item 6242, shown as increasing to \$6 million from zero in the previous year. Is it a switch or what it is that has happened here? As regards these items, such as maintenance, which I suppose will reoccur in the capital, the amounts approved by the Ministry of Finance for expenditure, under these items heads, presumably will not list the buildings themselves that will be maintained. What role will the regional agency play in identifying the buildings to be maintained?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Prior to the year 2013, maintenance of buildings, administrative buildings, was placed under Public Works, programme 743. As of the year 2013, it will be found with other programmes also. The item is being placed under the correct programme. In terms of the actual buildings, which we are talking about, the sub-office, at Timehri, \$670,000 will be spent there to do electrical works, works on the ceilings, windows; the Engineers' quarters, at Triumph, that is the Main Office, \$4 million will be spent there; the Auditors' quarters, at Triumph, \$950,000 and the Regional Education Officer (REDO) quarters, at Triumph, \$380,000, total \$6 million.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Do you have a follow-up, Mr. Greenidge?

**Mr. Greenidge:** Of course, Mdm. Chairperson, because the two questions I posed were not answered. The first one, as to the purpose for to why the amount appears, is fine. I am amazed to know that misclassifications have occurred in the past. I am interesting to know where else the Ministry proposes to effect such changes and reclassifications. More importantly, the question,

which has not been answered, is the role the region will play in the identification of the buildings. As you see, Mdm. Chairperson, the Minister Ganga Persaud was at pains to explain that on the basis of macroeconomic considerations the Ministry of Finance has allocated funds. Macroeconomic considerations cannot be determinants on what buildings maintenance votes are spent. I think the point here is that the law actually requires, not that the agency be responsible when the process starts, the allocations in the end and the use under the allocations be influenced by the region. That is what I am seeking to ascertain, whether the region has played a role in the identification of the buildings. Most certainly, it is not the Ministry of Finance.

**Mr. Whittaker:** The first part of the question, it is not a misclassification this is reclassification. I just want to make that clear. Secondly, the issue of which administrative buildings to which repairs must be effective and the order of priority is one determined by the administration in consultation with the RDC.

**Mr. Sharma:** Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: There was the increase of three employees under this line item, with an increase of \$5.661 million over what was revised in the year 2012. Could the Hon. Minister state the three additional employees' designations and salaries?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The three employees are the Deputy Regional Executive Officer, the Confidential Secretary and an Accounts Clerk. It should be noted also that included in that amount, of \$21.1 million, is a shortfall in meeting the expenditure, under contracted employees for the year 2012, which was met through the Ministry of Finance and that is an amount totalling \$2.5 million, to the nearest hundred thousand.

**Mr. Sharma:** I need the salaries of the three individuals who were hired.

**Mr. Whittaker:** The three salaries are Confidential Secretary - \$52,380, the Accounts Clerk - \$47,605 and the Deputy Regional Executive Officer (DREO) - \$195,000 per month.

**Mr. Sharma:** The Hon. Member Mr. Bulkan did ask for the highest salaries of the five and I do not think the DREO was mentioned here, however, in addition to line item 6111, Administrative, there is a decrease of three employees. Could the Hon. Minister say who are the three employees who resigned or services were terminated?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The Chief Accountant retired, the DREO was transferred to Region 3 and the District Development Officer (DDO) has resigned. Those are the three.

**Ms. Selman:** Line item 6284 – Other: Could the Hon. Minister identify the other goods and services that is to be purchased with this proposed allocation?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Line item 6284 includes the provision and allocation for the provision of internet services to the Regional Chairman, REO, legal fees and bank charges. Those should give us an idea of the nature of the items.

**Ms. Selman:** Line item 6294 – Other: Could the Hon. Minister say what the other operating expenses are?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Line item 6294 includes stipend for work study students and the costs of hosting receptions, wreaths and wakes are normally placed there.

**Ms. Selman:** Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): Could the Hon. Minister identify the category of persons that will be trained? Could he also provide the number of persons who will benefit from the training?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The first such training programme, the Institute of Private Enterprise Development (IPED), training for crafters is expected to target 100 persons; it is expected to be a one-day exercise, estimated cost is \$70,000. There is a workshop scheduled also; it has to do with abuse, parenting and counselling, again 100 persons are targeted; it is scheduled for the month of June, budgeted amount is \$70,000. Education tours, the areas targeted would be Cane Grove and Victoria centres; they are planned for July; 53 persons are expected to benefit and the cost is \$25,000. Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, this is a workshop for youths expected to be held in September, it targets 60 persons and the expected budgeted cost is \$50,000. Before that, there is the annual summer camp and, on this occasion, it is expected to be held in Cane Grove at the Cane Grove centre during August, it targets 100 persons and the estimated cost is \$120,000. There is some more. Is the Member satisfied with those?

**Ms. Selman:** Could the Hon. Minister be kind as to provide the reasons for the increase from \$898,000 to \$1.4 million? What was done in the year 2012 as compared to the year 2013?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The number of persons targeted to benefit from training has increased. We do not want to be stagnated at the same numbers every year. The Member would have noticed that the number of persons have increased by some 400 plus. In addition, the range of the training programme has widened, so all of that has contributed to increase in the budgetary provision for training.

**Mr. Trotman:** I would like to take the Hon. Minister back to Line item 6116, Contracted Employees. I know that Mr. Bulkan had posed the question about the five highest paid persons in that category and omitted was the position of the DREO. I wonder if the Minister can give us an explanation as to why that position was omitted and if there are any other highly paid persons who are omitted from this category.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am sorry about that. Could I ask the Member to repeat the question? I was engaged in a listening exercise.

**Mr. Trotman:** In relation to line item 611, in the Minister's response to Hon. Member Ronald Bulkan, he omitted to mention the position of DREO as one of the five highest paid persons in that category. I wonder, Sir, if it is there are other persons who are highly paid who he failed to mention. If it is, could he please correct those mistakes?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that, at the time of the crafting of the budget, the DREO was a public service employee and he was subsequently relocated to another region.

**Mr. Trotman:** Line item 6211 – Expenses Specific to the Agency: Could the Hon. Minister state the expenses specific to this agency?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I have a breakdown before me, line item 6211, Expenses Specific to the Agency: \$10,000 per month multiply by 33 councillors by 12 months, that is \$3.9 million; the travelling for those councillors to attend committee and statutory meetings, budgeted provision - \$3.0 million; meals for those councillors attending RDC, RAC and RIC meetings - \$2 million; refreshments for the Regional Chairman, Regional Vice Chairman - \$0.8 million; utility services, telephone, electricity bills - \$0.8 million, social needy cases - \$1 million, total - \$11.6 million.

**Mr. Trotman:** I noticed that there has been omitted from this head expenses related to monitoring of works by the councillors. Could the Minister indicate to us what has happened to that line item?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Under the very expenses specific to the agency, which I just indicated, there is this item “travelling for councillors” and so monitoring, which involves travelling, moving around, is included there. Also at the level of the subcommittee, the Member will notice a provision there of \$2 million, so if the councillors have to be moving around for the purpose of doing the work at the committee level there is a provision for that too.

**Mr. Trotman:** Line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants: Could the Minister state what number of vehicles falls under this head?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am told it is one vehicle, a pickup, PKK 6131.

**Mr. Trotman:** Follow-up question, Mdm. Chairperson. The amount of money, which is requested for gasoline, for fuel under this head is extremely large. I wonder if in actual fact the information provided, in relation to this specific item, is accurate.

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is accurate. The increase is aimed at, of course, outreaches especially in the riverine areas and the RDC has taken on the responsibility of providing fuel for the generator acquired by Saint Cuthberts and, of course, one additional car to its fleet, so that accounts for the increase.

**Mr. Bulkan:** It is a follow-up to the questions posed earlier under line item 6116. I am seeking a clarification from the Hon. Minister. Would the Hon. Minister say if the DREO is present on Region 4, at this time?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Yes. In fact, I have met the DREO for about the third time on Saturday.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Well, this is what is not clear. I, myself, Hon. Member Sharma and Hon. Member Trotman sought a clarification from the Hon. Minister as to when he had provided information of the five highest paid employees, under this category DREO was not one of those mentioned and he subsequently mentioned that of a salary of \$195,000. He went into a subsequent explanation that was - forgive me to say - unclear and this is why I am seeking this clarification. He is now

saying that, yes, that there is such holder of this position. He did not state it originally and the Hon. Member Trotman asked if that is the only omission that the Minister is guilty of under this heading.

**Mr. Whittaker:** The newly assigned DREO to RDC of Region 4 is on the pensionable establishment.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** His position is not under line item 6116. Basically that is what you are saying.

**Mr. Sharma:** Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: In the entire five programmes of Region 4, there is an amount allocate of \$96.8 million under current expenditure for the maintenance of building. In capital, there is a \$162.6 million allocated for such things as bridges roads, and so forth. These are, by nature, contracts for construction, building, and so forth. Being a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, at each and every meeting, which there was, when we examined these various regions' overpayments, and in particular to Region 4, there is an enormous situation of contractors and the Regional Tender Board negotiating contracts sums which is the breach of section 27(4) of the Procurement Act.

*3.20 p.m.*

Can the Hon. Minister state what would be the system that would be put in place to prevent this from recurring with this large amount that this House would be granting to the Region 4 Administration.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Under what line item, Hon. Member?

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Line item 6242.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Line item 6242 is Maintenance of Buildings.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Mr. Sharma I believe you may have to repeat the question.

**Mr. Sharma:** The question, Mdm. Chairperson, is that there is \$6 million allocated here, but throughout the programme and in capital programmes are large sums of money... [**Member:** Line item?] ...Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings. I do not know if this \$6 million

will be squandered. There will be deals with contractors. What system do you have in place as the Minister responsible to ensure that what is reported in Auditor General's Report year after year is not recurring?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, we follow the Nation Procurement Tender Administration procedures; that is what we follow.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chairperson, thank you. Is the Minister disputing the Auditor General's Report findings of 2011?

**Ms. Teixeira:** Mdm. Chairperson, on a Point of Order, as a Member also of the Public Accounts Committee, we have not completed our examination of the 2011 Auditor General's Report. Therefore, I think it is not appropriate for whatever discussions we have had with Regions or any other Ministry... We have not, as a Public Accounts Committee, pulled together all our views and opinions and created a Report to bring to this House. The Member is premeditating...

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I take your point, but, of course, the Hon. Member did not specifically speak about 2011. I do not know; I am not a Member. It could be that he is talking about 2009 or 2010.

**Ms. Teixeira:** He did say 2011, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I am just saying that he did not...

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Mdm. Chairperson, on a Point of Order, if I may, the Auditor General's Report is laid in this House and every Member receives a copy of that report. Therefore, it is their prerogative to peruse that report and ask any questions. This is the only time we get to ask questions on the Report.

**Mr. Greenidge:** Mdm. Chairperson, more specifically, I understood the question to be...*[Interruption]*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Let us hear Mr. Greenidge please.

**Mr. Greenidge:** I understood the question to be, in the light of the inadequacies and problems of overpayment which have arisen in the past under these items such as line item 6242 –

Maintenance of Buildings – what arrangements has the Region in place or the Minister to ensure that these do not have a repetition. That is a simple question to which the Member has a right to ask. We need a response also. His response was simply that ...

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I do not think you should indicate what his response should be. Hon. Minister, I think it is quite clear now what is being asked. What is your response to it?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I would want to make my response a bit clearer by saying that we not only follow the procedures, but we are doing more monitoring. We have intensified our monitoring approaches.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chairperson, line item 6281 – Security Services – can the Hon. Minister state the location that security will be provided for?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, there are nine locations under this programme. They are Triumph office, Paradise compound, Timehri sub-office, Cane Grove sub-office, Enmore sub-office, Grove's craft centre, Kuru Kuru administrative building, Triumph regional stores and the Regional Chairman's residence.

*Programme: 741 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$134,942,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

## **Capital Expenditure**

### **Programme: 741 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$10,800,000**

**Ms. Selman:** Mdm. Chairperson, project code 1208800 – Buildings - Administration – could the Hon. Minister provide a description of the works to be undertaken in relation to the enclosure of the administration building, and could the Hon. Minister say which of the buildings?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, the work that is earmarked to be done is the enclosure of the administrative building, which is the Triumph office. The purpose is to provide additional office space for a number of officers, including the welfare officers, culture, youth and sport, regional health officer and local government, to provide a comfortable waiting room, telephone room, kitchenette and voucher rooms for accounts and the sub treasury. So, it is to provide adequate space for those officers.

**Mr. B. Williams:** Is there provision for the Deputy Regional Chairperson?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The Regional Vice Chairman you are talking about. That officer, the Regional Vice Chairman, is being relocated at her request to the office at Timehri, the Timehri sub-office.

**Mr. B. Williams:** A follow up, Mdm. Chairperson: when would that be available to her?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Within a month.

**Ms. Selman:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Project code 2506800 – Furniture and Equipment - Administration – could the Hon. Minister provide the estimated cost associated with each of the items that are to be purchased?

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is the purchase of one intercom system for the Triumph office at \$4,014,000; the purchase of six executive chairs to cater for the new office as a result of the enclosures at \$210,000; the purchase of two water dispensers for this very office at a total cost of \$90,000; and the purchase of 20 fire extinguishers at a cost of \$486,000. These fire extinguishers are to be placed at the several offices and sub-offices, including the Triumph regional office, the Timehri, Enmore and Friendship sub-offices, the regional stores and, of course, the Cane Grove office.

**Mr. Trotman:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Same project code as the last one, the Minister has spoken very definitively about prices for these items. I wonder if it is that he can be as definitive in terms of the source of suppliers.

**Mr. Whittaker:** My understanding, Mdm. Chairperson, is that these are estimated costs and that the procedure that will be adapted for procuring the items is public tender.

**Mr. Trotman:** A follow up question, Mdm. Chairperson: there must have been some gathering of information from sources. I wonder, therefore, if it is that we can be apprised of the sources of the information relative to those prices.

**Mr. Whittaker:** As I pointed out, Mdm. Chairperson, these are estimates from reputable suppliers with whom the administration would have been dealing over the years.

**Mr. Trotman:** A follow up question, Mdm. Chairperson: while it is true that the Region may have some idea of who these reputable suppliers have been, we, in this House, do not have that

information at our disposal and it is important, based on the fact that there has been very definitive information in relation to the prices, that at least we can have some information in relation to who those reputable, reliable suppliers are.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, the definitive information that the Hon. Member seeks can only be provided when we would have gone through the tendering process. We can then provide the definitive information. For now, it is estimates.

*Programme: 741 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$10,800,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Current Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 742 – Agriculture – \$238,780,000**

**Mr. Bulkan:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Line item 6253 – Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works – to the tune of \$88 million, the dilemma that we face, or to borrow the Hon. Attorney General’s Words, the conundrum, I sought to allude earlier where I had said that these proposed interventions that are to be funded under this line item were not a determination of the Regional Democratic Council (RDC). I understand that the quantity or the quantum that is to be allocated is the sole preserve and prerogative of the executive of the Hon. Minister of Finance and the other subject Ministries. That is not what we are seeking to alter in any way, Mdm. Chairperson; it is that the activities that are to be funded under this reduced allocation that was presented to the Ministry is a unilateral decision of the regional administration, a process from which the duly constituted RDC was shut out. I respectfully made a submission to you, Mdm. Chairperson...

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Mr. Bulkan, you are making the same statement. It is obviously something that, perhaps with justification, you and the APNU feel very strongly about. If that is so, I would want to suggest that, in case of anyone who feels strongly, that you seek alternative means to have that question brought before the House and debated and resolved if possible in the House. For now, we are looking at the Estimates. I am inviting you to ask questions, seeking clarifications on the figures that you see.

**Mr. Bulkan:** I duly note your comments, Mdm. Chairperson, but I had earlier posed the question to you that if indeed you can use your prerogative as the Chairperson of these proceedings to seek a commitment or a concurrence of the Government, if they will be prepared to proceed along that path, which is to engage the RDC.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Yes, but we cannot do that here now. If the Government was to say yes, what do we do? Do we put the Estimates on hold?

**Mr. Bulkan:** No, the quantity would be approved.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** This is what I am saying. I think one of the Ministers did indicate, I think it was the Hon. Mr. Ganga Persaud, that the budget starts, I think, in July. Correct me if I am wrong. So, as I am saying, my suggestion would be that ways are found in which there can be an interface and interaction so that your concerns, which may well be legitimate, can be properly put and dealt with.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Mdm. Chairperson, might I respectfully refer to you that we had the similar situation last year where after the allocations, APNU had an engagement with the Office of the President with Dr. Luncheon and it led nowhere. We have a recurrence.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I understand that. That has been noted I think outside of the House. Could we confine...

**Mr. Bulkan:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to lay over for this Assembly the details of the D&I works that are to be funded under this line item for the \$88 million?

**Mdm. Chairperson:** This is line item 6253 – Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works – Hon. Minister.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, there would be maintenance of drainage and irrigation canals in a number of NDCs and the maintenance of dams: Unity/Vereeniging NDC, Haslington/Grove NDC, Enmore/Hope NDC, Buxton/Foulis NDC, Mon Repos/La Reconnaissance NDC, Beterverwagting/Triumph NDC, Better Hope/LBI NDC, Industry/Plaisance NDC, Ramsburg/Eccles NDC, Little Diamond/Herstelling NDC,

Mocha/Arcadia NDC, Golden Grove/Diamond Place NDC, Caledonia/Good Success NDC, Soesdyke/Huist Coverden NDC.

This is in respect of dams now: Unity/Vereeniging, Cane Grove, Beterverwagting/Triumph, Mon Repos/La Reconnaissance, Beterverwagting/Triumph, Cane Grove, East Coast Demerara maintenance of pumps; East Coast and East Bank – maintenance of kokers. That is how the items are made.

**Mr. Bulkan:** A follow up please, Mdm. Chairperson: would the Hon. Minister kindly indicate when that schedule of works could be laid over with Members of this House?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, as soon as the Budget has been approved, we will go out to public tender and it will become public information.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, I think the request is a request to make available to the House the list that you just read from. The Hon. Member is asking for a commitment as to time as has been done in the past with this very Budget, where Ministers have given commitments and upheld their commitments.

