

National Assembly Debates

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE SECOND SESSION (2002-2005) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT
OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE
REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUB-
LIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN**

Part I

55TH SITTING

2.00 PM

Wednesday 9 March 2005

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)

Speaker (1)

The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S. C., M. P. - *Speaker of the National Assembly*

Members of the Government - People's Progressive Party/Civic (34)

The Hon. Samuel A. A. Hinds, M.P.

*- Prime Minister and Minister
of Public Works and Communications*

The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud, O.R., J.P., M.P.

- Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P.

*- Minister of Foreign Trade and
International Co-operation (Absent)*

The Hon. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.

*- Minister of Local Government
and Regional Development*

The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P.

*- Minister of Culture, Youth and
Sport*

The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P.

- Minister of Education

The Hon. Saisnarine Kowlessar, M.P.

- Minister of Finance

The Hon. Shaik K. Z. Baksh, M.P.

- Minister of Housing and Water

The Hon. J. Ronald Gajraj, M.P.

*- Minister of Home Affairs;
Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/
West Demerara (AOL)*

The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D. A. Bisnauth, M.P.

*- Minister of Labour, Human
Services and Social Security*

The Hon. Clinton C. Collymore, M.P.

*- Minister in the Ministry of Local
Government and Regional Development*

The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P.

*- Minister of Fisheries, Other
Crops and Livestock
(Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)*

- *The Hon.S.Rudolphi Insarully, O.R, C.C.H, M.P. *Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Foreign Affairs*
- *The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P. *- Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Absent)*
- The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P. *- Minister of the Public Service*
- The Hon. C. Anthony Xavier, M.P. *- Minister of Transport and Hydraulics*
- The Hon. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P. *- Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/ West Demerara)*
- **The Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P. *- Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce*
- The Hon. Carolyn Rodrigues, M.P. *- Minister of Amerindian Affairs*
- The Hon. Dr Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P. *- Minister of Health*
- Mr S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P. *- Chief Whip*
- Mr Cyril C. Belgrave, C.C.H., J.P., M.P. *- (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)*
- Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P.
- Mr Husman Alli, M.P. *- (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni) (Absent)*
- Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.
- Mrs Indranie Chandarpal, M.P.
- Mr Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P. *- (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)*
- Mrs Shirley V. Edwards, J.P. M.P.
- Mr Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.
- Mr Heeralall Mohan, J.P., M.P. *- (Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supernaam)*
- Mr Ramesh C. Rajkumar, M.P. *- (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)*
- Dr Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.D., M.P.
- Mrs Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H, J.P, M.P. *- Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Water*
- Mrs Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P. *- (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)*
- Mr Zulfikar Mustapha, M.P.
- Mr Neendkumar, M.P. *- (Region No. 4 - Demerara/ Mahaica) (Absent)*
- Mr Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P. *- (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/ Corentyne) (Absent)*

Members of the Opposition, (30)

(i) People's National Congress/Reform (27)

Mr. Robert H. O. Corbin, M. P.	
Mr. Winston S. Murray, C. C. H., M. P.	- (AOL)
Mrs. Clarissa S. Riehl, M. P.	- Deputy Speaker of the N. A
Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M. P.	- Chief Whip (AOL)
Mr. Ivor Allen, M. P.	- (Region No. 2-Pomeroon/Supenaam)
Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M. P.	
Mr. Deryck M. A. Bernard, M. P.	- (Absent)
Mr. C. Stanley Ming, M. P.	- (Absent)
Mr. Raphael G. C. Trotman, M. P.	
Mr. Vincent L. Alexander, M. P.	- (Region No. 4-Demerara/Mahaica)
Mr. Basil Williams, M. P.	
Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M. P.	
Dr Dalglish Joseph, M. D., M. P.	
Miss Amna Ally, M. P.	- (Region No. 5-Mahaica/Berbice)
Miss Sandra M. Adams, M. P.	- (Region No. 10-Upper Demerara/Berbice) (AOL)
Mr. Jerome Khan, M. P.	
Dr George A. Norton, M. P.	
Miss Myrna E. N. Peterkin, M. P.	- (Region No. 4-Demerara/Mahaica)
Mr. James K. McAllister, M. P.	- (Region No. 3-Essequibo Islands West Demerara)
Dr Carl Max Hanoman, M. P.	
Miss Lurlene A. Nestor, M. P.	- (Region No. 4-Demerara/Mahaica) (AOL)
Mr Abdul Kadir, J. P., M. P.	- (Region No. 10-Upper Demerara/Berbice)
Mr Ricky Khan, M. P.	- (Region No. 1-Barima/Waini)
Mrs. R. Bancroft, M. P.	- (Region No. 8- Potaro/Siparuni)
Mr Nasir Ally, J. P., M. P.	- (Region No. 6-East Berbice/Corentyne)
Miss Judith David, M. P.	- (Region No. 7-Cuyuni/Mazaruni)
Miss Genevieve Allen, M. P.	- (Region No. 4-Demerara/Mahaica)

(ii) Guyana Action Party/Working People's Alliance Party (2)

Mrs Sheila V. A. Holder, M. P.	
Mrs Shirley J. Melville, M. P.	- (Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

(iii) Rise, Organise and Rebuild Party (1)

Mr Ravindra Dev, M. P. (Absent)

OFFICERS

Mrs Lilawtie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

Mr Maurice B. Henry, Head Committees Division

Wednesday, 9 March 2005

PRAYERS

The Deputy Clerk reads the Prayer

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2005

The Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to continue consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2005

ASSEMBLY IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

The Chairman: Honourable Members, we will proceed with the Schedule in terms of our Resolution.

Pages 56 and 57

AGENCY 07 - PARLIAMENT OFFICE, Programme 071 - National Assembly

Question is proposed that the sum of \$297,738,000 for Agency 07 - Parliament Office, Programme 071 - National Assembly - stands part of the Estimates

Agency 07 - Parliament Office, Programme 071 - National Assembly - \$297,738,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

Page 396

DIVISION 505 - CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES - Parliament Building (Project Code 25003)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$45,000,000 for Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies - Parliament Office (Project Code 25003) - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies - Parliament Building (Project Code 25003) - **\$45,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

Honourable Members, we will now move to the business set out for the second day.

The Chairman: Pages 78 and 79

AGENCY 13 - MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, Programme 131 - Main Office

Question is proposed that the sum of \$26,581,000 for Agency 13 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Programme 131 - Main Office - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister to give details on the provision for contract employees, details which will include the number of such employees, the nature of the work carried out by these employees and the justification for such a large number of contracted employees.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, contracted employees comes under the Central Ministry - one Permanent Secretary, one Special Projects Officer, one Confidential Secretary, two Personal Assistants, one Co-ordinator and one Financial Secretary. In addition there is a Confidential Secretary, Vehicle Driver and another Vehicle Driver. There are two Ministers in the Ministry so there are two drivers. There are also one Principal Regional Development Officer, one Co-ordinator and this Co-ordinator is co-ordinating construction and works on Region 9 Takatu Bridge and monitoring of works along the roads. There is an

Assistant Field Investigator, Local Government – NDCs; there are Regional Development Officer, another Regional Development Officer, three Technical Projects Officer, one Typist Clerk, one Field Investigator. In addition to that there are six REOs for the Regions.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I must thank the Minister for exceeding the required answer since my question was specific to the Main Office and I rather sense that the answer was beyond the Main Office, but that notwithstanding, the other part of the question has remained unanswered. Why is it that the Ministry finds it necessary to have all of its employees as contract employees, when in fact they should be under the Public Service Commission?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: In accordance with the current Estimates Page 79, the Ministry has under this head only seven and we have at the Head Office only seven contracted workers. I went beyond that to deal with Region 2 - Programme 2, Programme 3 and beyond that. I am trying to give the Honourable Member full explanation. If he wishes, when we reach those areas he can repeat those questions again.

The Chairman: I do not think that you answered the question Honourable Member. The question is: why is it necessary to have so many contracted employees? Isn't that your question Honourable Member?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, the Regions' REO comes through the Central Ministry. In the Ministry there is also the sixty-five neighbourhood councils and those employees are also working under the Central Ministry. Those under Programme 1, surely must have a Permanent Secretary; surely we have a Special Projects Officer, because in the Ministry we deal with urban development programme, we deal with solid waste and so forth. So we must have a Special Projects Officer. There is one Confidential Secretary that is to the Senior Minister ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: I do not think that you are dealing with the answer

Honourable Member. The Honourable Member asked: why is it so necessary to have so many contracted employees outside of the Public Service? I do not know that that involves a listing of each employee.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: It is necessary because of the volume of work that we have and all these positions were authorised by the PSM and without those people, it is difficult for us to carry out the works. We must have personnel on board to carry out the works.

The Chairman: Yes Mr Williams.

Mr Basil Williams: The question is supplemental. Those contracted employees, couldn't they have been employed under the structure of the traditional Public Service?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: If they could have been employed, surely we would have done so. These are all key and critical positions and we sought permission from the Public Service Commission to do so.

Mr Basil Williams: A follow-up on the supplementary question. Are you saying that there is no equivalent position in the traditional public service structure for those persons that you have employed as contracted employees?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: There may be, but these are persons who are needed and once the Public Service Ministry approves of them, we apply.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, is the Minister saying to us that Confidential Secretaries, drivers and people of that nature who would have originally been listed in the traditional public service are no longer accessible through the traditional public service and therefore are required to be employed only as contracted workers?

The Chairman: I do not know if that is a question for the Minister. You

are asking a question about the Public Service, but Minister I will allow you to answer if you wish.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Speaker, at least the Honourable Member should consider that the Ministry must choose his Confidential Secretary and driver too. I think I have that right so that is the position.

The Chairman: The Honourable Members Mrs Backer and then Mrs Holder.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I am still at Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - I see there are seven people earning a total of \$10,240,000 per annum. I would like the name of the posts, not the persons, and what is the highest paid annually?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am not on with figures, but if the Member could put a question in writing, surely I would be able to get the PS to go into the records, because to get the salaries for all these people, I am prepared to answer that if a written question comes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: This is supplementary to the question. Honourable Minister, would you agree with me that if we divide \$10,240,000 by seven, we will get the average salary for the contracted employees will be \$1.4 million per year ... *[Interruption]*

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, I do not agree with that. You cannot compare the quality of a Special Projects Officer with a driver.

The Chairman: We know what the average is, Honourable Member. Is there a question? Is that the question?

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I am asking if my mathematics is correct.

The Chairman: You need not ask the Minister that, that is a matter of

mathematics.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: That is right.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I thought he would have been able to answer it to confirm.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, my question to the Honourable Minister pertains to the same Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: I did not get that, Honourable Member. I am sorry.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: It pertains to the same Acct Code that is currently being examined, 6116 - Contracted Employees. My question to the Minister would be specific to the salaries of the Special Projects Officer, the Confidential Secretary and the Field Investigator. Will the Minister please give us the salaries of those three officers?

The Chairman: I think he was asked that already.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I would only be too happy to do so, but I did not come here with individual salary figures for these employees. If a question is put here in writing, I shall provide the answer.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Mr Chairman, my question is supplemental and in fact seeks your guidance. Mr Chairman, questions have been asked and we have been told that the information is not available. That is understandable. My question is, if the information is not available, isn't the Minister obligated to this House to make the information available rather than to rule as if he was the Chairman that we must now write those questions.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, at all times I am obligated once the questions ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: That is a matter for the Honourable Minister. This is the National Assembly of Guyana, if the Minister wants to take that position that is a matter for him.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, just for my edification. Is that the position that a minister can take on any question?

The Chairman: I have no idea if that is the position a minister can take.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: No, I mean if it is permissible for a minister on any question in the Committee of Supply to say that *I do not have information, write me later.*

The Chairman: I cannot answer your question, Honourable Member that is for the Minister to decide. I just repeat that this is the National Assembly of Guyana and you are the lawful representative of this Assembly and you are entitled to lawful information. That is all I can say. The Minister can take whatever position.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I do not have the salary figures for every individual in the Ministry, so if the Honourable Member will come here like they do, like others do, then surely I can ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Let us proceed to the next question, please. *[Pause]* Mrs Backer please proceed and ask the next question ... Do not worry with Mr Belgrave.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I was waiting on you, Sir. Acct Code 6302, Page 79, I am looking at the Programme Outlines in Volume 2 Page 60 and I see scholarship administration, but at Acct Code 6302, I see nothing. I wonder if the Minister can help us on that?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, no allocation, no answer.

The Chairman: I am sorry, I did not get that.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: There is no money allocated, so I do not have any answer for that.

Agency 13 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Programme 131 - Main Office - \$26,581,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 80 and 81

AGENCY 13 - MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, Programme 132 - Ministry Administration

Question is proposed that the sum of \$18,732,000 for Agency 13 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Programme 132 - Ministry Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to inquire of the Honourable Minister as to the number of contracted employees and their designations under Acct Code 6116 on Page 80.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, last year there were three contracted employees; this year two, one Confidential Secretary has resigned.

Agency 13 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Programme 132 - Ministry Administration - \$18,732,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 82 and 83

AGENCY 13 - MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, Programme 133 - Regional Development

Wednesday, 9 March 2005

Question is proposed that the sum of \$95,452,000 for Agency 13 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Programme 133 - Regional Development - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: On Page 82 Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - Can the Minister provide us with the categories, numbers and designations of those employees?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, Categories - one Principal Regional Development Officer, one Co-ordinator, one Administrative Assistant/Field Investigator, three Technical Projects Officers, one Typist and one Field Investigator.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, could the Minister advise how many of these contracted employees are retirees?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised one.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, on Page 83 Acct Code 6312 - Subventions to Local Authorities - there is a sum of \$5,000,000. Could the Honourable Minister indicate which local authorities will benefit from that subvention and in what sums?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: That is Administrative grants to ten new NDCs. Those were introduced in 1994.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, can the Minister itemise those ten NDCs.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Surely I can commit myself, but I do not have that list right now. Again, I can provide that.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Trotman and then Mrs Backer.

Mr Raphael GC Trotman: A supplementary question, can the Honourable Minister say what is the criterion used to determine how this \$5,000,000 will be allocated to the ten new NDCs?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, these are administrative expenses. The normal NDC will have an overseer, rangers, clerks and based on their administrative requirements ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: ... the NDCs make the request for the sums.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: That is right. Whatever is the request, once it is in the budget, the Ministry will try to meet it.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: A supplementary question, there are ten NDCs and \$5,000,000. Are they getting it equally? Is it a \$50,000 grant to ten people?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: No.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: So some could get very little and one could get very much depending on what they ask for.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I said depend on the request.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I now see training has a figure of \$16,100,000 ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: What is the number?

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6302, I am sorry about that. I will have to hold that. I am at the wrong page.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L'Alexander: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6322 on Page 83 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - I wish to ask the Honourable Minister to indicate what is the annual contribution to the Commonwealth Local Government Forum, which is the only organisation indicated in the Annexe as an organisation to which contributions will be made.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, that amount represents affiliation to the Commonwealth Local Government Forum. I am advised that the annual fee is £740. Last year, we did make some payments and we have now some outstanding.

Mr Vincent L'Alexander: I wish to ask under this code, what benefits Guyana derives or intends to derive from this expenditure?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am invited to give a political speech here, benefits to the Local Government Forum. We are affiliated and as such we do have conferences where Ministers and other officers will go and we will share experience with other local government bodies in different countries and we keep the door open for diplomatic and other related governmental matters.

Mr Vincent L'Alexander: Mr Chairman, under the same Code, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister to indicate to this House, why is it that the benefit of attendance of conferences specifically the Local Government Regional Conference held in Montego Bay, in 2004 all expenses paid was not attended by a Guyana delegation and similarly why the benefit of attendance to the Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2005 in Aberdeen, Scotland, all expenses paid, there has been a withdrawal of Guyana's participation?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Attendance of these conferences depends on the availability of the personnel and if, in the context of Guyana where we have so much work to do, then one has to decide whether we can send or not. On those conferences that were not attended, it simply means that our officers were not able to attend.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister of the wisdom of the continuation of paying such large sums of money to an organisation when over the last three years, in fact more than three years, on no occasion, starting from the conference in South Africa unto the present conference, no participation from the Government of Guyana was made, in the circumstances, all expenses were being paid by funding agencies?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the wisdom of being affiliated is the wise decision of this government. Secondly, attendance at conferences, as I said, if the officers and ministers are available, surely we will attend, but not attending does not mean that we must negate our membership.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: I would like to refer to Acct Codes 6223 and 6224 - Office Materials and Supplies - Print and Non-Print Materials - I have noticed that the Print and Non-Print Materials have gone up well over 100 percent while for the Office Materials and Supplies a mere 10 percent. Will the Honourable Minister explain the rationale for this?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the increase represents the revision of the laws of Local Government Chapters 28:01, 28:02 and printing of the Annual Report of the Ministry. So that is one of the reasons why the vote has increased.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, I would like the Honourable Minister to tell us under Acct Code 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - if the Caribbean Association of Local Government is one of the organisations that will benefit from this \$600,000.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The answer is no.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

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Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - I see a sum of \$16,100,000. Could the Honourable Minister share with this House what areas we are concentrating on in Regional Development and Local Government?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we have in this country 65 Neighbourhood Councils and every year the Ministry carries out training courses in different areas Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice and this represents the voted provision.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Just for clarity, Mr Chairman, does any figure here represents overseas training or this is just local training?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The answer is only local training.

Agency 13 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Programme 133 - Regional Development - \$95,452,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 413

DIVISION 527 - MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,192,400,000 for Division 527 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I wish to ask the Honourable Minister under Project Code 19004 - Infrastructure Development - the Legend says Provision for solid waste disposal facilities in Regions 3 and 4, could you indicate the proposed location of the solid waste disposal facility in Region 3?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The proposed site is Region 3.

The Chairman: The place.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Oh, I am sorry, Windsor Forest. It is proposed.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I wish to ask under Project Code 19005 - Project Development And Assistance - the Legend says, Provision for capital subvention for municipalities and local community councils - how much of the proposed sum is allocated for local community councils?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: For local community councils - \$10,000,000.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to find out about the *locus standi* of local community councils in the system of governance in this country, how do we determine what is a local community council that would benefit from this kind of subvention?

Hon Harippersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, community council bodies are called in Guyana CDCs. These bodies come from the communities themselves. In every area the people can form themselves into CDCs and in doing so, they normally identify small projects which by self-help they can do some work and if there is a need then they can ask the government for assistance for which we vote small sums of money.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I would like to find out who is final arbiter in determining the existence of the CDC. Is it possible in one community that you could have two CDCs? Who is the arbiter to determine which one is legitimate and which one is not legitimate and therefore which one is entitled to and which one is not entitled to a disbursement?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, this will depend on the nature of the work to to be done ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Who determines what is a legitimate CDC? That is the question the Honourable Member asked.

Hon Haripersaud Nokta: The Minister determines that. We have in that section Minister Collymore who is also in charge of the section. If the request comes, he looks at it and then he so decides.

Mr Vincent L.Alexander: Mr Chairman, could the Minister provide us with the criteria for such determination and the procedure which is used to process any such application, if not now, in writing at a later date?

Hon Haripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the criteria really depends on the needs of the society, the problems that confront the society and the benefits they can derive from a small project which they will initiate and then request the Ministry for assistance. That is the criteria. Now, concerning decisions, those are dependent on the nature of the projects and also the cost. So that is the way we go about it.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, under the Project Code 19003 - Consultancy - because there is no profile, can the Minister explain to us what is the nature of this consultancy which will demand \$100,000,000?

Hon Haripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we have four categories here:

- consultancy to assist municipalities to prepare 2005 municipal budgets and implement business plans;
- Council governance consultancy to provide key training in governance issues;
- consultants to do technical work on projects, roads, markets and so forth, designs and costing; and

- human resource management to build capacity in human resource management in municipalities.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Minister under Project Code 19005 - Project Development and Assistance - if the Honourable Member Philomena Sahoye-Shury is an Officer of the Ministry who is vested with the power to make determinations in relation to local community councils.

The Chairman: That is not a Budget question, but if the Minister cares to answer, he can do so.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I already said that Minister Collymore is in charge of this section.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, if we go back to 19004, the Minister did say that the area identified in Region 3 is Windsor Forest. For completeness, could the Minister say what is the location in Region 4? Is it Mr Rambo Gaskin's area?