**Mr. Whittaker:** It will be made available tomorrow.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Hon. Minister.

**Mr. Bulkan:** A follow up please, Mdm. Chairperson: would the Hon. Minister kindly confirm that the information that will be provided will also have the respective amounts for each of the targeted interventions?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Yes, it would.

**Mr. B. Williams:** A follow up please on that line item, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Is that the same line item?

**Mr. B. Williams:** Yes please.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Proceed.

**Mr. B. Williams:** We need to get some things on the record. In terms of maintenance of pumps, do they include Beterverwagting, Buxton, Cane Grove, Victoria and Golden Grove?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, I am informed that they include Triumph, Buxton and Cane Grove.

**Mr. B. Williams:** A follow up please: kokers on the East Coast, could you identify which kokers on the East Coast you are maintaining this year?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, the areas would be Strathaven, Joyce Phillips, Marys Hope, Helena Number One, Helena Number Two, Spring Hall, Mosquito Hall, Greenfield, Hope, Victoria and Triumph.

**Ms. Selman:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees – considering the increase of \$10 million for budgetary provisions for the five newly contracted employees, could the Hon. Minister identify the designation and the emoluments of the five additional contracted employees?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed, Mdm. Chairperson, that the five employees are all sluice attendants and that their salaries would be \$60,680 per month, each.

**Ms. Selman:** Mdm. Chairperson, would the Hon. Minister be so kind as to say what has occasioned the increase of \$10 million, from \$21 million in 2012 to \$31 million in 2013?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, I am informed that there was the shortfall of \$2.9 million during 2012. This was met by the Ministry of Finance under line item 6141 – Revision of Wages and Salaries.

**Mr. Trotman:** Mdm. Chairperson, for Budget 2012, a request was made for \$17,655,000 under this head and the revised figure was \$21,882,000. Does the revised figure take into consideration the explanation given by the Hon. Minister just now in relation to the anomaly?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, the five additional employees to which the staffing details refer were persons recruited in the late part of the year 2012. They have to be catered for during 2013.

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants – under this line item there is a sum of \$30 million being budgeted. However, over the various programme there is the sum of \$57.285 million budget here. Again, I would like an assurance from the Hon. Minister that the reports that regale us in the newspapers, at the PAC, the Auditor General’s Report, and so many other places, that a system for uplifting fuel from the gas station would be put in place in which vehicles that are not owned by the Region are not allowed to uplift fuel. Thank you.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Thank you very much, Mdm. Chairperson. Line item 6115 – Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled – for 2012 the sum of \$25,205,000 was budgeted. However, \$23,405,000 was spent. What I have recognised in staffing details, which is on page 303 under the very line item, is that in 2012 there were 42 staff and in 2013 there is a reduction by 5. Yet in Budget 2013 I have noticed \$25,109,000 being budgeted here. Could the Hon. Minister explain the reason or reasons for the increase in amount and the decrease in the staffing details? Thank you.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, during 2012, under line item 6115 – Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled – the RDC would have lost the services of five employees, but, at the same time, there would have been increases in the salaries for the remaining 37.

**Mr. B. Williams:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Could the Hon. Minister say from a position of zero in 2011 and zero in 2012 under line item 6272 – Electricity Charges – what accounts to this quantum leap to \$28 million in 2013?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, prior-year, the expenditure under this particular line item was catered for under public works. If you check there, you would see the adjustments. Of this year, it is being catered for under the respective programme.

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. The question was asked in relation to line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants – but I got no answer. Is it that I am to believe that the same will recur in terms of vehicles that are not owned and operated by the Region being allowed to collect fuel?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, it has never been the policy of the RDC of any Region to authorise drivers of vehicles that are owned by the administration to *unauthorisedly* collect fuel from any source whatsoever.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, I do not think he is accusing the Ministry of that. I think he is referring to the fact of the publicity that that has happened and what that Ministry is doing or proposes to do to ensure, assuming that those articles are correct – I am not sure if it does - that it does not happen? I do not think that anyone is saying that there is a policy that you give to unauthorised vehicles.

*3.50 p.m.*

**Mr. Whittaker:** Be assured, Mdm. Chairperson and Hon. Members, that systems have been put in place with respect to persons authorised to sign on to such requests and there is greater monitoring.

**Mr. Sharma:** Can the Hon. Minister say if an investigation is being done into that reported incident?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that the matter to which the Hon. Member referred has been reported to the Office of the Auditor General and the required investigations are being done.

**Mr. Sharma:** Line item 6281 – Security Services: can the Hon. Minister state the locations which are to be secured?

**Mr. Whittaker:** They are: Joyce Phillips electrical pump, Cane Grove diesel pump, Golden Grove electrical pump, Buxton Drainage and Irrigation (D&I) pump, Triumph D&I pump, Victoria electrical pump, Nabaclis electrical pump, and a 22-Ruston-Bucyrus (RB) dragline.

*Programme: 742 – Agriculture - \$238,780,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

**Programme: 742 – Agriculture - \$37,000,000**

**Ms. Selman:** Project code 1701200 – Agricultural Development: could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown, including the measurements and costs associated with construction of revetments in the identified areas?

**Mr. Whittaker:** These will be: Cane Grove, Joyce Phillips sluice. Length of the revetment: 300 feet, \$12 million allocated; Buxton East sideline, 250 feet, \$10 million allocated; Craig/Buzz-Bee Dam, 200 feet, 8 million allocated; and Soesdyke trench, 175 feet, \$7 million; total: \$37 million.

*Programme: 742 – Agriculture - \$37,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Current Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 743 – Public Works - \$114,363,000**

**Mr. B. Williams:** Line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads: \$30 million is to be spent on roads. Could the Hon. Member say whether this includes Graham Street, Plaisance, North Triumph, Bachelors Adventure, Grant Road, Belfield Road to line top, Melanie Cinema Road and Surat Drive, Triumph?

**Mr. Whittaker:** May I give the Hon. Member what we will be doing? He is asking about four streets.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** He asked about six, actually, but I did not get a chance to write them down. Do you want to repeat, Mr. Williams?

**Mr. B. Williams:** The first one is Graham Street, Plaisance, East Coast Demerara.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Repairs to Graham Street, Plaisance is there.

**Mr. B. Williams:** North Triumph.

**Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Health [Mr. Hamilton]:** Where is North Triumph?

**Mr. B. Williams:** Do not interrupt me, Rabbi.

**Mr. Whittaker:** There is Triumph but I do not know if it is East, West North or South.

**Mr. B. Williams:** How many roads do you have for Triumph?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, I am seeking your permission to read what I have here.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** We have to have some order. Mr. B. Williams is asking about North Triumph. You said that according to what you have, it is Triumph but you cannot be any more specific in terms of that. We can do this two ways: Mr. B. Williams is asking about six definite and finite areas. It can be answered yes or no when, of course, you look at the list of proposed works, which I think is fairly easy. We have already dealt with two – Triumph and Graham Street, Plaisance.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am not sure we have dealt with two. The Hon. Member is asking about North Triumph. I am not in a position to say if it is North or South.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** We have dealt with that. You have indicated that there is Triumph. If you do not have North Triumph, you cannot say to him that you have.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am asking for your permission to list them. They are not many; there are nine. Rather than deal with six, I will deal with nine.

**Mr. B. Williams:** If the Hon. Member is having difficulty with which street in Triumph, if he has 100 streets in Triumph, I will move to Bachelors Adventure, Grant Road. That should not provide a problem.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Six streets have been asked for. The Hon. Minister is saying that he has nine. Nine is not a long list. Hon. Minister, I would respectfully suggest that you read the nine. From that, it would be easy for Mr. Williams to ascertain if the six are within the nine.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Repairs to access road Haji and Hassan streets, Herstelling - \$3.5 million allocated; repairs to Seventh Street, Foulis Housing Scheme, East Coast Demerara - \$3.5 million allocated; repairs to School Street, Enmore - \$5 million allocated; repairs to access road south of Railway Embankment, Bachelors Adventure - \$2.5 million; repairs to Lindy street from Public Road to Seawall - \$3 million; repairs to Graham Street, Plaisance - \$3 million; repairs to Dasraj

Street and Triumph Housing Scheme road - \$3 million; supply and delivery of first grade crusher run - \$2.5 million; and repairs to access road, Nooten Zuil, West sideline road - \$4 million.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Under the very line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads – my concern is that apart from this particular line item, for the other line items there is variation in costs. But for last year, \$35 million was budgeted for roads and \$35 million was spent. Can the Hon. Minister lay in this National Assembly a list of the roads that were done in 2012 with the total cost for each road? Can he say how soon the list will be laid in the National Assembly?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, that information requested can be laid here by Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2013.

**Ms. Selman:** Line item 6252 – Maintenance of Bridges: can the Hon. Minister provide a list of the bridges which would be maintained in 2013?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Those bridges are: GH timber heavy-duty bridge, Hercules Avenue, Anns Grove - \$3million; rehabilitation of GH timber heavy-duty bridge at Golden Grove, School Street - \$2.5 million; rehabilitation of GH timber heavy-duty bridge, Clonbrook to Bee Hive - \$4.5 million; rehabilitation of GH timber bridge in Buxton - \$2.5 million; and repairs to concrete culvert at Polyclinic Street, Enmore, East Coast Demerara - \$2.5 million.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide details of the other infrastructure that is meant to be maintained for this allocation? Also, would he be kind enough to offer an explanation as to why the proposed allocation for this year for these works in Region 4 has been slashed by 50%?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that Agriculture and Regional Administration and Finance's allocation under this line item have been separated. It used to be under Public Works and now it has been separated and that accounts for the reduction. In terms of the actual projects, they are: repairs to the walkway to the Cane Grove sub-office - \$2 million; repairs to the fence at the regional stores, Triumph - \$1.5 million; repairs to the fence to the craft centre in Grove - \$0.5 million; repairs to guard huts - \$0.6 million; and repairs to fence at the Paradise sub-office - \$0.9 million.

**Mr. Bulkan:** A follow-up question: the Minister said that previously the allocations were made under Agriculture and Regional Administration and Finance but the allocation for Agriculture for last year was just \$1 million. If, indeed, it included the Regional Administration and Finance, that was only \$1.5 million. It does not account for the \$6 million, as I said, being slashed by 50%.

**Mr. Whittaker:** What I am saying is that for the allocation under this line item – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure – there is an allocation under Public Works, there is also an allocation for the first time under Agriculture, and there is also an allocation of \$1.5 million under Regional Administration and Finance, all of which used to be under Public Works. Now, the allocations are under separate Programmes and line items. If you look under Agriculture and Regional Administration and Finance, one would see allocations there for the first time.

**Mr. Bulkan:** That is correct but that only totals \$2.5 million and the allocation for this year has been reduced by \$6 million. Is there a reason, other than that, why the allocation has been reduced as drastically as it has been?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that there were, in 2012, and even in previous years, significant works done and, hence, there is no need in 2013 for the same level of works as was done in 2012.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Thank you for that explanation, Hon. Minister. We will seek to ascertain that with the Regional Democratic Council (RDC).

**Ms. Selman:** Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: could the Hon. Minister provide the designations and emoluments of the six contracted employees?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The designations and emoluments are: electrical engineer at a salary of \$159,414 per month; civil engineer - \$159,414; heavy-duty machine driver - \$44,867; and there are three drivers, each of them enjoying a salary of \$41,083 per month.

**Mr. Trotman:** Line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads: I am puzzled by something. I notice that the region was given a certain sum of money - \$35 million in 2012 – all of which it spent and I am assuming that it had completed its projects for that year. Yet, in 2013, when there is greater demand for improved roads, there is a request for less than what it was in 2012. [Mr.

**Benn:** That question was answered already.] No, it was not asked. The question was not asked.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Mr. Trotman, direct your questions to the Minister.

**Mr. Trotman:** I am wondering if the Hon. Minister can shed some light on this development – less money in 2013 when in 2012 the region completed all of the works for which money was assigned.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that of the lists of the streets proposed in the 2013 Budget to be done in Regional Democratic Council (RDC) 4, two of these roads – Oleander Gardens and Better Hope – were completed by the RDC using savings from 2012 and the works at Land of Canaan is already being done by the Ministry of Public Works, hence the reduction in the allocation by \$5 million.

*Programme: 743 – Public Works - \$114,363,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 743 – Public Works - \$58,000,000**

**Ms. Selman:** Project code 1100500 – Bridges: could the Hon. Minister say how much of the budgetary allocation would be spent to construct or rehabilitate the bridges at Diamond and Grove on the East Bank Demerara? Could the Hon. Minister further provide a description as it relates to the works: re: bridges in those two areas?

**Mr. Whittaker:** In both of the areas to which the Hon. Member alluded, there will be construction of wooden, heavy-duty type bridges. In Diamond, the dimensions are 66' x 5' feet and the provision is \$5 million. In Grove, the dimension is the same – 66' x 5' – and the provision is \$5 million.

**Mr. B. Williams:** The Hon. Member before me referred to some items but I am not seeing Victoria, Middle Walk and Golden Grove, East Bank Demerara.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Is it the same project code?

**Mr. B. Williams:** Yes, it is the same project code. Could the Hon. Minister indicate what the position with the Victoria, Middle Walk Bridge is?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I can only say that it is not part of the 2013 Estimates under Public Works.

**Ms. Selman:** Project code 1400700 – Roads: could the Hon. Minister say which roads are being constructed, identify those that are being rehabilitated and state the estimated costs associated with those?

**Mr. Whittaker:** In Nabaclis, Middle Walk Street, 3,168 feet of road will be constructed. The work involves excavation, filling, compacting with crusher run and Double Bituminous Surface Treatment (DBST) of potholes at a cost of \$6 million. In Paradise, 1,056 feet of road works comprising of excavation, filling, compacting and applying DBST to carriageway. In Eccles, First and Second Avenues, for the same type of work, \$8 million is allocated. Covent Garden – Tank and Rekha Streets, DBST, 1,258 feet; Melanie Damishana, Cinema Road, 1,584 feet, \$4 million allocated. Little Diamond – Waja to last cross street, 1,216 feet - \$5 million; Diamond Section A – Water Street, 730 feet - \$7 million. It is a total of \$37 million.

**Mrs. Garrido-Lowe:** Project code 1100500 – Bridges: would the Hon. Minister kindly provide details on the bridge at Saint Cuthberts Mission, including the cost?

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is a wooden, heavy-duty bridge – 35 feet x 14 feet – and the allocation is \$5 million.

**Mr. Bulkan:** A follow-up to the first question asked by Hon. Member, Ms. Selman: would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide more specific details for the two bridges measuring 66' x 5' at Diamond and Grove? Could he state the specific locations in those two areas where these bridges will be constructed?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The Diamond road will be from the area of the primary school to the main road...

**Mr. Bulkan:** It is not the road I am enquiring about. I am enquiring about the bridges measuring 66' x 5' feet each.

**Mr. Whittaker:** The bridge in the Diamond area is from the housing area to the main access road. The one at Grove is to provide access to the new primary school from the main access road.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Thank you, Hon. Minister. I believe that the second one is, perhaps, specific enough but you said that for the one in Diamond, it is from the housing area to the main access road. Hon. Minister, I believe that there are many housing areas in Diamond. Could you kindly be a bit more specific?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that it is from the market tarmac to the main road. That is as specific as I can get.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Project code 1400700 – Roads: The Minister outlined the roads to be done this year. Can the Hon. Minister say when the roads in Kaneville will be done? Sometime last year this issue was raised and the people continue to suffer in that area. Can you say exactly when those roads will be repaired?

*4.20 p.m.*

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, the road to which the Hon. Member refers is not part of the Estimate before me and I am not in position to say when the particular road will be done.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Just a follow-up question: based on the description of works to be done, I notice Eccles, Covent Garden, Little Diamond and Diamond. These are all on the East Bank. I guess in preparing your estimates for 2013, you would have been told about the condition of those roads in Kaneville. This was brought to you last year and I thought that while preparing for 2013, these issues would have been addressed.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) tried as far as resources would allow and having regard to the conditions of the streets within the various communities across the administrative region, to deal with as many roads as possible – not only roads on the East Bank, but roads on the East Coast. The Hon. Member would see Nabaclis, Paradise, and Melanie Damishana are all listed here to be done, but the resources would not allow us to do all the roads we would wish to do. I am informed and, again, I say that the RDC was part of the process of determining which the priority areas are.

**Mr. Sharma:** Project Code 1400700 – Roads: the Hon. Minister did indicate that Diamond Section A roads will be done. My official residence is Diamond Section A, Block X. He said the roads to be done include Water Street. All the streets where I live are water streets; when the rain falls all are filled with water. Which street is he speaking about?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, I am happy to report that the road to which this refers is the very road where the Hon. Member resides, Section A, Water Street. I think we had you in mind you in mind, Sir.

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you. That is indeed a water street. The residents will be happy to know that the Hon. Minister took that into consideration. Thank you.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Cde. Chair, through you to the Hon. Minister who said Water Street, but in Diamond about four streets there are called avenues but they are not avenues they are pastures. I wonder if you will be looking into those roads.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, they are not listed here but I am sure it is uppermost in the minds of the planners who are aware of them.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Cde. Chair, through you to the Hon. Minister, when could I tell the residents the roads will be done? I would like to know a specific time.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Well, you said it is not in the Estimates.

**Mr. Whittaker:** No it is not in the Estimates.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** So the Hon. Member will be unable to tell her residents.

**Mr. Whittaker:** That decision is hers Mdm. Chair; what she tells the residents.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Cde. Chair, through you to the Hon Minister, could you tell this House how long Diamond Scheme has been built so you will know how long those residents are suffering and still you say here you do not know when those persons will be relieved. Those persons have paid millions of dollars for their house lots.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister the question has been asked by the Hon. Member of how old is the Diamond Housing Scheme. Hon. Minister, are you in a position to answer the question?

**Mr. Whittaker:** No I am not in a position Mdm. Chair, but what I can say is that there are other Ministries that are involved in road construction and rehab, notably the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Housing and Water. I am pretty certain during 2013 if you check additional roads will be done across the length and breadth of this country.

*Programme: 743 – Public Works – \$58,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Current Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 744 – Education Delivery - \$2,205,516,000**

**Ms. Selman:** Line Item 6133 – Benefits and Allowances: could the Hon. Minister advise the National Assembly on what has occasioned the increase from \$48 million to \$100 million under this line item?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, the increase in expenditure under Benefits and Allowances I am informed is due to a shortfall in 2012 that was met under line item 6141 that had to do with the appointment of teachers. One would have noticed in excess of 90 new appointments during that period.

**Ms. Selman:** Line Item 6281: could the Hon. Minister say whether all the schools in Region 4 will benefit from 24-hour security?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The answer Mdm. Chair, is no.

**Ms. Selman:** Mdm. Chair, may I respectfully ask the Minister how many hours of security will the schools benefit from.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, the number of hours per day for primary, and there are 41 of them, is 16 hours; for nursery, and there are 37 such schools covered, 16 hours; for 16 secondary schools, 24 hours.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chair, line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants: can the Hon. Minister state the number of vehicles utilising the \$2.986 million for 2013?

**Ms. Selman:** One vehicle.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chair, may I inform you that in programme the Hon. Minister did state that one vehicle consumes \$3 million in fuel per year. I do not know if the Hon. Minister is aware that under this programme there is budgeted the purchase of one enclosed truck. I do not know if this truck will be parked if it is purchased. Could the Hon. Minister say why there is only a \$100,000 increase from that expended in 2012

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, provision is made here to cover the cost of a canter that the RDC proposes to acquire during 2013. That is in addition to the one vehicle to which I had alluded earlier on.

**Mr. Sharma:** In 2012, there was one vehicle and the sum expended on that vehicle was \$2.886 million. They will be purchasing an enclosed canter truck but the fuel consumption increase by \$100,000. This line item does not only cater for fuel but also lubricants, so is the Hon. Minister saying \$100,000 is sufficient for fuel for this canter for the entire year including lubricants?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The canter that is being acquired will be used under the education programme to move dietary supplies, exercise books etc.

**Mr. Sharma:** Hon. Chair, I think I should move on because I am not getting the answer. However, there is a need for additional fuel but if the Hon. Minister is comfortable with \$100,000 increase that is fine with me.

In relation to item 6281 – Security Services: can the Hon. Minister state the situation with the payment of security guards? I am a Region No.4 Member of Parliament (MP) and I am receiving about 50 calls per month because of late payments of security guards. I want to know, and the people want to know, what is the system in place for the security provider? Is there a deposit in case the region is late in the payment so the security company could assist in filling that gap?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that payment is based on service provided after some form of reconciliation between the RDCs records and the service provider.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chair, I am happy this is being done for the interest of transparency and accountability. But in the meantime while that is being done security guards are starving and complaining bitterly. I am asking if in the present contract there is provision for the security

provider, the company, to have a deposit sufficient to suffice for one month in case the Region should take one month to do the reconciliation.

**Mr. Whittaker:** The answer I am told is no.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chair, in view of this response and in view the fact that maybe the same provider is providing services continually - which may be Strategic Security - and the tender will have to be awarded again to a next company, could this be provided in the contract to ensure that security guards are paid in the meantime the reconciliation is being done by the region?

**Mdm. Chairperson:** So in fact, there is a recommendation that you are making that in the new contract or renewed contract a clause is put in that will cover that.

**Mr. Sharma:** Correct.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Cde. Chairman, through you to the Hon. Minister, I am back to line item 6133 – Benefits and Allowances: the Hon. Minister said that the addition in money for this project is as a result of increased teachers in Region No.4. I would like to ask the Hon. Minister if Region No.4 schools are adequately staffed and he feels comfortable with that.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, the answer will be yes.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Do all the schools have all the teachers, all staffed to capacity? Are all positions filled Cde. Minister?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, as far as the information in my possession I would say yes.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister would this include Georgetown?

**Mr. Whittaker:** No.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Georgetown is different.

**Mr. Trotman:** Mdm. Chair, line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skills: I note there is a reduction of the number of persons under this head. I wonder if the Minister can say what has occasioned the reduction under the head.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, there a number of staff, in fact the information before me says 23 were promoted. There was a shortfall of \$20.4 million and that was met from item 6141 – Revision of Wages and Salaries, Ministry of Finance.

**Mr. Trotman:** Mdm. Chair, line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: I note there is a reduction in the number of persons employed from 2012 but yet there is an increase in the amount of money requested for 2013. I wonder if the Minister can deal with this.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, we did have the resignation of a typist clerk and a lab assistant which accounts for the two positions. But there was a shortfall of some \$777,000 and that was met from item 6141.

**Mr. Trotman:** Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: can the Hon. Minister indicate which are those buildings being maintained under this head?

**Mr. Whittaker:** These include the Friendship Secondary School, Laluni Primary, Kuru Kururu Nursery, Clonbrook Primary, Covent Garden Secondary, Nabaclis Nursery, Grove Primary, Mobilissa Primary, Beterverwagting Practical Instruction Centre (PIC), Buxton Secondary, Enterprise Primary, Triumph Nursery, Plaisance Secondary, Logwood Primary and Hauraruni Primary.

**Mr. Trotman:** Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: can the Minister please indicate to us which are the infrastructures to be maintained?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, repairs to walkway at Beterverwagting PIC; repairs to the fence and replacing liners etcetera at the Golden Grove Primary; repairs to the sanitary block at Golden Grove; landscaping at the Ogle Nursery; landscaping of north-eastern side of compound and repairs to the fence at Friendship Secondary; repairs to fence and replacement of gate at Bladen Hall Multilateral; repairs to fence and gate at St Mary's Primary, Soesdyke, East Bank; repairs to walkway at Diamond Special Needs School; repairs to fence and gate Soesdyke Primary; landscaping of compound, Grove Nursery; sectional repairs to the fence on the eastern side, also gate to the Soesdyke Secondary; landscaping and repairs to fence, May 25 Nursery; repairs to sanitary block, stairs, repairs to fence and gate at St. Andrews Primary and repairs to fence and gate and landscaping Clonbrook Primary and repairs to sanitary facilities and Lindola Nursery

**Ms. Ferguson:** Mdm. Chair, just a follow-up question to line item 6242: could the Hon. Minister say what exactly entails maintenance of buildings? He outlined the buildings to be maintained but what works will be done on these buildings?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, it varies. In some instances it has to do with repairs to the roof, changing zinc sheets et cetera. It depends on what needs to be done and the degree of the deterioration. In some case it is the floor or the windows. For example at Logwood Primary it is repairs to the flooring and windows, repainting of the building and some electrical work. In the case of Kuru Kururu Primary it is about repairs to the roof, changing zinc sheets, some plumbing work; it is based on examination of each building, and varies from building to building.

**Ms. Ferguson:** A follow-up question, Mdm. Chair. Thank you Hon. Minister, would you be kind enough to lay that list over to us in the National Assembly?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Yes, by the end of this week.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Staffing details under line item 6115 – Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled, in 2012 we had 116, this year it is 83, could you say how that came about?

**Mr. Whittaker:** 23 PT promoted to AM.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I did not get that.

**Mr. Whittaker:** What I am saying is that 23 Pupil Teachers (PT) were promoted to Assistant Masters/Mistresses (AM).

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, when you said PT, you have to understand that everybody would not understand. I myself was not sure what PT meant. I thought about physical training.

*Programme: 744 – Education Delivery - \$2,205,516,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

**Programme: 744 – Education Delivery - \$62,966,000**

**Ms. Selman:** Project Code 2503400: could the Hon. Minister say how much moneys will be spent on school furniture and identify the school which will benefit from the furniture? And could the Hon. Minister identify the schools which will benefit from the remaining sums that will be spent on nursery sets, chalkboards, tables, chairs, refrigerators et cetera?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, of the \$15.2 million allocation \$7.995 million, very close to \$8 million, will be spent on the acquisition of type A and type B desks and benches; 333 type A desks and benches; 200 type B desks and benches. Type A will be for the secondary schools along the East Coast and East Bank, and type B will be for the primary schools. Besides that moneys have been allocated for 100 nursery sets for levels 1 and 2 at \$2.8 million.

There is allocation for chalkboards, teachers' tables and chairs, filing cabinets, fans, cupboards, bookracks etcetera bringing the total to \$15.2 million.

**Ms. Selman:** Mdm. Chair, the Minister did say that the type A will be distributed to secondary schools (300). Could the Minister say whether the Covent Garden Secondary School will benefit from these and if so how many?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair I am pleased to inform the Hon. Member that Covent Garden is listed for 75.

**Mr. Trotman:** Mdm. Chair, Project Code 1203300 – Construction and rehabilitation of schools, living quarters and sanitary blocks: is he prepared to lay over in this House the dimensions and cost of each of the works being done under this head? Is he prepared to do so as early as possible?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chair, I have before me the works to be done under that item so I can provide it to now.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Is it a long list Hon. Minister?

**Mr. Whittaker:** No, five items.

*4.50 p.m.*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I think that is acceptable.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Construction of a nursery school at Good Hope, 70 ft x 30 ft, concrete type building. It is a large housing scheme without a nursery school, so \$20 million have been provided for that. We also have extensive work; rehabilitation of the teachers' quarters at Bladen Hall – the quarters is in a poor state so it is being rehabilitated. Rehabilitation of the school at Providence...

**Mr. Trotman:** What is the cost of the quarters at Bladen Hall?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Three million dollars. Rehabilitation of the school at Providence - that is the primary school's roof, floors, walls and electrical works. Rehabilitation of Annandale Secondary School...

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister I think he wants the cost too.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Nine million dollars.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Is this for the school at Providence?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Providence Secondary School \$7 million; Annandale Secondary School \$9 million and; the construction of sanitary blocks for the Mon Repos Primary School, \$1,766,000, total \$40,766,000.

**Mr. Trotman:** Just a follow up question: The Minister omitted to say what the dimensions of sanitary block were that is proposed to be built.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I do not have the dimensions, but this construction will accommodate four more compartments; two for male students and two for female students.

**Mr. Trotman:** Project Code 2404700 – Land and Water Transport: I see here it is proposed to purchase an enclosed truck, I wonder, for what purpose and where will it be located?

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is \$7 million, as I pointed out earlier on, for the acquisition of one enclosed canter truck. This will be used to transport exercise books, juices, biscuits, furniture and other office materials.

**Mr. Trotman:** Is there a specific place that it will be located?

**Mr. Whittaker:** It will be based at the Triumph Office.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Follow-up to the last question, which was transportation, budgetary provision of \$7 million, which in this instance is under the heading of “Education”. Mdm. Chairperson, you might recall that when we were discussing the allocations for the central Ministry itself, you were not presiding then, it was the Hon. Speaker, I had posed a question to the then Hon. Minister, with regards to the provision of a vehicle for the Regional Chairman. The vehicle he is currently using is some 19 years old. You may have recall that the Speaker made a comment that he was surprised that that vehicle actual can make it from point A to point B. I have noticed that there is no other provision under the Capital Expenditure for Region 4 for a vehicle for use by the Regional Chairman.

My respectful question to the Hon. Minister is: does the Minister consider it useful and necessary that the Regional Chairman of this very large region be provided with the tools to allow and enable him to be able to discharge his significant responsibilities?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, notwithstanding the fact that we are no longer under Regional Administration and Finance, I am aware that the Hon. Regional Chairman does have the service of a vehicle provided by the RDC; that I am aware of.

I am also aware that there are vehicles under all the various programmes and that the Regional Executive Officer (REO), once the request is made in a timely way, will always be willing to provide the resources in the form of transportation for Vice Chairman/Regional Chairman. The point is that the Regional Chairman has a vehicle assigned to him. *[Interruption]* I would not know.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Mdm. Chairperson, you of course have been in this House much longer than I have and you have fight. I am sure you would have recalled that this is a sore issue and it seems that a resolution is certainly no eminent and it is lamentable.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Cde. Chairperson, under the project code 1203300 – Buildings – Education - “Construction and rehabilitation of schools, living quarters and sanitary blocks”: I would like to ask the Hon. Minister, if there is a section that is called the Building Inspectors? We have heard

time and time again that schools were built and in three months time windows were dropping off and all of that. I would like to know if there is a section that has building inspectors.

The second question, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister is there is something against Region 4 or is it against the Vice-Chairperson of Region No. 4 being a woman that she is not having a vehicle to her disposal? Thank you very much.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, whilst they are not called by that name today, I am aware that there are superintendents of works, senior superintendents of works and we also have engineers. These are the people who run checks on the works and construction that we do in the Regions.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** There was a second part of the question about the vice-chairperson and access to a vehicle by her. Ms. Baveghems, would you want to restate the question; would you want to ask the question again?

**Ms. Baveghems:** Very well Mdm. Chairperson. Through you, to the Hon. Minister, could you say why the Vice-Chairperson of Region 4 is not having a vehicle to her disposal? Is it something you have against her being a woman? It is the only region that has a Vice-Chairperson without a vehicle.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Minister, are you prepared to answer the question?

**Ms. Baveghems:** He is supposed to answer it.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Mdm. Chairperson, if I may. This is the second question that is asked under "Education" in Capital Expenditure that is irrelevant to this Capital consideration here. I understand the question asked, but there are questions that would have missed the boat. We are finished with administration for Region 4, under which the Chair and Vice-Chair would have been accommodated. We are dealing with Education here, but to answer the question. I have noted the concern and to say that there is some degree of inaccuracies in the statement because the Vice-Chairperson of Region 4 is facilitated with regards to her transportational movements and the Vice-Chairperson can attest to that. Thank you Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Thank you very much for both the question and the answer. Are there any further questions under Capital Expenditure for Education Delivery?

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you Mdm. Chairperson. Project Code 2404700 – Land and Water Transport: can the Hon. Minister say when this vehicle is purchased which agency's name will it be registered under?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The Regional Democratic Council, Region No. 4.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Members I just want to draw your attention to the fact that it is 5 o'clock. I think we will all be aware that we actually started to deal with Region No. 4 at between 2.35 p.m. and 2.40 p.m. Three hours have been allocated. We are doing fairly well, so my proposal is that we continue and finish Region 4 because we would just have Health Services to deal with. Then we will take the break and if necessary we can perhaps contract the one hour to perhaps 50 minutes, if you are agreeable. My proposal is that we proceed and finish Region 4 before we take the break. I sense that there is consensus. Thank you very much.

*Programme: 744 – Education Delivery - \$62,966,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Current Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 745 – Health Services - \$309,756,000**

**Dr. Norton:** Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: the Staffing Details show that there was no increase. Could the Hon. Minister explain the increase by \$9 million as compared to last year?

**Mr. Whittaker:** There was indeed an increase in the number of Contracted Employees; two ambulance drivers, a ward maid, a porter and handyman were hired, but these were met under line item 6141 – Revision of Wages and Salaries.

**Dr. Norton:** Mdm. Chairperson, we would understand that line item 6116 – Contracted Employees is for Contracted Employees, could the Hon. Minister explain exactly what was the reason for that change; placing them under a different line item?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am saying that there was a shortfall under this line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: last year, which the Ministry of Finance covered. That is how line item 6141 – Revision of Wages and Salaries comes into it. Provision is being made here now, in 2013, to cover that.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, line item 6141 has nothing.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am talking about the line item 6141 under the Ministry of Finance.

**Ms. Selman:** Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: could the Hon. Minister identify the health facilities that will be maintained?

**Mr. Whittaker:** There are a number of Medex quarters and a number of health centres that will be maintained at the cost of some \$20 million. These include Medex quarters at Laluni, St, Cuthberts Mission, Enterprise, Grove, Clonbrook, Soesdyke and Lusignan. Health centres at Buxton, Plaisance, Soesdyke, Craig, Grove, Herstelling, Crane Grove, Melanie and Beterverwagting.

**Ms. Selman:** Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: Could the Hon. Minister provide the list of buildings to be maintained under “Other Infrastructure”?

**Mr. Whittaker:** “Maintenance of Other Infrastructure” includes things like repairs to fence, plumbing works, electrical works, etc. The health centres targeted for such repairs include, Diamond Health Centre, Hauraruni Health Centre, Kuru Kururu Health Centre, St. Cuthberts Health Centre, Soesdyke Health Centre, Plaisance Health Centre, Clonbrook Health Centre, Melanie Health Centre, Victoria Health Centre, Beterverwagting Health Centre, Mocha Health Centre, Unity Health Centre, Mahaica Health Centre, Cane Grove Health Centre, Enterprise Health Centre, Herstelling Health Centre, Grove Health Centre and Lusignan Health Centre, total cost \$14.5 million.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Under line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): could the Hon. Minister say what categories of persons will be trained and the amount of persons expected to be trained?

**Mr. Whittaker:** English classes for the Cuban team and private English tutor, \$200,000 is listed there. Also, monthly on-services education for health workers, there is \$20,000 listed there and to provide training for all resident Cubans and Cuban trained doctors in basic life support, advance cardio life support, trauma team training, snake bites, blood transfusion, et cetera \$280,000.

**Ms. Ferguson:** A follow-up question: I think the Minister missed the second part of my question. I asked how many persons will be trained, not the amount. How many persons will be trained?

**Mr. Whittaker:** A total of 66 persons.

**Mr. Sharma:** Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: can the Hon. Minister say who will be the beneficiary of this \$2 million of drugs that will be purchased and what are some of the drugs that will be purchased?

**Mr. Whittaker:** “Drugs and Medical Supplies” include strips; generally materials not supplied by MMU. The beneficiaries will be residents.

**Mr. Sharma:** Is it not the staff these medical supplies are being purchased for; the 149 staff members, but residents?

**Mr. Whittaker:** No Sir.

**Mr. Sharma:** Do these various health centres benefit from the drugs the ministry purchase?

**Mr. Whittaker:** That is at the regional level to purchase and have on board a quantity of varying drugs for the purpose of dealing with emergency situations. The bulk of their drugs do come from the Ministry of Health.