The Chairman: Do you mean Eccles, Honourable Member?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that there are three proposed areas:

- Lusignan;
- Buxton/Foulis; and
- Chateau Margot.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, is the Minister

saying that there is no a final determination of where this project will be located?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, These are proposed areas, discussions are on going.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, Project Code 24001 - Land Transport - will the Honourable Minister indicate which officer will be given this vehicle of \$5,200,000. I have checked the profile and it does not state, it just simply says, purchase of vehicle.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the Honourable Minister Clinton Collymore presently has a very old vehicle and maintenance cost is very expensive right now. So this is an allocation for the Honourable Minister. This is true and I guess that you will support that.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Mr Chairman, Project Code 36001 - Solid Waste Disposal Programme - I would like to ask the Honourable Minister if the Haags Bosch location is located in Region 4.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The answer is yes.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: A supplementary question, Mr Chairman, is the Haags Bosch Project completely separate and apart from the other projects identified for Region 4?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The answer is yes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Corbin

Mr Robert HO Corbin: I refer to Project Code 19005 - Project Development And Assistance - \$270,000,000 have been allocated and wish to ask the Minister whether it is proposed with this sum to arbitrarily impose projects on the regions, continue doing that or whether this

year the Ministry proposes to accept the recommendations by the local bodies and allow them to execute these works.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, there is no arbitrary imposition. As I said, if the respective communities have a project or if they have a problem, they need a bridge or a road or a street when the request comes, the Honourable Minister examines and makes a decision.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 26003 - Power Generation - we that there is a purchase of solar panels for communities in Regions 7 and 8, I am just trying to find out if these solar panels are going to regional buildings or are they going to be distributed to the communities. Who will benefit? Will it be the regional office or the compound or for the general population in those to areas Phillippi and Kopenang.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, these two pieces of equipment will go to the Health Centres at Phillippi and Kopenang. We do put them there. In the case of night service, we can put a bulb. We also have a refrigerator where we keep some categories of medicine and it also powers the radio generation set in case of emergency our health workers can speak to other areas and get help.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Under Project Code 19005 - Project Development and Assistance - Provision for capital subvention for municipalities and local community councils, could the Honourable Minister indicate, what are the specific allocations for the municipalities under this provision?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Subvention to municipalities:

- | | | | |
|---|---------------|---|--------------|
| - | Georgetown | - | \$16,000,000 |
| - | New Amsterdam | - | \$10,000,000 |

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-	Linden	-	\$9,000,000
-	Anna Regina	-	\$7,000,000
-	Rosignol	-	\$7,000,000
-	Corriverton	-	\$7,000,000

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, regrettably I have to take you back to Project Code 19004 and to ask the Honourable Minister if we have not yet determine the location for the solid waste projects, what was the basis for arriving at the cost?

Hon Haripersaud Nokta: What was the ...

Mr Ivor Allen: ... basis for arriving at the cost?

Hon Haripersaud Nokta: Well we are hoping that after consultation with the communities ... and I suppose that when we reach that stage, we will cross the bridge.

The Chairman: The Honourable Members Mr Allen and then Mr Alexander.

Mr Ivor Allen: The question was: what was the basis for arriving at the cost? Because if you do not know where the thing is going to be, how do you cost it?

The Chairman: I do not think the Honourable Minister said that he did not know where the place would be. He named three places. He then said that they were consulting with the communities.

Hon Haripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, this is an allocation which we have opened here and when we get down to the discussions and all the other requisites then we will decide that.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, from the figures given to me from the allocation of the municipalities: Apparently \$56,000,000 has been allocated to municipalities out of a sum of \$270,000,000. The other aspect of the project deals with local community councils, is the Minister saying that out of a subvention of \$270,000,000 for municipalities that the local community councils that the local community councils will benefit from \$214,000,000, while the municipalities benefit only from \$56,000,000.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the Honourable Member actually forgot that we have sixty-five neighbourhood councils in this country and out of that sum \$195,000,000 will go to the sixty-five neighbourhood councils.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, could I ask that a correction be made because the notation here is very clear. It says, *Provision for capital subvention for municipalities* (and they are only six) *and local community councils*, there is absolutely no reference here to neighbourhood democratic councils and if it is intended for the neighbourhood democratic councils, I am asking that the relevant correction be made.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: This has been the format, for the past ten or more years I have been answering these questions ...

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Correct a wrong.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: ... and when we talk about local communities, local communities mean neighbourhood councils too.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, if one looks at Volume 3 where there is the Project Profile, it says, the project includes the provision of capital subventions to municipalities and local community councils for works and such rehabilitation, upgrading drains and irrigation systems, roads and bridges and for environmental sanitation. There is

absolutely no reference here to neighbourhood democratic councils. If perchance the intention is to include neighbourhood councils, I am asking the Honourable Minister to indicate how much of the subvention goes to neighbourhood democratic councils.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I do not know if the Honourable Member really understand. This has been the format for the past ten or twelve years. It has been this way, but if there is need for us to specifically put that then we will ask the Ministry of Finance to do so. If we come back to the point, we have sixty-five neighbourhood councils, a total of \$195,000,000 is allocated and when divided, it will amount to \$3,000,000 for each neighbourhood council.

Division 527 - Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development - \$1,192,400,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 244 and 245

AGENCY 71 - REGION 1: BARIMA/WAINI, Programme 711 - Regional Administration and Finance

Question is proposed that the sum of \$42,625,000 for Agency 71 - Region 1: Barima/Waini - Programme 711 - Regional Administration and Finance - stands part of the Estimates

The Honourable Member Mr Ricky Khan

Mr Ricky Khan: Under Acct Code 6134 - National Insurance - we have observed that the Auditor General's Report noted that there were quite a few employees not paying the National Insurance. Has this been rectified?

The Chairman: Is the Minister aware of that? I do not know.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Can the Honourable Member repeat the question?

The Chairman: The Auditor General's Report says that there are people employed for whom National Insurance has not been paid. Is that correct, Honourable Member?

Mr Ricky Khan: Yes.

The Chairman: Has that situation been rectified?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, I am not aware of that, but if the Member can bring these individual things to us then we will ask the NIS to rectify that. Mr Chairman, although it is mentioned in the Auditor General's Report, what we need is the specific information of the individuals. Surely, the Ministry will ...

Mr Vincent L. Alexander: You do not read the Auditor General's Report.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Yes, I do.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Khan.

Mr Ricky Khan: Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - a \$100,000 budgeted for 2005 in Region 1, can we have some explanation?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: The Ministry will normally carry out training for the staff sometimes every six months/three months as is required.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: A supplementary question to the one just asked, what specific training programmes are envisaged under that particular provision?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Training in management

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Khan

Mr Ricky Khan: Acct Code 6311 - Rates and Taxes - It says here, Rates and Taxes and Subventions to Local Authorities ... Can this be explained?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Well, this is payment to the NDC, Mabaruma and Materkai.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L. Alexander: I just want a clarification under Acct Code 63111 - Rates and Taxes and Subventions to Local Authorities ... Could the Honourable Minister say, of this sum how much is payable to the Morawhanna or Mabaruma area as opposed to what is paid to the Materkai area?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Individually, I am not in a position, but I am advised it is \$120,000 per month for the two NDCs.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Page 244, Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - I have noticed a small figure but there are four temporary employees in Region 1. Could the Honourable Minister indicate to us the designation of these four temporary employees?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: These are road cleaners who work along with the RDC.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: What are they?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: These are workers who work on the road - ordinary labourers.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Could the Honourable Member explain ... earlier you said that we have six contracted workers in the form of REOs in the Region. However, under Staffing Details COA 6116 - Contracted

Employees - the figure is zero?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: There is no contracted employee there in Region 1.

Agency 71 - Region 1: Barima/Waini, Programme 711 - Regional Administration and Finance - \$42,625,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 246 and 247

AGENCY 71 - REGION 1: BARIMA/WAINI, Programme 712 - Public Works

Question is proposed that the sum of \$84,587,000 for Agency 71 - Region 1: Barima/Waini - Programme - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Khan.

Mr Ricky Khan: Acct Code 6251 - Maintenance of Roads - Can we have a detailed report on roads in the different sub-regions?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I dealt with the maintenance of roads in my budget presentation and I can repeat it again. Road stretching from Mabaruma to Hosororo going into Kumaka then from Wanaina to Wauna and we are going to Matarkai then to Citrus Grove to Port Kaituma from Kaituma to Four Miles; from Four Miles to Arakaka; from Arakaka to Matthews Ridge.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - I noticed there are thirteen temporary employees ... Could the Honourable Minister say what positions these temporary employees hold.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: These are road workers and boat hands.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Khan.

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Mr Ricky Khan: Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Other Goods and Services Purchased - \$15,002,000 ... Can we have an explanation for this?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Could you repeat the number.

Mr Ricky Khan: I am sorry. Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Can we have an explanation?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: This is for security services. The name of the Company is United Associates and Domestic Services.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: A supplementary question to Acct Code 6281 ... We note a decline in the cost of security over 2003 to 2005 and I wish to ask if it is because of the services contracted or because of competitive bidding by the security services.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the reduction is because of the re-organising of the whole area in groups so that is reflected in the budget. Contracts - I am advised that these are advertised and then companies bid.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: With respect to maintenance of infrastructure, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister whether his Ministry is making any attempt to empower, train the people within the region to deal with their infrastructural needs.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the Ministry does training, but it does not come under this Code. This is only maintenance of infrastructure.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Khan.

Mr Ricky Khan: Acct Code 6282 - Maintenance and Equipment - could the Minister tell us the equipment that is maintained and if it is rented out privately at any time?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am afraid, there is no voted provision.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Back to Acct Code 6281 - could the Minister advise how many security services are contracted to the Regional Administration, Region 1?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am advised only one security service.

Agency 71 - Region 1: Barima/Waini, Programme 712 - Public Works - \$84,587,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 248 and 249

AGENCY 71 - REGION 1: BARIMA/WAINI, Programme 713 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$312,226,000 for Agency 71 - Region 1: Barima/Waini, Programme 713 - Education Delivery - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Is this the same United Associates and Domestic Services that has been awarded that contract?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Again Mr Chairman, just one security service.

The Chairman: Is that the name?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: That is the name.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr Dalglish Joseph: Mr Chairman Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - What specific training is intended by this figure?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: These trainings are organised under the CPCE Teachers' training for teachers in the region.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Could the Minister please indicate to the House whether United Associates - Domestic Security and Services indigenous to Region 1?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am advised no. These services are advertised and companies can bid from any part of the country.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mr Deborah J Backer: Could the Minister indicate whether any security service that is indigenous to Region 1 bid for this contract?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am advised, no.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, could the Minister advise whether the allocation under Acct Code 6281 is an allocation that is related to a contract separate and apart from the allocation under Acct Code 6281 on Page 247? Is it one contract with two allocations or is it two different contracts?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am advised that it is one contract.

Agency 71 - Region 1: Barima/Waini, Programme 713 - Education Delivery - \$312,226,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand

part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 250 and 251

AGENCY 71 - REGION 1: BARIMA/WAINI, Programme 714 - Health Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$113,583,000 for Agency 71 - Region 1: Barima/Waini, Programme 714 - Health Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, on Page 251 Acct Code 6281, I seek clarification as to whether the many health facilities benefit from security services?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised, no. The Community provides the security for the community health services.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question ... Is that the case for the Mabaruma hospital?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Yes, because the workers live within the compound.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - I would like the Honourable Minister to state which specific buildings will be maintained under this provision?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: We are maintaining Health Centres at Quebana, Arakaka and Matthews Ridge.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Hanoman.

Dr Carl Max Hanoman: Under Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - can the Honourable Minister state what supplies are available or will be bought from the budgetary allocation of \$1,200,000?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, this allocation is only for emergencies, because drugs are now provided by the central Ministry.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - that was the question from Dr Hanoman, but I see here Materials, Equipment and Supplies a total of \$5,099,000. What is that intended to provide?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: That is the grand total.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Hanoman

Dr Carl Max Hanoman: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - I would like to ask the Honourable Minister ... I see no figures for training in Region 1, an area in need, is that a typographical error?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I already said that drugs and supplies come from the Central Ministry.

The Chairman: Acct Code 6302.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Oh, sorry! The Ministry does that training.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: On Page 250, Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - We have been advised that this is for Emergency Supplies ... May I ask the Honourable Minister what is the mechanism in place for procurement of emergency supplies?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, emergencies are emergen-

cies and we deal with them accordingly. By the time you go through the process the patient is dead. *[Laughter]*

The Chairman: The next question Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, what has been the experience? Are these supplies available in the Region? Are they not available in the Region?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: It depends on the type of medicine needed. If it is available in the Region then it is procured, if not by a telephone call it can be sent in by the next plane.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph;

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6282 - Equipment Maintenance - Can the Minister tell us what equipment is going to be maintained here?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Computers, fax machines, telephones and so forth.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: A supplementary question . . . I have visited this facility recently, for example at Port Kaituma, there is a number of medical equipment that require maintenance and if the Minister is telling us that this money under health is being allocated for computers, then I really want to find out what is happening with the medical equipment maintenance here.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: We made note of that and that is why we have this provision under the same head and you can see there is an increase of \$50,000.

The Chairman: Yes, Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: A supplementary question, the Honourable Minister just stated that it is for maintenance for computers, fax ma-

chines ... [Interruption]

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister obviously sees no contradiction, Honourable Member. Ask another question.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, among other things too, if you look at the Code, we have an increase here of \$20,000

Agency 71 - Region 1: Barima/Waini, Programme 714 - Health Services - \$113,583,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 416

DIVISION 531 - REGION 1: BARIMA/WAINI

Question is proposed that the sum of \$109,500,000 for Division 531 - Region 1: Barima/Waini - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 24002 - Land and Water Transport - I see a sum of \$4,600,000 and the Legend says *Purchase of vehicle, outboard engine and balahoo*. I do not know if that is also going to be needed in Region 4, but if you look at Page 147 of the Profile page, this project includes the purchase of one double cab, 175HP outboard engine and one balahoo. My question is where in Region 1 this balahoo is going to be placed. Where has it been bought for?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The balahoo is a wooden boat and it will be used for all the small rivers. There are many small rivers in the interior, Koriabo, Hotakwai, Sahubudia, Kaituma and I can go on calling a lot of names of rivers.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I think in his excitement to answer the ques-

tion ... the question is where will one balahoo be stationed? Where will be its headquarters?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The balahoo will be stationed at Mabaruma and the boathouse is constructed at the river side of Kumaka.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: No, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Khan.

Mr Ricky Khan: Project Code 11001 - Bridges - the Legend says Construction of Bridges \$7,000,000. I do believe this is ongoing, was it ever advertised?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we are now seeking the provision; when we get the money we will advertise.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Holder

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister a question I attempted to ask before, but I believe that it would be more relevant this time with respect to Project Code 11001 - Bridges - will the Honourable Minister tell this House whether attempt is being made by his Ministry to build capacity within the Region. I see the bridges to be constructed are in Wauna and Kumaka junction. Is there any attempt to build capacity so that the people of the region can contribute to the construction work there.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we endeavour at all times to build capacity and in this respect, yes we do look at that, but these jobs are advertised and based on bids.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, if we could revisit Project Code 11001 – Bridges. This is supplementary to the question asked by my colleague Mr Khan. The Honourable Minister said that there will be

no tendering, because the work has not started, but when you look at Page 142 of the Profile, we see that the amount spent before 2005 is \$4,100,000. Amount budgeted for this year \$7,000,000 which gives a total of \$11,100,000, so I find it strange that the Minister could say that work has not started.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, it is mentioned in the Profile retention. This bridge was completed last year and we have to pay the retention. The defects are liable for the Wauna bridge

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Project Code 26004 - Other equipment - Can the Minister state what other equipment is listed to be purchased here under this figure?

The Chairman: I am afraid there is no budgeted figure there Honourable Member.

The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 26003 - Purchase of electrical cables, meters and poles - I just want to know if there is any study done or if there was any thought given to powering by means of solar systems as was done in another part of the region, because I thought that would be very forward looking.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we do have solar panels, but we used those in the outlying areas at the health centres, but we recently installed a brand new 500KV generating set at Mabaruma and this allocation is to provide the necessities to extend power to the Mabaruma settlement and the catchment areas.

Division 531 - Region 1: Barima/Waini - \$109,500,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 256 and 257

AGENCY 72 - REGION 2: POMEROON/SUPENAAM, Programme 721 - Regional Administration and Finance

Question is proposed that the sum of \$68,123,000 for Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomeroon/Supernaam, Programme 721 - Regional Administration and Finance - stands part of the Estimates

The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Codes 6111, 6112, 6113 and I draw your attention to the Staffing Details on Page 257 and wish to note that the authorised establishment is 93 and filled 94 and to ask of the Minister if there is no existing vacancy in the administration of Region 2.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, there are existing vacancies, if the Honourable Member can look at the Staffing details, Authorised is 116 and we have 94. So there are.

Mr Ivor Allen: A supplementary question, what proposals are in place to fill these vacancies during 2005 and would they be advertised?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, sure, the Region through the Ministry has already approached the Public Service Commission to look at the appointments and I want to report that last year one Senior Personnel Officer (SPO) was appointed. So the process goes on.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Code 6291 - National and Other Events - could the Minister advise on what events this \$670,000 will be expended?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, every year we do have activities marking Independence Day, Republic Day and Amerindian Heritage month. This allocation is used for those.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: On page 257 Acct Code 6311 - Rates and

Taxes - could the Honourable Minister advise if the rates and taxes for 2005 have been prepaid?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised, yes, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Melville if Mr Alexander will give way.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - we must know that we have quite a lot of valuables within the Regional Administration site and under this Code nothing has been budgeted for security. Could the Minister kindly explain please?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, there is no allocation under this Code.

Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomerook/Supenaam, Programme 721 - Regional Administration and Finance - \$68,123,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 258 and 259

AGENCY 72 - REGION 2: Pomerook/Supenaam, Programme 722 - Agriculture

Question is proposed that the sum of \$122,143,000 for Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomerook/Supenam, Programme 722 - Agriculture - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honour Member Mr Ivor Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6113 - Other Technical and Craft Skilled - and I draw your attention to Staffing Details and I note that there are twenty-five persons ... Could the Minister advise where these persons are based?

The Chairman: Is it Technical and Craft Skilled - Acct Code 6113?

Mr Ivor Allen: Yes

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, the Head Office is in Anna Regina at the Administrative Office, but these officers are based in different locations in the Region, Pomerook and so forth.

Mr Ivor Allen: A supplementary question . . . Of the twenty-five officers how many are based in Pomerook, if any?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, there is an Agriculture Office at Charity, but I am not in a position to say how many officers are stationed at Charity to service the Pomerook. We can provide that.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Ivor Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and unskilled, and I note that there are sixty-two persons employed, and I ask the same question . . . Where are these persons and in anticipation of the answer, I ask if any of the sixty-two persons are based in the Pomerook and if so, at what locations?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, the same answer . . . The Office is at Charity and they are based at Charity, but they service the Pomerook, Wakapau, Akawini, Upper Pomerook, Kabakaburi, St Monica, Karawab, Sirikie and so forth.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I therefore draw your attention to Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - I wish to ask the Minister if the sum of \$400,000 will provide adequate local travel and subsistence for eighty-five officers travelling to Karawab, St Monica and all the places he just called.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, I am advised yes, because they do not travel individually, these trips are tied up with other government agencies like Education, Health and they save on the travel.

Mr Ivor Allen: One final question, please.

The Chairman: Mr Allen, you have to be prompt or else we will proceed. Time is against us. I cannot wait on Members to ask questions. Go ahead.

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Code 6253 - Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works - I wish to ask the Minister of the \$55,500,000 proposed to be spent, where these works will be executed?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the whole of the Essequibo Coast has so many drainage canals and if I have to relate them, I am afraid you will have to give me more time. So it is for the Drainage and Irrigation Systems, canals, kokers, sluices from Supenaam going all the way to Charity and even in the Pomeroun.

Mr Ivor Allen: A supplementary question ... Where in the Pomeroun, Mr Minister?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Hackney Canal, Cozier Canal ... well there are so many canals.

Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomeroun/Supenaam, Programme 722 - Agriculture - \$122,143,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 260 and 261

AGENCY 72 - REGION 2: POMEROON/SUPENAAM, Programme 723 - Public Works

Question is proposed that the sum of \$65,318,000 for Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomeroun/ Supenaam, Programme 723 - Public Works - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Ivor Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - I wish to ask the Minister to advise this House as to where he proposes to

spend the \$5,500,000 budgeted?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the State House Complex at Anna Regina. We have an old building there and it needs to be maintained.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - I wish to ask the Minister how is the service provided if it is contracted out and if so who is the contractor?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the contractor is United Associates

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: The same Acct Code 6281, is this the same United Associates in Region 1?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Yes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: On Page 260 under Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance and Other Infrastructure - I wish to ask the Honourable Minister which infrastructures are intended to be maintained under this Code - specify which infrastructures are to be maintained?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, in that region we have government buildings at Onderneeming, Anna Regina, Cotton Field and Charity.

Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomeroon/Supenaam, Programme 723 - Public Works - \$65,318, 000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 262 and 263

AGENCY 72 - REGION 2: POMEROON/SUPENAAM, Pro-

gramme 724 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$571,314,000 for Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomerook/Supenaam, Programme 724 - Education Delivery - Stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Ivor Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - and here again I ask the question ... Who is the contractor?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Again, Mr Chairman, the contractor is the same.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: On Page 262 under Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - I wish to ask which infrastructure will be covered by this Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: We have lots of buildings and we have to maintain fences at the sanitary blocks, schools, health centres and to do some land filling on some of these compounds.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, under Acct Code 6242 which specified maintenance of buildings ... Is the Minister saying to me that maintenance of buildings is covered under two Codes 6242 and 6255 - Other?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, under that Code is buildings alone.

The Chairman: What is under Acct Code 6255 Honourable Member? Honourable Minister what is under 6255? I think that is the question - buildings under 6242?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised sanitary block, fence and land filling

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I always like to get clarification. He is withdrawing the previous information that buildings are being maintained under Code 6255 - Other.

Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomerook/Supenaam, Programme 724 - Education Delivery - \$571,314,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 264 and 265

AGENCY 72 - REGION 2: POMEROON/SUPENAAM, Programme 725 - Health Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$185,684,000 for Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomerook/Supenaam, Programme 725 - Health Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - I ask the question if the Minister is of the view that the sum of \$1,800,000 is adequate for the purchase of drugs for Region 2?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, again this is only for emergencies. We have a hospital at Charity and we have one at Suddie and if there is an emergency then we do that purchase.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I draw your attention to Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - and note that the sum of \$550,000 for training including scholarships ... Could the Minister ad-

wise what training and to whom the scholarships are going to be awarded?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, most of this money is used for training of health workers, community health workers who are scattered all over the Pomeroun, Essequibo Coast and Supenaam. So periodically they are given some training.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - Can the Minister state for us what buildings will be maintained by this provision?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised the Oscar Joseph Hospital at Charity.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Ivor Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6112 - Senior Technical - I draw your attention to the Staffing Details on Page 265 and I note that there are seventeen vacancies at the level of senior technical and I wish to ask the Honourable Minister if provision is made for the filling of these vacancies in the Estimates.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Again, I will say yes, because we badly need those positions to be filled.

Mr Ivor Allen: A supplementary question, Mr Chairman, I note Acct Code 6112 that for 2004 the sum of \$12,643,000 was expended. If therefore we proposed to fill the vacancies in 2005 the provision of \$12,260,000 would be inadequate. As a matter of fact it would be less than was expended last year.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, this amount that is proposed here, should there be a shortfall, the region will seek assistance from the Ministry of Finance.

The Chairman: The Honourable Members Mr Alexander and then Dr Joseph.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: On Page 265 Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - could the Minister advise if the training programme in Region 2 is distinct from that of the Ministry of Health?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised, no, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Acct Code 6282 - Equipment Maintenance - can the Minister state what equipment and where, which part of Region 2 is the maintenance intended?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised for both hospitals, Charity and Suddie hospitals.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - could the Honourable Minister explain the approximately \$2,000,000 increase for those services for one year, because I noticed that it has been constant for several years except for what is proposed for this year?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Again, there is no voted provision. The security is taken care of by contract.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary to the question just asked ... The Minister, if I heard him correctly, said that there is no provision because the security is taken care of by contract. From which provision is the contractor paid?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Under the Ministry of Public Works. Oh I am sorry, not the Ministry of Public Works, under Public Works in the Region under that Code.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Acct Code 6294 - Other - last year \$201,000 was spent, this year \$60,000. Can the Minister state what is Other intended for?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, the correct figures are 57 and 60 this year.

The Chairman: Do you know what Other is intended for? I think that is the question. What expenses is that meant to cover?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Incidentally if you have to purchase a rake, some medicine, brooms, disinfectant and things like that.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask a supplementary question in relation to Acct Code 6302, having been told that training of health sectors in the region is distinct from the training from the Central Government. In that context, I would like some indication as to how the allocation for the health sector in the region is managed given that the programme is not a distinct programme.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, it is planned centrally, executed by the region and if needs be resource personnel from Georgetown do go and give the necessary training.

The Chairman: The Honourable Members Mr Allen and then Dr Joseph.

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - we note that the sum of \$9,324,000 has been budgeted. There are five employees according to the Staffing Details. Could the Minister be kind enough to state who are the contracted employees and in which area they perform.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, we have at present five contracted doctors serving the region.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr DALGLEISH JOSEPH: Mr Chairman Acct Code 6294, the Minister responded that Other was supposed to be cleaning and other ...

The Chairman: ... miscellaneous ...

Dr DALGLEISH JOSEPH: ... items. Now that is also provided in Acct Code 6283 with a sum of \$610,000, can the Minister explain?

The Chairman: Yes, but the Minister listed several items and he said other miscellaneous expenses. It is his question and I will allow him to answer.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, whatever cannot be purchased under this small amount then they are purchased under the other Code.

Agency 72 - Region 2: Pomerook/Supenaam, Programme 725 - Health Services - \$185,684,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 417

DIVISION 532 - REGION 2: POMEROON/SUPENAAM

Question is proposed that the sum of \$188,000,000 for Division 532 - Pomerook/Supenaam - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Project Code 25001 - Furniture and Equipment - Administration - a budgeted amount of \$3,000,000 for purchase of furniture and equipment for schools ... When one turns to the Profile page 161, it says this project includes the pur-

chase of Types A, B and C furniture and benches. My question is which schools will benefit from this new or additional furniture?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we start from the Pomeroon, St Johns, Liberty, Hackney, Marlborough, Martindale, Charity, Jacklow and other schools on the Coast, there are so many. In the region the Education Department will determine the schools that need these furniture.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Project Code 12001 - Buildings - Health - I see here construction, extension and rehabilitation of health facilities. The Minister in a previous question already stated that Oscar Joseph Hospital and Charity Hospital are to be maintained, so under this amount to be spent here what facilities specifically are earmarked?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, under capital expenditure for health, we have construction of new health post at Mainstay; extension of health post at Lima Sands; construction of new health staff quarters, Wakapau; construction of health post Abrams Creek and Sirikie. In addition, rehabilitation of staff quarters at Adventure and payment of retention fees.

Division 532 - Region 2: Pomeroon/Supenaam - \$188,000,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 270 and 271

AGENCY 73 - REGION 3: ESSEQUIBO ISLANDS/WEST DEMERARA, Programme 731 - Regional Administration and Finance

Question is proposed that the sum of \$105,043,000 for Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 731 - Regional Administration and Finance.

The Honourable Member Mr Mc Allister. Mr Allen, are you finished?

Are your assignments over?

Mr James K McAllister: Acct Code 6111 - Administrative - could the Honourable Minister state the reasons for the 13 percent increase over 2004?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, we have two additional staff, SPO and DREO.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K Mc Allister: Well then I move to Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - could the Minister give us an explanation for the 57 percent increase since we still have two contracted employees in 2005?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: One has resigned and there is an upgrade in the salary of the other officer.

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister state the positions of the two contracted employees?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: One was the Regional Information Officer and the other Regional Engineer.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question ... Could the Minister state which one resigned?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am advised that the Regional Engineer has resigned.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister state if the new Regional Engineer engaged is coming with more skills and expertise?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised, yes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Page 271 Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - I see a figure of \$12,504,000 ... Could the Honourable Minister indicate the name of the security service that is engaged by the Region. I do not want to guess.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the name of the Company is the Strategic Security Services.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister.

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, Page 270 Acct Code 6131 - Other Direct Labour Costs - now he seems to have a reduction of 22 percent. Could the Honourable Minister state the reasons for the reduction?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that officers who were acting are now employed permanently by the Public Service Ministry.

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6264 - Vehicle Spares and Service - could the Honourable Minister state how many vehicles are being serviced under this Acct Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised five vehicles, Mr Chairman.

Mr James K McAllister: Could the Honourable Minister give the respective age of these vehicles? It is relevant, Mr Chairman, given the amount stated here.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that the age of these vehicles vary from five to nine to fifteen years.

Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 731 - Regional Administration and Finance - \$105,043,000

- agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 272 and 273

AGENCY 73 - REGION 3: ESSEQUIBO ISLANDS/WEST DEMERARA, Programme 732 - Agriculture

Question is proposed that the sum of \$128,096,000 for Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 732 - Agriculture.

The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I note that Acct Code 6253 - Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works - \$76,426,000 budgeted. Could the Minister advise where these works will be executed?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Canal No. 1, Canal No. 2/Boeraserie Conservancy, there are several canals at Leonora, Uitvlugt and the Warimia Koker, there is a big Canal in the Moruca River, Parika outfall, Bonasika and so forth.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6253 - Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works - I have noted that there has been no increase in the budgetary allocation. In fact, there is a slight reduction and given the recent flooding, could the Honourable Minister explain why there has been a reduction in the amount allocated for maintenance of drainage and irrigation works?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: At the time when this Budget was being prepared, last year, there was not even a dream of a flood.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, could the Minister explain to

the Honourable House whether this figure represents any realistic allocation to treat with the dilapidated drainage situation during the last flood.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: At the time when it was prepared it was realistic.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - out of a total staff of eighty-five filled in 2005 and if you look at the Staffing Details thirty-six are temporary employees. Could the Minister please share with us the job specification of the major areas of these thirty-six contracted employees?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: These are sluice attendants and rangers.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Code 6115 - Semi-skilled Operatives and Unskilled - \$15,651,000 budgeted. We expended \$14,763,000 in 2004 for twenty-two persons and forty-six persons employed in 2005, but there is an increase of just under \$1,000,000. Could the Minister explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that these positions were appointed later in the year after the budget preparation and should there be a supplementary allocation surely the Region will apply for it.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Acct Code 6254 - Maintenance of Sea and River Defences – I noticed that there is no allocation, can the Minister please explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, again I have to repeat, there is no budgetary allocation, no answer.

The Chairman: The Honourable Members Mr Alexander and then Mr Allen.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: On Page 273 Acct Code 6311 - Rates and Taxes - I would like to be advised by the Honourable Minister which properties in the agricultural sector are subject to payment of these taxes.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, there is an Agriculture Office at Vreed-en-Hoop; there are in the Neighbourhood Councils also and that is why we have catered for this allocation.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I draw your attention to Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - and wish the Minister advise if the maintenance of sea and river defences will be taken care of under this item.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am advised that sea and river defences come under the Ministry of Public Works.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, other than Vreed-en-Hoop to which mention was made ... which other local authorities are host of agricultural offices?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Parika, Mora.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: On Page 273 - Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - the sum of \$1,251,000 - could the Honourable Minister indicate the name of the security service? Don't let me pre-empt him?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Again I repeat Strategic Security Service

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr James McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, page 273 Acct Code 6264 - Vehicle Spares and Service - could the Honourable Minister state how many vehicles are being serviced under this Code and the average age of those vehicles?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: There are two very old vehicles

Mr James K McAllister: Age?

The Chairman: Very old. Mrs Riehl, do you want to ask something.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister what is the authority for employing thirty-six temporary employees? They are not authorised. This is on Page 273 at the Staffing Details. None has been authorised according to the Staffing Details.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, if they are not authorised, it means they are not needed. I am sorry. *[Pause]* I am advised that the temporary employees are rangers, sluice attendants, watchmen and handymen and so forth.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Couldn't they be filled under Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that they do not have the qualifications

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: They do not have the qualifications for unskilled.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The required qualifications - a sluice attendant, any ordinary man can go and watch.

Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Pro-

gramme 732 - Agriculture - \$128,096,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 274 and 275

AGENCY 73 - REGION 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 733 - Public Works

Question is proposed that the sum of \$53,958,000 for Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 733 - Public Works - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - a princely sum of \$8,928,000 ... could the Honourable Minister say whether SSS is again the beneficiary?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The answer is, yes, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - could the Honourable Minister state what are the other infrastructures to be maintained under this Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, fences, bridges, kokers, revetments at some of the trenches that need to be reveted.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister state whether revetment, kokers would normally be covered under Drainage and Irrigation, Sea Defence and River Defences?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I suppose it is possible, but this is the

Code under which these items will be taken care of.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I note the drop in the provision in 2005 and I ask the question if this is indicative of what is going to happen at the national level.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that one of the stores is closed down and all the materials are now brought into the central stores. So that is responsible for the reduction of the vote.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6252 - Maintenance of Bridges - could the Honourable Minister list the bridges to be covered under this Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that there are five bridges to be maintained.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr James K McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question ... I noticed the sum of \$4.6 million under this Code, could the Honourable Minister state the relevant state of these bridges in question that require this amount of money?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that these bridges are wooden bridges built many years ago, the beams, columns and even deckings have to be replaced.

Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 733 - Public Works - \$53,958,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 276 and 277

AGENCY 73 - REGION 3: ESSEQUIBO ISLANDS/WEST DEMERARA, Programme 734 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$849,289,000 for Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 734 - Education Delivery - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - could the Honourable Minister say whether Strategic Security Services is the service employed under that Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Again, the answer is, yes.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Could the Honourable Minister say whether this year is the first year that Strategic Security Services were employed or were they employed last year?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I understand this is the first year.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Could the then say, if it was this year, when was the tendering process advertised? Not the exact date, but when was it advertised prior to the award of the contract?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that it was advertised in 2004.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: When? That is the whole year, Sir, if you could be a little more helpful.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I cannot provide the exact month, but I understand it was in the latter part of 2004.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Could the Honourable Minister say how many companies bid for that contract?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: To provide that exact number, I am afraid

I cannot, but I can answer if a written question comes here.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: A supplementary question ... I understand that and I appreciate that, but is the Minister in a position to say whether more than one bid?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised yes, Mr Chairman.

Mr Deborah J Backer: Thank you.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Could the Minister when he is providing information in relation to the bid indicate whether at that time this company provided all of the required certificates?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I will try as far as practicable to provide that information.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - could the Minister indicate which infrastructure is intended to be maintained?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we have several schools, Maria's Pleasure, Ridge, Makouria; Kingston Nursery; in Leguan Blenheim Primary School and a few other schools in the Region.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, under Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - \$21,504,000 - and I am advised under Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - he mentioned buildings again and I am wondering whether in fact buildings are being covered under two codes under this programme.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised sanitary blocks, water supply trestles and fences are catered for here.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question ... I want to be very definite, are you now saying that buildings are not covered under Acct Code 6255?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Yes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister:

Mr James K McAllister: Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - could the Honourable Minister state the nature of the training involved here?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: This is for Teachers' In-Service Training.

Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 734 - Education Delivery - \$849,289,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 278 and 279

AGENCY 73 - REGION 3: ESSEQUIBO ISLANDS/WEST DEMERARA, Programme 735 - Health Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$322,983,000 for Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 735 - Health Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Account Code 6281 - Security Services - could the Honourable Minister please indicate to us the name of the Security Service that has been awarded that contract?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: The name of the service is Strategic Security Service.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - could the Honourable Minister explain the 67 percent decrease in the sum allocated for drugs?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the central bond provides the bulk of the supplies and this again is for emergency.

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, I note in 2004 \$15,000,000 was allocated for the said emergencies. We are now living after the flood ... Could the Honourable Minister explain what has changed so drastically that has resulted in the emergency allocation being reduced by 67 percent?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I do not think that I am qualified in that field to say what case we will have as an emergency and as a result this is an opening that if there is an emergency whether heart, lungs, broken-leg, I am not in a position to say that.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - I wish to ask a different question, a supplementary question of the Minister ... If you look at the trend from 2003 and 2004 you will see that a significant amount of monies were spent on emergencies and I think legitimately so. So it is very important that you are now having such a significant decrease, it is anticipated that there will be any emergencies now, and I think that if the Minister cannot answer this question, his colleague may be able to answer.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am not in a position to say how many emergencies we will have during the year.

continued in pt II

National Assembly Debates

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE SECOND SESSION (2002-2005) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT
OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE
REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER,
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN** **Part II**

55TH SITTING

2.00 PM

Wednesday 9 March 2005

continued fr. pt I

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, if I can try, the same Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - could the Minister say what was the basis? You must have used some yardstick to decide that you are going to move it from \$15,000,000 to \$5,000,000. What was the thought process behind that ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: ... are you anticipating a reduction of emergencies, Honourable Member?

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Yes, thank you very much.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I anticipate that, Mr Chairman. *[Laughter]*

The Chairman: There is your answer. The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr Dalgleish Joseph: Mr Chairman, this justifies this follow-up question, what criteria does the Minister use to determine that there will be less emergencies?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, it is not less emergencies, it is less emergency purchases.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr Dalglesh Joseph: Acct Code 6283 - Cleaning and Extermination Services - one sees a justified increase of \$3,727,000, but here under Other, other seems to be ranking almost equally and I would like the Minister to justify why so much money is being allocated under Other and for what reason.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Acct Code 6283 - Cleaning and Extermination Services - This is for all the Health Centres scattered around the Region and the hospital.

Other – consists of things like insecticides and other incidentals, bleach and so forth.

Dr Dalglesh Joseph: A supplementary question, Mr Chairman ... We have been asking this question perpetually ... Other seems to be ranking almost as high or even higher than the specific under goods and services purchased. Now my point is that if the Minister envisaged that he should have had more money for example, for cleaning and extermination services, he should have increased the budget. Now to put Other ranking so high, he needs to justify why Other is so high.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, if there is need for this vote that is why they put it here. There is need for it and Other comes under medical supplies.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6283 - Cleaning and Extermination Services - I observe that this is what this Code caters for. I further observe that under Acct Code, Other, the Minister indicated that among other things insecticides are acquired. I am wondering if there is an extension of the extermination services to Other.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, if you have to weed the yard, fix the drains, do other work in the health centres, this is where the money is allocated and there are several health centres in the region.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr Dalglish Joseph: A supplementary question ... The Minister could not justify just now why such a drastic reduction in the purchase of drugs and medical supplies. In his response to Other he said that Other will be used for the purchase of drugs, so could he explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: No, it is not Other for drugs. As I said, this is for cleaning the compounds, weeding grass, repairing drains and sanitation, garbage collection and disposal and things like that.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James k McAllister: Acct Code 6264 - Vehicle Spares and Services ... again, I wish to find out about the number of vehicles being serviced under this Code.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that there are four old vehicles.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - I see you have budgeted an extra \$3,000,000 in 2005 over last year, but then I looked at the Staffing Details and I see you have out of an authorised strength of 216, you have only 174. Could you explain, you have a \$3,000,000 increase and a decrease in staff?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, a number of employees have been upgraded. So those who were acting are now appointed and that is the result of the increase.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr Dalglish Joseph: Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings ... I would like to find out what specific buildings here are earmarked for maintenance?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Nurses hostel, Sandhills health post, Mēt-en-Meerzorg health post and one at Santa Mission.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: I wish to ask the Honourable Minister a follow-up question as I was pre-empted by someone else. Minister, you have a decrease of staff not an increase and you cannot bring anybody up, so I am wondering why you increase your budget when you have a shortfall of staff by twenty, nearly 50 percent shortfall.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, those who were acting have been promoted and appointed, that is the reason for the decrease. Once you are appointed, you are then removed from that acting position.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, Account Code 6264 – Vehicle Spares and Services I have noted over the last three years, under this head that you have expended in excess of \$10,000,000 on services and repairs on very old vehicles. I wish to ask the Minister if there are plans to replace the old vehicles or to acquire new vehicles.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, we recognise that they are old and requests have been made for allocation for new vehicles. Unfortunately we have not had those so we have to continue maintaining.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: I am back to Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - in year 2004, 212 persons earned \$57,253,000. It is proposed that in year 2005 174 persons will earn \$60,402,000. Could the Minister safely say that the difference constitutes a proposed increase in salary of public servants for 2005?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, I am advised that these

sam persons were paid under Acct Code 6131 - Acting Allowances; so now they have been appointed.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr Dalglish Joseph: Acct Code 6282 - Equipment Maintenance - my first question to the Minister is whether the maintenance here is of medical equipment.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised, yes, Mr Chairman.

Dr Dalglish Joseph: A supplementary question ... Which agency will be responsible for maintaining of these equipment?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Generally, the regional personnel do, but if they need further technical help, they will resort to the Ministry of Health - the central ministry.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Joseph

Dr Dalglish Joseph: Mr Chairman, this is a region that operates independently and therefore I would have preferred the Minister to give me a more specific answer as to whether or not the facility for repairing medical equipment and maintenance of medical equipment whether it resides in the region or whether they are seeking this service outside of the region?

The Chairman: I think the Minister answered.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, some aspect of it resides in the region and if there is need for further technical support then they request Central Ministry.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr James McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: Acct Code 6251 - Maintenance of Roads - Could the Honourable Minister state where these roads are located?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: These are internal roads at the West Demerara Regional Hospital, and roads leading to Health Centres, Met-en-Meerzorg Health Centre, Lanabali Health Centre, Alik Health Centre, and Hubu Health Centre.

Agency 73 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 735 - Health Services - \$322,983,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 418

DIVISION 533 - REGION 3: ESSEQUIBO ISLANDS/WEST DEMERARA

Question is proposed that the sum of \$147,800,000 for Division 533 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 14001 - Roads - we see a sum of \$40,000,000. The Legend says, Upgrading of Community Roads. When you look at the Profile page, this project includes rehabilitation of roads in areas such as La Grange, Patentia and it goes on. The question, Sir, is this list of six areas exhaustive or are there more areas, because *such as* gives the impression of examples?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, this is specific, but sometimes we do have savings on these projects. If there are savings then other roads can be attended to also.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A Supplementary question on the instances where they are saving ... Is there any automaticity in the utilisation of the

remaining funds?

The Chairman: Use simple language in the National Assembly, Honourable Member.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I was trying to use a short word instead of many words. Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Minister if when there are savings, is it routine for the region to use the money on other projects or are they required to refer or defer to the State Planning Secretariat.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, it is not automatic. Once it is additional work is identified then permission has to be granted from the Ministry of Finance.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr McAllister

Mr James K McAllister: A supplementary question, the roads in La Grange and Patentia ... could the Honourable Minister state if these are the same roads scheduled to be rehabilitated in 2004?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised no.

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question on the roads listed here ... Could the Honourable Minister state when last these roads were rehabilitated and at what cost?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am afraid, I cannot say when last they were rehabilitated and what cost. Perhaps if the Member requests a written answer to the question, I can do so.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 25001 - Equipment - Health - the Legend says, \$3,300,000 - Purchase of Equipment. If we look at the Profile page we see this project includes the purchase of air conditioning unit, a filing cabinet, a cardiac monitor and surge protector. So there is really one true health item. Could the Minister indicate what is

the approximate cost of the cardiac monitor?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Well, we have an estimated cost of \$2,000,000 and the air conditioning units \$1,300,000.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr McAllister.