**Mr. Sharma:** Is the \$2 million adequate enough for emergency purposes?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Yes it is.

**Mr. Sharma:** What are some of these emergency drugs, name me two or three of them?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am told things like aspirins, plasters and stuff like that; glucose strips, etc.

**Mr. Sharma:** The public will be safe knowing of these emergency purchases of plasters and aspirins. Thank you.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Just a follow-up question to line item 6255 and 6242, respectively: I know the Hon. Minister outlined maintenance on buildings and maintenance of other infrastructure, but could he be kind enough to lay that list to us please. When can you give an undertaken? Thank you. Hon. Member.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Yes, by Friday.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister I hope that you are making a note, but I think the staffs of Parliament are also making notes because you are being asked to provide a lot.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Be assured that the Deputy Permanent Secretary (DPS) and the Permanent Secretary (PS) are making notes.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Yes.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Cde. Chairperson to the Hon. Minister, could the Hon. Minister tell this House if...

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Line item please.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Under...

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Take your time because it will also help the Minister and his team.

**Ms. Baveghems:** I do not know if it will come under Drugs and Medical Supplies, but I want to ask the Hon. Minister if in Region 4, East Coast and East Bank have ambulances.

**Mr. Whittaker:** The answer is yes.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Cde. Minister, where is it located?

**Mr. Whittaker:** One at the Diamond Regional Hospital on the East Bank and the other at Doctor C.C. Nicolson Hospital on the East Coast.

**Ms. Baveghems:** I thought it would have been stationed at some other place like the region's office because many times you want an ambulance you do not get it because it is already being used by the hospitals. That is why I asked if there were additional ambulances.

**Mr. Whittaker:** It has to be central to the place where it is most needed.

*Programme: 745 – Health Services - \$309,756,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 745 – Health Services - \$37,768,000**

**Ms. Selman:** Project code 2404700 – Land and Water Transport: could the Hon. Minister say how many motor cycles will be purchased and at what estimated cost for each and identify the health facilities that would benefit from the purchase of these motor cycles and the criteria for distribution? It is four questions.

**Mr. Whittaker:** The three motor cycles will be used by the Environment Health Officers. The purpose is to facilitate their movements throughout the length and breadth of the region.

**Ms. Selman:** Project Code 1203500 – Buildings – Health: could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown of the proposed allocation to improve accommodation at those facilities listed in the Legend?

**Mr. Whittaker:** At the Lusignan and Enterprise Health Centres sheds will be constructed; that is, a waiting area will be created. It will be concrete with seating accommodations, 20ftx15ft. Presently, there is no waiting area to accommodate patients. The amount involved there would be \$2.2 million for each - the Lusignan and Enterprise Health Centres. The Health Post at Moblissa – to provide a safe and comfortable environment for residents – a 20ftx18ft concrete Health Post will be constructed and there is a provision of \$7 million for that. The midwives quarters at Kuru Kururu will be rehabilitated to provide improved living conditions for the midwives stationed there.

There will also be the construction of a concrete trestle at Herstelling, in the compound of the Herstelling Health Centre. This is to ensure a continuous supply of water for the health centre.

The balance of that allocation, \$3.834 million, will be spent at the Diamond Regional Hospital to rehabilitate the plumbing and the electrical network of that hospital.

**Dr. Norton:** Project Code 2506900 – Equipment – Health: could the Hon. Minister say for which centre the otolaryngology, orthopaedics, obstetrics and gynaecology instruments are being purchased for?

**Mr. Whittaker:** It will be the Diamond Regional Hospital.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Project Code 2503700 – Furniture and Equipment – Health: could the Hon. Minister say how many chairs, water dispensers, washing machines, fire extinguishers, fans, refrigerators, etc. under this project description will be procured and to where these items will be assigned. Thank you.

**Mr. Whittaker:** What I am about to read is for the Diamond Regional Hospital: 15 writing desk, 154 chairs, five washing machines, 80 fire extinguishers, three refrigerators, eight water dispensers, six bedside cupboards, two bedside screens, 10 transformers and two emergency cars.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Cde. Chairperson, a follow up question to the Hon. Member Ms. Ferguson's question. I have not heard the Hon. Minister say if they intend to purchase generators for that hospital.

*5.20 p.m.*

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that there is a generator at that hospital.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Is it working?

**Mr. Whittaker:** There is a generator.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Is it working, Cde. Minister?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Yes. It is working very well.

**Ms. Baveghems:** Mdm. Chair, through you, to Cde. Minister, line item 2404700- Land and Water Transport: I heard the Hon. Cde. Africo Selman ask about the purchase of motor cycles under the heading Land and Water Transport. What would the water transportation be like?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Well I guess this item catered for fact that we also have hinterland areas and rural areas but in this instance it is all land transport; three motor cycles.

**Ms. Baveghems:** No water transport.

**Mr. Whittaker:** No water...

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Member Mrs. Hughes, is your light on? I am sorry. I was...

*Programme: 745 – Health Services - \$37,768,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Members, this concludes the Estimates with respect to Region No. 4, I propose that we take the suspension now. It is now, according to the clock on the wall, 5.23 p.m. and I suggest that we come back at 6.15 p.m. to commence Region No. 5.

*Sitting suspended at 5.22 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 6.21 p.m.*

**Mdm. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, please be seated the Assembly is now resumed. We will immediately go into the Committee of Supply.

*Assembly in Committee of Supply*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Thank you. Hon. Members, we are now in Committee of Supply. When we took the break we had completed Region No. 4 and we therefore will commence this session with Region No. 5.

**Agency: 75 Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice**

**Current Expenditure**

**Programme: 751 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$91,258,000**

**Ms. Wade:** Mdm. Chairperson, line item 6116- Contracted Employees: I have noticed that there is a budgetary increase of \$4 million and I have also notices that there is just one new contracted employee. Can the Minister provide the designation and emolument of that one person?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. That additional contracted worker is a driver. Salary is \$41,083 per month. In addition one has payment of vacation allowance, gratuity and increased National Insurance Scheme (NIS).

**Ms. Wade:** Thank you. Line item 6264: could the Hon. Minister say how many vehicles are on the fleet and how many are new vehicles?

**Mr. Whittaker:** None of the vehicles are new, Hon. Member. The number of vehicles is four, in all.

**Ms. Wade:** Line item 6281- Security Services- could the Hon. Minister say what is responsible for the increase? Which are the new areas that will be secured under this head and what the name of the security firm is?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The name of the security service is strategic action security. The number of locations would be six: at the Regional Chairman's residence – two guards, the Regional Executive Officer's residence – three, Regional Vice Chairman's residence – two, Regional Democratic Council Compound (Sub Office) – six, Regional Democratic Council Compound – six, Regional Democratic Council Boardroom – four. The total is 23.

**Mr. Ramjattan:** Hon. Minister, I noticed that you indicated just now that the contracted employees' allocation has risen by that \$4 million because of NIS increases. I also noticed, under the NIS, line item 6134, there is an increase to cater for NIS increases and that is generally the line item that goes towards increases for NIS. Is it now part and parcel that you are going to put NIS increases with "Contracted Employees" too?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that NIS for contracted employees is paid under that particular line item 6116.

**Mr. Ramjattan:** Line item 6242- Maintenance of Buildings: I notice that there is \$6 million there for maintenance of buildings. Could you say which building in Region No.5? It was \$0 last year.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Thank you. There are six buildings identified here; the Regional democratic Council (RDC) Main Office at Fort Wellington, the Regional Executive Officer (REO) living

quarters, the RDC Boardroom, the RDC Sub-Region Office at Mahaicony, the guesthouse at Fort Wellington.

**Dr. Ramayya:** On the same line items 6241 and 6242: here again at line item 6242 we have \$6 million in maintenance of buildings and for rental and maintenance of buildings again that went up by \$6 million. We have maintenance of buildings under one heading and at line item 6242 we have again “Maintenance of Buildings”. What buildings are we talking about?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I just identified the buildings. Perhaps what the Hon. Member is looking at is the subtotal above under Renal and Maintenance of Buildings. That is the subtotal of \$6.3 million and then that is further separated. \$6 million is for Maintenance of Buildings and the other \$300,000 is Janitorial and Cleaning supplies. Perhaps that is the mistake you are making.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Dr. Ramayya, are you finished?

**Dr. Ramayya:** Yes, Mdm.

**Mr. Felix:** Thank you very much, Mdm. Chairperson. Line item 6291- National and Other Events: could the Hon. Minister explain to this honourable House what this expenditure is intended to cover?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Thank you. The national events identified here are Mashramani to which \$1 million is allocated, our Independence Anniversary Celebration \$175,000, Indian Arrival Day \$75,000, Emancipation Day \$75,000 and Amerindian Heritage Month Activities \$83,000.

**Mr. Felix:** Line item 6302, Training and Scholarships: What training is being done in Region 5 to necessitate this expenditure?

**Mr. Whittaker:** This is primarily training at the level of the Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) and also, of course, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development; that is the RDC; Internal and external training for the officer of the region along with the NDC Overseers at Public Service Ministry (PSM). In addition, included here is payment for training materials. The sum allocated is \$300,000.

**Mr. Felix:** Just to follow up, I heard the Hon. Minister saying that the money included training for overseers at PSM. Could he explain?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I think the Hon. Member misunderstood me. There is training at the Public Service Ministry. That has to do with supervisory management staff and also training of staff on the issue of staff appraisal but there is training of NDC personnel and that is at the level of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development.

**Mr. Ramjattan:** Line item 6281- Security Services: I notice a jump by some \$3 million here. Are there new building for which security services are to be provided?

**Mr. Whittaker:** This is an increase in the provision because of the fact that we have additional guards and escort duties.

**Mr. Ramjattan:** Which is the security firm here?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Strategic Action Security.

*Programme: 751 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$91,258,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 751 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$8,200,000**

**Ms. Wade:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Line item 1208900, Buildings – Administration, Rewiring of buildings: Can the Minister say if it is all of the buildings they will be rewiring?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The two buildings within the RDC Compound housing the administration, the engineering section, education, accounts, et cetera. Those will be rehabilitated. Primarily it has to do with addressing electrical problems. The buildings will be rewired.

**Ms. Wade:** Thank you. Programme Code 2503900- Officer Furniture and Equipment: which department will benefit from the allocation?

**Mr. Whittaker:** \$3.2 million is being spent here with most of it, \$1.9 million, going towards the acquisition of a 10 KVA transformer to be used as part of the rewiring exercise with respect to the administrative building. The balance of the money will be used to acquire five executive writing desks and four executive chairs and these are for use by senior functionaries – REO, Deputy Regional Executive Officer (DREO), the engineer and the PPO. Three cubicles are to be

placed in the Personnel and Local Government Departments. Two water dispensers are to be placed in the Accounts and Personnel Department. Five electric fans are to be placed: one in the Office of the Regional Chairman, two in the Regional Accounting Unit and two in the Local Government Department. Filing cabinets will be placed where needed in offices under the Administration and to refrigerators to be used by the Administration and the Chief Accountant.

*Programme: 751 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$8,200,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Current Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 752 – Agriculture - \$112,759,000**

**Dr. Ramayya:** Yes, Mdm. Chairperson. I see here at line item 6253- Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works: I would kindly ask the Minister to indicate to this House where this work will be done.

**Mr. Whittaker:** These works comprise of manual and mechanical maintenance of channels and accesses across the Region. These works will be executed by MMA and among the areas listed here are: Blairmont, Bella Land, Rosignol, Zee Lust, Bel Air Woodlands, Bath, Woodley Park, Tempe, C Field, Profit, Rising Sun, Mahaicony, Abary, Hamlet, Chance, Woodlands, Farm, De Edward Village, Novar.

**Ms. Wade:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Line Item 6251- Maintenance of Roads: could the Hon. Minister name the roads and provide a breakdown on how the moneys will be allocated to each project?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Thank you, Hon. Member. There are essentially six roads – farm to market roads; Esau and Jacob, Burma, East Coast. The allocation is \$5 million. Champagne, Mahaicony, allocation \$3 million; Hyde Park, Mahaicony, allocation \$3 million; within the Good Faith-Novar area \$3 million. This is Abary on the West Coast, maintenance of quarry farm to the market road, grading of the road shoulders, looking at depressed areas of the road and upgrading with approximately 2 inch thick first grade crusher run. The entire road will be done there for \$2 million; Novar/Dundee, West Coast Berbice at \$2 million.

**Ms. Wade:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. Line item 6252- Maintenance of Bridges: could the Minister please name the bridges and provide a breakdown on how the money will be allocated to each project?

**Mr. Whittaker:** There are two bridges here and in both instances general repairs will be done – fixing defective pile caps, stringers, liners, et cetera. Hosanna Street, Rosignol at \$4 million and Welcome Street, Rosignol, at \$3.5 million.

**Mr. Felix:** Thank you very much, Mdm. Chairperson. Would the Hon. Minister kindly inform this House whether it is intended to do the entire length of the Burma Road or not?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that what is happening here is the Region is focusing on dealing with the very bad parts of the road but that the Ministry of Agriculture has a provision under their capital programme... This is under our “current” but the Ministry of Agriculture does have a provision under their “capital” to deal with this very road.

**Mr. Felix:** So you are saying that you are doing patchwork.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am saying that we are doing maintenance work.

*Programme: 752 – Agriculture - \$112,759,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 752 – Agriculture - \$82,000,000**

**Ms. Wade:** Can the Hon. Minister say what type of vehicle will be purchased for the agriculture department?

**Mr. Whittaker:** This is a 4x4 pickup, double cab, for transporting the officers; primarily those from the engineering department to do inspection of the sluices, drainage networks, access roads, et cetera.

*Programme: 752 – Agriculture - \$82,000,000– agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

## **Current Expenditure**

### **Programme: 753 – Public Works - \$95,492,000**

**Ms. Wade:** Line item 6251- Maintenance of Roads: could the Hon. Minister identify the roads for maintenance and a breakdown of how the money will be allocated to each project?

**Mr. Whittaker:** General rehabilitation to the Burma Branch Road. There is a \$9 million allocation for that; general rehabilitation to the De Hoop Branch Road, allocation \$8.8 million. General rehabilitation to Weldaad and this general rehabilitation include grading of the road, correction of depressed surfaces by adding sand, loam, et cetera. That is \$3.5 million. Maintenance of Rosignol road networks at \$4 million; general maintenance to Dinar, Akimbo Street \$3 million; upgrading of the road linking the old road to the new road in Mahaicony at \$2 million and upgrading of community roads in the Fairfield, Broomhall, De Kinderen and Bygeval areas at \$4 million; a total of \$34.3 million.

**Ms. Wade:** I would like to know what criteria are being used to identify these roads, simply because I spoke about the “Coco Cabana Street Road” – I gave it a name. That is the road next to Belladrum Bridge and Minister Westford and even to “Obama”, the Hon. Member, can testify to these roads... [**Hon. Members:** Obama?] “Lumumba”. I would like to know what criteria are used.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I hope that President Obama does not sue anyone or Member Lumumba may also sue. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Whittaker:** The “Coco Cabana Road” to which the Hon. Member refers I called. Perhaps she did not hear me well, but that is listed along with Belladrum at \$3.5 million. You asked about the criteria. These roads were identified and prioritised by the Regional Democratic Council (RDC).

*6.48 p.m.*

**Ms. Wade:** Line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants: Could the Hon. Minister say what number of vehicles falls under this head?

**Mr. Whittaker:** There are two pickups, a bobcat, one outboard engine, two standby generators, a tractor and a pressure wash.

**Ms. Wade:** Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: Could the Minister say the designation of the six new contracted employees and what are their emoluments?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The six new contracted employees - a Civil Engineer - \$167,007, a Sluice Attendant - \$60,678, a vehicle driver - \$41,083 and three Labourers - \$37,657 per month each.

**Mr. Felix:** Line item 6283 – Cleaning and Extermination Services: Hon. Minister I see that you are just changing around figures. Are you required to do maintenance on the buildings in Region 5 every year? The allocations were \$999,000 in the year 2011, \$1 million in the year 2012, \$999,000 in the year 2013. It was revised in the year 2012 and it spent less. You are asking for \$1million again. Please explain, what are the buildings involved?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The voted provision \$1million is to clean. The Hon. Member would notice that it is also about providing extermination services normally provided by private service providers and it is for the extermination of pests, bats, and so.

*Programme: 753 – Public Works - \$95,492,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

## **Capital Expenditure**

### **Programme: 753 – Public works - \$91,300,000**

**Ms. Wade:** Project 1400800 – Roads: I have noticed that there are some works to be done in Number 30 Village. I would like to know how many streets will be done and if it is on the northern side of the public road or the southern side that these works will be carried out.

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is north of the public road.

**Mr. Ramjattan:** Under the line item “Maintenance of Road”, in the current budget the Minister had indicated a number of roads and on this project1400800, Roads, I notice that there is a duplication here, with Burma and Rosignol, and so on. Is there a duplication, one under capital expenditure and one under current expenditure? Or are they separate roads?

**Mr. Whittaker:** What is happening is that certain distance on those roads are being asphalted because of the resources available while the balance is being maintained. There are not enough resources to asphalt the entire road, so it will be done in stages. The asphalted road will be done under capital works.

**Mr. Felix:** Project 1701300 – Land Development: Which housing schemes are to be upgraded and the nature of the works to be done?

**Mr. Whittaker:** There would be rehabilitation of streets in the housing area at Experiment, West Bank Berbice - \$4.6 million to the nearest hundred thousand, streets in the housing area at Hope Housing Scheme, West Coast Berbice -\$4.03 million, rehabilitation of streets in the housing area at Waterloo - \$4.5 million and streets in the housing area at Bush Lot, Section A, the third cross street and Section D, the first cross street - \$5.01 million.

*Programme: 753 – Public Works - \$91,300,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

## **Current Expenditure**

### **Programme: 754 – Education Delivery - \$947,875,000**

**Dr. Ramayya:** Line item 6281 – Security Services: Could the Minister say to this Committee how many security guards are there at this stage and where are they placed? I have seen here that there is a big increase at \$10 million?