Mr James K McAllister: Mr Chairman, I wish to refer to Project Code 11001 - Bridges - and the same question to the Minister in relation to the last occasion when the rehabilitation was done.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am not in a position to say when last they were repaired or rehabilitated but the fact that they have gone bad is why we have sought money now to rehabilitate them.

Division 533 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara - \$147,800,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 284 and 285

AGENCY 74 - REGION 4: DEMERARA/MAHAICA, Programme 741 - Regional Administration and Finance

Question is proposed that the sum of \$82,755,000 for Agency 74 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 741 - Regional Administration and Finance - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I draw your attention to Acct Code 6114 - Clerical and Office Support - and wish to ask the Honourable Minister, if provision is made in this item, for persons ordinarily considered contractors in other regions?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I have a good adviser here.

The Chairman: Miss Peterkin, one moment, Honourable Member, let

us get the microphone on.

Miss Myrna EN Peterkin: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - I see a reduction in the allocation for fuel. Can the Honourable Minister state why?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, last year they used to hire some vehicles but now they are going to use administration vehicles to do these works.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: A supplementary question, is the Minister suggesting that this year they have vehicles that they did not have last year?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, it is not that there is an increase but they are going to cut down on their cost and try to minimise their travels.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Miss Peterkin.

Miss Myrna EN Peterkin: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6271 - Telephone Charges - I see there is a reduction, less than even 2003 ... Is it that we are going to disconnect telephones?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: These are charges to pay phones for the Regional Chairman's residence.

The Chairman: The Honourable Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to be advised in relation to Programme 741 if there are absolutely no buildings to be maintained, no janitorial services and cleaning to be done under that programme?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Those will come under Programme 3, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Miss Allen.

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6311 - Rates and Taxes - we see an increase of \$4,000,000 ... Could the Minister state which agencies, these taxes are paid to and why?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the Cane Grove NDC does not collect taxes and this subvention goes to Cane Grove NDC.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Miss Peterkin.

Miss Myrna EN Peterkin: Acct Code 6181 - Security Services - Could we know which Security Service?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised Strategic Security Services.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I want a supplementary for clarification purposes. It is noted here under Acct Code 6311 - Rates and Taxes - that there is a sum of \$2,200,000 in the year 2004 and \$4,000,000 in the year 2005. The question is: What is the basis for the increase? I would like to make the observation that the sum does in no way refer to subvention as the Minister proffered in his response that Cane Grove does not collect taxes and therefore they are covered under some subvention which is not visible in these provisions.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, out of this Acct Code, \$2,400,000 goes to Cane Grove and \$1,600,000 for rates and taxes to the other NDCs and government buildings.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, could I ask that the relevant corrections be made, since Cane Grove, not being a rated area, does not in fact benefit from rates and taxes and therefore should be listed under subventions.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I have no problem with that, Mr Chairman, and I will request the REO to make that correction.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - we have gotten the name Strategic Security Service ... Could the Honourable Minister please indicate to the National Assembly where the headquarters of this service is located?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised in Charlotte Street, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Miss Allen.

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6294 - Other - under operating expenses, we see an increase ... Could the Minister give the reason for the increase and state what Other refers to?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that it is to replace curtains, cookery, some glasses and other things which are used in the Board Room for refreshments.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Peterkin.

Miss Myrna EN Peterkin: Mr Chairman, under staffing, we notice that there is quite a number of vacancies within this area. Can I ask the Minister if there is any intention of filling these vacancies in the near future?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the Region is making desperate efforts to fill these vacancies, and the Public Service Ministry is well aware ... So we are hoping we can have some vacancies filled.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask a supplement-

tary question. Is the Region's inability to fill these vacancies dissimilar from the inability of other agencies which have resorted to the use of contract workers?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am not in a position to answer that.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I draw your attention to the Staffing Details and note that the authorised [*Inaudible*] I wish to ask the Minister if there is any relationship between the authorised establishment and the number of persons living in the Region?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am not in a position to answer that question now, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Mr Chairman, like this thing does not work. I wish to ask, under Acct Code 6261 - Local travel and Subsistence - I see last year the revised amount was \$3,500,000, but there is a reduction of \$1,000,000 this year. Is it that the Region, or the officials of the Region, will travel less this year?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the Regional vehicle will be used for field visits to the local government NDCs and to the craft centres and so forth.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

Dr Dalglish Joseph: Mr Chairman, I am back to Acct Code 6284 - Other - According to 2004, the budgeted amount was \$1,000,000. It was revised and increased by almost \$500,000. Now, obviously, there are reasons for that revision, and also the increase. Now, in 2005, it is back to \$1,050,000, are and therefore I am really asking the Health Minister whether or not an increase may be proposed, taking into con-

sideration what may have occurred in 2004, that they may want to consider ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Honourable Member, your question is very complicated. Is there any way you can simplify it? I do not even understand it.

Dr Dalglish Joseph: I am asking the Minister if he could consider a revision in the supplementary budget that he is proposing in June, whether he can reconsider a supplementary amount for Other.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the allocation right now is \$50,000 more than last year, and if there is need later on in the year, surely we will move to have supplementary estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - on Page 285, I wish to ask the Minister if the execution of this contract is now the subject of litigation.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am not aware of that.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Peterkin.

Miss Myrna EN Peterkin: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - can the Minister say who are the persons that will be trained under this Acct Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, crafters, local government personnel, and NDC and regional personnel, in different categories.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: No, sir.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question

under Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - could the Minister indicate whether the Strategic Security Services, if I have the name right, has assumed this employment?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised, yes.

Agency 74 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 741 - Regional Administration and Finance - \$82,755,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 286 and 287

AGENCY 74 - REGION 4: DEMERARA/MAHAICA, Programme 742 - Agriculture

Question is proposed that the sum of \$96,680,000 for Agency 74 - Region 4: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 742 - Agriculture - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Miss Allen.

Miss Genevieve Allen: Acct Code 6253 - Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works. We have a revised sum of \$61,400,000 for 2004, and we have budgeted \$58,400,000 for 2005. Could the Minister tell us which are the drains that fall under this maintenance programme, and the reason for the decrease?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we have additional allocations, and this amount of money will be spent in outfalls at Buxton, Triumph at different sections, Cane Grove, Buxton again, Victoria, Golden Grove, Cane Grove and Greenfield.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - we note the sum \$226,000 approved for 2005, which

represents a decrease from 2004. Could I ask the Minister how we can justify these decreases, in light of the emphasis we are told that will be placed on agriculture?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I understand that one of the persons who have been travelling has now purchased his own car, so there is a decrease on the vote there.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, I want to ask the Minister if Acct Code 6253 - Maintenance and Drainage and Irrigation Works - if this includes putting back in service the pumping station at Buxton Front? I heard Buxton mentioned, so I ask the question.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I understand that it is, yes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Miss Allen.

Miss Genevieve Allen: Acct Code 6283 - Cleaning and Extermination Services - we see a reduction in the budgeted amount for the year 2005. Could the Minister say why?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that this sum here is to be used to eradicate termites at the pump stations only.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, in light of the numerous observations made about the poor state of drainage and irrigation in Region 4, I draw your attention to Acct Code 6253 - Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works. Could the Minister justify the reduction in proposed expenditure under this Acct Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the National Drainage and Irrigation Board has been doing drainage and irrigation works in the Region also.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6291 - National and Other Events - I wish to ask if Agriculture Month is on the event of calendars in Region 4.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, there is no budgetary allocation there.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - \$7,926,000. Could the Honourable Minister please share with the National Assembly the security service that is employed there?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I understand the same security service - Strategic Security Service.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: The second question please, Mr Chairman. If we look at the Staffing Details, which is at the bottom of Page 287, we see authorised staff - 143, and vacancies exist for over 50 percent of the staff. In other words, the actual strength is less than 50 percent. Could the Minister indicate if there have been any efforts to either get temporary or contracted employees to fill those vacancies while advertisement is going on?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the Public Service Ministry is well aware, and the Region is making all attempts to have these vacancies filled.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, that was not quite the question I asked. The question I asked is whether they are making any efforts to fill those vacancies by employing contracted or temporary workers.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that they are making efforts.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Allen.

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6311 - Rates and Taxes - could the Minister say to which agency is the \$3,000,000 being paid?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that this amount is paid to the East Demerara Water conservancy.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister a supplementary question. What is the basis for the reduction in that sum?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that the Drainage and Irrigation Board will take care of the additional cost.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Which Drainage and Irrigation Board are you referring to?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The National Drainage and Irrigation Board.

Agency 74 - Region 4: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 742 - Agriculture - & 96,680,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 288 and 289

AGENCY 74 - REGION 4: DEMERARA/MAHAICA, Programme 743 - Public Works.

Question is proposed that the sum of \$116,446,000 for Agency 74 - Region 3: Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, Programme 743 - Public Works - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, on page 288, Acct Code 6243 - Janitorial and Cleaning Supplies - in the context of a previous answer, which said that the administration and finance will be catered for under this provision - Public Works, I wish to ask the Minister to specify all of the areas that will be covered under this Acct Code - Janitorial and Cleaning Supplies?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: This allocation is to service the many offices - the Administration Office, Triumph and Paradise Offices and Timehri also.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Miss Peterkin.

Miss Myrna EN Peterkin: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6251 - Maintenance of Roads - can I ask the Minister if the President's College road is one to be maintained under this Acct Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we have a proposal here - North Melanie; South Kurukuru, Diamond, East Bank; Triumph, East Coast Demerara; Soesdyke, East Bank Demerara; Friendship, East Coast Demerara; Silver Hill, that is on the Highway; Mahaica, East Coast Demerara; Victoria, East Coast Demerara.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Miss Allen.

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6223 - Office Materials and Supplies - we see a reduction in the budgeted amounts for this year. Could the Minister give reasons?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we have now introduced a few computers and, as a result of that, it has contributed to the reduction of the vote.

The Chairman: The Honourable Miss Peterkin.

Miss Myrna EN Peterkin: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - can we know the infrastructures that will be maintained under this Acct Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Yes, Mr Chairman, Paradise, East Coast Demerara, Cove and John, Enmore, Paradise again, two areas in Timehri, Kurukuru, Victoria on the East Coast Demerara and East Bank Demerara.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, may I proffer, under Acct Code 6223 - Office Materials and Supplies - if, in fact, computers have been introduced, that whilst the labour cost is likely to go down, that the operation cost for computers is likely to be higher than if you were using typewriters. So I am questioning the answer the Minister gave us, suggesting that the introduction of computers will lead to a reduction in the office materials and supplies. It may lead to an overall reduction in cost, but not under this Acct Code. I have questioned that answer.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, at all times the Region will exercise control over the purchases of materials and I understand there is stringent monitoring of the expenses under this Acct Code.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Miss Allen.

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - we recognised a very substantive increase in the budgeted amounts for this year. Could the Minister give reasons?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we have four new pumps and two Hymacs, one dragline, and one new 4x4 vehicle.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Honourable Minister, under Acct Code 6264 - Vehicles, Spares and Service - I see

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there is a very meagre increase of \$70,000 over the expenditure last year. Would the Honourable Minister say whether an increase of \$70,000 would be adequate to service all the Region's vehicles and spares?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that this amount is adequate.

Agency 74 - Region 4: Demerara/Mahaica, Programme 743 - Public Works - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 290 and 291

AGENCY 74 - REGION 4: DEMERARA/MAHAICA, Programme 744 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,094,597,000 for Agency 74 - Region 4: Demerara/Mahaica, Programme 744 - \$1,094,597 - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Page 291, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - could the Honourable Minister say whether that rather princely sum of \$112,319,000, if that is also being done by the Strategic Security Service of Charlotte Street.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The answer is yes, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Miss Allen.

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6114 - Clerical and Office Support - I am looking at the Staffing Details on Page 291, and I am a little confused because, in 2004, we have nine filled - authorised nine, and then we have filled 231 for 2005. Could the Minister explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that these employees have now moved up from Acct Code 6115 to Acct Code 6114

Agency 74 - Region 4: Demerara/Mahaica, Programme 744 - Education Delivery - \$1,094,597,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 292 and 293

AGENCY 74 - REGION 4: DEMERARA/MAHAICA, Programme 744 - Health Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$113,002,000 for Agency 74 - Region 4: Demerara/Mahaica, Programme 744 - Health Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - the sum of \$19,625,000. Could the Honourable Minister please indicate which Security Service?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The answer is Strategic Security Service.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Under this same Code - Security Services, I wish to ask a supplementary question... Could the Minister justify a \$3,000,000 increase from last year - \$16,000,000 to \$19,000,000 for the same security service?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that there are some new healthposts established at Dora, Timehri and Yarrowcabra.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Allen.

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Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - we recognise a very substantial decrease in the budgeted amount. Could the Minister give reasons why?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Again the answer is: supplies from the Central Ministry.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: In the wake of this area, especially the East Coast, which has been severely affected by the flood. Could the Minister be specific as to why is it that this amount has been significantly decreased in relation to last year?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that that is the reason why it decreased.

Now that the services of the Georgetown Hospital are so good, people come to the Georgetown hospital also.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - we see that there was a revised amount - from \$105,000 to a mere \$44,000, but we now see a fairly big jump to \$345,000, an increase of \$301,000, anticipated for this year. Could the Minister share with this Honourable House what is the nature of this training, and if there are specific areas within Region 4 is or this Region 4 generally?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, this is generally Region 4 - increased training on nutrition, anaemia, physical health, and environmental health.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - Can the Honourable Minister state whether the Nabaclis Health Centre

is earmarked for maintenance work under this provision?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that the Nabaclis Health Centre was maintained by Basic Needs Trust Fund last year, but I have a list of where this allocation will be expended.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Listening to that, Mr Chairman, is it to be understood that the Nabaclis Health Centre does not need any further maintenance?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: We have it listed here for further minor maintenance.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: For maintenance this year?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Yes, minor maintenance.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: No

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: No.

Agency 74 - Region 4: Demerara/Mahaica, Programme 744 - Health Services - \$113,002,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 419

DIVISION 534 - REGION 4: DEMERARA/MAHAICA

Question is proposed that the sum of \$92,500,000 for Division 534 - Region 4: Demerara/Mahaica - stands part of the Estimates

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 14001 - Agricultural Development - the Leg-end says Construction and Rehabilitation of Drainage and Irrigation Systems. The Profile page speaks about construction of revetment at Cane Grove, and then the rehabilitation of drainage canal. My question is of that \$20,000,000 allocated, how much is going towards the construction of the revetment at Cane grove?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman the breakdown is:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------|
| - | Cane Grove | - | \$8,000,000 |
| - | Doch Four Middle Walk | - | \$6,000,000 |
| - | rehabilitation of east sideline
Canal, Beehive | - | \$6,000,000. |

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I draw your attention to Projects Code 11001 to 25004, and wish to ask the Honourable Minister if any consideration is given to the population of the Region in the consideration of investment on capital expenditure.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I will answer to say, *yes, at all times we take into consideration the population, and the needs of the population.*

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 25004 - Furniture and Equipment - Health - the Leg-end says Purchase of Furniture and Equipment. When we go to the Profile on Page 182, we see this project includes the purchase of refrigerators and electrical fans. Out of that \$2,500,000, I want to know what portion will go towards electrical fans and where, because it is under health; which hospital, or cottage hospital, or health

centres?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we have here - fans 12 - 14 for the health centres on the East Coast Demerara, 26 in all.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, under Project Code 25002 - Purchase of furniture and Office equipment, under the Project Profile I observe that it says the project includes the purchase of fans, typewriters, typist chairs, water coolers, air conditioning units, typewriters for a second time, intercom systems, gas stoves and desks. I would like to ask the Honourable Minister if this is the equipment/computers that the Minister is referring to when he said that there will be a reduction in cost in the operation of the use of computers. We are noticing here that they are purchasing typewriters.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the computers are already in place. The DREO's Office, Registry, Sub-Treasury, Personnel, and the Regional Accounting Unit will benefit from computers and typewriters.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I will like to ask a supplementary question. Is the purchase of typewriters in keeping with the request of the Region or is this what they have been offering in response to a request for computers?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I understand these are electric typewriters and the Region requested them.

Division \$92,500,000 for Division 534 - Region 4: Demerara/ Mahaica - \$92,500,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 298 and 299

AGENCY 75 - REGION 5: MAHAICA/BERBICE, Programme 751 - Regional Administration

Question is proposed that the sum of \$31,308,000 for Agency 75 - Region 5: Mahaica/ Berbice, Programme 751 - Regional Administration, stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Miss Amna Ally

Miss Amna Ally: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - I wish to draw your attention to the Staffing Details - authorised twelve, filled three, with an increase in the budgeted allocation of \$801, 000,000 for 2005. Could the Minister explain please?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that some of the workers have been promoted to Acct Code 6113 - Other Technical and Craft-Skilled.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Can the Honourable Minister say which security service provides this service.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised United Security Service

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Is the Minister saying Strategic or United?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: United Security Services.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I would like to clarify this. Is the Minister aware of where is this United Security Service is located?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that the Headquarters is at Fort Street, Kingston, Georgetown.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Kadir

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6211 - Expenses Specific to the Agency - Could the Minister care to explain what is meant by expenses specific to the agency? What does it entail?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: These are expenses specific to the RDC Administration - meetings, travelling expenses to councillor, their out-of-pocket allowances, refreshments, meal allowances, and so forth.

The Honourable Member Miss Amna Ally

Miss Amna Ally: Acct Code 6283 - Cleaning and Extermination Services - \$100,000. Could the Minister explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I do not know what explanation. In 2004 the amount was \$100,000. It was revised to \$98,000, and now it is \$100,000, which is just a matter of \$2,000. It is within the same bracket.

Agency 75 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice, Programme 751 - Regional Administration - \$31,308,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 300 and 301

AGENCY 75 -REGION 5: MAHAICA/BERBICE, Programme 752 -Agriculture

Question is proposed that the sum of \$60,983,000 for Agency 75, Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice, Programme 752 - Agriculture - Stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Ivor Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6253 - Maintenance of

Drainage and Irrigation Works - Could the Minister advise what and where these works will be executed?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I have a list of areas:

- Mahaica/Mahaicony D&I Channels within the region;
- Residential Mahaica/Mahaicony Rice areas, twice per year, including -
 - Perth/Biaboo main canal;
 - Handsome Tree;
 - D'Edward Middle Walk;
 - Benett Dam, Rosignol;
 - Mechanical Maintenance of D&I Channels within the Mahaica/Mahaicony rice areas:
 - Perth/Biaboo main canal;
 - Wash Clothes branch canal;
 - Basket Pimpler branch canal
 - Weeding of the Mahaicony Creek - approximately twenty miles;
 - Hopetown School Street.

The Chairman: The Honourable member, Miss Ally.

Miss Amna Ally: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - Could the Minister give some specifics of the *Other Infrastructure*, and what it means?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Industry canal - 2,400 rods;

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Washclothes canal 2,300 rods;

Biaboo canal - 600 rods;

Rutherford canal - 1,100 rods

Basket Pimpler canal -1,800 rods;

Handsome Tree Canal - 1,145 rods;

Yankee Canal - 1,050 rods;

Yankee branch canal - 550 rods;

Poor Fellow canal - 700 rods; and

Pandit canal - 918 rods.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Page 301, Staffing Details - We see that there is an authorised strength of fifty-nine, which is a significant increase from the authorised strength in 2004, but yet we see that only twenty-one, in other words, less than 50 percent, about 45 percent of the authorised strength was filled. Could the Honourable Minister say what efforts are being made to attract people?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, a request has already been made to the PSM since last year to fill those vacancies, and I hope that it can be done.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question - is there anything preventing the region from taking into its employment temporary employees until these vacancies are filled?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The REO is advising that there is no need for that at the moment, but once the request is put to the Public Service Ministry, to contract employees permission is granted from the Public

Service Ministry.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, just for clarity, I am speaking about temporary employees, not contracted employees, and the question I am asking is very specific. Is there anything legally stopping the region from employing temporary workers while they await possible appointments?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that the answer is no.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Ally.

Miss Anna Ally: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6251 - Maintenance of Roads - Could the Minister say whether this amount budgeted takes into consideration the completion of the Ithaca Road?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The answer is no, because that road is under the Ministry of Public Works and it will be done by them.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Code 6113 - Other Technical and Craft-Skilled - I note the establishment allows for eleven and there are ten vacancies ... Could I ask the Minister if it would be correct to say that the services provided by these persons are almost non-existent in Region 5?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: There was once a time when the region needed land surveyors, but at this time their services are not needed, and that is why.

Agency 75 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice, Programme 752 - Agriculture - \$60,983,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 302 and 303

AGENCY **75 - REGION 5: MAHAICA/BERBICE, Programme 753 - Public Works**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$81,979,000 for Agency 75 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice, Programme 753 - Public Works - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Can the Honourable Minister share with us the name of the Security Service that is catered for there?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: United Security Service.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Amna Ally.

Miss Amna Ally: Mr Chairman, Acct Codes 6251 and 6252 - Maintenance of Roads and Bridges -

- (i) Could the Minister give some specifics as to where exactly these works will be carried out?
- (ii) What supervisory mechanisms are to be employed in order to ensure that substandard work is not done?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The Roads identified are:

- Blairmont main road;
- De Hoop branch road;
- Burma branch road,
- Mahaicony branch road;
- Burnham Avenue, I guess you will be glad to hear that name;

- Murphy Dam, Rosignol ;
 - Woodley Park;
 - Cow Dam in Bath Settlement; and
 - Ithaca Health Centre Street.
- Bridges - Greenheart timber:
- No. 7 Village;
 - Mc Rae Street, Rosignol;
 - D'Edward , Rosignol; and
 - Hope - five culverts

The Chairman: The Honourable Member - Miss Ally.