**Mr. Whittaker:** We are talking about 72 security guards at six nursery schools, 19 primary schools, seven secondary schools and two Practical Instruction Centres (PICs)

**Dr. Ramayya:** I just want to ask the Minister whether these locations existed last year. If not, what are the new existing buildings that would need additional security for?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that the number of guards has not changed but that during the year 2012 the region did some virement in order to be able to meet the additional expenditure under that particular line item. It would be the latter part of last year.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Could the Minister provide the name of the security service?

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is Strategic Action Security Service.

**Ms. Wade:** Line item 6133 – Benefits and Allowances: Could the Hon. Minister advise why there is the increase, under this line item, from \$16 million to \$22 million?

**Mr. Whittaker:** There is an increase of \$5.9 million and this is to accommodate payments of Whitley Council leave, vacation allowance, uniform and travelling allowances.

**Mr. Ramjattan:** Line item 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: I notice this is cropping up and there is almost \$9 million there. What is the “Other Infrastructure” that required maintenance?

**Mr. Whittaker:** This will be for activities such as fixing fence, post, actual mesh, infilling and landscaping, activities of that nature. These will be done at Number 29 Primary School, for which there is an allocation for \$2.4 million, the Hopetown Nursery School, where there is some infilling and landscaping – \$0.6 million, at the Yeovil Nursery School – \$0.7 million, Zealand Primary School - \$0.9 million and there would be landscaping and upgrading of incinerator, Blairmont Primary School - \$1.5 million, Groden Nursery School – \$0.8 million, Bush Lot Nursery School - \$0.8 million, Bush Lot Secondary - \$0.7 million, and this is where the fence will be fixed, Hopetown Primary School - \$0.7 million.

The total involved is \$9.8 million.

**Ms. Wade:** Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): Could the Hon. Minister say what category of person will benefit from this training and the number of persons to be trained?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The training programme, sets out here, targets the nursery, primary and secondary schools. In respect of the Grades 1-4 there are lots of workshops and seminars that focus on literacy and numeracy; there are workshops for the teachers and those will be focused on information technology and training of our teachers; there is even a programme that targets the parents; there is a parents’ conference; there is also workshop on Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI); there are cluster meetings and there are workshops on child-friendly schools. There will be three one-day workshops for head teachers. There is a range of workshop that targets teachers, students and parents at the various levels, by that, I mean, nursery, primary and secondary.

As I look down further, there are workshops that target students doing the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) and the teachers also. There are workshops that speak to the issue of HIV/AIDS and workshops that deal with the Health and Family Life Education (HFLE).

**Ms. Wade:** Line item 6284 – Other: Could the Hon. Minister say how this allocation will be spent?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The allocation of \$20 million is intended to cover the increase in cost for 90 invigilators and 30 supervisors at a cost of \$900 and \$1,200 each, respectively. It also includes payment for three permanent and 91 contracted sweeper/cleaners.

**Dr. Ramayya:** I would like to ask the Minister about the money, which is to be given, in line item 6255, for infrastructure work, whether that money will be given to the regional department and it then supervises that work, with the Bill of Quantity, that it is properly done under the regional administration, because we are dealing with the administration, here, of the region?

**Mr. Whittaker:** All money, which will be approved in this National Assembly for the RDC, such as the other nine, will be allocated to the RDC for works within the region.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Just for the benefit of the Committee, under line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) – I know that the Minister alluded to the fact that a number of persons will be trained but can he say whether, after training, the participants are awarded with certificates.

**Mr. Whittaker:** The answer is yes.

**Mr. Felix:** Line item 6112 – Senior Technical: There is an increase of 29 persons. Could the Minister explain this increase, give the designation and the emoluments? It is not all of the 29 persons. It is just for the top five.

**Mr. Whittaker:** Under line item 6112, Senior Technical, there was the appointment of 27 trained graduates, two Graduate Senior Assistants, Assistant Master and Assistant Mistress (AMs). The AMs' salary is \$78,799 and the Graduate Senior Assistant is \$124,394 each.

**Ms. Wade:** Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: There is an allocation of \$46.4 million. Could the Hon. Minister name the buildings which will be maintained and give a breakdown on how much money will be allocated to these buildings?

**Mr. Whittaker:** There are a number of nursery, primary and secondary school buildings that we are talking about here...

**Ms. Wade:** Just tell me it is how many nursery schools, how many primary schools and how many secondary schools please, Hon. Minister.

**Mr. Whittaker:** There are nine nursery school buildings, six secondary and 15 primary school buildings.

*Programme: 754 – Education Delivery - \$947,875,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 754 – Education Delivery - \$68,810,000**

**Ms. Wade:** Project 1203600 – Buildings – Education: Could the Hon. Minister provide an estimated cost associated with each of the extension and is there an emergency plan for Bygeval teachers' quarters, which was burnt, the other day?

**Mr. Whittaker:** There are six schools listed here. There is the extension to the Mahaicony Secondary School. The school was built to accommodate about 600 students and the present enrolment is 877 and there is going to be an 80x30 extension, allocation of \$21.8 million.

There will also be an extension to the Novar Primary School, secondary department and \$15.7 million is allocated there. There will be the rehabilitation of the teachers living quarters, Mortice Primary and Nursery Schools - \$5.2 million. The completion of annexes at Fort Wellington Secondary School is \$4.7 million. The total cost of that building will be \$14.1million.

Then there is the annex at Woodley Park Secondary School \$1.5 million to be spent to be completed and the overall cost will then be \$15.2 million. The annex at Rosignol Secondary School is \$1.1 million and the completed buildings, which is a rollover from the year 2012, would have cost to \$11.5 million.

The school, to which the Hon. Member referred, Bygeval, is not listed here.

**Ms. Wade:** It was the teachers living quarters, Hon. Member.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I did not get that.

**Ms. Wade:** It was the teachers living quarters, at Bygeval, which was burnt the other day.

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is not listed here. This document was prepared before.

**Ms. Wade:** I know that it is not listed. I am asking if there is any plan for that area – emergency plan.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I would not be in a position to give that kind of commitment, but I am pretty confident that our Ministry will be dealing with the issue.

**Ms. Wade:** I just want to find out about the Fort Wellington annex because I notice that there is a stall in the construction of that building. I would like to know: How much money was budgeted for that annex? How much has been spent so far and how much will be spent to complete it?

**Mr. Whittaker:** That project is expected to be completed this year. It is a rollover from the year 2012. The total cost, as I pointed out before, is \$14.1 million and the \$4.7 million is available this year to complete that project.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Project 2401900 – Land and Water Transport: There is an allocation of \$6 million to purchase a boat and an outboard engine. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to advise where and for which purpose this equipment will be used?

*7. 18 p.m.*

**Mr. Whittaker:** This amount of \$6 million is for the purpose of acquiring a boat, 32 feet in length, an outboard engine; a 90-horsepower is recommended. It is for transporting approximately 40 students who live in the riverine area, Mahaicony Creek. They traverse 10 miles or more daily to and from school, from First Savannah to Mora Point, and Gordon Table and Washclothes. It is to move students to and from schools.

**Ms. Wade:** Project 2503800 - Furniture – Education: Could the Minister say how many schools will benefit from the purchase of this allocation?

**Mr. Whittaker:** This will be a total of 31 nursery schools, or classes at the nursery level; primary, it will be 30 and secondary, it will be nine.

*Programme: 754 - Education Delivery - \$68,810,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

## **Current Expenditure**

### **Programme: 755 – Health Services - \$282,916,000**

**Dr. Ramayya:** Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: In the year 2012 there were 37 contracted employees and the budget was approximately \$32 million. This year it went up approximately \$15 million with an additional nine contracted employees. Could the Minister state to this Committee the salaries of those top contracted employees?

**Mr. Whittaker:** These would be two Health Centre Attendants - \$41,083 each, one Cook - \$41,083, one Chief Executive Officer (CEO) - \$159,216, two Ward Maids - \$37,657, a Typist Clerk - \$41,083, two Accounts Clerks - \$47,605.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Dr. Ramayya, are you finished - at least for the while?

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chairperson, I am satisfied with the answer, which the Minister gave, but that will not add up to, annually, \$9 million.

**Mr. Whittaker:** It will add up when I tell the Hon. Member and the Committee that it also includes vacation allowance, gratuity and National Insurance Scheme (NIS) but the Hon. Member just ask me about the employees' salaries and that is what I gave.

**Ms. Wade:** Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: I would like to know Hon. Minister if the living quarters or the hostel at the Fort Wellington Hospital will be included in this maintenance for the year 2013, and if it is no, why not?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mdm. Chairperson, it is not listed here, but I am informed that it was done in the year 2012 using savings available.

**Ms. Wade:** It is just a follow-up. If there is a living quarters for the nurses, why it is not being occupied by the nurses?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I have just learned that the building was being used as the diabetic foot care centre, but now when it is checked it can be seen that that building would be done, this year, under our capital programme.

**Ms. Wade:** Hon. Minister, are you saying to the Committee that as soon as that building is completed the hostel will be available for nurses?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Yes. I am saying that.

**Mr. Felix:** Line item 6292 – Dietary: Could the Minister indicate to this honourable Committee the categories of persons who would benefit from this increase?

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is estimated that 50 inpatients per week will benefit at both of the two hospitals, Fort Wellington and Mahaicony. I may add also that there is going to be this year an extension of the ward at the Mahaicony Hospital.

**Mr. Felix:** Line item 6283 – Cleaning and Extermination Services:... [Ms. Teixeira: Again, Mr. Felix.] Yes. It must be pointed out here. My question to the Hon. Minister is whether there is a comprehensive programme for the examination of these buildings, under health. It appears to me that these figures are just placed there because if there is a programme the contract will be between three and five years so the same buildings do not have to be done and budgeted for every year. That is the point.

**Mr. Whittaker:** What is done here is the provision of extermination services. These services include extermination of rats, *wood ants* and other termites in addition to sanitary disposal at Mahaicony Diagnostic Centre, Fort Wellington Hospital and other health centres.

**Mr. Felix:** My follow-up question. Is there a contract and what this contract entails?

**Mr. Whittaker:** I am informed that there is a contract.

**Mr. Felix:** My question also has in it what it entails.

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is extermination – spraying.

**Mr. Felix:** I see the Minister has some challenges. I will leave it as that.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** For a second, I was not sure if he was saying “spraying” or “praying”.

*Programme: 755 – Health Services - \$282,916,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital expenditure**

#### **Programme: 755 - Health Services - \$38,816,000**

**Ms. Wade:** I have two questions here and I want to place both together. Project 1203700 Buildings – Health: How much of this budgetary amount will go towards the construction of the diabetic foot care centre and how much will go towards the purification of Fort Wellington water system?

**Mr. Whittaker:** The construction of the diabetic foot care centre at Fort Wellington Hospital will be 20 feet by 40 feet, \$8 million is allocated there. The construction of the reservoir, it will be a water filtration purification system, which is at the Fort Wellington Hospital, is \$5.5 million.

**Dr. Norton:** Project 2504000 - Furniture and Equipment – Health: Could the Hon. Minister say for which health centre or which institution is this neurological bed earmarked for?

**Mr. Whittaker:** It is for Fort Wellington.

**Dr. Norton:** Project 1203700 - Buildings – Health: The construction of the wards in Mahaicony Hospital. Would it be a specialised area and how many wards?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Actually it is to allow for the preparation of the male and female wards and to have a distinct area serving as the male washroom and the female washroom. This extension is 40 feet by 32 feet. It is to allow for the separation of male and female inmates.

*Programme: 755 - Health Services - \$38,816,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Members, this brings us to the end of Region 5. I would like to thank the officers who have been with us for the duration of the consideration for Region 5.

#### **Agency: 76 Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne**

## **Current Expenditure**

### **Programme: 761 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$113,384,000**

**Mr. Jones:** Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: We noted an increase of one person, but a significant increase from \$32.571 million to \$36.397 million. Could the Hon. Minister please explain?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** As usual, the numbers themselves do not tell the full story. During the course of the year a number of staff would have resigned and other staff would have joined, at different parts in the year, and so they were paid for that period in the year 2012, now they have to be paid for the entire year 2013, assuming that they remained on the job, to the end. That is the reason why there is that the increase.

**Mr. Jones:** Follow-up. It is the same line item. Could the Hon. Minister indicate the five highest paid employees and state the salaries of those persons?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** The five highest paid are one DREO - \$205,333; a second Deputy Regional Executive Officer and that is the DREO, Finance, \$195,998, one Assistant Regional Executive Officer - \$102,367, two Accountants - \$88,591 per month.

**Mr. Jones:** Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: Last year there was a voted provision of zero and we note a request for \$7.5 million, please explain, Hon. Minister.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Base on the advice given last year the Ministry sought to take the necessary action and so those buildings, which were under the programme Public Works, but were administrative buildings, it has apportioned expenditure under administrative. That is the reason why there is the allocation of \$7.5 million. As a follow-up to what the Hon. Member may request, as I am on my feet, I should state the buildings that will be benefiting from the allocation this year: “C” 63 Guyana House, New Amsterdam - \$5 million, Administrative Building, RDC Compound, New Amsterdam - \$1 million, Personnel Building, RDC Compound, New Amsterdam - \$1.5 million.

**Mr. Ramjattan:** Line item 6211 – Expenses Specific to the Agency: I notice almost a \$3 million increased there, from \$10 million to \$13 million, and it has always bothers me, was this expenses specific to the agency?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Line item 6211 is that line item that covers the cost for the Regional Democratic Council under the administrative programme in the 10 regions. The expenditure catered here are for stipend to councillors, meeting of councillors, expenses while attendance to meetings of the council of subcommittees of the council and also to assist with councils monitoring work programmes and conducting their outreach programmes with their respective communities.

**Mr. Adams:** Line item 6281 – Security: In the years 2011 and 2012 we noted that it was zero and for the year 2013 \$80.6 million is being requested now. Were these security services in place in the years 2011 and 2012, Mr. Minister?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** This is linked to line item 6242, Maintenance of Buildings. The buildings have been moved so also the security. The security was in place all that would have happened is that the cost is now reflected under administrative.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** It is to the same line item 6281. Could you kindly tell the House, Mr. Minister, how many sites there are? Whether it is a private security firm, which firm?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** It is Strategic Action Security Services. The sites are Regional Chairman residence, RDC compound, and the Regional Executive Officers residences.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Follow-up, Mdm. Chairperson. Could the Hon. Minister kindly indicate whether the region employs a checker?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Minister, line item 6282, Equipment and Maintenance, I note that the allocation has been cut by approximately 55%. Could you kindly tell the House what machinery is not there within, this particular agency, in this programme, in which the cost for maintenance has been cut?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** The region received an allocation of \$900,000 last year, it had to virement because both of its heavy-duty photocopiers needed significant maintenance and replacements of parts. This year the allocation has gone back to what was given to it in the year 2012 and it is hoping that it will be able to effectively maintain and keep all its equipment going.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Mdm. Chairperson, through you, a follow-up, it is on the same line item 6282. The Minister indicated that the heavy-duty photocopier went down and the Ministry had to pay some \$900,000 to repair it. Was there any analysis to see whether it would have been better to purchase another new machine instead to spend this amount of money for repairs and how old is the machine?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** One machine is four years old, one three years old and there are two machines, both of them, as I said, the analysis was done and the advice that we got from the technical people was to do the repair.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Mr. Minister, through the Mdm. Chairperson, line item 6283, Cleaning and Extermination Services, you have just indicated that the Regional Administration and Finance Department will now take care of several buildings yet I see the decrease of some \$1.2 million for cleaning and extermination services. Could you kindly explain?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Last year the significant investment was to do, what we called, the ground treatment. That has been completed and there is a warranty of three years and so it is only then we have to repeat that ground treatment. That is the reason why the cost is so reduced this year.

**Mr. Sharma:** Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: The staffing detail shows an increase of one and there is a reflection of \$3.8 million in employment cost increase. Could the Hon. Minister state the one individual, designation and salary?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Maybe the Hon. Member was distracted when I responded to this question asked of me by another Member of this House, the identical question, and so, for his benefit, I will repeat.

During the year 2012, a number of officers would have resigned, left the job and others would have been recruited and there were gaps between recruitment periods. Some of those officers were paid just for a couple months in the year 2012. The increase reflects payment for the entire

period of the year 2013. The one officer, who would have joined... I will give the list of those who would have come on: one Expeditor, one Typist Clerk, two Accounts Clerks.

**Mr. Sharma:** I thought that the Hon. Minister was stalling. I understand the explanation from the first instance. I asked him who the net person is, the one person who would have remained. In the year 2012 there was \$35 million allocated to the region and in this case it actually spent \$32.5 million. It means then that in the year 2012 it had less. It means that between December, 2012 and some time January, 2013 there was a number of persons who were hired, the net effect was that one person remains on the job. Who was that one person and what was the salary?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** I am sorry. Maybe, my explanation is not getting through to the Hon. Member. The Hon. Member is making some assumptions and that is... Maybe, I am not going over clear to the Hon. Member. Yes, \$35 million was allocated in the year 2012, \$32 million was spent. It means therefore that a number of staff would have resigned or, otherwise, moved off the job.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** It was during the year 2012.

*7.48 p.m.*

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Right. And, there were periods, Mdm. Chairperson, that there were gaps, that is, the recruitment process could not have been such that one has left today so he/she is replaced tomorrow. This is a fact of the Public Service. You cannot pay unless you have the person on. So, if you recruited someone in October of 2012 and that person is there with you, you would have paid that person for three months in 2012; you have to pay that person for 12 months in 2013. So, that is the reason why it is so reflected, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. The Hon. Minister is not yet familiar or getting the idea of what I am trying to say. I do not want to stay too long on this. The effect is that the Hon. Minister either says what was his staffing as at 31<sup>st</sup> December and what was his staffing at the time the Minister closed off this Budget in terms of finalising the figure. It means that within one month or so the Hon. Minister is saying that there probably was a turnover of about five to ten staff, according to him. Let me not dwell on this particular line item.