Miss Anna Ally: A supplementary question - Could the Minister say how many, if any, will be paved roads, and could he indicate which are the ones that will be paved roads?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that paved roads will be done under capital expenditure?

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Page 303 - Staffing Details - Would the Minister agree with me that only about 37 percent of the authorised strength has been filled and that there is a problem with obtaining workers in that region?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: While there is problem, I do not agree that the problem cannot be addressed, insofar as the region has been carrying on with its administration.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, there is a problem, and he went on to say that it could be fixed, and I agree that every problem could be fixed. Could the Minister share with the House what efforts have been made to fix this problem?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Efforts are being made, and unless approval is given from the Public Service Ministry, the region will have to continue until such time.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, once again I draw your attention to Staffing Details. I note that there is a number of vacancies, and I wish to ask the Minister if it is because of the shortage of staff that Region 5 is not being responsible for the maintenance of drainage and irrigation works, river and sea defence, and other infrastructure.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised no.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Ally.

Miss Amna Ally: Mr Chairman, I do not recall getting an answer for my second question about the supervisory mechanism to be employed, in terms of substandard work.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The region has competent officers to supervise its infrastructural work.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, the competent worker that the Honourable Minister just referred to, using the Staffing Details, could the Honourable Minister share with us under which Code these supervisors will fall? Is it 6111, or 6112, or 6113, or 6114, or 6115?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: One Engineer and two Senior works Officers

Mr Deborah J Backer: No, that is not the question Minister, with all respects to you. Which one of these Codes will these people fall under, 6111, 6112, 6113, or 6114?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that they will fall under Codes 6112 and 6113.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Miss Ally.

Miss Amna Ally: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6264 - Vehicle Spares and Service - Am I to understand that only the servicing of some vehicles will be done under this Code and, if so, how many, and the extent of the repairs?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised only one vehicle.

Agency 75 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice, Programme 753 - Public Works - \$81,979,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 304 and 305

AGENCY 75 - REGION 5: MAHAICA/BERBICE, Programme 754 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$493,575,000 for Agency 75 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice, Programme 754 - Education Delivery - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - the sum of \$5,616,000 - Could the Honourable Minister please share with this House the name of the Security Service that is employed there?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, United Security Service.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Ally.

Miss Anna Ally: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - I notice an increase in the allocation of this Code. Could the Minister say whether this increase takes in the existing vacancies for cleaners at schools?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, the answer is no.

Agency 75 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice, Programme 754 - Education Delivery - \$493,575,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 306 and 307

AGENCY 75 - REGION 5: MAHAICA/BERBICE, Programme 755 - Health Services.

Question is proposed that the sum of \$108,976,000 for Agency 75 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice, Programme 755 - Health Services - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 75 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice, Programme 755 - Health Services - \$108,976,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 470

DIVISION 535 - REGION 5: MAHAICA/BERBICE

Question is proposed that the sum of \$145,200,000 for Division 535 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 535 - Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice - \$145,200,000 - agreed

to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 312 and 313

AGENCY 76 - REGION 6: EAST BERBICE/CORENTYNE, Programme 761 - Regional Administration and Finance.

Question is proposed that the sum of \$50,192,000 for Agency 76 - Region 6: East Berbice/ Corentyne, Programme 761 - Regional Administration and Finance.

Honourable Member Mr Ally

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, on page 312, under Acct Code 6114 - Clerical and Office Support - How come you have ninety-one authorised staff and only thirty-one is filled. What do you intend to do to fill all the vacancies?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, this region has also made application through the Public Service Ministry to fill these vacancies.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Ally

Mr Nasir Ally: Under Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - Can the Honourable Minister say what positions the contracted employees hold which says two persons, and why is it you have such a large increase - from \$639,000 to \$2,699,000?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, there are two contracted employees - a Confidential Secretary and a Deputy Regional Executive Officer. This takes care of contract gratuity and 5 percent for the DREO.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Ally

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6211 - Expenses Specific to the Agency - What is meant by expenses specific to the

agency which has \$4,200,000?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: This is to take care of Regional Council's activities - attendance at meetings, travelling for the councillors, meal allowances when they attend meetings, and stipends.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, further to that, under Acct Code 6284 - Other - What does *Other* mean there?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: *Other* means weeding, portering, and advance charges.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Ally

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, a general question. I see there total Wages and Salaries - \$24,110,000, and Total Other Charges amounts to \$16,516,000, What is this Total Other Charges, and how do you categorise them?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the general answer to that is that it is spread out among all the Acct Codes to have that general amount.

Agency 76 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne, Programme 761 - Regional Administration and Finance - \$50,192,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 314 and 315

AGENCY 76 - REGION 6: EAST BERBICE/CORENTYNE, Programme 762 - Agriculture.

Question is proposed that the sum of \$191,680,000 for Agency 76 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne, Programme 762 - Agriculture - stands

part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Yes, Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - I would like to ask the Minister three questions.

The Chairman: Please ask one at a time.

Mr Nasir Ally: Why is the increase from \$18,522,000 to \$23,167,000?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, there are ten new pump operators and one ranger.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: The other question is, why is the steep drop in the staff authorised of 126, and only 39 at the moment?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Again, we have vacancies here, and the Region has already applied to the Public Service Commission to fill those vacancies.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: The third question is: who supervises the staff when there is no administrative staff mentioned?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the staff is supervised by the Senior Technical Officer at the New Amsterdam Head Office.⁶

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - there is \$98,606,000, why this steep increase from \$57,929,000?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, to cater for that, we have acquired two new pumps, and there is provision here to purchase two more this year.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: The other question is, where is this fuel and lubricants used?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, there are five irrigation pumps:

- Manarabisi
- Black Bush Polder, there are four schemes there; and
- six drainage pumps, apart from machines, equipment, draglines, huyacs and so forth.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

Mrs Clarissa Riehl: I wish to ask a follow up to Mr Ally's question. Under Acct Code 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - there is a \$40,000,000 jump there, and the Honourable Minister said that it is for the purchase of two new pumps. Isn't the purchase of new pumps done under capital expenditure?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: This is exactly for fuel and lubricants for two new pumps, and provision has already been made there for two more new drainage pumps, which will be provided by the Drainage and Irrigation Board.

Agency 76 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne, Programme 762 - Agriculture - \$191,680,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 316 and 317

AGENCY 76 - REGION 6: EAST BERBICE/CORENTYNE, Programme 763 - Public Works

Question is proposed that the sum of \$67,302,000 for Agency 76 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne, Programme 763 - Public Works - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister a question under Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - How come you are spending so much - \$8,215,000 on security services when the total wages and salary is just \$10,249,000? Am I to understand that you have one security to every worker?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, it is the same security service, and the amount has not changed.

The Chairman: Do you have a question, Honourable Member?

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, What is the name of the security?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: United Security Service. I am advised USS - the same security service.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Nasir Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, if I am permitted to ask a general question - I thought you are spending only \$67,302,000 on public works, while much more is spent on education and health, if you care to answer.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, education gets quite a lot of allocation. Public Works deal with infrastructure, and many of the infrastructures within the region are done by the Ministry of Public Works.

Agency 76 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne, Programme 763

- Public Works - \$67,302,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 318 and 319

AGENCY 76 - REGION 6: EAST BERBICE/CORENTYNE, Programme 674 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$933,981,000 for Agency 76 - Region 6 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne, Programme 674 - Education Delivery- stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - I see that \$18,000,000 will be spent there. Can the Honourable Minister say on which buildings this amount will be spent?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I have a list here:

- Skeldon Primary School;
- Berbice High School;
- Tutorial Secondary School;
- Manchester Secondary School;
- Kildonian Primary School;
- All Saints Primary School;
- Zorg Primary School;
- Trinity Street Primary School;

- Rosehall Estate Primary School; and
- the Education Office - routine maintenance.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, under CCT Code 6222 - Field Materials and Supplies - What do *field materials and supplies* refer to? What is it used for?

The Chairman: Mr Chairman, there are so many schools in the region, and this Code is to buy tools, cutlass, files, wheelbarrow, rakes and other equipment to do cleaning of the compounds and for the agriculture sectors of the institutions.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Riehl.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Mr Chairman, as I looked at the Staffing Details under Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - there is a filled portion of twelve staff members, but there is no provision for these persons. Could the Minister say how the provision is made?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we recognise this, and I am advised that there is a little mistake here, and it will be corrected.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

Mr Clarissa S Riehl: I wish to ask a follow-up on the same area: How is the matter going to be corrected? Is it that you have twelve temporary employees that you have not budgeted for?

The Chairman: I am advised that we do not have any temporary employees, but after the Estimates is passed, then the Ministries of the Public Service, Finance and the Regional Administration will have to get together to correct this?

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Well, Minister, then your Staffing Details is not correct. Is that what you are saying?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that way at this time.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Firstly, may I ask, how come this large amount is being spent on security services here? The second question is, what is the name of the security service?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, one would agree that we do have to protect State property in these days, and there are schools and labs, nursery and primary schools - also that region is so vast, and that is why there is that amount. The name is United Security Service.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally. You may proceed, Honourable Member.

Mr Nasir Ally: Under Acct Code 6131 - Other Direct Labour Costs - \$16,094,000 - What is meant by this?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that this is the provision for acting allowances and for teachers who are acting in senior positions.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Under Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - I see here authorised ninety-six, but only thirty-three is filled. When will the other vacancies be filled?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: As I said earlier, these people need to be adjusted, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Under Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - It is \$2,200,000 - a reasonable amount for officers to travel from school to school so that there can be efficiency in the system.

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Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I am advised that that is so.

Question -

That the sum stated under Agency 76, Programme 764, stands part of the Estimates.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: I wish to ask for a division on this matter:

17:35H – SUSPENSION OF THE SITTING

18:05H – RESUMPTION OF THE SITTING

The Chairman: Pardon me, Honourable Member.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: I wish to ask for a division on this matter.

The Chairman: One moment please. *[Pause]* The Clerk will take the division for Agency 76, Programme 176.

AGAINST

FOR

Mrs Melville

Mrs Holder

Mr Mustapha

Mrs Sukhai

Mrs Sahoye-Shury

Dr Ramsaran

Mr Rajkumar

Mr Mohan

Mr Lumumba

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	Mrs Edwards
Miss Allen	
Miss David	Mrs Chandarpal
Mr Ally	Mr Chand
Mrs Bancroft	Mr Ali
Mr R Khan	Mr Ramotar
Mr Kadir	Mr Belgrave
	Mr Mohamed
	Dr Ramsammy
Mr McAllister	Miss Rodrigues
Miss Peterkin	Mr Nadir
Dr Norton	Miss Shadick
Mr J Khan	
	Dr Westford
Miss Ally	Mr Sawh
	Mr Collymore
Mrs Lawrence	Dr Bisnauth
Mr Williams	
Mr Trotman	
Mr Alexander	Mr Kowlessar

Mrs Backer

Mr Nokta

Mr Allen

Mr Persaud

Mr Hinds

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Agency 76 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne, Programme 764 - Education Delivery - \$933,981,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 320 and 321

AGENCY 76 - REGION 6: EAST BERBICE/CORENTYNE, Programme 765 - Health Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$431,877,000 for Agency 76 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne, Programme 765 - Health Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, just two quick questions. One under Acct Code 6111 - Administrative - I just want to ask, how will there be efficiency in the system when you have only two persons out of nine employed. Could the Minister make some observations on that?

The Chairman: I do not know that that is an appropriate question. Maybe the Minister will be able to answer you.

Mr Nasir Ally: Okay, Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - here again, I would like to know, when will

steps be taken to fill the vacancies? Because there is a vast difference - 327 out of 498.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the PSM is addressing the matter.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Page 321, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Could the Honourable Minister please share with the National Assembly, the security service, or services, which are employed under this Acct Code?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, United Security Service.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Mr Trotman.

Mr Raphael GC Trotman: Mr Chairman, a re-committal of Acct Code 6111, can the Honourable Minister say whether, if at all, the administration is affected by the fact that there are only two administrative staff?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised not, Mr Chairman.

Agency 76 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne, Programme 765 - \$431,877,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 421

DIVISION 536 - REGION 6: EAST BERBICE/CORENTYNE

Question is proposed that the sum of \$197,900,000 for Division 536 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, Project Code 11001 - Bridges - Construction of footpaths and Bridges at Yakusari, Johanna, Mibicuri, and Lesbeholden. Am I to assume that four footpath bridges will be constructed at a cost of \$12,000,000?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, we have, on the Estimates here - 10 footpaths in those four villages.

The Chairman: Yes, Honourable Member?

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, under Project Code 12002 - Buildings - Education - I see there *rehabilitation of BEI Secondary School at No.68 Village*. It is in the profile document, but I am not aware that you have BEI at No.68 Village, that is the first thing, and the second thing is, under the same Project Code, construction of sanitary blocks at No. 67 Village. Well, I know you have a school at No.68. I am not aware of that school at No.67. The government will spend \$26,000,000 for what size of sanitary blocks and how many? What is the extent of the repairs at BEI?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, Berbice Education Institute, to expend \$15,000,000 and construction of sanitary blocks, No. 67 nursery school and No.69 nursery school, both total \$4,500,000.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, on page 421, under Project Code 1101 - Bridges - and given the explanation that there are to be 10 footpath bridges, I wish to ask the Honourable Minister, what is the average length and width of these bridges?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Average ...

Mr Vincent L Alexander: ... length and width of these bridges?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that it is about 60 feet by 4 feet.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, under Project Code 14001 - Roads - may I ask the Honourable Minister what extent of works will be done on roads for a cost of \$41,000,000?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, there are several roads in Region 6 for which this budgetary allocation is requested:

- Khedaru Street, Fyrish,
- Seepersaud Street Yakusari,
- Culvert Street, Johanna,
- Black Bush Polder First Street, No.52 Village
- Susannah Street,
- Bovelie Street Grant,
- 1805 First Street Kilcoy,
- Middle Street South, Adventure,
- Soman Street, Yakusari, Black Bush,
- Collector Drain Dam, Field 9, Johanna South,
- First Street Zamber,
- Second Street Field 1211, Mibikuri South
- First Street Lesbeholden, Black Bush Polder,
- Middle Walk Dam, No.60 Village,
- Second Street No.65,

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- First Street East, No.67 Village,
- Back Street No.65 Village,
- Middle Walk Dam No.71,
- Second Street Grant 1804,
- Back Street Crabwood Creek,
- Second Street Alness,
- Cromarty Street, Mustapha, Yakusari Black Bush,
- Eastern Sideline, Kildonan,
- School Street Aukline,
- North Street No 35 Village...

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ally.

Mr Nasir Ally: Mr Chairman, under Project Code 25003 - Furniture and Equipment -Health - I want to make an observation, if the Minister can bear ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: You cannot make an observation, Honourable Member. Please ask a question. We are running out of time. We are two hours late already.

Mr Nasir Ally: Alright.

The Chairman: Please do not make an observation, just ask a question.

Mr Nasir Ally: Well, I will ask in a question. In a poor country like ours, what does a hospital want with a 4x4, when you can really buy three or four other vehicles with that money?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the hospital needs the vehicle.

Division 536 - Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne - \$197,900,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Honourable Members, before I move to Region 7, Agency 77, I would like to point out that our time for this page has long expired. For this page, and up to Region 10, it expired since 17:00h. I have not invoked the Resolution of the Business Sub-Committee, which was approved by this House, in order to allow Members to have the possibility of asking questions, but we have four more Regions. Regions 7, 8, 9 and 10, and if the time is going and we are unable to finish it, I will have to put all of these regions without questions.

Pages 326 and 327

AGENCY 77 - REGION 7: CUYUNI/MAZARUNI, Programme 771 - Regional Administration and Finance

Question is proposed that the sum of \$60,923,000 for Agency 77 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni,, Programme 771- Regional Administration and Finance - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Miss David.

Miss Judith David: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - I see there is a provision of \$275,000,000 and when I look at the Staffing Details for temporary employees, there is none. Can the Minister explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: We do not have any temporary employees now, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

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Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Could the Honourable Minister please share with this House the name, or names, of the security services employed in Region 7?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that it is the United Security Service, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Miss David.

Miss Judith David: A supplementary question to Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - Can the Minister say how soon there would be employment of temporary employees, and if it would be done during this year?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Whenever the Region requests, and the Public Service Commission approves, that will be done.

Miss Judith David: Mr Chairman, under the Acct Code 6284 - Other Goods and Services Purchased - Can the Minister say what is *Other*?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: To pay the cleaners for the rest houses. There are several rest houses in the Region.

Agency 77 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 771- Regional Administration and Finance - \$60,923,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 326 and 327

AGENCY 77 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 772 - Public Works

Question is proposed that the sum of \$77,324,000 for Agency 77 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 772 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Miss David.

Miss Judith David: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6112 - Senior Technical - no provision has been made. When you look at the Staffing Details, there are five persons. Can the Minister explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: There is no budgetary allocation under that sub-head, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: A supplementary question on this same Code. If we look at the Staffing Details we will see that there are five persons there, so how have they been paid?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that these figures need to be adjusted, Mr Chairman.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Is the Minister saying that five should be replaced by zero? I am being specific on Acct Code 6112.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The answer is yes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss David.

Miss Judith David: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - there is \$6,000,000. Can the Minister say what are those infrastructures?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Installation of trestle, Mobile Medical Quarters - Kamarang; steel trestle - Purima Health Post; Construction of bed springs - Bartica Hospital; repairs and extension of incinerator - Bartica Hospital; maintenance of septic tank - Bartica Hospital Compound; Mortuary at Philippi.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, will the Honourable Minister

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refer to Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - name the security service and name the principals of the service, please?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, United Security Service.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Will you please name the principals of the United Security Service?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, I understand, Mr Johnson.

Agency 77 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 772 - Public Works - \$77,324,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 328 and 329

AGENCY 77 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 773 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$301,816,000 for Agency 77 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 773 - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Miss David.

Miss Judith David: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6114 - Clerical and Office Support - there is a provision of \$330,000 for clerical and office support, and when you look at the Staffing Details, there is no personnel there.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: At the time of budgeting, Mr Chairman, this person was not in place, but we are hoping for the vacancy to be filled.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss David.

Miss Judith David: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6241 - Rental of Buildings - \$564,000. Can the Minister name these buildings, please?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, REDO's Quarters - Bartica; HM Quarters - Batavia; Batavia Primary School; Teachers Quarters - Issano, HM Quarters - Kamarang, DES Quarters - Kamarang, Welfare Officers' Quarters - Kamarang; Kamarang Primary School; Sports Organisers Quarters - Kamarang.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Miss David.

Miss Judith David: Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - could the Minister say, what these infrastructures are?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Bathroom - Waramadong dormitory;

- six bathroom dormitories - Waramadong;
- two steel trestles for Teachers Quarters - Kamarang;
- chain link fence Bartica dorm;
- chain link fence, Agatash Primary;
- chain link fence, Agatash Headmaster's Quarters;
- maintenance works at Precious Gems School Compound;
- maintenance of Mogrippa Hill playground.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss David.

Miss Judith David: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6282 - Equipment Maintenance - Last year, there was a revised amount of \$543,000, and this year I see \$330,000. Can the Minister say why the deduction?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I understand that last year there was old equipment, and this year, there is a new one, so that is why maintenance

cost is less.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question. Acct Code 6114 - Clerical and Office Support - when asked the question about the figure of \$330,000 that is budgeted, the Honourable Minister indicated that they were trying to fill it. But when one looks at the authorised Staffing Details, there is no authorisation for anyone in that category. So I will be happy if the Minister could explain that apparent anomaly.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I understand that there is need for a clerical officer in the Upper Mazaruni, Mr Chairman, and the approach is made to the Public Service Ministry to provide that.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - the sum of \$6,794,000. Could the Honourable Minister please share with this House the name of the service, or services, that have been employed?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, United Security Service.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss David.

Miss Judith David: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question. Acct Code 6282 - Equipment Maintenance - can the Minister name the new equipment, please?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I understand the equipment is a Risograph.

Agency 77 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 773 - Education Delivery - \$301,816,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 332 and 333

AGENCY 77 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 774 - Health Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$130,610,000 for Agency 77 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 774 - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Members, before we go further, at 19:00h, whatever remains of the Regions, I will put without entertaining any further questions. You want to ask a question, you stand and ask it, Honourable Member.

Dr Dalglish Joseph: Is that the Resolution of the Committee?

The Chairman: That is the Resolution, Honourable Member. You passed this.

Dr Dalglish Joseph: That if ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: You approved this Resolution, Honourable Member. You passed this.

Dr Dalglish Joseph: ... that happens ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: You approved this Resolution, Honourable Member. Just get your copy and look at it. Yes, Honourable Member?

Miss Judith David: Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - I see a sum of \$1,710,000, and when I look at the Staffing Detail, only one person is contracted. Can the Minister say who is the person?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: A dental surgeon, Mr Chairman.