I move to line item 6281 – Security Services – there is an amount of \$8.6 million. Again, I heard the Hon. Minister's explanation. It is not acceptable for the fact that the Hon. Minister never

stated which one of the programmes he reduced to increase this one. Which is the programme that the Minister reduced or took buildings out from and put them under Programme 761? I should see a reflection of reduction of security in one of the programmes to show increase in Programme 761.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you, Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, I had said Programme 763 - Public Works. That is it Mdm. Chairperson. Thank you.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chairperson, thank you. Programme 763 - Public Works - Security Services that was budgeted for 2012 was \$11.2 million; the actual was \$19.7 million and the budgeted is \$19.3 million. Where is the reduction? Is the Minister confessing that he did the right thing to put the \$8 million there but he forgot to take it out from Public Works?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Mdm. Chairperson, that is not so. When I get to Public Works, I will explain the allocation under Public Works. Budgets are treated according to Programme, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. I am looking forward for that explanation.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Mr. Sharma, it will be your duty to remind him because the Minister may not remember, inadvertently, because he is doing so many things. We all, perhaps, need to make a mental note of that. Are there any further questions, Mr. Sharma?

*Programme: 761 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$113,384,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 761 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$6,700,000**

*Programme: 761 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$6,700,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Current Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 762 – Agriculture – \$453,268,000**

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chairperson, could the Hon. Minister respond under line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants? I would like to ask the Minister how many vehicles we have in Region 6 to consume lubricants and fuel of \$200 million.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, under this line item, there are a number of pieces of equipment that would consume fuel. We have four pickups: PLL 2717, PFF 1748, PHH 4467 and PFF 1581; these are based at Whim. We have a Massey Ferguson 390 tractor, a New Holland 7810 tractor, a truck - GFF 4929, a backhoe, a motor grader, two bobcats, three motorcycles, and five John Deere pumps: one at Number 43, one at Liverpool, one at Borlam, one at Seawall and at Manarabisi. We have hydroflow pumps at Canje/Eversham, Crabwood Creek, Manarabisi, and Mibikuri. We have six excavators under this programme, 320CL and one 312CL excavators. We have another Massey Ferguson tractor 25304 and a five-tonne truck, GPP 7632. These, Mdm. Chairperson, are the fuel consuming vehicles and equipment which we have operating in Region 6 under the Agriculture Programme.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chairperson, I can recall that last year the Hon. Minister stated that there was a workable truck and it was parked at Whim compound. I would like to ask the Minister if that truck is still workable.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you, Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, I am advised that the truck is presently not working and that the Administration is sourcing the part so that it can become operable again.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chairperson, for the purpose of this House, for the last two years that truck has been parked at a work shop. From last year when I first came to Parliament, we were told that we had a truck at Whim...*[Interruption]*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Just hold a minute. Please make sure that your phones are away from the microphones that are on, even if it vibrates we still get the feedback.

Sorry, Dr. Ramayya, please proceed.

**Dr. Ramayya:** ...that the truck was at Whim parked and the truck was working. After investigation, the truck is not working and the truck is at the workshop for the last couple of

years. I was told that the Region owed a lot of money to get the truck fixed. I would like to know how an unworkable truck can consume diesel.

Secondly, one of the hymacs, Mdm. Chairperson, was at the *[inaudible]* at Port Mourant. The pump was stolen and the equipment was completely paralysed without parts. Yet that equipment was using fuel. Being here for the last year, I was able, in my position, to do some investigations. I would like to know, for the amount of money that was allocated by this House, where the fuel is going. It is being diverted from one area to another, going from one dam and coming out from another. The Region Councillors are not making false accusations; these are true statements. I would like the Minister to answer the question of how unworkable equipment could use fuel.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much, Mdm. Chairperson and thank you very much, Hon. Member. The Hansard would prove that the question asked of me is what machine and equipment we have under this Programme. I gave that answer.

Mdm. Chairperson, I am advised that efforts are still being made to source the coil spring for that truck. So it is part of the inventory. I assume that whenever it is repaired, it must be provided with the necessary bit to work. I am not sure if the Hon. Member has any evidence to support that this truck and the other piece of equipment were credited with the use of fuel in the year. I would willingly accept any evidence that the Hon. Member has.

Mdm. Chairperson, I want to assure the Hon. Member that he is on speaking terms with me. I have listened to many bits from him. He can say that I have taken action. The Hon. Member has been very helpful. In this case, I am certain, whatever evidence he has available with the fuel having legs, I will be willing to take those evidence and ensure that the taxpayers' dollars are well protected. So, I am certain, that the Hon. Member will accept my invitation and so not too long from now both of us will be able to inform this honourable House that we have cut the legs off the fuel.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chairperson, I would still like to hear from the Minister if he knows anything about the hymac that was on the *[inaudible]* at Port Mourant back dam doing private work and it being left there and stripped of its parts? Does the Minister know about that?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, as I said, I cannot claim – I am a very true human being, humble too – to be aware of everything that happens across this beautiful land of ours. So, if the Hon. Member can give me these bits and pieces of information, I will willingly and readily act on them.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Thank you very much, Mdm. Chairperson. Under line item 6283 – Cleaning and Extermination Services – I notice for 2012 there was not any allocation, but in 2013 it raised. Could the Hon. Minister give reasons for this year's allocation and which buildings works will be effected on? Thank you.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Your observation is correct and we are hoping that the allocation given to us this year will place us in a better position to take care of those buildings and infrastructure that fall under the Agriculture Programme.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Just to follow up on this, Hon. Member: would you be kind enough to say exactly which buildings or areas these works are likely to be carried out? Thank you.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** The General Works Building in the New Amsterdam RDC compound.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Thank you very much, Hon. Member.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Thank you very much. Mdm. Chairperson, to the Hon. Minister, line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants – you are aware that the Auditor General's 2011 Report speaks to some \$25 million with respect to fuel and lubricants that have not been accounted for. Here it is that we are allocating \$200 million. Could the Hon. Minister kindly tell the House what measures have been put in place to ensure that - and I am using the Auditor General's Report, Sir, so that you could look back to refer to these things - the quantity of fuel and lubricants acknowledged and recorded as having been received were often less than that stated on the invoices as having been actually delivered by the supplier? I would like to know what measures have been put in place to deal with that. Also, there has been no evidence of supervisory checks with respect to the receipt and issue of fuel and lubricants. Could the Hon. Minister kindly tell us how they are going to safeguard this allocation of \$200 million?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, in 2011, indeed the references pointed out by the Hon. Member were recorded in the Auditor General's Report.

From then to now, many things have changed. Sometimes because we do not speak sufficiently with each other, we are unaware of these changes. I am surprised that the Hon. Member of Parliament (MP) from Region 6 would not have informed his colleagues that we no longer use buckets to do our measurements. We now have a metred system of recording the quantity and amount of fuel. That in itself would erase the element of mis-approximation.

The second bit too is that this House has just approved a capital expenditure for the expansion of the storage bond at the New Amsterdam RDC compound. We have sought to recentralise, in a very significant way, our operations from Whim so that we can have closer scrutiny with regards to our fuel and the whole operation of our fuel. We have also sought to place senior officers now at the Whim operations. All these are measures intended at strengthening our level of accountability and transparency, and, at the same time, enhance our monitoring and evaluation.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I am very happy to hear that you have improved on the storage and the supervisory checks for the fuel and lubricants. This was brought up in 2009 by the Auditor General and it still is in the 2011 Report.

However, I would like to go on to line item 6253 – Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works – I note that you have an additional \$11.4 million added to this allocation for this year. Could the Hon. Minister kindly inform the House what would be his primary focus area for 2013?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you, Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, what we seek to do this year is to look once again at the major cultivation areas in terms of ensuring that there are proper Drainage and Irrigation (D&I) systems and structures in place and that these systems and structures are properly maintained. So, there will be a number of interventions and many of these would have been regular interventions year after year and some monthly, bimonthly and so on.

Some of the major areas which works will be done at are the Black Bush Polder area, Yakusari, Joanna, Mibikuri, Lesbeholden and so on there. Also, the whole bit in terms of the Torani and the Letter Kenny/Bloomfield area, Seaford, Number Fifty-two/Number Seventy-four area, Number Forty-seven/Number Forty-eight, Essex facade, Whim hotline main drainage canal, Number Fifty-one/Number Fifty-two drainage systems and the Bush Lot drainage canal, Alness drainage canal, Maida main drainage system, Liverpool main drainage canal, Eversham, Number

Thirty-five, Kilmarnock, Wellington Park, Number Sixty-six, Hacks canal, Warren main drainage canal, Crabwood Creek/Crown Dam canal. Those are generally weeding and cleaning.

Other works will be done. These would be repairs to timber bridges in areas such as the Black Bush Polder, Number Fifty-two/Number Seventy-four, repairs to sluice at Crabwood Creek east, backfilling and repairs to revetment at Crabwood Creek and other areas, grading and shaping of dams in the Number Fifty-two/Number Seventy-four area, and grading and shaping of dams in the Black Bush Polder area.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Thank you, Hon. Minister. Could you kindly lay over that list in the House?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Will do.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Thank you, Sir. Mdm. Chairperson, line item 6281 – Security Services – I note a \$5 million increase from \$22.1 million to \$27.1 million this year in security services. Could you kindly indicate which security service and how many sites you have?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much, Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, what would have happened in the Agriculture sector is that the increase has been basically because of increase in hours, particularly in the field. The areas that we have are Whim office, Black Bush Polder pump station, the Manarabisi pump station and Borlam Pump station. I have six regulators here at different parts on the Corentyne Coast, the RDC compound itself at Seawall, Eversham and Joppa. Those are the areas. As I said, in many of the areas, we would have increased the number of hours.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Minister, did I hear you say the RDC compound? I thought I heard you say that under Programme 761. Could you kindly correct me if I am wrong?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes, I did say RDC compound. I am seeking clarity myself on that. Mdm. Chairperson and Hon. Member, that has been struck off my list. Thank you.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Is that the list for this one or the list for Administration?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** It is this list, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mrs. Lawrence:** Thank you, Hon. Minister. Mdm. Chairperson, a follow up: could the Hon. Minister indicate for the 13 sites which he has just listed, how many checkers they have?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you, Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, the Region has three checkers. These checkers work across the five programmes in the Region.

**Mr. Sharma:** Line item 6282 – Equipment Maintenance – the Hon. Minister did say that the information that he read was indicating that the Regional Administration compound building was here and he struck it off. Which list did he strike it off from and did he strike off the equivalent amount so that the \$27 million should be reduced?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you, Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, it was struck off from this list. It was just a cut and paste, so there is no need to reduce any cost.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chairperson, if you cut and paste the name and the description, then you have to cut and paste the amount to the relevant programme.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Thank you very much for that observation, Mr. Sharma. Are there any further questions?

**Mr. Sharma:** No, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chairperson, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether the low-bed is part of one of the equipment which we use for agricultural purposes.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Which head are we under, Dr. Ramayya?

**Dr. Ramayya:** It would come under Vehicles Spares and Service or whatever. There is not a specific item here. It comes under equipment, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, are you in a position to assist? We are talking about a low-bed.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes, Mdm. Chairperson, there is a low-bed. The low-bed is placed under Public Works, but it serves the other programmes in the Region.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** So, this would be the next Programme.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chairperson, I have a very strong word which I want to use, but I am restricted. I am very restricted in this House. For the last six years, that low-bed is at the Whim Cricket Ground not being used and not being rectified. That cost the taxpayers over \$19 million.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** What is that?

**Dr. Ramayya:** The low-bed is not being used, Mdm. Chairperson. This would probably disappoint the Hon. Minister: it is parked right now at the Whim Cricket Ground for the last six years. That can be verified at this stage.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** I do not know how you are allowing it, Mdm. Chairperson, but I am being mixed with Programme 762 and Programme 763.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I did not expect you to respond. I just thought Dr. Ramayya was seeking to assist, as you had had asked him for assistance before, to tell you about the low-bed.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes, Mdm. Chairperson. Thank you.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Members, if there are no further questions, I now put the question.

*Programme: 762 – Agriculture – \$453,268,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Members, could I invite you to turn to the capital expenditure? Before I do so, I have been advised and verily believe that snacks are available. As such, at Members' convenience, you may retire to be refreshed.

*8.18 p.m.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

**Programme: 762 – Agriculture - \$124,000,000**

**Mr. Trotman:** In relation to project code 1301000 – Drainage and Irrigation - can the Minister lay in writing the specifics in relation to the items under this project code?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** We have some of the information here and, in fairness to other Members of the House, I think it will be good if I can share some of it. Excavation of end field drainage canal, 1,000 rods - \$6.5 million; excavation of the Kilmarnock main drainage canal, 1,500 rods - \$7.5 million; excavation of the Rotterdam to Bussels facade, 2,000 rods - \$9 million; rehabilitation of the Number Fifty-two village sluice door - \$6.5 million; reconstruction of Mibikuri cattle bridge timber - \$8.9 million; construction of timber revetment at Grant 1779 Crabwood Creek - \$7 million; timber revetment at Orealla - \$8.6 million; construction of 8x10 Reinforced Concrete (RC) structure at Highbury - \$9 million, purchase of winches for sluice - \$7 million; construction of heavy-duty timber bridge at Light Town - \$8.5 million; reconstruction of timber bridges at Lesbeholden - \$16 million. It continues, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mr. Trotman:** Notwithstanding the Minister's anxiety to read out the figures and information, I still am hoping that he would agree to lay over, in writing, the relevant information.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, there is a request that you lay over the information in writing.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Will do, Mdm. Chairperson.

*Programme: 762 – Agriculture - \$124,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Current Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 763 – Public Works - \$162,044,000**

**Ms. Ally:** Line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads: could the Hon. Minister say whether the entire East Bank Berbice road is slated for maintenance or just a part of it?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** For the East Bank Berbice road for \$39 million, I am advised that there will be works done on various sections of this road. As I am on this, I had made a commitment to the Hon. Member, Mr. Sharma, that I would answer his question with regards to security and why the increase here.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, just bear with me. I think that Hon. Member, Ms. Ally, had a follow-up question on the same line item. Let us deal with that first but thanks for reminding the House.

**Ms. Ally:** Could the Hon. Minister state what the various sections of the road which will be done are and the type of material which will be used to do it?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** The first portion is Essendam to Mara and that would be Double Bituminous Surface Treatment (DBST) at a cost of \$9 million; Kuberang to Highbury, hot mix surface - \$9 million; Light Town to Plegt Anker, hot mix surface - \$9 million; Everton to Sisters Village, hot mix surface - \$8 million; and Islington to Glasgow, hot mix surface - \$4.5 million.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Who will be the contractor for this work?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** As soon as I am aware of that, I will endeavour to allow the Hon. Member to benefit from the information.

**Mr. Greenidge:** Would the Minister be good enough to tell us why the treatment along the road will be varied?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** I am not sure that I have that response here and I do not have, as part of my team, an engineer here to so guide.

**Mr. Greenidge:** Would he be good enough to provide us with that information? This road is the source of extensive concern in the Region. The residents along the road have, from time to time, resorted to blocking it, to protesting outside of Parliament, to protesting in New Amsterdam and elsewhere. I think the difficulties... [Mr. G. Persaud: What is your question, Mr. Greenidge?] My question is: what is the logic for this differential treatment when the road itself was constructed originally as a single road with one surface from end to end because the traffic along it, whilst it may vary, the loads that they carry are not radically different? There ought to be a justification for the treatment that the Minister proposes. If he does not have it now, I hope he will undertake to let us have that rationale within a very short space of time because it is a major concern to the people along the road.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** I want to thank the Hon. Member for the education in road construction. I enjoyed it and I promise that as soon as I get my bit from the technical people, I will make it available to the House.

**Mr. Trotman:** Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: I note that there is a doubling of the number of contracted workers in 2013. I wonder if the Minister can say what new positions have been added to this head. Secondly, can he inform us about the five highest paid categories under this head?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** The positions added: one plumber at a salary of \$44,408 per month; two carpenters at a salary of \$44,408 per month each; two labourers salaried at \$37,657 per month each; two vehicle drivers salaried at \$41,083 each per month; and one cleaner salaried at \$37,657 per month. This is based on the response I gave when I responded to questions asked on another region and that was that it is our quest to strengthen our public works department.

The five highest paid employees within this line item are: superintendent of works - \$107,470; sluice attendant - \$60,655; two other sluice attendants at a salary of \$52,442 each; one mechanic charge hand - \$52,318.

**Mr. Trotman:** Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: can the Minister please list the other infrastructure to be serviced under this head?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Repairs to fence and landfill C294 Strand, New Amsterdam - \$2.5 million; C47 living quarters, repairs to trestle, concreting of yard - \$800,000; Guyana House, Strand, New Amsterdam, repairs to fence, land filling - \$1 million; Amerindian Hostel, Stanleytown, repairs to fence and landfill - \$800,000; drainage and irrigation works at sub-office, Whim, repairs to the guard hut - \$400,000; RDC compound – land filling, concreting, and repairs to shed - \$2.5 million; C48 living quarters, New Amsterdam – repairs to fence and land fill - \$600,000; C65 Strand, New Amsterdam – repairs to fence and guard hut - \$700,000; and C57 living quarters, New Amsterdam – repairs to fence and land fill - \$1,080,000.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): I notice there is a variation in 2012. For 2013, there is a large sum budgeted. Can the Minister advise: one, why there is a

variation and two, who are the beneficiaries and what number of persons will be targeted for training?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** In the year 2012, the Ministry of Public Works assisted the regional administrations in providing engineering seminars and workshops. This year, we would like to do some follow-up training at the level of the region for our works department. The persons who would be involved are all 37 members of the department at varying times, based on their special needs and, particularly, for our technical staff training in AutoCAD.