Agency 77 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni, Programme 774 - Health Services - \$130,610,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 422

DIVISION 537 - REGION 7: CUYUNI/MAZARUNI

Question is proposed that the sum of \$68,100,000 for Division 537 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 537 - Region 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni - \$68,100,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 338 and 339

AGENCY 78 - REGION 8: POTARO/SIPARUNI, Programme 781 - Regional Administration and Finance

Question is proposed that the sum of \$26187,000 for Agency 78 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni, Programme 781 - Regional Administration and Finance - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member Mrs Bancroft

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Just a moment, Mr Chairman, I need to have my adviser.

The Chairman: Just one moment. *[Pause]* Yes, Honourable Member.

Mrs Rajcoomarie Bancroft: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6241 - Rental of Buildings - I notice a great increase, I would like to know, where is this building that Region 8 is renting? Could the Honourable Minister say?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, this is just an allocation provided because we intend to employ agriculture officers. Mr Chairman, just a correction, this allocation is provided in the Estimates to allow for rental of office space in Georgetown for use by the Regional Administration, whenever the IFMAS system puts the Region online. It will require regular presence of officers in Georgetown.

Agency 78 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni, Programme 781 - Regional Administration and Finance - \$26,187,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 340 and 341

AGENCY 78 - REGION 8: POTARO/SIPARUNI, Programme 782 - Public Works

Question is proposed that the sum of \$46,375,000 for Agency 78 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni, Programme 782 - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 78 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni, Programme 782 - Public Works - \$46,375,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

Pages 342 and 343

AGENCY 78 - REGION 8: POTARO/SIPARUNI, Programme 783 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$109,184,000 for Agency 78 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni, Programme 783 - Education Delivery - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member, Mrs Bancroft.

Mrs Rajcoomarie Bancroft: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - I noticed there is a great increase. Could the Honourable Minister give an explanation here?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: There are two factors there. There are more schools in the Region and because of the geographic spread of the

area there are schools in the Upper Mazaruni, in middle Mazaruni, Bartica, Potaro and so forth. There are more schools and more locations.

Mrs Rajcoomarie Bancroft: I think that is the wrong Region the Minister is talking about, I am talking about Potaro/Siparuni, Mr Chairman.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Oh, sorry. I beg your pardon, Mr Chairman. There are more schools in the Pakaraimas, Monkey Mountain, Tusenen, Kato, Bamboo Creek, Kopinang, Chenapowu and at Mahdia. So there is no need for more security at these outposts.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, I would like to refer the Minister to Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - I see \$9,700,000 allocated. Where is the cost of renovating or building the new school at Bamboo Creek?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised, Itabac, Tumatumari and Kaibarupai.

Agency 78 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni, Programme 783 - Education Delivery - \$109,184,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 344 and 345

AGENCY 78 - REGION 8: POTARO/SIPARUNI, Programme 784 - Health Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$57,451,000 for Agency 78 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni, Programme 784 - Health Service - stands part of the Estimates.

continued in pt. III

National Assembly Debates

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE SECOND SESSION (2002-2005) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT
OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE
REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN

Part III

55TH SITTING

2.00 PM

Wednesday 9 March 2005

continued fr. pt II

Agency 78 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni, Programme 784 - Health Services - \$57,451,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

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DIVISION 538 - REGION 8: POTARO/SIPARUNI

Question is proposed that the sum of \$73,900,000 for Division 538 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member Mrs Bancroft

Mrs Rajcoomarie Bancroft: Mr Chairman, Project Code 12003 - Buildings-Health - I notice the Legend says, extension of health posts. I would like to Honourable Minister to tell this Honourable House ... I see in Volume 3, the profile ... it has, extension of health posts, Paramakatoi, Kopinang and Tumatumari, but I know Tumatumari Health Post ... would it be fitting to extend it or remove it? Because it is facing threat from the river, the revetment is not good. So, I would like to ask the Minister, why extending it, rather than moving it?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am advised that the provision here is for the extension of the building.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, is it prudent use of money to extend a facility when its very existence is threatened by erosion?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I understand it is prudent because revetment was done last year.

Division 538 - Region 8: Potaro/Siparuni - \$73,900,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 350 and 351

AGENCY 79 - REGION 9: UPPER TAKATU/UPPER ESSEQUIBO Programme 791 - Regional Administration and Finance

Question is proposed that the sum of \$49,479,000 for Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo, Programme 791 - Regional Administration and Finance - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member Mrs Melville

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6264 - Vehicle Spares and Service - how many vehicles have you catered for?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Three jeeps and four motorcycles, Mr Chairman.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6282 -Equipment Maintenance - What equipment maintenance would be done?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Computers and fax machines, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Dr Norton.

Dr George A Norton: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6294 - Other - Could the Minister kindly explain what is included in Other?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: These are cases that are necessary. Sometimes, you have corpse to assist in burial and people who are stranded if they leave the Deep South and come to Lethem and they need some help.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - Could the Minister say which security service?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: United Security Service, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6284 - Other - Could the Minister kindly explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: This is to purchase services of mechanics, electrical technicians and porters and so forth around the compound.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Norton.

Dr George A Norton: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - Could the Minister say who will benefit from the training?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Staff of the Regional Administration, Mr Chairman.

Dr George A Norton: A supplementary question.

The Chairman: Yes.

Dr George A Norton: What category of staff of the administration?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Management as well as secretarial staff, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 63 12 - Subventions to Local Authorities - Could the Minister please indicate which local authorities will be the beneficiary of subventions?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: One NDC, Ireng/Sawariwau, Mr Chairman.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplemental, Mr Chairman. We were advised earlier that there were ten local authorities which would be getting subventions from the Central Ministry. Could the Minister say if this local authority was listed among those ten?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: There are more than ten. Sixty-five neighbourhood councils are enjoying \$3,000,000 a year, but this amount here is to further assist the NDC in their administrative work, because they do not collect rates and taxes.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: We were advised earlier that there are 65, and that the 65 will each get \$3,000,000. We were subsequently advised, under another Acct Code, that there are ten new NDCs that would be granted special subventions. I am asking if this NDC falls within the number of the new NDCs?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: I am advised that it is one of the new ones that came in 1994, Mr Chairman.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Members, we are now at 18:50h, so if you wish to get some questions in on Region 10, I would urge you to do so, but that is a matter for you.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplemental, Mr Chairman. This is the first of those ten NDCs which is the subject of a third provision. The question is: why is this NDC, unlike all the other NDCs, the subject of a

third provision?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the Government is very generous. Ireng/Sawariwau is far in the Rupununi and they do not collect rates and taxes so the Regional Administration does help in cases where help is needed.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, am I to understand that we have two Acct Codes - 6264 and 6284, for the same purpose? Could the Minister kindly explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mr Chairman, the answer is no.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Dr Norton.

Dr George A Norton: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6291 - National and Other Events - Could the Minister kindly say what are these national events?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Mashramani, Independence and Amerindian Heritage Month.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, may I ask, under Acct Code 6284 - Others - what is being provided for?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: What is the Acct Code?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Acct Code 6284.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I thought I answered this already - services of mechanics, electricians, and people who are employed to clean the compound and so forth, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - Could the Honourable Minister explain what scholarships you will be having for our civil servants?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: No scholarships, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6284 - Other - Is the Minister saying that contracts are awarded under that Acct Code for those services which he referred to?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised, yes.

Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo, Programme 791 - Regional Administration and Finance - \$49,479,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 352 and 353

AGENCY 79 - REGION 9: UPPER TAKATU/UPPER ESSEQUIBO, Programme 792 - Agriculture

Question is proposed that the sum of \$7,041,000 for Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo, Programme 792 - Agriculture - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Speaker, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - Could the Honourable Minister explain what training or scholarship would be done?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: There is no scholarship, Mr Chairman, only training.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Can the Minister explain what sort of training will be done with the amount allocated there, please?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Training to farmers in control of insects, and also foot and mouth disease.

Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo, Programme 792 - Agriculture - \$7,041,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 354 and 355

AGENCY 79 - REGION 9: UPPER TAKATU/UPPER ESSEQUIBO Programme 793 - Public Works

Question is proposed that the sum of \$63,579,000 for Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo, Programme 793 - Public Works - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister explain, under Acct Code 6251, what maintenance would be done to roads?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: We have a list of roads here - Karasabai, Lethem, Apoteri, and Manawari. Those are the roads that we have allocations to do maintenance.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, did I hear correctly - Apoteri?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Apoteri/Crash Water Road. A road is opened there now.

Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo, Programme 793 - Public Works - \$63,579,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 356 and 357

AGENCY 79 - REGION 9: UPPER TAKATU/UPPER ESSEQUIBO, Programme 794 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$241,051,000 for Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo, Programme 794 - Education Delivery - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6264 - Vehicle Spares and Service - What vehicles would be maintained, please?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Two jeeps, Mr Chairman.

Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo, Programme 794 - Education Delivery - \$241,051,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 358 and 359

AGENCY 79 - REGION 9: UPPER TAKATU/UPPER ESSEQUIBO, Programme 795 - Health Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$91,432,000 for Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo Programme 795 - Health Services - stands part of the Estimates.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - Which buildings would be maintained, please?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Aishalton Maternity Ward, Aishalton kitchen and laundry, Annai Health Centres, Sand Creek Health Centre, and Wauwita Health Hut.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, we have to protect State property, and we are going to have a state-of-the-art new Lethem Public Hospital. Could the Honourable Minister explain why no security has been allocated for that? We do not have someone living on the premises. Thank you.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, we do not have that new hospital as yet.

Dr George A Norton: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6282 - Equipment and Maintenance - Could the Minister identify what equipment would be there for maintenance?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, Risograph, fax machine, x-ray and some other technical equipment, blood testing equipment and so forth.

Agency 79 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo Programme 795 - Health Services - \$91,432,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 424

DIVISION 539 - REGION 9: UPPER TAKATU/UPPER ESSEQUIBO

Question is proposed that the sum of \$124,024,000 for Division 539 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo - stands part of the Estimates.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Could the Honourable Minister state whether the \$7,000, where we would be getting drive-through dips ... We have acquired a new design.

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Could the Honourable Member tell us

under what Project Code?

The Chairman: What Project Code, Honourable Member? *[Pause]*
No further questions.

Division 539 - Region 9: Upper Takatu/Upper Essequibo - \$124,024,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

Honourable Members, you have a few minutes left for Region 10.

Pages 364 and 365

AGENCY 80 - REGION 10: UPPER DEMERARA/UPPER BERBICE, Programme 801 - Regional Administration and Finance

Question is proposed that the sum of \$68,902,000 for Agency 80 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice, Programme 801 - Regional Administration and Finance - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member Mr Williams.

Mr Basil Williams: Mr Chairman, might I respectfully refer you to Acct Code 6281 - Security Services, and ask the Minister what is the name of the security service?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: United Security Service, Mr Chairman.

Mr Basil Williams: But why is the incumbent security service not being paid?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: They are in the process of being paid, Mr Chairman.

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Mr Basil Williams: Sir, there is a commitment for them that they would be paid.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised that they are in the process of being paid, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, is this the subject of litigation?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am not aware of that, Mr Chairman.

Mr Basil Williams: It is the subject of litigation.

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Thank you for the information, Honourable Member.

Mr Basil Williams: That is not the part of the question I raised. The effect of the court litigation means that there could be no replacement of the incumbent security service by that security service that is sweeping the country. That is why.

The Chairman: Put in a motion for that and we will deal with that, Honourable Member.

Yes, Mr Alexander?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I was wondering whether, in the circumstances of litigation, whether it would not be a contentious act for us to approve the provision.

The Chairman: Do not let us go there, Honourable Member. That is not for the Minister to answer. We are dealing with the Budget.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I am dealing with the Budget, and I am suggesting that this item could probably be put ... *[Interruption]*

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The Chairman: We are dealing with the Estimates, Honourable Member, and I disallow the question. Are there any other questions?

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, under staffing details, I would just like to ask the Minister when the vacancies under *Administration and Other Technical and Craft-Skilled* will be filled?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: The Public Service Ministry is addressing that question, Mr Chairman.

Agency 80 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice, Programme 801 - Regional Administration and Finance - \$68,902,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 366 and 367

AGENCY 80 - REGION 10: UPPER DEMERARA/UPPER BERBICE, Programme 802 - Public Works

Question is proposed that the sum of \$61,703,000 for Agency 80 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice, Programme 802 - Public Works - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6253 - Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works - I would just like to ask the Minister if the outfalls at Pokatara, Haimara, Karakara and Katabuli Creeks are included in this expenditure?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: I am advised, no. Those will come under the Ministry of Agriculture.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask, under Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - if this, like on a previous occasion, also covers the maintenance of buildings that come under Adminis-

tration and Finance?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: The answer is yes.

Agency 80 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice, Programme 802 - Public Works - \$61,703,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 368 and 369

AGENCY 80 - REGION 10: UPPER DEMERARA/UPPER BERBICE, Programme 803 - Education Delivery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$723,319,000 for Agency 80 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice, Programme 803 - Education Delivery - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6241 - Rental of Buildings - There is a tremendous reduction of approximately 50 per cent - from \$15,000 to \$780,000. Can the minister explain which are the buildings that will not be rented any longer?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Two new structures are being constructed.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Under the Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - which totals about \$75,000. Could the Minister explain which security agency is given this contract?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: United Security Service, Mr Chairman.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Could the Minister explain if this is a new contract beginning this year, or if it is an old continuing contract?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: A continuation, Mr Chairman.

Agency 80 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice, Programme 803 - Education Delivery - \$723,319,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 370 and 371

AGENCY 80 - REGION 10: UPPER DEMERARA/UPPER BERBICE, Programme 804 - Health Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$122,978,000 for Agency 80 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice, Programme 804 - Health Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Could the Minister explain - under Staffing Details, there is a tremendous reduction from twenty-five authorised to nine to be filled in 2005. Are these vacancies intended to be filled in the health services programme?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Absolutely, yes, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Under Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - again, there is a tremendous reduction - from \$22,500,000 to \$5,000,000. Could the Minister explain?

Hon HARRIPERSAUD NOKTA: Mr Chairman, supplies will be done by the Central Health Department, under the Ministry of Health.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Under Acct Code 6112 - Senior Technical - There

is a reduction from last year filled from eleven persons to nine, yet there is an increase from \$9,600,000 to \$10,100,000. Could the Minister explain?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: Through staff promotion and five percent increase.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Minister, under Acct Code 6221 -Drugs and Medical Supplies - Notwithstanding the fact that they are provided by the Centre, are they not provided for under a vote of the Region?

Hon Harripersaud Nokta: It used to be, but not now.

Agency 80 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice, Programme 804 - Health Services - \$122,978,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 425

DIVISION 540 - REGION 10: UPPER DEMERARA/UPPER BERBICE

Question is proposed that the sum of \$113,900,000 for Division 539 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Berbice - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 539 - Region 10: Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice - \$113,900,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

Honourable Members, we are running more than one and a half hours late as we move into the next agency - the Ministry of Finance, Agency 03. I therefore ask you to keep your questions short and fast.

Pages 42 and 43

AGENCY 03 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE, Programme 031 - Ministry Administration

Question is proposed that the sum of \$8,167,271,000 for Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance, Programme 031 - Ministry Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Good evening, Mr Chairman. I refer you to Page 42, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - where the historical data shows that, in 2003, there was \$25,900,000, which was revised in 2004 to \$27,500,000, when they budgeted for \$30,700,000. If we now refer to the Staffing Details on Page 43, we will see, under Contracted Employees, that there was no authorisation in 2004, nor does there appear to be any authorisation in 2005, yet there were fourteen persons hired in 2004. Given the background of that information, my first question is: under what authority does the Minister hire these employees?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, may I ask for the question to be repeated?

The Chairman: Could you repeat the question, Honourable Member?

Mr Jerome Khan: No problem, Mr Chairman. I refer again to Page 42, and I am referring to Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - the historical data shows, under 2003, that \$25,900,000 were utilised; the revised of 2004 was 427,500,000 and the budgeted projection for 2005 is \$30,700,000, yet when we refer to Page 43, *Staffing Details*, under the authorised column, there was no authorisation in 2004, nor is there any indication of authorisation in 2005; yet we noticed that there were fourteen staff positions filled in 2004, and no projected staff for 2005,

correspondingly. Can the Minister say under what authority those contracted employees are hired? That is the first question. I have five of them in that category.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, I want to point out that, on Page 43, where we have the staffing details, there has been an omission with respect to 2005, and I would like to identify those omissions, and ask that the Estimates be corrected in that respect as follows:

-	Administrative	-	7
-	Senior Technical	-	0
-	Other Technical and Craft Skilled	-	15
-	Clerical and Office Support	-	33
-	Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled	-	17
-	Contracted Employees	-	13
-	Temporary Employees	-	<u>1</u>
	Total of		<u>86.</u>

The Chairman: If you are correcting this, then you have to move an amendment at the end, just before I put the question, Honourable Member. Are you moving an amendment, to have these amended now?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Yes, sir.

The Chairman: That is included under 2005 - Authorised?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Yes, which is vacant at the moment; so I am asking that the amendment be ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman:

Administrative	-	7
Senior Technical	-	0
Other Technical and Craft Skilled	-	15
Clerical and Office Support	-	33
Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled	-	17
Contracted Employees, how many?		

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Contracted - 13.

The Chairman: And temporary employees ... how many?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: One (1) that is to be filled.

Correction- Substitute for Staffing Details on page 43 the undermentioned:

STAFFING DETAILS					
CDA	Description	Authorised		Filled	
		2004	2005	2004	2005
6111	Administration	34	29	7	7
6112	Senior Technical	30	21	0	0
6113	Other Technical and Craft Skilled	33	36	15	15
6114	Clerical and Office	72	65	23	33
6115	Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled	28	31	14	17
6116	Contracted Employees			14	13
6117	Temporary Employees			15	1
	Total	197	182	88	86

The Chairman: Yes, Honourable Member.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, while my colleague gets that information, the question was: under what authority were these persons hired, when there were absolutely no provisions made in 2004?

Again, while he is seeking that, if you will permit me, Sir, I will give the second question, which was: can he state what category of contracted employees, specifically, these thirteen he proposes would reflect? Then I have three other follow-up questions on that same category.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Honourable Members, before we go into all these, if the time is going too long, I will begin to limit each agency to a specific number of minutes so that we can complete. I have asked Honourable Members to ask short, sharp, quick questions so that we can complete within the timeframe. If Honourable Members decide not to pay attention to what I have asked, I will then place a limit on each agency. Could you repeat the question for the Honourable Minister?

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, my simple question is: under what authority is the Minister filling these vacancies when they are not authorised?

The Chairman: I think there are two questions. Let him answer that one first; then you will come with the next one.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, I would like to move another amendment to insert the authorised ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Could you answer the Honourable Member first? There is a question about what authority you had to employ people.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: That is why, Mr Chairman, I am now giving the information. It has been omitted.

The Chairman: No, the Honourable Member did not ask for information. He asked for authority. Are you authorised to employ people?

You are a Finance Minister. Yes or no?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Yes, sir, I am authorised. So, Mr Chairman, can I now move that the section that does not have the information be inserted?

The Chairman: Which section would that be?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: That would be under 2005 - Authorised. I have already given the information on *filled*. I am asking to insert the omission, which was 2005.

The Chairman: So, the one you gave just now was filled?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Yes, Sir.

The Chairman: I had it under *authorised*, so they are *filled* now? *Authorised, now filled?*

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Yes, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, we will have to have two separate amendments for these two figures. You want to give the information to the Honourable Member now? I will invite you to make these amendments just before I put the question, okay? So could you read out what you have there now for the Honourable Member's benefit? Is that what you want, Honourable Member Mr Khan?

Mr Jerome Khan: No, Sir.

The Chairman: You do not want that? Okay, could you proceed to the next question then?

Mr Jerome Khan: Sir, just to save time, could the Minister say if these positions that were filled in 2004, and are proposed in 2005, will be publicly advertised, and in what medium?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, the staffing there will be

advertised.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, I refer to page 42, Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - again, I refer to the historical information, and to point my colleague to page 43. There were fourteen positions filled under this category of *temporary employees*, and the amount revised in 2004 was \$6,253,000. I notice now that the Minister is saying to the Committee that they propose to fill one vacancy in 2005 for an amount of \$500,000. Can the Minister say what category of temporary employee will be earning that?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, the category of employee is the relief cleaner, and there have been some reclassifications that they are being moved to Acct Code 6114 - Clerical and Office Support - which reflects an increase in the number for 2005.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, I move to page 43, Acct Code 6272 - Electricity Charges - and I note that the budgeted amount is \$1,700,000,000. Can the Minister say if this is the amount that he is catering for, for all the Ministries, or what buildings he is indicating here?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Yes, Mr Chairman, this figure reflects payment for electricity charges for Ministry of Finance and any shortfalls by line ministries and regions.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, the same question applies again to Acct Code 6273 - Water Charges - if this here is to cover the water charges for line ministries and other Government buildings, or only under the Ministry of Finance?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, the answer is yes.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, on Page 43, under Acct Code 6284 - Other - I have noticed, based on the historical information, in 2003 it was \$25,700,000, and there is a steep amount proposed in 2005, the

revised, in fact, was \$23,027,000 in 2004, but there is substantial increase - almost three-fold, budgeted for 2005. Could the Minister say what is covered in this category?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: That increase reflects provisions for legal fees for arbitration matters and local litigation matters, which the Ministry of Finance normally pays.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, I direct you to page 43, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - We noticed the historical information that, in 2003, \$556,000, and an increase to \$3,100,000. I ask the Minister if he feels it is an adequate amount to cover eighty-six staff in the Ministry, given the demands that they are going to meet under his Ministry?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: This amount includes an amount for a National Debt Strategy Workshop.