**Mr. Sharma:** Line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads: I worked in Region 6 for quite some time and so I have people on the ground who would say to me that things are not being done. So, I get some inside information. In relation to the maintenance of roads, bridges and so forth, when the residents ask for these projects to be identified, the wrong projects are being shown to them. In the Auditor General's Report for 2011, it stated that the AG's staff was also shown the wrong road. They asked for a road in Grand 1780, second cross street, Crabwood creek and they were shown the wrong road. What mechanism would the Minister put in place to identify these projects? Together, under line items 6251 – Maintenance of Road and 6252 – Maintenance of Bridges – some \$68 million will be spent. It is important to know that these projects are identifiable some way or the other.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Mdm. Chairperson, sometimes history keeps us stifled. In 2012, Region 6 embarked on a process of signing its infrastructure works contracts in the communities. It is the Region that has set the pace. They go into the communities and sign the contracts and residents are invited to witness those signing. **[Dr. Ramayya:** It was only four people from the party.] Whether four or five persons turn up, it is an activity with a difference because it goes to the community. It is my hope and prayer that this process in itself will cause the utterances of the Hon. Member to be something of the past.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** 'Statements' would have been a nicer word. We are being very nice today; I am very happy.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** I stand corrected, Mdm. Chairperson. I withdraw. 'Statements' I accept.

**Mr. Greenidge:** Whilst the Minister is withdrawing, can he confirm whether it is a section of the community that signs these contracts rather than the engineer? Our impression is that the engineer signs the contract on something like the road and that is how the type of confusion that Mr. Sharma highlighted arose. Has it changed now? Does the entire NDC sign these contracts and go to visit the sites?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Coming from a gentleman who held high financial office in our country and who has an in-depth understanding of these procurement procedures, I am very much elated. Let me assure the Hon. Member that the signing is witnessed. It is like a football match at the Stadium where the team takes the field and we enjoy the game. The ceremonial aspect of the signing is witnessed.

**Mr. Greenidge:** The very officers who are with the Minister are aware of some of these problems. I would urge the Minister to consult with them now and in future before giving these definitive answers about what might be an ideal – I am not even sure that it is practicable – when, in reality, the Auditor General’s Report and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) meetings on this matter have pointed to grievous inadequacies as regards the supervision of the projects, the signing off of works... [Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Greenidge, are you speaking in general or are you being Region 6 specific?] I am being general. [Mr. G. Persaud: How can you be general? Be specific to Region 6.] I can be Region 6 specific. Do you want me to name the roads?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** I have heeded the guidance. I have heard the Hon. Member. I want to thank him.

**Dr. Ramayya:** I believe it is an insult to this House to listen to somebody who I respect, the dear Minister, who comes to this House and tells this House...and if they should bring all of the tapes from the National Communications Network (NCN), I would challenge this Minister in this House by asking if the people who were present at the signing of the contract were outside of the People’s Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C). This is an insult to this House. [Mr. G. Persaud: What is the question? Ask the question so I can get up...] I am adding to what Mr. Sharma said that the contract which was signed was not witnessed by the community; it was witnessed by a few and the few who are affiliated to the PPP/C.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Let me thank the Hon. Member for confirming one thing and that is that the statement I made about the contracts being taken to the community is validated. The question with regards to how many people accept and respond positively to the invitation is another issue. I am happy that the Hon. Member counts himself as a member of the PPP/C who witnessed the signing of these contracts. We welcome everyone. If everyone can be deemed as members of the PPP/C for any activity, we will love it and I am sure that you guys will love it too.

**Mr. Sharma:** I would not dwell any longer on line item 6251.

However, for line item 6252 – Maintenance of Bridges, I would direct the Hon. Minister to turn to page 197 of the Auditor General’s Report for 2011. If these community leaders know of these projects...the Auditor General’s department staff took time to go to Region 6 with all of the Public Works staff and engineers and yet they could not find the correct road. Something is seriously wrong.

Let me move to line item 6281 – Security Service. The Minister needs to provide some information as he promised. But before he provides that information, sometime ago there was a former Regional Executive Officer (REO) nicknamed “low bed”. After the incident about “low bed” came up...I recall this story about the REO nicknamed “low bed”.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Just speak about a former REO, if that is what you are speaking about, and do not tie him to an alias. There are so many people in Guyana who have aliases, if, in fact, he does have.

**Mr. Sharma:** He was removed and given a position at the Office of the President (OP) which is paying over \$1 million. I do not know if the increase in security charges under line item 6281 is reflective of security for “low bed.” Can the Hon. Minister just enlighten me?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you, Hon. Member for the sarcasm. Sometimes it is the last laugh story. As Hon. Members of this House, we checked the salaries of persons who are paid under the Office of the President. We did that only a couple of days ago in this honourable House. I am wondering if the Hon. Member can identify, from that explanation given and the document provided, that REO who is earning \$1 million per month. That is an indictment on us in this House to approve such.

**Mr. Sharma:** I said that the individual is no longer REO but he is employed by the Office of the President and earning that amount of money. This was said to this House during the 2012 debates. In 2012, we were given a list of persons and I could provide that list if the Hon. Minister wants it.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** That is my point. I think my Hon. Friend, Mr. Bulkan, read from the recording. He quoted 1283 and my statement about persons being responsible. That is another incident of the Hon. Member seeking to be less than responsible.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Member, Mr. Sharma is specifically saying that he has the information *vis-a-vis* 2012. He just said that. I am just telling you what he said but if you...

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Mdm. Chairperson, I hope that in your ruling you ask that he presents it to the House.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** If you want to ask him to provide it, then I think that he should be required to provide it.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Can the Hon. Member give us a timeframe by which he will provide it?

**Mr. Sharma:** I do not want to be quoting the wrong figure, so I will ask the representative of Office of the President to submit the list of contracted employees so that I can see the salaries and quote correctly.

**Minister in the Ministry of Finance [Bishop Edghill]:** As the Minister who answered for expenditure at the Office of the President, I would like to inform the House and, by extension, the entire nation that there is no former REO of Region 6 who is employed at the Office of the President and earns \$1 million per month. It is slanderous; it is wrong and it should be withdrawn. The question was asked about the five highest paid employees under the Programme and I stood up here and named the designations and the salaries. For a Member of this House to be allowed to have this on the public record, I think it is being very malicious. It should be withdrawn.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Member, Mr. Sharma, said he was speaking about 2012. We can do it two ways: Mr. Sharma, you can withdraw it and when you bring the evidence, in whatever time

you need and it is correct, we will restore it. Or, you tell us how long you want to provide it, and if you do not provide it, we will have it struck off then. Based on what has happened before, I would be inclined to go on the second limb which I mentioned but you must give us a specific time, Mr. Sharma, within which you will produce that document. If it is for 2012, it should be in the Hansard. Once you can find that, you can produce it. If not, at the designated time...I think it should be done by Wednesday, being the latest, because we will finish consideration of the Estimates by Wednesday and it should be done before. I will give you until Wednesday. I will remind the Speaker and if you cannot produce it by then, it will have to be struck from the record.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chairperson, the information is supposed to be with the Parliament Office. I can request a copy but I want updated information from the Office of the President on the various programmes under contracted employees.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** We have passed that. We cannot have a recommittal to that. My understanding is that with the assistance of the staff, obviously, you are seeking to get the Hansard for 2012 when questions were asked under Office of the President. You will peruse it, and if you find it you will bring it to the House. If you do not find it – because we all make mistakes – you will be required to withdraw it.

**Ms. Teixeira:** Mdm. Chairperson, for the 2012 Budget, the Office of the President's list of contracted employees, designations and salaries were circulated in the House to all Members of this House. There is no fishing expedition that is required.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** We are not speaking about a fishing expedition. The Member has been asked to provide it.

**Ms. Teixeira:** With due respect, he has made a very serious allegation here. He talked assertively that he has proof and, therefore, Madam, he should provide it now or at tomorrow's sitting at 2 o'clock, he should hand it in.

*8.48 p.m.*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I have ruled that by Wednesday, which will be before the Estimates are completed, when we are in this cycle, that the documentation be produced, and when produced it

can be either corrected or completely withdrawn. I am giving the Member until Wednesday's sitting. I will communicate with the Speaker that is the ruling and the Hon. Member will be required to produce...

**Ms. Teixeira:** When?

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I am saying by Wednesday's sitting.

**Ms. Teixeira:** He can do it tomorrow.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** I treasure your advice, but I will not take it on board on this occasion. So by Wednesday Mr. Sharma and until that is brought, my suggestion is that we move off from that and move onto another area.

Hon. Minister you had indicated that there was an item... I cannot quite remember it now.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Security.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** ...that you would have given the House a little more explanation. Are you in a position to so do?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes, Mdm. Chairperson. The question was why is it that the revised 2012 matches the requested 2013 in a close manner. I would have indicated to the House that the security for admin buildings were removed from Public Works and placed under Administration. Sometimes figures can cause us to be judgemental unless we are careful. I wish to ensure that I provided the information as requested to remove any doubts. The Public Works Department were providing in most instances eight hours security service in the year 2012 up to a certain period. From then, because of certain situations in our country, we upped the number of security hours from eight to 24 in two thirds of the instances and to 12 in the other instances. That is the reason why we have the increase.

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you Mdm. Chair. I need specifically if there are security tariffs incurred to secure the low-bed and if he could say for how many years it was being secured as an unserviceable low-bed.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much Hon. Member. Mdm. Chair, we spent a good while in this House in the Tenth Parliament and we all need to learn a little bit. Very often this he and she sometimes is the way we speak on the street but here it is different. I hope the Hon. Member will take time formulating his questions and pay the courtesies before trying to get answers.

**Mr. Sharma:** I apologise to the Hon. Minister.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member, apology accepted. I trust the Hon. Member Mr. Harmon would learn too because he is asking me what disrespect the man... the Hon. Member stood up... alright.

Mdm. Chair, let me assure the Hon. Member that the low-bed in question is not part of the security expense at this point in time and it has not been part of the security expense for the year.

**Mr. Sharma:** So this piece of Government asset is unprotected, which is against the laws of this country.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Mdm. Chair, the low-bed is in a Government compound and that compound has security via the agriculture programme protecting the agricultural equipment within that compound.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chair, that low-bed is not in a Government compound. The playground is not a Government compound. I do not see the definition that a cricket ground is a Government compound to store a low-bed.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Mdm. Chair, the Whim Compound is a Government compound. However styled by the Hon. Member it is a Government compound.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Therefore, Mdm. Chairperson we have two security guards and Mr. Sharma is right because they are looking after the Whim Community Centre. If that is the compound Mdm. Chair then there are two security guards at the Whim Compound. So the low-bed is under security.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Mdm. Chair, I acknowledge that the compound is secured. I said so.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Thank you very much. I think we all know more about the low-bed than we did when we came here. As to exactly where it is I am personally still slightly confused but I am not in a position to ask questions today.

*Programme: 763 - Public Works - \$162,044,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

## **Capital Expenditure**

### **Programme: 763 – Public Works - \$121,200,000**

**Ms. Ally:** Mdm. Chair, 1401000 – Roads: in the profile, Edinburg is identified as one of the areas where these roads will be done. First of all I find it a little strange that item is alone by itself when other roads come under the Current Expenditure Public Works. Be that as it may, I would like to find out whether there is any other area concealed within this head to do roads and, if not, can the Minister tell us what type of road we are going to have at Edinburg.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Mdm. Chair, there are a number of roads that will be done under this allocation. The rehabilitation of the Mibicuri Post Office Street, it is a burnt earth surface which will be transformed to DBST at a cost of \$6 million; dimensions 1,000 feet by 9 feet. Rehabilitation of the No. 64, Third Cross Street, a mud surface that will be transformed to DBST at a cost at \$11 million; dimensions 2,000 feet by 9 feet. Rehabilitation of No. 65 First Cross Street and Side Line Access, a burnt earth surface which will cost \$8 million; 2,000 feet by 9 ft. Rehabilitation of No. 41 First Street, burnt earth to DBST, No. 71 Village at \$14 million; 2,800ft by 10 feet. Rehabilitation Johanna South, Field No. 7, mud surface to DBST at \$7 million; 1,500 feet by 9 ft. Rehabilitation to Auchlyne, Third Street, burnt earth to DBST at \$8 million; 1,300 feet by 10 feet. Rehabilitation to Edinburg Community Centre Street, DBST to asphalt concrete surface at \$8 million; 1,300 ft by 10 feet. Rehabilitation to Grant 182 Side Line Access, to asphalt concrete surface at \$6 million; 800ft by 12 feet. That gives us the total of \$68 million.

**Mr. Trotman:** Mdm. Chair, Project Code 11000700 – Bridges: the profile talks about the construction of footpaths and heavy duty bridges in a number of areas. I wonder if the Minister can say where the footpaths will be constructed and how many heavy duty bridges will be

constructed. At the same time can he please give us the dimensions for all of these bridges and the relative costs?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Mdm. Chair, construction of heavy duty timber bridge at Sand Reef at \$7.5 million 25ft by 14 feet. Construction of a timber footpath bridge at Adelphi, \$1.5 million, 45 feet by 6 feet. Construction of a timber footpath bridge at Miss Phoebe, Tain, \$1.5 million, 45 feet by 6 feet. Construction of a timber bridge at Grant No. 2229, 1661, No. 4 Side Line, Crabwood Creek, \$4 million, 30 feet by 12 feet. Construction of a timber footpath bridge, Yakusari Second Street, \$1.5 million, 45 feet by 6 feet. Construction of a timber footpath at No. 71, 72 Side Line, \$1.5 million, 45 feet by 6 feet. Construction of reinforced concrete access bridge to RDC Compound, Vryman's Erven, New Amsterdam, \$9 million, 4 feet by 4 feet by 20 feet. Reconstruction of heavy duty timber bridge at Warren, Appiah bridge, \$5.5 million, 30 feet by 14 feet. Reconstruction of heavy duty bridge at No. 11, that is Blue Bridge, timber construction, \$5 million, \$25 feet by 14 feet.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chairman, I would kindly ask the Hon. Minister if he can make available a copy of the list for the rehabilitation of community roads so I can follow up on the roads done to report back to the Hon. Minister.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much Hon. Member and that is the kind of partnership Mdm. Chair... I will willingly so do.

**Ms. Ferguson:** Mdm. Chair, just a concern I have and I would like the Minister to give me a response to this. Is the Public Works Department responsible for maintaining of community grounds? I know for a fact that the residents in Eversham are complaining bitterly about the state of their grounds and that the youths do not have anywhere to, more or less, spend their recreational time. Can you advise who is responsible for maintaining the grounds and when these works will be done?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. This issue is one of extreme importance and so I cannot give you a single response because playgrounds proper would enjoy dual responsibility from the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/Civic) Government over the years. The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport will play its rule; the regional administration from time to time will also do what it can; the Neighbourhood Democratic Council itself will also do that and other

agencies of Government and non-governmental organisations will throw in their lot from time to time. I am hoping that we will look out for the advertisement when it is placed by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport in another couple of weeks and we can urge the community group in Eversham to put in an application. In the interim the Regional Administration will make an assessment of the ground to see how they can help the youngsters in that community.

*Programme: 763 – Public Works - \$121,200,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Current expenditure**

**Programme: – 764 – Education Delivery - \$2,060,950,000**

*[Mr. Nadir in the Chair]*

**Mr. Adams:** Line Item 6291 – National and Other Events: I notice for 2011 \$8.87 million, for 2012 \$8.87 million was budgeted and \$9.63 million was spent but in 2013 \$8.87 million is budgeted. I know there is always a problem in the Region with national and other events. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to say what occasioned the increase spending in 2012 and why is the Budget for 2013 back to the 2012 amount?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Mr. Chair, the increase in 2012 was a result of the Nationals being held in Georgetown. The region took a decision that the students should be brought up one day ahead and so the cost for cooks and stipend to a number of other individuals would have resulted in that increase in staffing.

Mr. Chair, it is a usual situation that the ten departments of education will make their Estimates with regards to national and other events under the education programme very often being unaware of where the activity will be held. That contributes significantly to the cost of participating in the activity moving sometimes significantly downwards, other times significantly upwards.

**Mr. Trotman:** Mr. Chair, line item 6113: I have asked this question before and want to ask it again. I notice there is a reduction in the number of persons employed under this head and I wonder again why this is so and would like the Minister to provide us with an answer.

*[Mdm. Chairperson in the Chair]*

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. The item 6113 generally caters for trained teachers that are called AM - Assistant Masters/Mistresses. So when they are promoted to Senior Masters/Mistresses then that number reduces until the graduation in September again. That is how it goes all the time for line items 6113 and 6112; promotions are often done in September and students graduate also in September from CPC.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chair, line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants: can the Hon. Minister state how many vehicles are allocated to this programme?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Under this programme there is a pickup, PJJ 8619; a land rover PDD 7933; two motor cycles, CE 5234 and 6223; a Leyland truck GMM 7179.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chair, I asked for the quantity not the list. However, thank you Hon. Member.

Is the Hon. Minister aware that in the capital budget there is a provision for one mini bus but the increase in cost is a mere \$1,000? How does he account for the consumption by that mini bus of \$1,000 a year?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Mdm. Chair, I am aware that there is an addition with regards the fleet of vehicles under the education programme. The procurement process in itself will take us a while and by the time we would have that vehicle with prudent management I think the allocation will see us to the end of the year.

**Mr. Sharma:** Does the Hon. Minister expect to purchase the vehicle on 31<sup>st</sup> December?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Mdm. Chair, whenever the procurement process is completed it will be completed.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chair, the Hon. Minister is satisfied and if he is satisfied I am satisfied that \$1,000 could do to run the vehicle whenever it is purchased.

Line item 6281 – Security Services: there is a large increase from what was revised in 2012; \$104 million was expended and \$116 million is being asked for in 2013. What is the reason for the increase?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Mdm. Chair, the increase of approximately \$11 million for the year 1213 is due once again to the increase in number of hours offered to security at the secondary school level in Region No. 6. All the secondary schools in the region now boast 24-hour security personnel. In some instances the number of ranks would have increased as well. That is the reason why the increase was requested.

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you Mdm. Chair for the Minister's explanation but the Minister should also take into consideration that the 2012 revised was \$140.7 million. So what was planned for 2012 that did not occur in 2012. Now the Hon. Member is indicating that there is a coverage of more security guards, increased hours and so forth.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Mdm. Chair, as I said there are three checkers in the region and these came as a recommendation from the Public Accounts Committee some years ago. We have implemented that and so we pay a number of hours of service verified.