Mr Jerome Khan: I am sorry, Mr Chairman, but I did not get the last part ... What workshop?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: The National Debt Strategy Workshop.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: I think the Honourable Member was complaining about the small amount.

Mr Jerome Khan: Exactly, Sir.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member was asking whether the sum was adequate.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, that amount is adequate for that workshop, and we also benefit from amounts coming from the Public Service Ministry.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, again, I turn to Page 43, Acct Code

6311 - Rates and Taxes - historically, \$220,000,000 ... I am looking at the Budget for 2005, of \$321,400,000 proposed. Does this money cover all outstanding arrears to all municipalities where rates and taxes are concerned, including the Georgetown municipality?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, the answer is yes.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Sheila Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - could the Honourable Minister indicate how many buildings this will cover, the name of the security service, and the name of the principal.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: The name is the Special Constabulary.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, again, I am on Page 43, Acct Code 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - again, we notice from the historical data that there has been a substantial increase from 2003 to the budgeted amount in 2005, which reflects \$21,545,000. Can the Minister name the international organisations to which we will be making such contributions?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, if we go to Page 386 of the Estimates, we will see what agencies are listed.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - and the Annexe to that Acct Code is specifically State Planning Secretariat, and its allocation of the sum of \$140,572,000, I would like to ask the Minister to give some indication of what is covered by that sum. What activities and expenditure are covered by that sum?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, under the State Planning Secretariat, there are two programmes which have been introduced re-

cently. One has to do with the Public Sector Investment Programme, and the other is the FFMP, which is the Fiscal and Financial Management Programme were under which this National Assembly is benefiting. Under those programmes six new staff was employed in December 2004, so part of the numbers there reflect the annualisation of those salaries which were paid in 2004 for 2005, and there are another six new members who will be employed in 2005, as a result of the FFMP programme, and the implementation of the new budget law. Also, it includes counterpart funding for those two programmes under the IDB.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, could the Minister say how much of the \$140,000,000 is specifically allocated for staff?

Hon Saisnarie Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, \$111,200,000 is allocated for staff salary and other benefits.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Basil Williams.

Mr Basil Williams: Mr Chairman, might I respectfully refer you Acct Code 6141, and ask the Honourable Minister if the budgeted sum of \$1,500,000,000, in respect of revision of wages and salaries relates to the entire public service?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Yes, Mr Chairman.

Mr Basil Williams: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question: Could the Honourable Minister indicate what fraction of that sum is earmarked for increase in wages and salaries for this period in 2005?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, I cannot provide an answer at this time, except to say that that figure, or whatever, is subject to negotiations.

Mr Basil Williams: A supplementary question, Mr Chairman - Could

the Honourable Minister indicate what other payments are earmarked in that sum, other than increase in wages and salaries.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, it includes new recruits in all agencies and ministries ... we do not normally budget for these in the line ministries ... and also to meet employment costs shortfalls that can arise as a result of promotions, reclassification, and upgrading of staff.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question - Under State Planning, the provision of \$111,000,000 for staff, could the Honourable Minister indicate the number of staff affected?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: The number is 67, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Mr Kadir, I cannot wait on you to ask a question.

Mr Abdul Kadir: No, I was standing, Mr Chairman. I would like to look at Acct Code 6321- Subscriptions and Contributions to Local Organisations, and ask a question with respect to that subvention, the LINMINE Community Power of \$1,475,000,000, which is an increase. I would like to ask the Minister to give us some brief details on that.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, that sum is for subsidies to LINMINE for community power.

The Chairman: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, could the Minister explain why that sum is necessary, in the context of the deal with CAMBIOR, and the capacity being put in place by OMAI to generate power? Is it that the community will benefit from a subsidy from that source?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, though there has been an agreement with OMAI/CAMBIOR, I think that there is still a legal matter to finalise, which is preventing that too.

Wednesday, 9 March 2005

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Mr Speaker, a supplementary. Is the Minister saying that the CAMBIOR/OMAI arrangement is still executory?

The Chairman: That is a technical question, Mr Alexander. Could you explain what you mean by executory?

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Has that contract still not entered the state of implementation?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, while the privatisation agreement has been signed, we still have to provide subsidies to LINMINE for community power.

Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance, Programme 031 - Ministry Administration - \$8,167,271,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Honourable Members, before I move on to the next item, I would like to announce that I am stopping at 21:30h, so Members can choose whichever important areas they want to deal with and leave the unimportant areas out. It is a matter entirely for you. I will stop at 21:30h and, according to my watch it is 19:30h.

Pages 44 and 45

AGENCY 03 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE, Programme 032 - Accountant General's Department

Question is proposed that the sum of \$3,107,529,000 for Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance, Programme 032 - Accountant General's Department - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, I refer to Page 44, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees ... *[Interruption]*

[Consideration on Programme 032 - Accountant General's Department, suspended to facilitate an explanation on a procedure for correction/amendment of the Estimates]

The Chairman: Honourable Member, before you proceed. I have been advised by our resident expert that you do not need an amendment for what you want to add, Honourable Member. It is just a correction. The correction is approved that you requested during the course of the question. Proceed, Honourable Member.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a point related to that, since it is going to be a correction and no amendment, I would be grateful to be provided with the figures where they were not provided.

The Chairman: The Minister announced them ... *[Interruption]*

Mr Vincent L Alexander: No, he did not announce one set, he deferred for the amendment.

The Chairman: Yes, okay.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Yes, Mr Chairman, I will provide this Honourable House with the information.

The Chairman: Thank you, very much.

[Consideration on Programme 032 resumed]

The Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Yes, Mr Chairman, I refer to Page 44, Acct Code

6116 - Contracted Employees - the historical information shows in 2003 - \$11,800,000, the revised in 2004 - \$9,500,000. If we correspond that to Page 45, Sir, under *Staffing Details*, we would have noticed in 2004 that there are sixteen positions filled under *staffing*. Now, when we relate to the proposal for 2005, there is \$13,000,000 proposed, but a reduction of eleven staff in 2005. Can the Minister explain to the House why this is so?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, this is one area in which I will have to submit the corrections to the Honourable House.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, I wish to turn to Page 45, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships). I noticed that the proposed positions to be filled in 2005 are 130, yet the training amount that is budgeted is a measly \$5,000,000. I am asking the Minister if he thinks this is an appropriate amount.

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: The answer is yes, Mr Chairman.

Mr Jerome Khan: On Page 45, Acct Code 6294 - Other - we notice that there is a steep increase from this historical of 2003, which shows \$33,260,000, to the revised in 2004 of \$192,899,000, and budgeted sum of \$144,900,000. Can the Minister tell us why there has been such a steep increase in this category?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, in 2004 there was a one-off payment for a litigation brought against the Government by one James Ramsahoye, and so that figure in 2004 was inflated because we had to pay that compensation.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, again I am on page 45, Acct Code 6262 - Overseas Conference and Official Visits - The proposed budget for 2005 shows \$168,700,000. My question to the Honourable Minister is, does this amount cover all the Ministries or any additional agencies are included in this amount?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: The answer is yes. It covers for all min-

istries, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, particularly in view of the answer to question for Acct Code 6294. If indeed the figure revised for 2004 affected a particular litigation matter, what is the explanation for the increase, from the budgeted sum of \$45,730,000 in 2004, to a budgeted sum of \$141,900,000 in 2005?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, that figure covers the CARICOM Head Office Building opening, the State visits by Presidents of Brazil and Chile, and also we are hosting the CDB Board of Governors meeting in May this year.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, I turn to Page 44, Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - and I look at the Staffing Details on Page 45, which shows that the filled positions in 2004 were forty-two, and the revised allocation for 2004 was \$16,274,000. The same quantum of employees is proposed for 2005, yet the figure, in terms of budget, is \$15,050,000. Given the fact that they have announced the wage increase, is this figure accurate, and if so, what does it reflect?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, the term *temporary* means that these employees are not employed throughout the year. They are only employed for periods.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, A supplementary question. Is the Honourable Minister informing this House that persons who are employed temporarily, in no circumstances will work for the entire calendar year?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: In some cases they may work for the

entire year, Mr Chairman. In some cases they do not.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, will the Honourable Minister turn to Acct Code 6224 - Print and Non-Print Materials - I see there is proposed over about 140 percent increase. Will the Minister explain what accounts for this?

Hon Saisnarine Kowlessar: Mr Chairman, in 2005, this figure in 2005 reflects the provision for printing of revenue stamps. In 2004, there was a stock of revenue stamps which did not incur costs in 2004 but, in 2005, we intend to print those revenue stamps. Also, as a result of the IFMAS System, we have upgraded the security features of cheques and we have to purchase the necessary paper and that sort of thing, and the stationery cost will be increasing as well.

Correction -

Staffing Details

For COA 6116 substitute the figures 10 and 12 for 16 and 11, respectively; and opposite TOTAL substitute the figures 133 and 131 for 139 and 130, respectively

Agency 03 - Ministry of Finance, Programme 032 - Accountant General's Department - \$3,107,529,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 412

DIVISION 526 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Question is proposed that the sum of \$25,000,000 for Division 526 - Ministry of Finance - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 256 - Ministry of Finance - \$25,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 60 and 61

AGENCY 08 - OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL, Programme 081 - Office of the Auditor General

Question is proposed that the sum of \$152,618,000 for Agency 08 - Office of the Auditor General, Programme 081 - Office of the Auditor General - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 08 - Office of the Auditor General, Programme 081 - Office of the Auditor General - \$152,618,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

Page 396

DIVISION 505 - CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES - AUDITOR GENERAL, (Project Code 2001)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$625,000 for Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies - Auditor General, Project Code (12001) - Buildings - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies - Auditor General, (Project Code 12001) - Buildings - \$625,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

DIVISION 505 - CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES - AUDITOR GENERAL, (Project Code 25001)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,800,000 for Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies - Auditor General, (Project Code 25001) - Office Equipment and Furniture - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies - Auditor General, (Project Code 25001) - Office Equipment and Furniture - \$1,800,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

DIVISION 505 - CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES - AUDITOR GENERAL, (Project Code 4401)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$43,500,000 for Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies - Auditor General, (Project Code 4401) - Institutional Strengthening - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies - Auditor General, Project Code (4401) - Institutional Strengthening - \$43,500,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 372 and 373

AGENCY 90 - PUBLIC DEBT. Programme 901 - Public Debt.

Question is proposed that the sum of \$8,087,181,000 for Agency 90 - Public Debt, Programme 901 - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 90 - Public Debt, Programme 901 - Public Debt-

\$8,087,181,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 156 and 157

AGENCY 45 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND WATER, Programme 451 - Housing and Water

Question is proposed that the sum of \$354,629,000 for Agency 45 - Ministry of Housing and Water, Programme 451 - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Just a question. I note on the Schedule that Minister of Housing and Water, Honourable Shaik Baksh, would be answering under this Code. I do not see the Minister.

The Chairman: The Minister is here, Honourable Member.

Honourable Member Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Minister to indicate, under Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - which is specified as contributions to local organisations to Guyana Water Inc., a sum of \$250,000,000, what is the basis for that contribution to Guyana Water Inc?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: That is a subvention for year 2005.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: May I ask a supplementary question? What percentage is the subvention granted here, of the entire operational cost of Guyana Water Inc?

Hon Skaik KZ Baksh: I do not have that right now, but I can provide you with that information.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Is the subvention an unspecified subvention, or is it a specified subvention?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: It is unspecified.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

Dr Dalgleish Joseph: A supplementary question. Under that subvention to Guyana Water Inc, what part of that subvention will be used for water-testing, and the specific areas for water testing?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: No part of that subvention. This will come out of the revenues.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Mr Chairman, there is a provision, under Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies - Could the Minister advise for what purpose does the Ministry acquire such a quantity of drugs?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: We have a Health and Safety Unit at GWI and these sums will be required to ensure the safety of the employees and so on.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question. Is the Minister saying that, apart from the subvention earlier referred to, there are other transfers through other channels to GWI?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: Yes, there are other transfers. There are current and capital transfers.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: The problem I have, Mr Chairman, is that GWI is listed as an organisation to which a subvention is given, and an organisation which has an independent existence outside of the Ministry. Here is the Minister saying to me that a sum of money identified for drugs and material supplies under the Ministry of Housing and Water is,

in fact, for GWI. I am trying to clarify the relationship here.

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: I am advised that this \$153,000 will be for the Ministry. This is not for GWI.

Mr Vincent LAlexander: Thank you for the correction.

Agency 45 - Ministry of Housing and Water, Programme 451 - Housing and Water - \$354,629,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 409

DIVISION 523 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND WATER

Question is proposed that the sum of \$22,500,000 for Division 526 - Ministry of Housing and Water - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister explain where about in the Hinterland will water be improved?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: Upgrading of water supply systems in Regions 1 and 9, and improvement of water supply systems at Monkey Mountain, Kopinang, Bamboo Creek, among others.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Can the Honourable Minister state, under the same question, whether there is any water provision, or improvement, in Parima, Region 7?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: Yes, we are also looking at Parima. There is improvement of water supply there under the \$18,000,000 programme.

Dr Dalglish Joseph: What is the specific improvement?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: The improvement is to bring the pipelines from the spring at Parima into Parima itself.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, can the Minister advise, under Project Code 28001 - Water Supply - if this work will be done by GWI, or if it would be done by an agency?

Hon Shaik KZ Baksh: Works will be done by the Central Ministry in collaboration with GWI.

Division 523 - Ministry of Housing and Water - \$22,500,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 415

DIVISON 530 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND WATER

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,452,000,000 for Division 530 - Ministry of Housing and Water - Housing - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 530 - Ministry of Housing and Water - Housing - \$2,452,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 438

DIVISON 552 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND WATER - Guyana Water Incorporated

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,156,759,000 for Division 552 - Ministry of Housing and Water - Guyana Water Incorporated - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 552 - Ministry of Housing and Water -Guyana Water Incorporated - \$1,156,759,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 100 and 101

AGENCY 21 -MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, Programme 211 - Ministry Administration

Question is proposed that the sum of \$373,203,000 for Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture, Programme 211 - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - Could the Honourable Minister state at what levels do the sixteen contracted employees operate, and the duration of their contracts?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, contracted employees operate with the Ministries of Agriculture, Fisheries, Other Crops and Livestock, and they cover areas like Confidential Secretaries, Personal Assistants, Drivers, Public Relations Officers, et cetera.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I wish to bring to your attention the Staffing Details, COA 6111, and to note that there are eight vacancies in the administrative section. Would the Minister be kind enough to say if provision is made for filling of these vacancies in 2005?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Efforts are being made to fill those vacancies. Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: A supplementary question ... As a matter of fact, the question was if provision was made in the Budget for the filling of those vacancies. I asked the question because I note that the eight persons who served in 2004 were paid \$8,646,000, and only the sum of \$7,490,000 is provided in 2005.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, there are different designations for different categories of workers. So it does not necessarily mean the same eight positions will be filled.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, the fact that there exist twelve vacancies in the senior technical division ... As a matter of fact, there is only one person serving in that area. To what extent do the vacancies affect the performance of the department?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, I am advised that there are several other technical officers within the ambit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Other Crops and Livestock.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, may I remind the Honourable Minister that in the first question - the duration of the contracts for the contracted employees, he has not yet given the House an answer.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, the duration of these contracts are usually one year.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Trotman.

Mr Raphael GC Trotman: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations, I notice there is an allocation of \$264,000,592 - an amount of which Drainage and Irrigation is supposed to be receiving \$250,000,000. I just want to ask the Minister if the works that are expected to be done on the East and West Demerara Conservancies are included in this amount.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, these are current expenditures.

Agency 21 -Ministry of Agriculture, Programme 211 - Ministry Administration - \$373,203,000 agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 102 and 103

AGENCY 21 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, Programme 212 - Crops and Livestock Support Services.

Question is proposed that the sum of \$627,650,000 for Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture, Programme 212 - Crops and Livestock Support Services - \$627,650,000 - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6113 - Other Technical and Craft Skilled - Could the Minister say if provision is made under this Head for staff for the Duck and Sheep Breeding Unit?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, technical personnel for duck and sheep rearing comes under the jurisdiction of the National Agricultural Research Institute.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, here again I must ask the Minister, under Acct Code 6116 -Contracted Employees - the number of contracted

employees with professional skills, and the length of their contract.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, I am advised the number is eleven, and the duration of their contract is approximately one year.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - I ask the Minister if the amount of \$1,867,000 includes provision for the Guyana School of Agriculture and, if so, if the amount includes the five percent increase due to workers from 2004.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, I am advised that this does not include the Guyana School of Agriculture, and it does not include the five percent.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Further, Mr Chairman, if the same sum for Acct Code 6302 - \$1,867,000, includes provision for training at St Ignatius Unit for persons who are in the business of seedlings.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, that amount pertains to seminars, agro-chemical, acoushi ants, plant health, swine, duck rearing, et cetera.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I take you to Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - a provision of \$433,952,000, I wish to ask the Minister who are the local organisations that received these subsidies?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, the answer is listed on Pages 382 and 387.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Dr Joseph.

Dr Dalgleish Joseph: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6221 - Drugs and Medical Supplies – Are these veterinary drugs and medical supplies? This is my first question.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Yes they are, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

Dr Dalgleish Joseph: There is a significant increase in relation to the previous year. Could the Minister explain what has been responsible for this significant increase?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, this amount represents stocks for the new veterinary lab where poultry and meat-testing for the export market will be done.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I hope this is the final question under this Code. Acct Code 6272 - Electricity Charges - I note the substantial increase over the figure provided in 2004, and I ask the Minister if there is any special reason for this significant increase.

The Chairman: Electricity charges are going up, Honourable Member. I can hardly pay my own. That is the answer. The Honourable Minister

Mr Ivor Allen: I, too.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: I concur with your explanation, Mr Chairman. I can hardly afford mines as well.

Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture, Programme 212 -Crops and Livestock Support Services - \$627,650,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 104 and 105

**AGENCY 21 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, Programme 213
- Fisheries**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$47,630,000 for Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture, Programme 213 - Fisheries - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member Mr Allen

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - Again, and I ask this time, how many Guyanese are among the contracted employees and what is the length of the contract and their technical skills?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: I am advised, Mr Chairman, that all of the employees are Guyanese, and the contracts are in the duration of approximately one year.

Mr Ivor Allen: The skill area.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, they are:

- ten Inspectors;
- fishery officers;
- fishery inspectors
- field assistants; and
- master fishermen.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Acct Code 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - there is a provision of \$6,580,000. Would the Minister be kind enough as to indicate the organisations that re-

ceived these subsidies and contributions?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, that answer is listed on Page 387.

Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture, Programme 213 - Fisheries - \$6,580,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 106 and 107

AGENCY 21 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, Programme 214 - Hydrometeorological Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$100,437,000 for Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture, Programme 214 - Hydrometeorological Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I draw to your attention Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - I note the number of sixty-eight temporary employees, and I ask the Minister if these persons will be made permanent at any point in time.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, no.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: A Supplementary to that question. Could the Honourable Minister indicate what functions these temporary employees have?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, these temporary employees are based primarily in the interior, where they provide weather data from far-flung areas, and they are paid a stipend for this service.

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Agency 21 - Ministry of Agriculture, Programme 214 - Hydrometeorological Service - \$100,437,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 400

DIVISION 508 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,205,030,000 for Division 508 - Ministry of Agriculture - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, I would like the Minister to turn his attention to Project Code 13003 - Rehabilitation of Drainage and Irrigation Areas - I notice in the profile that major and minor works for drainage and irrigation would be done in various areas. My question to him is whether or not BK International, which is responsible for the La Bonne Mere breach, will be eligible to bid for these projects?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, this issue will be addressed by the Central Tender Board, and I really am not in a position to answer whether they will or will not.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Project Code 17004 - NARI - Could the Minister advise the House as to the cost of the laboratory equipment and the supplier?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, what I have are estimates - \$9,500,000, shown here as *establishment of genetic plant facility and purchase of seed laboratory equipment*.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, Project Code 13003 - Rehabilitation of Drainage and Irrigation Areas - There is listed here some major rehabilitations in areas such Buxton, Anns Grove, Golden Grove, and also rehabilitation work at Linden. My primary question is; what are these works expected to be done at Linden, and at what cost; and what are the works expected to be done in Buxton, and at what cost?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, Region 10 work will be identified by the Region in conjunction with the farmers of that area, and both Buxton and Linden, as the Honourable Member noted, are included in these works and, if he so wishes, I can provide him with all the areas, including those two that will be addressed.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Will the Minister turn to Project Code 33005 - Intermediate Savannahs - Agriculture Project - I see there is a small increase allocated. Would the Minister indicate whether or not an assessment of the effectiveness of this department has been done?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: I am sorry, Honourable Member, can you kindly repeat that question?

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: In relation to the allocation for the Intermediate Savannahs Project, I see there is a small increase. Has there been an assessment to ascertain the effectiveness of this department to justify the increase?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Before I answer in the affirmative, Mr Chairman, there is an ongoing process, and we have reached a stage in the savannahs now where there is approximately 25,000 acres under production with mixed-fruit crops, vegetables, corn, minica, sergum, pasture, and livestock. For example, Dubele Ranch - 60 acres under citrus, and about 300 acres planted per year.