**Mr. Sharma:** If indeed a checker caused reduction of \$36 million in savings such initiatives should be encouraged.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you.

**Mr. Bulkan:** Mdm. Chair, might I respectfully refer the Minister to line item 6255 with a budgetary request of \$25 million. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide some details of the other infrastructure that is to be maintained?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Mdm. Chair, construction of an incinerator at the Department of Education; raising the concrete floor at that same Department of Education; construction of outdoor toilets and revetments at the Department of Education; building concrete bridges; land filling and revetment work at the Benab Sub-Office, No. 64 Village; revetment and land filling, Savannah Park Nursery. Would you like the cost as well Hon. Member?

**Mr. Bulkan:** Would you be kind enough to lay it over for us please, Hon. Minister?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes, will do. Good Banana Land Nursery, \$600,000, land filling and repairs to fence; Sandvoort Nursery, repairs to fence and construction of two gates; Mount Sinai Nursery, land filling and repairs to fence; Adelphi Nursery, repairs to fence and trestle; Fyrish Village Nursery, land filling; Viola Nursery, land filling; Line Path D Nursery, land filling; St Mary's Nursery, construction of bridge, repairs to concrete walkway, and land filling; Cumberland Nursery, land filling and guard hut; Canefield and Nurney Nursery Schools, land filling; Tain Nursery, land filling.

Land filling at the following primary schools: New Amsterdam Special Needs; Tain, Fyrish, Auchlyne and Albion.

Secondary infrastructure – sourcing drainage system to effect repairs at Tagore Memorial; Winifred Gaskin, repairs to fence, lifting of concrete pathway; Tutorial Academy, land filling, construction of two gates; Vryman's Erven, land filling and repairs to fence; Central Corentyne Secondary, repairs to guard huts and concrete pathways; Edinburgh, repairs to fence.

*Programme: 764 – Education Delivery - \$2,060,950,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

9.18 p.m.

### **Capital Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 764 – Education Delivery - \$67,832,000**

*Programme: 764 – Education Delivery - \$67,832,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Current Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 765 – Health Services - \$995,492,000**

**Dr. Ramayya:** Mdm. Chairperson, I have seen here Drugs and Supplies - \$20 million: I would like to kindly ask the Hon. Minister...

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Would this be line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies?

**Dr. Ramayya:** Yes.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Thank you.

**Dr. Ramayya:** That figure to me is extremely high realising that the Minister of Health has indicated his budget of 2013. I would like the Hon. Minister to explain how is it that from a regional level we are spending \$20 million.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member, Mdm. Chairperson, the Ministry of Health through the drug bond is committed to providing the drugs and medical supplies that are required by the Regional Administration's Health Programme. From time to time an emergency will surface and so, given patient care, one tries to minimise delays as far as practicable and so from time to time it is necessary to procure from the open market.

Most importantly, much of the expenditure under this line item is to procure the required gas that is necessary for the open wards. That is what much of the expenditure is being used for in the various hospitals and institution, along with responding to those emergency situations.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Dr. Ramayya, are you finished, at least for the while?

**Dr. Ramayya:** No Madam.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Proceed.

**Dr. Ramayya:** Line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants: I have seen there is an increase of \$5 million for 2013. Can the Minister please explain the increase and how many new vehicles we have at this stage?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** We have 17 vehicles presently. I know that the Hon. Member is very concerned with vehicles, when down, so I should say that there are two vehicles out of the 17 here that are recorded as being down presently. Efforts are being made to have them repaired.

There are also two additional vehicles and there is a tractor and slasher that will consume fuel. The vehicles are... I can run them through.

**Members:** No.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much.

**Dr. Norton:** Line item 6222 – Field Materials and Supplies: this has increased by \$3 million, can you explain this increase?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** We would have had an increase in field staffing in the region, while we do not have an overall increase in staff so to speak. Particularly too, our taking in Region No. 6 once again, taking as much patient care to the homes of patients, this required us being on the road more often than we were before. So because of that, our environmental office, community health workers and so on are constantly in the fields and that would have resulted in us incurring more expenses.

**Dr. Norton:** Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: there is an increase of \$5 million from last year, could the Hon. Minister explain this increase?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Here again, as our buildings are aging there is need for more attention at the maintenance level. Hon. Member, are you interested in the list of buildings to be maintained?

**Dr. Norton:** No Sir.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you.

**Dr. Norton:** Neither in 2011 nor in 2012 there were any allocations for the maintenance of bridges. We have an allocation, even though small, in 2013, could the Hon. Minister kindly explain?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** The Hon. Member's observation is correct. The allocation is intended for the construction of the bridge in front of the Crabwood Creek Health Centre. The decking needs to be replaced, and it will cost \$650,000. It is a 15ft x 10ft structure.

**Dr. Norton:** Line item 6281 – Security Services: there is an increase by \$6 million as compared to last year, could the Hon. Minister say what is the reason for this increase?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** I am advised that with three additional locations; Port Mourant, Angoy's Avenue and No. 52 Village.

**Dr. Norton:** Line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships): taking into consideration that as a new project in the Capital Expenditure you have the acquisition of ultrasound equipment. Does this training include the training of persons to operate these equipment?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** This year it is intended to ensure that we train as much of our staff in the use of the equipment available, so our emphasis this year would be very much targeting our technicians, our support staff and training in such a manner so that, we not only know to use our equipment, but we know to use them correctly.

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you, Mdm. Chair. My question is in relation to line item 6221, but before I move on. I want to vindicate my statement by submitting to you, way before the time that you had given me, the information that I stated that there is one former REO that is now appointed and is in the Office of the President as of 2012, as Presidential Liaison Officer for Region No. 9, receiving \$1,747,140. So you have this information.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Is this monthly or yearly?

**Mr. Sharma:** Monthly.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** That cannot be correct; that is incorrect Mdm. Chairperson. When that information is circulated we will be able to respond with regards to its authenticity.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Yes, obviously.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chairperson, I received that information from the Parliament Office.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Thank you. It says here, “Payroll database for contracted employees for June, 2012.” Hon. Clerk, could I ask that it be copied, so that tomorrow it can be circulated to the Members?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member.

**Minister of Finance [Dr. Singh]:** I think many of us in this House would recall that at the time that this question was asked, last year, information was circulated that was extracted from the computerised payroll that included amounts of arrears salaries that a number of persons had been paid. As a result of which a corrected table was circulated and entered into the records of this

Assembly and every Member of this House received that correct table that reflected the monthly salary, rather than an accumulation of arrears salaries that the person had been paid.

That information was circulated in this House to every Member. So the Hon. Member should be well aware of this fact and should not be using this information that was very clearly corrected in this House.

May I ask Mdm. Chairperson through you that the Clerk provides the necessary clarification. I believe his records will reflect this.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Well I will ask that, but I will be hesitant to impute to the Member because speaking for myself I cannot remember. The amount of paper that we get, I do not think that we should impute an improper motive, that he had it. I do not even remember what he was saying. I am now seeing this. I have taken what you have said onboard and into consideration. I see it was Mr. Joseph Harmon MSM, MP who asked the questions.

It will be circulated and surely and certainly if there was a corrected version, that also will be circulated by tomorrow.

Mr. Clerk, tomorrow will do. Thank you very much. I believe the Hon. Member Mr. Sharma is on the floor.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chairperson, before I move on, just for clarification, I not too long ago collected that document. I asked the individual to submit both of them; only one was in the records. So I did not fabricate anything, I did not present a wrong... *[Interruption]*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Okay. I think there must be ...*[Interruption]* Hon. Member, I am satisfied that you have submitted a document, the Hon. Minister of Finance has raised an issue which we will look into and I am advising that you proceed with asking whatever other questions you may have under this programme head.

**Mr. Sharma:** Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: I am asking the Hon. Minister to provide, not to read out, tonight, that list that he has there for emergency medical supplies. Thank you.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. I am not certain what list the Hon. Member is referring to.

**Mr. Sharma:** Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: where he indicated that it included some gas and other stuff, I do not need... [Ms. Teixeira: Oxygen man.]

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Please allow the Hon. Member. The Minister did say gas and I myself was wondering what he meant; he did say gas. Hon. Minister, the request is, whether you are in a position to provide and I know that you usually do so quite promptly, the question is if you could provide tonight, but I would think it is very late tonight, but a commitment from you to do it tomorrow or by Wednesday, I think would be most reasonable. Are you in a position to so do Hon. Minister?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes. Mdm. Chairperson, I will certainly do as you would have directed. But let me say very quickly too Mdm. Chairperson, it would be very presumptuous of me to attempt to determine what will be the emergency drugs and medical supplies that we will be procuring. I will certainly, however, list the types of gas and the quantity, etc, that I have documented here.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Yes, I appreciate that point you are making, but thank you. You will submit obviously what you have.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes, Mdm. Chairperson.

**Mr. Sharma:** Mdm. Chairperson, I want the page that will total \$20 million. That is what I am asking for. The Hon. Minister was reading some document; just give me that document tonight and I will be satisfied.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Well the Minister... [*Interruption*] I believe the Assembly is beginning to resemble, you know when there is a big race coming on, like the Kentucky Derby and all the horses are in their gates and there is that buzz of excitement, I think as we approach 10 o'clock we are all becoming a bit excited, save and except Dr. Leslie Ramsammy who remains cool as usual. So could I invite people to let us have the questions and the answers so that we could meet that 10 o'clock deadline?

Hon. Member, the Hon. Minister has indicated that he will lay over, by Wednesday latest, the list. Hon. Member Mr. Sharma, do you have any further questions?

**Mr. Sharma:** Yes. Line item 6292 – Dietary: there is \$93 million for Dietary: I suppose this dietary is for the Fort Canje and New Amsterdam Hospital. Could the Hon. Minister say what amount is for the Fort Canje Hospital and what amount is for the New Amsterdam Hospital?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Here again these are estimates and so it is based on projections. We cannot make patients, so the estimated bits are as follows: Skeldon's Hospital estimated costs is \$28.050 million, Mibicuri \$3.3 million, Port Mourant \$3.3 million, New Amsterdam \$123 million and the National Psychiatric Hospital \$298 million.

**Mr. Sharma:** From my recollection, I recall clearly a report from the various institutions that there seems to be a breach in the procurement process in which the amount of items that are being ordered, when it is actually delivered it is less. The explanation given is that because of the long delay in delivery, the cost increases. Could the Hon. Minister address this and try to assure me that this would not reoccur; in that the time of purchase and the time of delivery should be as short as possible?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member. Mdm. Chairperson, very quickly, once the Hon. Member can provide any guidance to me, which I can act on I will certainly act. *[Interruption]*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Ms. Shadick, are you okay? I am just inquiring as to whether you are okay.

**Mr. Sharma:** I will be happy to present the Hon. Minister with the information. I would not give him my source because I do not want anyone to be dismissed, but I will give him the 2011 Auditor General's Report.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you very much Hon. Member.

**Mr. Sharma:** I will give him personally.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** This is public knowledge. I would hope that the Minister would have a copy of the 2011 Auditor General's Report.

**Mr. Bulkan:** A follow-up question to the same line item: would the Hon. Minister please clarify the figures that he provided us with a moment ago? Unless I heard him incorrectly, he referred to the projections for Fort Canje, he said \$298 million and for the New Amsterdam he said \$123 million. Is it that I misheard the Hon. Minister or would he care to clarify those figures? The total proposed allocation here is \$93 million.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** The figures that I was giving were daily. The figures I gave for the National Psychiatric Hospital was \$298,650 – that was daily.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Daily?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Yes Mdm. Chairperson.

*Programme: 765 – Health Services - \$995,492,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

#### **Programme: 765 – Health Services - \$63,670,000**

**Dr. Norton:** Project Code 2402000 – Land and Water Transport: could the Hon. Minister say with the boat and outboard engine that is earmarked here for the Orella and Siparuta communities because it is under “Health”, could the Hon. Minister say the style and material this boat is made of so it can probably be used as an ambulance or could he go further?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** I am advised that it is an ordinary boat that will be procured.

**Dr. Norton:** I asked that because one would consider an ordinary boat to be without cover. We know the Hon. Minister Mr. Robeson Benn for instance, is insisting that boats are now made with covers so as to protect passengers and so on. Especially, as I said before, this is under the health sector, one would have thought it was going to be used by the hospitals for the transfer of patients and so on and should not be an ordinary open boat.

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member, the suggestions are noted.

**Dr. Norton:** Same Project Code: could the Hon. Minister say for which community is the ATV vehicle for?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** It is for Orealla/Siparuta.

**Dr. Norton:** Once again, I am asking because it is under the health sector. We had the persons from the Rupununi who had no option, but to transfer patients on ATVs and they complained bitterly about the inconvenience of such a vehicle. What is the purpose of this vehicle?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** The ATV is to allow for commuting between Orealla and Siparuta and at the same time for the health workers to be able to offer patient care and for the transportation of medical supplies across land.

**Dr. Norton:** Just a follow-up question: I am asking the Minister, at any time was it ever thought of that this ATV might be the only means of transporting a patient from one let us say, Siparuta to Orealla?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Thank you Hon. Member, I am certain that many thoughts would have gone through at the consideration phase, when the Regional Administration would have sought to procure these two transportation equipment for the Orealla/Siparuta communities.

For me, I hear the Hon. Member and anything that can help to relieve a health problem or situation and save lives, I think it is the right thing to do.

**Dr. Norton:** Project Code 2504300 – Furniture and Equipment – Health: could the Hon. Minister say, those five equipment allotted here, for which centres are they earmarked for?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Ultrasound machine – New Amsterdam and Skeldon Hospitals; cardiac monitors – New Amsterdam as well as Skeldon Hospitals; pulse metres four hospitals and health centres, we have not identified exactly their placements; x-ray machine – New Amsterdam Hospital; and the benches for hospitals and health centres.

**Dr. Norton:** My last question Mdm. Chairperson: could the Hon. Minister say what type of ultrasound machine they have, if it is therapeutical or if it is diagnostic?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** I am advised that it is diagnostic.

**Mr. Trotman:** Mdm. Chairperson this is my final question for the night. I want to refer the Minister to Project Code 1204000 – Buildings –Health and to say to him that I noticed that there

are several pieces of rehabilitation works to be done and there are some constructions of buildings also to be carried out. I wonder if it is that you can give us the costs; the individual costs of all of the items in relations to the construction of the new buildings, their dimensions also?

**Mr. G. Persaud:** Rehabilitation of doctor's quarters at Mibicuri – wooden building 72ft x 22ft, \$3.5 million; raise house and construct flat under Skeldon - \$5 million, 34ft x 22ft; construct kitchen at Mibicuri Hospital – concrete, \$2.5 million, 30ft x 30ft; construct shed at the Berbice Regional Health Authority, New Amsterdam, \$4 million, 90ft x 48ft; rehabilitation of Mibicuri Hospital Mortuary, \$2 million, 40ft x 24ft; rehabilitation of Baracara Health Centre, one flat concrete building, \$4 million 41ft x 33ft; rehabilitation of doctor's quarters, Asylum Street, No.4 and 5 wooden building, \$6 million, 44ft x 29ft x 2ft and; enclosed doctor's quarters No.3 Asylum Street, concrete flat, \$5 million. 35ft x 32ft.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Member, before I put the question, I just want to indicate that I have received from Mr. Isaacs, the Clerk of the National Assembly, two documents; one is Notice Paper 63 which was based on a question asked by Mr. Joseph Harmon about the payroll and in that one, Desmond Kissoon was listed as receiving \$1,747,140 per month.

*9.48 p.m.*

Subsequently, another document – if I could be allowed because there is no... Just let me check. There is no date on it but I am saying that subsequently... I say “subsequently” because the covering letter says, “this replaces and corrects answers previously circulated on the notice paper”, so both the initial answer was given by the Government and subsequently it was corrected. Mr. Desmond Kissoon's salary on the corrected notice paper was a grand total of \$280,000 so, in view of this, I rule – I do not know if it is a big matter of ruling – that the statement made by Mr. Sharma be corrected... What he did say was correct but he must also go on to say that that was correct so he has a choice. He can either leave it on the record and then we insert ‘but honourable House it has been drawn to my attention that that figure was corrected subsequently and the correct figure is “this” or, Mr. Sharma, you can withdraw. [Ms. Teixeira: This was...] We are not dealing with when it was corrected. I am saying, Mr. Sharma, having made the statement and it now having been brought to his attention that that paper was corrected,

he has two options open to him; that you, Mr. Sharma, can add to what you have said that you have now been informed and you have now seen – I can show you the document – that it has been changed or you can withdraw the statement that you made.

**Mr. Sharma:** Thank you, Mdm. Chairperson. I will go with your first option and I will ask that the information that I provided to be amended. The Hon. Minister of Finance, whom I have great respect for, did make an error. Just like that I looked at the first one where I made the error so I apologise and I will subsequently be asking a question for an update of that information. Thank you.

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Hon. Members, what we will have on the Hansard are two answers with the second one, which is the lower one, being accepted by Mr. Sharma as being the correct figure. [Mr. Ramjattan: He had it since last year.] Yes, he may have had it since last year but we are not correcting... Hon. Minister, firstly you are not in your correct seat, which I understand and I understand why but that is what we are doing. We are not going with dates. He is saying that this is what he had. He has since been corrected. He is satisfied that it is corrected. He has already apologised. Many people do not have the courage to do. He has apologised. He must be credited for that. There will be no violence done to the Hansard because it will have the corrected figure. Hon. Members, on that note I would want to put the final item.

*Programme: 765 –Health Services – \$63,670,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mdm. Chairperson:** Let the House resume, please.

*Assembly resumed.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mdm. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, this now concludes our business for today.

**Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs [Mr. Hinds]:** Mdm. Speaker, I move that the House be adjourned to tomorrow, Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April, at 2.00 p.m.

**Mdm. Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. The House is now adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m., Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

*Assembly adjourned accordingly at 9.53 p.m.*