The Chairman: You asked the question, Honourable Member.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Take the answer.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, there is Gold Field Investments, there are 5000 acres under corn, sergum, minica, citrus and mixed fruits and herbs and spices. This is probably the largest farming enterprise in the country. So, Mr Chairman, my answer is yes. *[Applause]*

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Project Code 17004 - NARI - the provision of \$19,000,000. My question is whether this sum includes the rehabilitation of the nursery at Timehri, and what is the position relative to the nurseries at Benab, Pouderoyen, Fort Wellington and Charity.

The Chairman: Those are distinct questions. What is the first one? Those are two distinct questions.

Mr Ivor Allen: The first question is whether it provides for the rehabilitation of the nursery at Timehri?

The Chairman: Okay.

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: This nursery is already rehabilitated, Mr Chairman, under the PRCSSP programme.

The Chairman: What is the next question? Just a minute, Mr Kadir.

Mr Ivor Allen: The next question is if provision is made for the nurseries at Benab, Pouderoyen, Fort Wellington and Charity?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, Benab is in existence and being in service, and Pouderoyen and Charity were rehabilitated under the PRCSSP last year.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, Project Code 21001 - Hydrometeorology - I want to ask the Minister if this allocation here has anything to do with the purchase and installation of the new Doppler Radar System?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Yes, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, relative to Project Code 17005 - Guyana School of Agriculture - provision of \$5,000,000. Is provision made for the generator and the water reservoir?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, the answer is no.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: A supplementary question. Is provision made for the floor of the auditorium ... and the roof of the dormitory?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, the Legend says *rehabilitation of buildings, construction of feed lots, and purchase of books.*

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Allen, are you looking for questions?

Mr Ivor Allen: No, no. I was waiting for an answer. Sorry.

The Chairman: You are seeking out questions?

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, I was waiting for an answer.

The Chairman: You are researching questions while ... [*Interruption*]

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, my question now is - under the provisions of GSA, is provision made for the facilities over at REPAHA?

Hon Satyadeow Sawh: Mr Chairman, that was already done last year.

Division 508 - Ministry of Agriculture - \$1,205,030,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 401

DIVISION 509 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE - Rural Support Project

Question is proposed that the sum of \$799,900,000 for Division 509 - Ministry of Agriculture - Rural Support Project - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 509 - Ministry of Agriculture - Rural Support Project - \$799,900,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 402

DIVISION 510 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE - MMA III

Question is proposed that the sum of \$102,000,000 for Division 510 - Ministry of Agriculture, MMA III - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 510 - Ministry of Agriculture, MMA III - \$102,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Page 403

DIVISION 512 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE - Artisanal Fishery

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,000,000 for Division 512 - Ministry of Agriculture, Artisanal Fishery - stands part of the Estimates.

I see Mr Allen relaxed back when I called that Project. I believe I can put the question.

Division 512 - Ministry of Agriculture, Artesian Fisheries - \$1,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

That is it for the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Home Affairs ... [Pause] Well, I certainly welcome this contingent from the Ministry of Home Affairs, and hope they came early enough to enjoy our hospitality, and I hope you enjoy our questions.

The Chairman: Pages 192 and 193

AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 511 - Secretariat Services

Question is proposed that the sum of \$68,918,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 511 - Secretariat Services - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, I have nothing to ask under security services- but Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions for Local Organisations - I am sure that I am missing something because, when we turn to Page 384, there is a breakdown. We have a

figure of \$2,212,000, but when I turn over to Page 384 - Agency Code 51, towards the bottom of the page, Minister, the figures are not adding up to \$2,212,000, and I want to know if something was left out. In fact, when you add the figures, you get \$2,372,000.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Khan.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I have not received an answer.

The Chairman: You have not received an answer?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Yes, I am just checking your math.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Well, we can proceed while you check.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, the Ministry of Home Affairs, No. 51 on page 384, the total is \$2,292,000, so there may be a mathematical problem which we can double check quickly.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Yes, because ... *[Interruption]*

Hon Gail Teixeira: It is not \$2,212,000. It is \$2,292,000.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: But when you add up, you get \$2,372,000, so I am just flagging that the additions need to be double-checked.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Yes, I appreciate that.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, I turn to Page 193, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - I wish to ask the Minister if she feels it is adequate - \$100,000, for sixty-seven staff to receive training, including scholarship provisions.

Hon Gail Teixeira: The figure that is raised here - obviously one would hope to have more, but at this point we will use what Ministry of Finance gives us, but obviously we would all like to have more for training. But

through the PSM, and through other agencies within the Government, and outside the Government, we are able to support the training of staff at the Secretariat, and within other areas under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, just one other question on the same Page 193 - Acct Code 6272 - Electricity Charges ... [*Interruption*]

Hon Gail Teixeira: What?

Mr Jerome Khan: Acct Code 6272 - Electricity Charges - We are advised in this House that all the electricity charges are paid through the Ministry of Finance, and I am just asking for clarifications and the question is; is this Acct Code 6272 not accounted for, or not provided for in the Ministry of Finance?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Yes, this figure is related to what we will have to spend in order to cover our electricity charges. Some agencies are covered by Finance and some are not. In Home Affairs we are not.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I am looking at Staffing Details on Page 193, and I notice that about 17 to 18 percent of the staff falls under either Contracted or Temporary Employees. Contracted being five and Temporary being seven. Could the Honourable Minister share with this Honourable House what positions the contracted employees fill? Then I will ask the same question with the Temporary Employees.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - where the diagram on Page 193 concerns are three staff members that are on contract, and it also reflects the five percent increase.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, I am asking what jobs do these five contracted employees perform?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Those persons are:

- the Permanent Secretary;
- the Head of Public Sector Security;
- the Parole Board Secretary; and
- a driver.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: And the same question for the temporary employees.

Hon Gail Teixeira: The temporary employees cater for three relief charwomen and office assistants who are not regularised by the Public Service Commission.

Agency 03 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 511 - Secretariat Services - \$68,918,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 194 and 195

AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 512 - Guyana Police Force

Question is proposed that the sum of \$3,075,844,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Guyana Police Force. - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, on Page 194 Acct Code 6131 - Other Direct Labour Costs - Could the Minister please share with the Honourable House what does this cover? Is it salaries?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6131 - Other Direct Labour Costs refers to allowances, generally within the Police Force at all levels.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Just a follow-up question. I see at Acct Code 6133 - Benefits and Allowances - I see a reasonable figure of \$684,265,000, so I am just wondering if there is an overlap? There seems to be an overlap there, Minister.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Yes, Acct Code 6133 refers to travel allowances, as well as purchase of items for uniform materials - shoes, boots, badges of ranks, caps, et cetera. That is about it.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - we have just been told that benefits and allowance include travelling, but we see a figure of \$114,870,000 - Local Travel and Subsistence. So I am asking the same question. I mean, there seems to be an overlap, Minister. There seems to be an overlap under your various heads. What does Local Travel and Subsistence cover?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, just to clarify for my colleague who is across the House, that the travelling allowance refers to the motorcar allowances, commuted travel and so on, and where certain ranks are allowed to have cars. Acct Code 6261, on which you are asking a question now, refers to payment for subsistence and travelling expenses and feeding of ranks, et cetera, when on duty.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I was not sure I had the floor. Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - I see a figure of \$10,000,000. I personally would have liked to see a much bigger figure, in view of the fact that, in the Minister's presentation, he spoke about the forward-looking and training of the Force. Is the Minister satisfied that this \$10,000,000 will give our Guyana Police Force the kind of training that it needs to transform itself?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6302 is to cover overseas training. In addition to that although we would all like the figures to be higher in this area, at the same time, we again received support from a number of agencies that covers some of our expenses. In fact, approximately 500 police were trained last year with this tiny budget and other support from other agencies.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - I see what has been allocated for this year is perhaps the lowest since 2003. Is this indicative of the renewed state of the buildings, or is this specific to which buildings?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Specific to ... Sorry, I did not hear you.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Which buildings are maintained under this Acct Code?

Hon Gail Teixeira: This is mainly for the maintenance of buildings already in existence, not for massive renovations. These are basic maintenance of the various police stations and buildings that they own across the country.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Under Staffing Details on Page 195, the authorised strength 4,227; filled 3630, roughly a 25 percent shortfall ... Could the Minister share with the House what strategies, if any, are be-

ing used to get us, as near as possible, to the authorised strength of this important arm?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Obviously we always want to recruit more police, and the recruitment drives are on, and we are constantly training policemen. We are also expending on training for them in other areas of specialisation, in terms of investigating, forensics and so on. So it is not only just bringing at the bottom the ordinary ranks. It is also to give promotion and career opportunities for the police. In fact, this is an ongoing activity but, despite what has happened in the last two years, the fact that we are short 600 would have impacted, but I believe that, of recent, we are seeing a new mood, a new change of young people wanting to join the police as the situation balances out.

We have had discussions on having major recruitment drives, and to help the Felix Austin College to be able to function better so as to be able to run more training programmes at a better level.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Having said all of that, is the Minister then saying to the House that she is relatively confident that, at the end of this year, 25 percent will be significantly smaller?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, I am being put on a line here. I would certainly believe that all efforts will be made to reduce that 25 percent shortfall, but I could not commit myself.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister, Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - why has there been a downward projection? Because the revised figure for 2004, \$118,599,000, and the budgeted was \$114,870,000 - in view of the fact that fuel and lubricants at Acct Code 6321 has been increased, why has the travel figure been decreased at the same time? Could the Minister explain the two?

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Hon Gail Teixeira: I cannot explain totally, in all honesty. However, I believe that the police, with their accounting practices and use of materials, in getting value for money, that maybe this is part of their efforts. In addition to that, I am quite confident that if we had problems under this Acct Code, that the Minister of Finance will come to our rescue.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - Could the Honourable Minister please share with this House, if not all - it may be many, but the main international organisations that we contribute to.

Hon Gail Teixeira: In answer to the Honourable Member is No. 51 on page 388 - International Organisations. It has under the International Organisation Parole Board Association, the Guyana Police Force to pay for Buenos Aries, Interpol and that comes up to \$8,000,000 - the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police, which we are part of. So that will cover \$9,300,000.

Agency 03 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 512 - Guyana Police Force - \$3,075,844 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 196 and 197

AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 513 - Guyana Prison Service

Question is proposed that the sum of \$500,454,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 513 - Guyana Prison Service - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: On page 196 Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - We see a sum of \$6,500,000, which is a hundred percent increase. This is heartening, but could the Minister share with us which infrastructure, and what does this \$6,500,000 cater for?

Hon Gail Teixeira: This \$6,500,000 at Acct Code 6255 is for maintenance of other infrastructure, maintenance of works on the drains around the prison locations, repairs to fences at Timehri, Mazaruni and New Amsterdam.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, on Page 197, Staffing Details again – Authorised - 502, and the Filled is 397, roughly about twenty percent less than our authorised strength. Would I be correct in saying that your initiatives are the same as you have stated for the police, or do you have different incentives and initiatives to fill those vacancies?

Hon Gail Teixeira: They are similar obviously, but in fact it is probably more difficult to recruit people for prisons than even for police, based on prejudices, stigma and, in some cases, the fear that people have. So it is more difficult to get persons for the prisons than for the police. They always have greater difficulties, so they have to make greater efforts and, obviously, greater attention has to be paid to in-service training.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - A sum of \$3,426. Does this include any overseas training?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Acct Code 6302?

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Yes, on Page 197.

Hon Gail Teixiera: This does include provision for local and overseas training.

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Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs - Programme 513 - Guyana Police Force - \$500,454,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 198 and 199

AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 514 - Police Complaints Authority

Question is proposed that the sum of \$13,910,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 514 - Police Complaints Authority - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, I have been standing here trying to catch your eye. I would like to direct a question to the Minister in relation to Acct Code 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - I know the Chairman of the Police Complaints Authority has been asking for investigators. Would this cover that?

Hon Gail Teixeira: No, it would not cover that.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: No?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Not in this area.

Agency 51- Ministry of Home Affairs - Programme 514 - Police Complaints Authority - \$13,910,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 200 and 201

AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 515 - Guyana Fire Service

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Question is proposed that the sum of \$285,327,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 515 - Guyana Fire Service - stands part of the Estimates.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Just one question at the bottom of page 200 Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - \$995,000 - Could the Minister please share with this Honourable House the buildings that would be covered?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - It would be rehabilitation of perimeter fences at New Amsterdam, Timehri, West Ruimveldt, and Campbelville; to build water tank trestles, and to repair driveways.

Agency 51 -Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 515 - Guyana Fire Service - \$285,327,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 202 and 203

**AGENCY 51 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, Programme 516
- General Registrar's Office**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$51,029,000 for Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 516 - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, I am going straight to Staffing Details. I notice that there are two contracted employees and nine temporary employees. The question for both areas would be the same. What positions do the two sets of persons hold?

Hon Gail Teixeira: The two contracted persons would be the two key positions in the organisation - the GRO, and the supervisor for the GRO's Branch in Berbice. The nine temporary whom you are referring to are persons who are helping to write-up the birth certificates. Some of them are not appointed by the Public Service Commission.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, if we go straight to Staffing Details - COA 6113, we can see, in 2004, *Filled - three persons*; and 2005 Projected - three persons, but yet, when we go to the amounts allocated, we see there is a reduction from \$1,474,000 to \$1,161,000. Does the Minister intend to reduce the remuneration of personnel?

Hon Gail Teixeira: In some cases when there is a decrease like that, it is either that the persons have been promoted and are therefore outside of that bracket and are getting a higher job, or that they have retired or resigned, or have been fired, and therefore we can only put up requests for finances based on the job. We cannot do projections for persons to be hired. If those are approved then the money is provided for the agency to pay the person.

Agency 51 - Ministry of Home Affairs, Programme 516 - General Registrar's Office - \$51,029,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

The Chairman: Pages 398 and 399

DIVISION 507 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

Question is proposed that the sum of \$474,600,000 for Division 526 - Ministry of Home Affairs - stands part of the Estimates.

Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, just for clarification, I see it is marked 399 but, in fact Home Affairs is at Pages 398 and 399. So I presume I can ask questions on Page 398.

The Chairman: Well, once it is on Division 507.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Yes, it is, Sir. The bulk is at Page 398, actually.

The Chairman: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 12002 - Police Station and Buildings, the sum of \$141,000,000, and when you look at the Profile on Page 38, the first thing you see here is *construction of police station at Sophia*. Could the Minister indicate whether this construction has started?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Under this Project Code 12002 for \$141,000,000, the following areas are listed. *[Interruption]*

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I asked a very specific question.

Hon Gail Teixeira: I would like to share it with the House.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Has the construction of the police station at Sophia commenced?

Hon Gail Teixeira: The construction at Sophia has started, and we are going well, but I thought that you might be interested as it might lead to other questions you might wish to ask.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: No, you cannot pre-empt me.

Hon Gail Teixeira: No, you are asking for the areas under Project Code 12002. Just in case you think that I am hiding Sophia in these figures and not showing you them, they are:

general repairs and rehabilitation works to force control;

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- extension to quartermaster stores;
- general repairs and rehabilitation to the Felix Austin Police College, and there are several areas under that including the barracks;
- general repairs and rehabilitation of Providence Police Station;
- general repairs and rehabilitation of Brickdam Administrative building;
- rehabilitation to the marine Police Station, New Amsterdam Store;
- rehabilitation of the Felix Austin Police College Barracks, Adventure, Corentyne, for those of you from Berbice;
- rehabilitation to the OC living quarters Fort Wellington;
- rehabilitation to No.51 Police Station;
- construction of a new police station at Pattersen East Coast Demerara, Sophia. So there it is for my colleague across the House;
- extension of Vigilance Police Station;
- general repairs and rehabilitation to Wales Police Station;
- rehabilitation to the Eteringbang Police Station, for my friend from the interior;
- rehabilitation to the Mahadia Police Station, my friend who is not here, Honourable Member Bancroft;
- rehabilitation to the Bartica Police Station and living quarters: and

- rehabilitation to the Aurora police station;
- rehabilitation to the Suddie police station;
- rehabilitation to the Commander's Living Quarters, Onderneeming;
- rehabilitation to the Charity Police Station.

Those accounted for the \$141,000,000.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, I am now worried. Could the Honourable Minister say what is budgeted for Sophia, given all these things? The Sophia Police Station specifically - what is the total budgeted figure, if any is left?

Hon Gail Teixeira: I can go through the list again.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I have no problem ...

Hon Gail Teixeira: Construction of a new police station at Sophia is \$24,957,524, and that is the second phase. We started the first phase in 2004. This is Phase II.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Could the Minister say whether it is anticipated that the police station at Sophia will be completed in the current year?

Hon Gail Teixeira: The building will most likely be ready by the end of the year. However, I have mentioned in my Budget speech, if you remember anything that I said, and it is that we are unable to complete the perimeter fence because of three houses there that are on our property where we want to build the station. So that is going to hold up the commissioning and the opening, unless we solve that problem quickly.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member - Dr Joseph.

Dr Dalglish Joseph: Page 398 Project Code 26001 - Equipment -

Police... In 2004 it was budgeted at \$70,000,000. This was revised and increased to \$109,569,000. In this year, it is budgeted at \$105,000,000. I want to find out here what is the reason for this decrease, and I see here under *Equipment Arms, Ammunition*, et cetera. More specifically, can the Minister explain what *equipment* means?

Hon Gail Teixeira: In 2004, the original provision was \$70,000,000; we were able to get additional funds for the police for equipment for last year. Thanks to the government. So in fact we do not have a decrease. We moved from \$70,000,000 to \$105,000,000, which is an increase. But what we had was a supplementary that allowed us to purchase badly-needed equipment. In terms of your question on what type of equipment, these have to do with equipment of a security nature such as lab equipment, communication equipment, obviously arms and ammunition, including sniffer dogs trying to acquire dogs and horses.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, under Project Code 24001 - Land and Water Transport - Police - Could the Honourable Minister verify whether, under Purchases of Vehicles, Boats and Outboard Engines, that a vehicle will be placed at Mabura, seeing that, under Project Code 12002 an outpost is going to be established at Mabura Hill?

Hon Gail Teixeira: This is Project Code 24001? Is that what you are referring to? Which heading are you referring to?

Mrs Shirley J Melville: It is under the purchase of vehicles. Seeing that an outpost is being established at Mabura Hill, ... *[Interruption]*

Hon Gail Teixeira: I am asking for the Project Code 24001?

Mrs Shirley J Melville: 24001.

Hon Gail Teixeira: With the allocation that we have, Honourable Member, this is to acquire a number of double-cab pick-ups, motors, land rovers, prison vans, motorcycles, armoured cars, fibreglass boats,

ballyhoos, 4 wheel ATVs, and things like flashlights and sirens and other accessories. So these will be distributed outside of Georgetown to the best of our ability. But I cannot say, for now, which one will go where; but I can assure you that we always consider the interior. We will try our best not to have you neglected in any way.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: A supplementary question to Project Code 26001, and the Legend says *Purchase of Equipment, Arms, Ammunition and Horses*. So I wonder if the Minister got her animal wrong. But if we look at the Profile on Page 47, there is a heading there - Traffic. My question is: Does this acquisition include adding new traffic lights, or renovation of our existing ones? It is 47 on the profile page. The very first thing which says *Traffic, Security, Communication*, et cetera.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Unfortunately no. Your question on traffic lights cannot be incorporated under this. When we talk about *traffic*, it would mean road markings, certain equipment that the traffic people would need, such as vests, signals, and stuff like that. But on the traffic lights - there was a study done, and the figures are phenomenally high for the traffic lights. There is an offer that we are exploring right now, but it is very expensive to put in new traffic lights.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Trotman.

Mr Raphael GC Trotman: Mr Chairman, Project Code 24003 - Land and Water Transport -Fire ... I am wondering whether there is a typographical error. Is the Minister saying that one land rover for use by the fire department will cost US\$95,000, or thereabout? And whether that money is better spent acquiring more than one vehicles; perhaps not brand-new, giving the speed of fire sweeping Guyana.

Hon Gail Teixeira: I am so happy Honourable Member Mr Trotman asked me this question. It allows me to let the public know how expen-

sive fire equipment is. The \$19,000,000 is for a land rover with equipment for water capacity, but a full fire-tender is anywhere between \$51,000,000 and \$98,000,000. So this will give us some capacity, but not the full machines.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I go now to Project Code 12003 - Fire Ambulances and Stations - If we look at the Project Profile on Page 39, the description says the project includes the construction of fire station in Linden, and my question is: Out of the \$25,000,000 budgeted, how much is going towards the construction of the fire station in Linden firstly, and secondly when is this project expected to be completed? When is the ribbon to be cut?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Honourable Member, the first phase of the Linden Fire Station was started last year. We are now in the second phase, and in the first phase approximately \$6,700,000 was expended. The total project is \$16,000,000. So in this Phase II we are expecting to spend about \$10,000,000. We would hope to finish it early in the new year.

Division 507 – Ministry of Home Affairs - \$474,600,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Honourable Members, that brings us to the end of our business for today.

ASSEMBLY RESUMED

The Honourable Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

Hon Reepu Daman Persaud: Mr Speaker, I wish to move that the National Assembly stands adjourned to tomorrow 10 March 2005 at 14:00h.

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The Speaker: Honourable Members, the House stands adjourned to tomorrow at 14:00h. Thank you very much.

Adjourned accordingly at 20:50h